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Global Medical Teacher

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Abstract

This qualitative study is an attempt to find a deeper understanding of the concept of global medical teacher. Data was collected from faculty members of Tehran University of Medical sciences. All participants were selected through snowball sampling. A semi-structured interview with follow up probes was carried out. All interviews were audio-taped, transcribed, and analyzed. According to one of the emerged categories, themes and sub-themes, global teacher is described as “spirit of education”, “leader” and “creator of change”. It is noteworthy that participants of this study were fully concerned about holistic educational role of teachers. Meanwhile, the requirements of the global world necessitate training of competent learners, which is quite indispensable to promote success of education system. In this stance, spiritual role of teachers amalgamated with their roles as leader and creator of change in educational settings are of major importance. Therefore, definition of “teacher” as one of the major elements of the teaching-learning process should be examined and a new concept must emerge to adapt the evolving needs of this era.

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Key words: Global medical teacher; globalization; medical education

1. Introduction:

Globalization as a process of increased communication and interaction has become widespread. Globalization has influenced education and other field of studies (Carnoy, 1999), likewise medical education. One of the major consequences of this global phenomenon is invention of worldwide criteria to assess (medical) teachers' competencies, which has led them to achieve higher competencies to fulfil global world needs (Carnoy, 1999). In this circumstance, rethinking roles of teachers is an absolute need. Roles of teachers as one of the major elements of teaching and learning process in global era need to be redefined. Therefore, this qualitative research was designed to explore the concept of global teacher, which seems to be complex and multilayered, through answering the two main research questions: Who is a global medical teacher? What are the roles of medical teachers as the key elements of global medical education?

2. Method:

This qualitative study is designed to collect a deeper understanding of the concept of global medical teacher. Data was collected from faculty members of Tehran University of Medical sciences. Having at least 10 years of educational experience at the university was considered as inclusion criteria. All participants who met the criteria were interviewed until data saturation occurred; in other words, until no new data emerged (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

All participants were selected through snowball sampling. The primary research question was developed, e.g. who is a global medical teacher? And potential sub-questions were also taken into account.

Participants were confirmed about anonymity and confidentiality of the findings. Informed consent was secured from each participant. Thereafter, each interview was scheduled at the time and location of the participants' choice. Then, a semi-structured interview with follow up probes was carried out. Interviews were audio-taped and then transcribed for further analysis. In order to enhance trustworthiness, member, peer and external check were done to confirm the accuracy of findings. Data analysis led to labels that were categorized according to their concept similarity through axial coding. Finally, axial codes emerged from all transcriptions were blended and changed into categories.

3. Results:

According to the gathered data 5 main categories along with their themes and sub-themes emerged. The category of "teacher in global era" along with its themes and sub-themes is the major concern of this paper.

4. Medical teacher in global era

This category consisted of three themes concerning definition of medical teacher in global era. The emerged themes are teacher as spirit of education, leader, and creator of change, which will be discussed in the following sections.

4.1. Medical teacher as spirit of education

Participants of the study believed that the definition of teacher in this era is far beyond what is defined in traditional curriculums. Teacher is the spirit of curriculum, and teaching without considering the roles of teachers as supervisors and designers of teaching and learning experience is a unilateral communication.

Teachers promote educational settings. In addition, to achieve global objectives of a successful education they make a bridge between global and local educational expectations with needs, wants and desires of learners. Therefore, teachers focal concern are learners, societies in which they inhabit and the global world. Teachers as spirit of education must distinguish between prescriptive education and curriculum. Moreover, appropriate use of instructional design is an approach that helps them transfer their spirit into education.

" Instructional design is a process through which teachers analyze learners' psychological and scientific attributes. They assess prerequisites of a course and list educational facilities, they understand tasks and responsibilities of learners at local and international levels. They could create educational objectives through these steps. Through instructional design, teacher's role-play, and learners' cooperation it becomes possible to achieve instructional objectives (Participant).

4.2. Medical teacher as a leader

In global world, teaching equals leadership. Leaders make changes and continuously enhance educational status quo. Promotion of leaders happens along with their followers, and to achieve acceptability of learners, teachers need to manifest supportive behavior. Tendency to continuous growth, besides belief in knowledge transfer and enlightening of learners is a means in hands of teachers that helps enhance education. One participant described teacher-leaders of global world as:

Teachers are there to enlighten minds of learners and transfer knowledge among them (Participant).

It seems that this perspective overlaps human beings desire to reason and seek information, and paves the way for scientific exchange of ideas and dialogue of minds in global level. Teacher-leader prevents learners from being entrapped in prejudice and ignorance.

4.3. Medical teacher as creator of change

To create change is a requirement for medical teaching in global era. Rapid continuous changes of life due to information explosion and knowledge transfer are evident in the global world. Medical education is not exempted from global world rapid changes. In recent years, considerable changes in medical educational content and

application of different approaches have taken place. Medical teachers in all educational settings play an important role in developing educational changes. They are the next to the learners in modern and global societies and know learners' needs better than other educational parties. As it was suggested, medical teachers can create change, facilitate and monitor education and continuously try to balance learners' wants, needs and desires to those of their immediate local and global societies.

5. Discussion

This study is an attempt to answer the research questions about definition of medical teacher in global world and medical teacher-ship in this era. It is worth mentioning that the emerging themes are varied and gives a new perspective on the coverage of the new concept of being a global medical teacher.

“Medical Teacher in global era” consists of 3 minor themes as teacher: the spirit of education, leader, and creator of change. Roles of teacher as the spirit of education (Harrison & Killion, 2007, Shahini & Daftarifard, 2010, Hargreaves, Moore, & Manning, 2001; Renadora, 2011) and creator of change (Danielson, 2007, Boyd-Dimock & McGree, 1995) are emphasized in other studies.

Findings of this study show that participants repeatedly referred to global medical teacher as life-guide and transferor of knowledge and experience. In addition, the ability to grow, to take risks and to have a strong motivation to make changes in the learners is the radiant characteristic of a global medical teacher who seeks success and wants to be the best role model for learners. In other words, participants of this study hold a holistic view towards global medical teachers.

Different studies confirmed findings of this study in regard to leadership role of teachers and being a teacher-leader (Boyd-Dimock & McGree, 1995, Hart, 1990, Wasley, 1991, York-Barr & Duke, 2004), and teachers as creators and facilitators of change (Danielson, 2007). Teacher facilitates change by applying diverse approaches. It is worth mentioning that the ultimate goal of creating change from teachers' perspectives is to create positive changes in learners' lives. Teacher as the spirit of education can prevent extremes in educational objectives. If we consider learner, society and the globe as three interconnected overlapping layers, teacher is the mediator who can balance these layers through constant monitoring, revision, and change. Leadership role of a teacher is of critical importance in reinforcing motivation in learners and peers.

6. Conclusion:

In global era, competent teachers are required to prepare competent learners for the requirements of globalization and promotion of education system in the global era. Global world requires powerful competent teachers who enjoy various roles as spirit of education, leader, and creator of change. From a holistic point of view, these roles are inseparable parts of being a successful global teacher. Finally, to revise and redefine “teacher and teaching” in global era is emphasized, and definition of “teacher” as one of the major elements of teaching-learning process is examined and a new concept emerged to adapt the evolving needs of this global era.

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