

What is Ailing the Medical Education in our Country?

The scene of medical education in our country is best with number of issues. They can be discussed in relation to the educators as well as the process of education delivery.

The educators are suffering from the following

1. **They totally lack any power** to improve or change the system. The purse strings are generally controlled by narrow minded individuals who are devoid of any vision. The educators normally have not a single rupee budget to spend and depend on the DDOs for even meager things like educational supplies, photocopies etc
2. **The teachers are paid pathetically.** Almost all medical teachers in this country spend the afternoons and evenings doing their second shift job to make both ends meet. The private practice is an economic necessity but it has conflicting interests with the morning job of teachers.
3. **The teachers have no formal training in education methodology.** When an assistant professor is inducted as a teacher we only assess their clinical knowledge and skills and they are put on the job without any instruction in the process of educational delivery or assessment/evaluation.
4. **There is no monitoring of CME on the part of the teachers.** Once in the queue the teachers keep on progressing up the ladder without any further attempt or need for improvement of qualification and training.
5. **They have no academic freedom** and lack tenured positions and have no job security. This scuttles attempts which may be made to redress the deficiencies of system.

The process of education is afflicted with the following:

1. Majority of the medical institutions in the country lack a properly functioning Department of Medical Education which is a pre-requisite for improvement in our curricula, teaching methodology and process of evaluation.
2. Decision making is too centralized for the stake holder to play a meaningful role. In fact, any attempt at innovation or improvement which disagrees with the establishment's view point is dealt with by iron hand.
3. In this electronic age of information we are still lacking in learning resource centers, modern equipment for educational delivery like laptops, multimedia and internet access in many class rooms /seminar rooms.

Medical education is a specialized but serious business and requires specialized departments headed by individual with vision, knowledge and leadership qualities to improve the currently dismal scenario.

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