

Fix the lecture

Swapnil Paralikar

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Physiology, Government Medical College, Bhavnagar, Gujarat, India

Lectures of today,
Useless and boring;
The sage on the stage,
Relentlessly narrating.

Yet they help in coverage of the topic,
Oh! the sage acquires precious expertise;
Lectures may help in understanding complex concepts,
That students are also motivated is an advantage.

Passivity and compliance,
No critical thinking and problem solving;
Because adults learn better by doing,
Such lectures are not interesting.

Lectures need to be interactive,
Learning needs to be active;
Make students work with the content of the lecture,
This is the template for the future.

Buzz groups and brainstorming,
One minute paper and questioning;
As students are doing,
Learning is better and interesting.

Lectures are here to stay,
Do not cast them aside;
Rather than the sage on the stage,
Be the guide on the side.

Poet's Note

Lectures are taken in all medical and allied sciences. Their utility lies in them enabling coverage of the topic and understanding of concepts. In addition, students are motivated to study.

The traditional method of delivering lectures is called 'the sage on the stage approach.' The lecturer transmits information and the students are just passive recipients. In fact, a famous quote states that, "Lecture is a method by which the notes of the teacher are passed to the student without passing through the minds of either." As a result, students hardly develop the skill of 'thinking on the go' which is vital for a physician. No wonder, lectures are considered as boring and useless.

The key to fix the lecture is to use active learning strategies such as questioning, brainstorming, buzz groups, one minute paper. Thus, teaching in consonance with the principles of adult learning will enable the students to learn in a fun and interesting manner.

As there is a dearth of faculty across the country, it would be prudent to state that lectures are here to stay.

Hence, the above mentioned strategies, which help in making lectures effective, are the need of the hour.

Reference

1. Brown G, Edmunds S. Lectures in Dent JA, Harden RM: A practical guide for medical teachers, London, 2013, Churchill Livingstone (Elsevier), pg. 61.