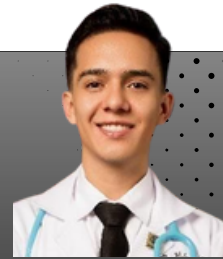


Medical Education, the Life of a Medical Student, and the Environment That Shapes Them into Physicians



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Medical students are characterized by their complexity, with their mindset standing out as a significant strength. This mindset is built upon various elements, such as values, awareness, ethics, motivations, desires, personality, and more. Moreover, medical students are resilient and focused on specific activities, but they can also be distracted or unaware of their surroundings. These distractions often stem from the educational model implemented by universities themselves.

Human beings naturally develop, form mentalities, and build relationships based on biopsychosocial factors that impact this growth positively or negatively. From the very beginning of medical training, students learn to immerse themselves in books—a habit that is immensely beneficial academically. However, and to the frustration of many, life as a medical student is not all about studying. From this writer's perspective, being locked in a room eating and drinking next to a pile of books, attending classes, and completing assignments like a robot is not the essence of medical training.

It is crucial for physicians-in-training to be educated not only as individuals within the realm of medicine but also to be encouraged to embrace and promote the social role they will one day fulfill.

This involves addressing and recognizing the needs of the population, improving public health and well-being, creating public policies, advocating for preventive measures, and striving to improve the living conditions of their patients.

At this point, I pose the question: What is the value of a physician who is academically outstanding but cannot establish a doctor-patient relationship or who forgets their social role?

Some might argue, “There are areas of medicine where the doctor-patient relationship isn’t as relevant (depending on the specialty).” However, human nature, since prehistoric times, shows that humans are communal beings, sensitive to others’ emotions, and guided by reasoning. Therefore, a physician lacking social intelligence and awareness will face deficiencies in ethical, psychological, and social aspects. Among these, the most critical issue is the difficulty in building relationships with patients.

It is essential to emphasize that the central axis of medicine is not the physician but the patient—or, more broadly, the population. How does failing to establish a healthy doctor-patient relationship affect us? At best, it could lead to the physician losing a patient.

However, more concerning is the possibility of eroding trust in the physician, which may result in poor adherence to treatment. This can have implications beyond the individual, impacting public health. Such events are rarely isolated, as statistical trends suggest that this issue may reflect systemic shortcomings in medical education models heavily focused on clinical and surgical knowledge, with little attention to social and interpersonal skills.

What can be done?

Medical education must evolve. A medical student should not be guided through their career with outdated methodologies. In changing times, we need a different approach to education. Training future healthcare professionals must be multidisciplinary, not solely centered on clinical and surgical knowledge. It should encompass aspects of the humanities, law, culture, and social sciences.

However, more concerning is the possibility We can address this transformation even as students, by becoming leaders in policymaking within our institutions or by participating in decision-making groups, such as advisory boards. Students represent the face of their universities. This title carries weight, and it is essential to honor it. The truth is, there are no "bad schools," only students who fail to demand better, who don't study, and who don't work together as a community for a common good.

Key Takeaways:

"It's meaningless to be a top-performing doctor if you forget your role in society."

"It's meaningless to be a doctor if you don't know how to connect with the person in front of you."