

NEWER APPROACHES IN ANATOMY TEACHING

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Is there a need to change teaching methodologies in Anatomy?....

No doubt the older dedicated teachers prefer the 'Chalk and talk' method in a year & half course of first MBBS, where students were admitted purely on the bases merit and hence intellect.

But in my opinion acceptance of newer methods of teaching would prove beneficial to students as 1st MBBS is reduced to one year course, the 'Payment seat' concept admits 'Not so bright' students whose mindset is exam oriented and on top of it there is a dearth of sincere dedicated teachers, who are willing to painstakingly impart their knowledge. Also with the rise of competitive exams for post graduation or USMLE calls for introducing / accepting newer methods.

Most common newer method is use of PPT – where a well organized lecture is imparted and diagrams can be conveyed completely. The lecturer is more at ease and has the flexibility to amplify a particular point. An overlay technique is effective way of 'Building up' a diagram (which needs artistic expertise in chalk method). Also use of animation videos makes the students more interested.

A number of studies of senior medical students have revealed a need of clinically oriented Anatomy, Imaging anatomy, surface & living anatomy. Here are a few suggestions

Group project work or problem solving team exercises where research with the help of internet/books and senior residents can be used to complete an assignment would promote cooperative learning.

Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) by visualization of surface & living anatomy where a mummy is not available.

Well developed (radiology) software can be used for teaching sectional or imaging anatomy for better understanding of MRIs, CT scans in coming clinical years. This will act as supplement in understanding relations of various structures, thus adding a radiological perspective to gross anatomy.

Virtual microscopy should be used to teach histology beyond laboratories. Spotting should be promoted as a self directed learning approach.

Appetite for dissection is declining. Use of prosections is a very effective way especially in unfavorable student cadaver ratio and curtailed teaching time. A list of structures are shown to students that are supposed to be seen after a particular class.

CAT (Computer assisted teaching) leaves a lasting impression on the students' mind.

Use of smart phones & I-Pods for viewing Anatomy videos/text is popular among students.

This self adopted, learn anywhere method can be supported by developing quality videos at our own institutions.

So the days are not far where a web-based interactive 3D visualization will be used for an improved Anatomy learning in this Digital Era. So, curriculum design is the key to promote effective Anatomy education and goal of deep and meaningful learning in preparation of professional practice.

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