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TRAINERS' ATTITUTE TOWARDS USING MODERN PRACTICES IN THE TRAINING OF MEDICAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
The contemporary education process is very complex because of the concurrent action of numerous, even opposing factors and other reasons place the contemporary trainer in the exceptional situation, which requires new approaches in education. Our research on the attitudes and experience of the educators in using the modern practices in education shows the upsides and downsides of this process, as well as the mastery of the didactic art to apply the above-mentioned components of the education process to the needed extent.

Key words: Attitudes' Trainers, Modern practices, Motivation, Modeling, Observational Learning , Self – Efficacy

Theoretical foundations of the problem

The contemporary education process is very complex because of the concurrent action of numerous, even opposing factors: the huge amount of information and the lack of criteria for necessary and basic knowledge; the presence of contemporary cutting-edge technology for diagnosis and research, as well as the impossibility to use it directly in the education process; the underestimation of the subjective factor and the individual approach to education in the preparation of future specialists. (1)

These and other reasons place the contemporary trainer in the exceptional situation to possess vast amounts of knowledge and the art to present them conceptually, to visualize to the needed extent the theoretical constructs and to be able to effectively apply them in practice, to have the ability to work with audiences, student groups or even individual students and finally to be skilled in the art of motivating students for learning and practical fulfillment. (2)

The biggest challenge faced by today's institution of higher education is that it has the mission to prepare professionals who possess "anticipating competences" responding to the needs of the future. The educators teaching medical students are placed in a state of dependence by the fact that they have to prepare specialists, who, in 15 or 20 years, will be at the apex of their professional maturity. This is an extreme responsibility in today's world of rapidly developing knowledge, technologies and practices. If today it is impossible to predict the achievements of science and technology a quarter of a century from now and teach today's students how to use them, at least it is possible to help them develop a skill for "sensing the new", which we could call a disposition towards using modern practices.

As far as the concrete case is concerned, the attitude (3) towards using modern practices is connected with one of the criteria for success and efficacy in one of the most significant and socially responsible professions - that of the medical doctor.

The medical student is not subject to influence, but turns into a partner in the education process, he is motivated, has a positive attitude towards his chosen profession and regards it as his vocation.

The goal of contemporary medical education is to assist the student in his independent

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acquisition of knowledge, skills, habits, in the development of behavioral algorithms, evaluation of attitudes and adoption of new styles of team work. (4)

In contemporary practical medical training, it is often hard for the student to participate directly and autonomously in practical activities, because of the risk of making mistakes associated with high risk for the patient's life. Moreover, complex technological process are used in these practical activities, which can be operated only by medical specialists with a lot of experience. Therefore, this training often has the character of modeling or observational learning as Alber Bandura defined it (5). This learning model is based on the view that modeling generates learning through its informative function.

The application of modern practices to the contemporary organization of the training of medical students has to develop in them a sensitivity to using such practices in their future professional activity. Such attitudes are capable of enhancing student motivation for knowledge acquisition and this will help to increase their professional competence.

Goal, tasks, hypothesis, object and subject of the research.

The goal of the research is to determine the educators' attitudes towards using modern practices in the process of training medical students.

Tasks:

1. Studying the educators' opinion regarding the relationship between the fundamental and the applied, practical knowledge.
2. Determining the forms and methods of education under the contemporary conditions.
3. Analyzing the possibilities for demonstrating to the students the latest scientific achievement in the corresponding area.

Hypothesis: On the basis of the scientific, theoretical analysis of the problem, our team hypothesizes that the trainers' attitudes towards using modern practices in the education process of the medical students enhances their motivation for learning and is a determinant for the formation of their professional competence.

The Object of the research is 33 university teachers from the Faculty of Medicine at Trakia University.

The Subject of the research is their opinions and assessment of the training of medical students, as a focus of the cutting-edge achievements of science and practice.

Instruments. The survey method was used in this research. A survey card was created which contained 6 questions regarding the quality of education.

Results and Discussion

Question 1. What do you think is the optimal amount of knowledge that students should receive in the area of study which you teach? **(Fig.1)**

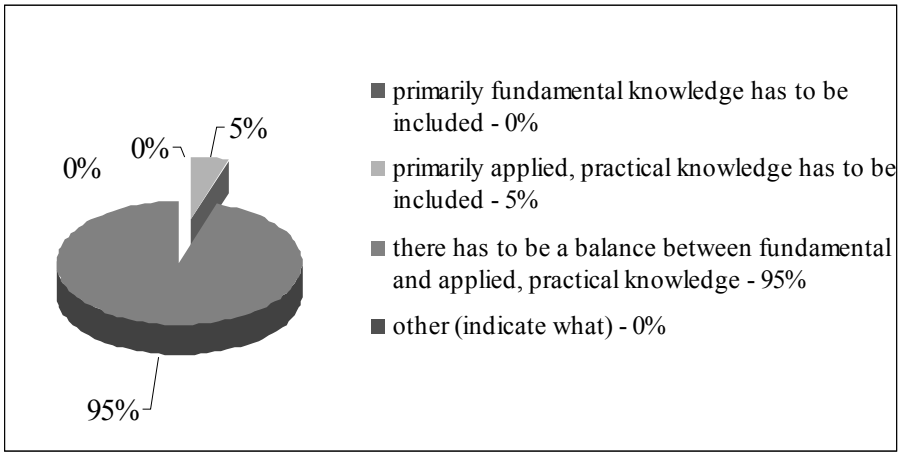

Fig. 1. Respondents' replies to Question 1

The trainers' answers in response to **Question 1** are as follows:

The majority of trainers, 95% think that "there has to be a balance between fundamental and applied, practical knowledge". Only 5% of the respondents expressed the view that "primarily applied, practical knowledge has to be included". No other options were selected.

Question 2: If the hours assigned for lectures and exercises in the course schedule are too few, how would you organize the teaching material in your area? **(Fig. 2)**

In response to this question, more than half of the surveyed trainers or 58% find it necessary to look for additional ways (out-of-classroom, facultative, etc.) of supplementing the students' knowledge. 42% of them think the best course of action is to choose the option of teaching only the theoretical and practical principles and fundaments in their area of science.

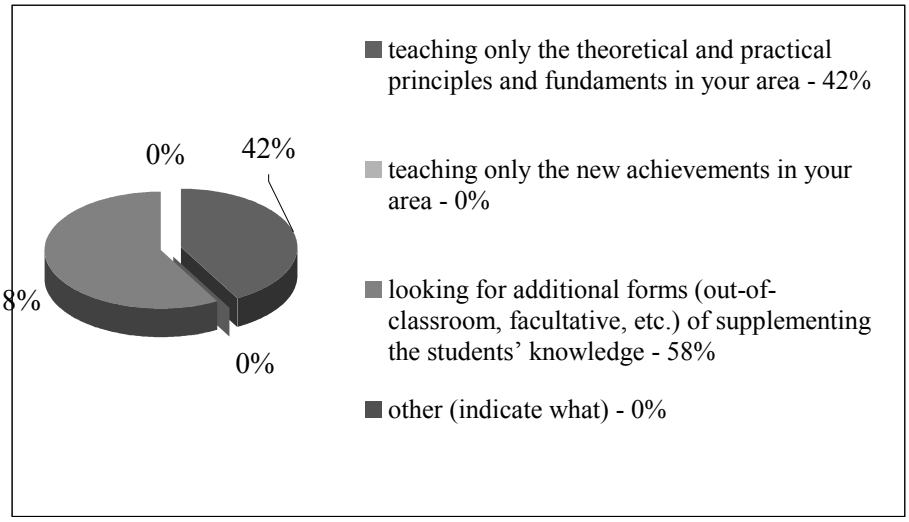

Fig. 2. Respondents' replies to Question 2

Question 3: At what stage of their professional training and development should the future medical doctors become acquainted with the cutting-edge achievements of medical science and practice? **(Fig. 3)**

In response to this question, the majority of the surveyed faculty members or 74 % think that the future medical doctors should start learning about the latest achievements of the medical science and practice from the very first day of classes.

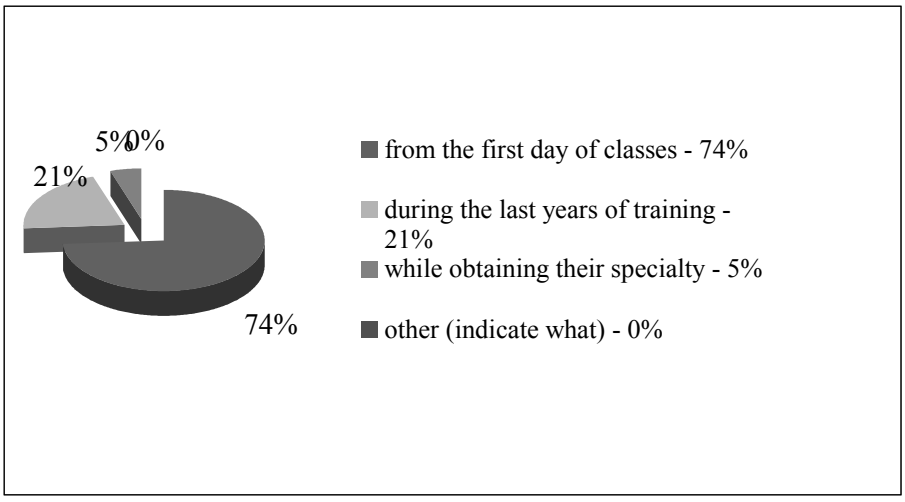

Fig. 3. Respondents' replies to Question 3

With regard to the preferred methods of instruction, various views are also expressed. The majority of trainers are supporters of the traditional lecturing technique - 38%. Others prefer more modern forms: conversation and talk - 31%, debate and discussion - 23%. A

relatively low percentage of the educators prefer the presentation - 3% and the demonstrations - 5%.

Question 4: Is it possible for you to demonstrate some of the achievements in science and technology in your area of competence?

From the responses to this question, it becomes clear that for the majority of surveyed faculty members, 53%, it is only partially possible to demonstrate some of the achievements in science and technology in their area of competence. 42% are convinced that they can and actually do this in the education process and only 5% are of the opinion that this does not happen in the education process.

Question 5: How do you compensate for the limited possibility to demonstrate the cutting-edge achievements of the scientific disciplines which you teach? (mention all options, arranging them in order of importance)

The trainers' striving for overcoming the limitations of the education process with regard to the utilization of modern practices could be clearly seen in their answers to Question 6. It is obvious that they use a wide variety of methods of compensation. The largest percentage of trainers are those that use video and photographic sessions - 33%. One-quarter of them - 25% use the oral talk, almost as many - 24% use Internet references, 12% rely on the multimedia and ? % each use printed materials, observation of real cases or engage students.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions that can be drawn with regard to the use of modern practices in the process of student training in medicine:

1. The vast majority of educators: 95% think that " there has to be a balance between fundamental and applied, practical knowledge". More than of half of the respondents - 58% think that it is necessary to look for additional forms (out-of -classroom, facultative, etc) of supplementing the students' knowledge.
2. A lot of trainers - 74% think that the future medical doctors have to start learning about the cutting-edge achievements of the medical science and practice from the first day of classes.
3. More than half of the surveyed trainers - 53%, claim that it is possible for them only partially to demonstrate in the training process some of the latest achievements of science and technology in their area of competence.

On the basis of the conducted research, it can be concluded that all possible forms of presenting the latest achievements in science and technology applied in the education process contribute to the effective training of students and in the particular case of medical students contribute positively to the motivation for learning and the formation of their professional competence.

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