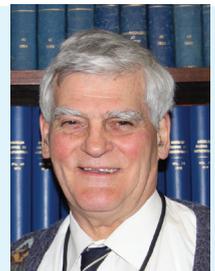


# Award and reward

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Did Eric Partridge have it wrong? In his seminal reference book, *Usage and Abusage*, the words Award and Reward are considered thus: “the latter is either a recompense or a recognition of merit; the former is a “judicial sentence, especially that of an arbitrator or umpire”, hence: “that which is assigned as payment, penalty etc by the terms of the judge’s sentence or arbitrator’s decision” (The Oxford English Dictionary).

Context, as always, is critical. Let the umpire “award” an LBW decision, let the judge “award” costs to the litigant. But Funk and Wagnalls in their Standard Dictionary, at last make the acknowledgement, admittedly as a second meaning, that an award can be “bestowed, as a prize”.

The Association certainly conflates the two words, for The Awards Committee, in making deliberations and decisions, regards the Awards it makes as a type of Reward in recognition of merit. (Intriguingly, The Standard Dictionary



Dr Ramphoma congratulated by Editor Bill Evans.

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does not include “conflates” but The Oxford English Dictionary does!! namely “to fuse together”.)

Research demands accurate usage, and that indeed is one of the criteria applied by the Panel of Judges appointed to consider papers submitted in competition for The Young Essayists Award. The purpose of the Award is succinctly stated: SADA seeks through this award to encourage promising young authors to submit original scientific essays of an international standard for publication in the Association’s Journal.

The central criterion is recorded as: **Each paper will be assessed on whether it represents a substantial contribution to scientific progress and is presented with clarity that the reader can comprehend.**

Of the eight eligible papers considered for the award, that authored by Dr KJ Ramphoma was adjudged as meeting the criteria most successfully. The award was presented on the occasion of the Gala Awards Dinner of the Association, held in Durban during the Annual Congress, 2015.

The paper was titled: “*Knowledge, attitudes and practices of oral health care workers in Lesotho regarding the management of patients with oral manifestations of HIV/AIDS*”, published in the SADJ: Volume 69, No.10.

Dr Ramphoma comments on her background and how the research developed:

“Growing up in Lesotho and having witnessed the poor and substandard dental health services provided, I knew that I wanted to go into Community Dentistry, with the hope that I would one day be able to reach the remote and rural villages of Lesotho

and to provide the much needed dental health services. In August 2010, I was accepted for a MChD programme in Community Dentistry and graduated in September 2014 at the University of the Western Cape. I became interested in this particular topic because, as much as similar studies had been conducted in other African countries, it had never been done in Lesotho, specifically on oral health workers. Given that Lesotho has the third highest prevalence of HIV in the world, coupled with the gross lack of oral health workers, I realized the need for this particular study. Over and above that, there is a wealth of research on how oral health workers are playing a significant role in the diagnosis of oral lesions associated with HIV and I saw an opportunity to assist in this regard to achieve early detection of HIV and better management to prevent premature mortality of those infected with the disease.”

The project was supervised by Professor Su Naidoo (Deputy Dean of Postgraduate Studies and Research, UWC), who was the second author.

And yes, the Award was indeed also a Reward... in tangible terms there is a medal and a cash prize.. but more importantly for the authors the reward is in the recognition that the research had merit and that the paper was indeed explicit. The Association also is in line for a reward, for it is to the recipients of the Young Essayists Award that we shall look for the researchers and authors of the future, as they take their turn in defining the cutting edges of dental research. Yes. Let us at once conflate the words “Award” and “Reward”.. of course with due apologies to Eric Partridge!

## Reference

1. Partridge E. Usage and Abusage. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, England, 1981.