Chapter 1
Understanding Modern Learners, Technology, and Medical Education

Robin Bartoletti
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9443-3947
Indiana Tech, USA

Kim Meyer
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6216-1342
The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth, USA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Clinicians and researchers are expected to educate the next generation of clinicians with little or no formal education on effective, modern instructional design. Clinicians and researchers are left to teach in the same way they were taught many years or decades ago. Medical education must adapt to meet the demands of the Generation Y student population that would benefit from the innovative use of instructional technology. This generation thrives in small groups, using social media, and has never known a world without Google. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate innovative curricular design strategies using technology to leverage the skills and preferences that Generation Y brings to a medical classroom.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-5092-2.ch001
INTRODUCTION

Teaching is the most noble art, and it must improve and evolve with the times. Medical education literally has future lives in its hands which makes it worth the effort of continuous improvement. Which innovations will be successful? On which measures or assessments should change be based? An innovative curricular design that focuses on and leverages the characteristics of its learners has a great likelihood for success. The design should be solidly founded on educational theory while utilizing modern technology to meet goals and accomplish the intended learner competencies. Medical students in the year 2020 are in the older group of Millennials (Generation Y), and in just a few years, the first years of Generation Z will be entering medical programs. The generational differences between learner and teacher are distinct and must be understood in order to be a value rather than an obstruction in the learning process. Generation Y learners expect to use technology, and they should be taught to use it to improve their learning in a professional and respectful way as they interact with older generations both as instructors and future patients. Equally, instructors can utilize technology to improve their teaching and simplify their efforts. This chapter will review the characteristics of the recent generations, explore relevant learning theory, and highlight innovative curricular design strategies using technology to leverage the skills and preferences that Millennials and Generation Z bring to a medical classroom.

THE MODERN LEARNER DEFINED

Clinicians and researchers are expected to educate the next generation of clinicians with little or no formal education on effective, modern instructional design. Clinicians and researchers are left to teach in the same way they were taught many years or decades ago (Sunal et al., 2001). Medical education must adapt to meet the demands of the Generation Y student population that would benefit from an innovative curriculum using the best instructional technologies. This generation thrives in small groups, communicates using social media, and has never known a world without Google (Evans, Ozdalga, & Ahuja, 2016).

As more generations enter the workforce, a rapid change in culture and technology makes experiences of generations more divergent. Medicine demands effective interactions between members of different generations as an emphasis on teamwork, team-based care, and interprofessionalism increases. There is also a rising need for more doctors in the workforce, making retention and job satisfaction especially relevant considering that burn-out rates are climbing. Are there generational factors that are common among medical students that would allow teachers to understand and
Related Content

Can Everyone Code?: Preparing Teachers to Teach Computer Languages as a Literacy
www.igi-global.com/chapter/can-everyone-code/237420?camid=4v1a

The Truth We Can't Afford to Ignore: Popular Culture, Media Influence, and the Role of Public School
Danielle Ligocki and Martha Ann Wilkins (2020). Participatory Literacy Practices for P-12 Classrooms in the Digital Age (pp. 57-72).
www.igi-global.com/chapter/the-truth-we-cant-afford-to-ignore/237413?camid=4v1a

Complexities of Identity and Belonging: Writing From Artifacts in Teacher Education
Anna Schick and Jana Lo Bello Miller (2020). Participatory Literacy Practices for P-12 Classrooms in the Digital Age (pp. 200-214).
www.igi-global.com/chapter/complexities-of-identity-and-belonging/237422?camid=4v1a

Preservice Teachers Collaborating and Co-Constructing in a Digital Space: Using Participatory Literacy Practices to Teach Content and Pedagogy
www.igi-global.com/chapter/preservice-teachers-collaborating-and-co-constructing-in-a-digital-space/237423?camid=4v1a