

Editorial

Revitalizing Classroom Attendance: Reviving Interest in Medical Education by Tackling Challenges and Embracing Solutions

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The pursuit of medical education has always been a noble path, attracting individuals driven by a passion to heal, serve, and make a meaningful impact on society. However, in recent years, there has been a concerning decline in classroom attendance among undergraduate medical students.

Regardless of the cause, absenteeism has become a formidable problem in classrooms worldwide. The increasing popularity of private coaching classes and the easy accessibility of online study materials have contributed to a manifold increase in absenteeism. Medical colleges are not exempt from this trend. The revolutionary developments in the field of electronics have also played a role in this matter.¹

The significance of in-person learning cannot be understated, as it facilitates hands-on experience, fosters mentorship, and enables collaborative learning. The qualities of teachers, their practices, and the relationship they have with their students also seem to play a significant role in student absenteeism.² A robust faculty training program, modifying the content delivery to suit the students' needs, and a strict attendance policy are the suggested remedies.³ Detecting and preventing issues early can help avert undesirable consequences of absenteeism, safeguarding medical students' academic performance and professional growth.⁴

To ensure the future of medicine remains bright, it is imperative to address the challenges leading to decreased classroom attendance and implement effective solutions that reignite interest in medical education. This editorial delves into the underlying issues and proposes measures to revitalize classroom attendance and rekindle enthusiasm in the pursuit of medical knowledge.

Challenges Hindering Classroom Attendance

Technological Distractions

In an era where digital devices have become integral to our daily lives, students often find it challenging to resist distractions in the classroom. Social media, online entertainment, and other digital temptations can divert students' attention away from lectures, hampering their focus and engagement.

Stress and Burnout

The rigorous nature of medical education, with its demanding curriculum and high stakes, can lead to overwhelming stress and burnout. As a result, students may resort to skipping classes in a bid to cope with academic pressure, exacerbating the issue of declining attendance.

Evolving Learning Preferences

The advent of online resources and e-learning platforms has influenced students' learning preferences. Some students may perceive virtual learning as more convenient and flexible, leading them to favor remote education over traditional classroom settings.

Lack of Active Learning Opportunities

Passive teaching methods, such as one-sided lectures, can be less stimulating for students, leading to disengagement and decreased attendance. Lack of active learning opportunities in the classroom can diminish students' enthusiasm for attending lectures regularly.

Financial Constraints

The cost of medical education, including tuition fees, textbooks, and living expenses, can place a significant financial burden on students. For those

with limited resources, attending every class may become a challenge, especially when faced with the need to work part-time to support their education.

Solutions to Revitalize Classroom Attendance

Interactive and Engaging Teaching Methods

To counteract the allure of passive online learning, educators should adopt more interactive and engaging teaching methods. Utilizing technology in the classroom, such as audience response systems and interactive presentations, can foster active participation and enhance the overall learning experience.

Addressing Student Mental Health

Medical institutions must prioritize student mental health and well-being. Providing access to counseling services, stress management workshops, and creating a supportive environment can help students cope with academic pressures and reduce the likelihood of burnout.

Creating Incentives for Attendance

Introducing attendance-related incentives can be an effective way to encourage students to attend classes regularly. Institutions could consider implementing attendance policies that reward students for their active participation through bonus points or additional learning opportunities.

Redefining the Classroom Experience

Embracing the advantages of in-person learning, educators should strive to create a dynamic and inclusive classroom environment. This can involve incorporating case-based discussions, group activities, and simulations that allow students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios.

Leveraging Technology for Active Learning

Instead of viewing technology as a threat to classroom attendance, educators can harness its potential to foster active learning. Integrating virtual anatomy tools, medical simulations, and collaborative online platforms can complement in-person instruction and enhance the learning experience.

Financial Support for Students

To alleviate financial burdens, medical institutions and governments should explore scholarship programs, financial aid packages, and loan forgiveness options. These initiatives can help deserving students pursue their medical education without compromising on attendance due to financial constraints.

To conclude, revitalizing classroom attendance in medical education requires a collective effort from educators, institutions, and policymakers. By understanding the challenges hindering attendance and implementing innovative solutions, we can rekindle interest and enthusiasm among undergraduate medical students. Emphasizing the value of in-person learning, promoting interactive teaching methods, addressing student mental health, and providing financial support will not only improve attendance but also shape a new generation of compassionate and competent healthcare professionals. As we embrace the challenges and solutions discussed, we can ensure that the pursuit of medical knowledge remains an invigorating and transformative journey for future medical professionals.

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