

## Scholarship of teaching and learning in the Afromed senior research fellowship program

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**Received:** 16<sup>th</sup> August 2024; **Accepted:** 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024; **Published:** 01<sup>st</sup> October 2024

The Afromed Senior Research Fellowship Program is designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of health professionals and students in medical and clinical research. This manuscript examines the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) within the program, focusing on the structured educational framework that includes weekend lectures, quizzes for assessment, and case scenario tests. Participants engage in a collaborative learning environment that promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for medical research.

Additionally, the program requires fellows to develop research proposals aligned with their concentration courses; one notable proposal investigates the impact of family scapegoating abuse on mental health among university medical students. By integrating various teaching methodologies, the Afromed fellowship not only fosters individual growth but also contributes to the advancement of healthcare practices through evidence-based research. Future directions include enhancing teaching methodologies and supporting fellows in developing high-quality research proposals, thereby empowering the next generation of medical researchers in Sub Saharan Africa.

### Introduction

The Afromed Senior Research Fellowship Program by Afromed Academy of Medical Research and Innovation aims to enhance the skills and knowledge of health professionals and students in conducting medical and clinical research. This manuscript explores the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL)

within this program, focusing on the processes involved in attending lectures, completing assessments, and engaging in case scenario tests for both concentration and elective courses.

### Program Structure

The Afromed fellowship is structured to provide participants with a comprehensive learning experience through a combination of theoretical knowledge and practical application. The program includes:

*Weekend Lectures:* These are designed to accommodate the schedules of working professionals. Lectures are held virtually, allowing for flexibility and accessibility [1].  
*Quizzes for Assessment:* To evaluate understanding and retention of the material, participants are required to complete quizzes. These quizzes serve as formative assessments that guide learners in their educational journey.

*Case Scenario Tests:* Concentration and elective courses include tests based on real-world case scenarios. These assessments are critical for developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential in medical research [2].

### Attendance and Engagement

*Weekend Lectures:* Participants attend lectures on weekends, which are crucial for balancing professional commitments with educational pursuits. The virtual format allows for

interactive sessions where fellows can engage with instructors and peers, fostering a collaborative learning environment [3].

*Quizzes and Assessments:* Quizzes are strategically placed throughout the course to ensure continuous engagement and understanding of the material. They provide immediate feedback, allowing participants to identify areas needing improvement. This iterative process enhances learning outcomes and prepares fellows for more complex assessments [1].

*Case Scenario Tests:* The case scenario tests are integral to the curriculum, particularly in concentration courses. These tests require fellows to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, simulating real-life challenges they may face in their professional roles. This experiential learning approach not only solidifies knowledge but also enhances critical thinking skills [2].

### Research Proposal Development

As part of the fellowship program, participants are required to develop a research proposal aligned with their concentration course. For the January 2024 intake, the concentration course focused on Non-communicable Diseases and Mental Health. In August 2024, fellows presented their proposals to a committee for review and feedback [4].

One such proposal, titled "Impact of Family Scapegoating Abuse and Mental Health Seminar: A Randomized Controlled Trial in University Medical Students," was developed. This proposal aimed to investigate the relationship between family scapegoating abuse and mental health outcomes among university medical students. The research aligned with the concentration course's

**Financial Support and sponsorship:** Nil

focus on mental health and addressed a significant gap in the literature. The proposal obtained clearance from National Health Research Authority (NHRA) in Lusaka [5]

### Conclusion

The Afromed Senior Research Fellowship Program exemplifies the principles of the scholarship of teaching and learning through its structured approach to education. By integrating weekend lectures, quizzes, case scenario tests, and research proposal development, the program equips participants with the necessary skills to excel in medical research. This comprehensive educational framework not only promotes individual growth but also contributes to the advancement of healthcare practices through evidence-based research.

### Future Directions

Continued evaluation and enhancement of the fellowship program's teaching methodologies will be essential. This includes exploring innovative assessment techniques, expanding the range of case scenarios to reflect the evolving landscape of medical research, and providing support for fellows in developing high-quality research proposals. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, the Afromed program can further its mission of empowering the next generation of medical researchers.

### Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their gratitude to the staff of Afromed Academy of Medical Research and Innovation for their time and willingness to contribute to this research fellowship.

**Conflicts of interest:** There are no conflicts of interest.

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**Cite this article as:** Balapala KR and Malinda MD. Scholarship of teaching and learning in the Afromed senior research fellowship program. *Al Ameen J Med Sci* 2024; 17(4):271-273.

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