
Editorial

A Viewpoint on Medical Education in Iran

Mozafar Khazaei Ph.D.

Fertility and Infertility Research Center, Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah, Iran

Email. mkhazaei@kums.ac.ir

One of the unique characteristics of medical universities compared to other higher education centers in Iran is existence of medical education development centers. These centers have made an attempt to enhance the quality of medical education by regular and constant activity in various domains of educational planning and policymaking, and empowerment of the faculty members, students and personnel. Numerous studies published in Persian and English journals are one of the achievements of these centers. Also, several Persian and English scientific journals are being published by these centers among which the role of the few English languages journals of these centers is remarkably significant. Since these journals attract more audience, especially from abroad, it is necessary to pay special heed to the quality of their published articles. Avoiding the publication of such articles as “analysis of awareness and attitude” and turning to innovative intervention studies in medical education (1) have been highlighted by the authorities of medical education.

During the past 30 years, the planners and medical sciences teachers have made to keep up with global developments in medicine. However, medical education in Iran has encountered numerous challenges, some of which have been referred to in the literature such as incompatibility of education with the real needs of the society, necessity of revising the syllabi and scientific resources, and weakness of clinical education (2, 3). One of the challenges highlighted in the recent years is the decreasing trend in medical students’ motivation and their academic failure. Various studies have investigated the factors affecting the students’ academic failure (4, 5), but few studies have analyzed the practical and scientific solutions to decrease and prevent it. Accepting undergraduate students in Iranian universities is state-based and the fact that universities have no role in the selection and acceptance of students, determining

appropriate strategies to prevent academic failure can preserve financial and human investment and enhance the academic rank of the universities. Taking the academic failure into account as one of the challenges facing medical education in Iran and doing intervention and meta-analysis studies are recommended.

The increasing number of medical sciences students, especially general medicine during the recent years, that has caused congestion in theoretical and practical classes and relative decline in the quality of education, is also another noticeable challenge in the medical education. It seems necessary to have appropriate and prospective plan for this quantitative increase of students before they enter clinical wards in hospitals and to make anticipations for the preparation of physical and educational conditions and facilities needed for clinical and outpatient training. Taking into account of the ability and interest of the new generation of students in electronic facilities like internet and mobile and explicit emphasis of educational authorities and programmers of the country in the recent medical education congress (2013) on the necessity of applying virtual education, designing new educational programs and models based on virtual education can be considered as one of the methods of coping with the given challenge.

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