THE ANATOMY OF A 'POSITIVELY NOVEL' MEDICAL TEACHER IN COVID-19 TIMES - Dr Gaurav Agnihotri

A year to forget or a year with many ripples and echoes? We are now facing unprecedented challenges and situations and the way we respond will determine our future. The body donation, embalming and post-mortem protocols need to be continuously upgraded with our increasing understanding of the COVID-19 infection and mode of spread. The safety of the medical teachers and medical staff is paramount. More and more anatomists and basic science teachers are actively treating corona patients in hospitals and their efforts deserve applause and appreciation. The pandemic has introduced us to unusual scenarios, and we must give our best and realize that 'this too shall pass'. The pandemic has ushered a plethora of online classes [1]. Everyone has started recording lectures and this trend is the new 'normal'. The lectures are often uploaded on YouTube. YouTube has a monetization policy based on number of subscribers and minutes viewed. This can lead to an undesirable clamor for subscribers and likes. The teachers need to be mature enough to handle the new scenario and its repercussions. The medical education practicals are online too in some medical colleges and soon we will have these online doctors treating and teaching. The medical universities need to rise up to the occasion and take appropriate decisions and create black and white protocols. This is necessary to ensure that the interests of medical students and society are not hampered. Novelty is the hallmark of the COVID-19 situation and a new window for webinars and virtual CME's has opened up. Here again, the participants must ensure that they seriously participate and interact to gain knowledge. The aim should not be to get the e certificate but 'e-enrichment'.

The medical education watchdogs need to understand that medical educators are the foundation of the medical fraternity. Their growth and prowess should be caressed and harnessed without putting unnecessary burden on them.

Quality of teaching cannot be compromised at any cost. The felt need of the time is to increase the faculty requirements in subjects like anatomy and the penchant for continuously changing the publication criteria for promotions should be avoided. It is a documented fact that whatever new discoveries /innovations are taking place are in molecular/cellular anatomy [2-4]. Most medical colleges do not have the infrastructure or facility for research at molecular and cellular levels [5]. This is a bitter reality and is knowingly, ignored. Also, a system that does not care for the empowerment of youth cannot have a future. The retirement age is increasing in most medical institutions and so time bound promotions are necessary to avoid denying promotion to younger faculty, at pertinent time.

Experience is 'enrichment' but there is a time to move on and create an inlet for new ideas. The need for replacement and rejig is a time tested successful formula and ideally should be there in all offices, organizations, and workplaces. A rotational approach beckons new enthusiasm and ideas. I just feel, we need to introspect and reflect. We need to be 'positively novel' in COVID-19 times.

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*Faculty, Department of Anatomy,
Government Medical College,
Amritsar, Punjab, India.*

Editor - *International Journal of Anatomy and Research,*
Ex General Secretary, Society of Clinical Anatomists,
Mobile no.: +919815542792
E-Mail: anatomygaurav@yahoo.com