

## Letter to the Editor Regarding “Perception and Challenges of Health Science Students toward E-learning in a Sub-Saharan African Country: A Multi-institutional Study”

Kristina Kilova<sup>1</sup> , Tanya Kitova<sup>2</sup> , Borislav Kitov<sup>3</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Department of Medical Informatics, Biostatistics and e-Learning, Faculty of Public Health, Medical University of Plovdiv, Plovdiv, Bulgaria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Anatomy, Histology and Embryology, Medical Faculty, Medical University of Plovdiv, Plovdiv, Bulgaria

<sup>3</sup>Clinic of Neurosurgery, University Hospital “St. George”, Plovdiv, Bulgaria

**Correspondence to:** Tanya Kitova; email: [tanyakitova@yahoo.com](mailto:tanyakitova@yahoo.com)

Received: 11 Apr 2022; Revised: 29 Aug 2022; Accepted: 29 Aug 2022; Available online: 31 Aug 2022

**Keywords:** Perception, Challenges, Health, Science Students, E-learning

Ann Afr Surg. 2022; 19(4): 173-174

**DOI:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/aas.v19i4.2>

**Funding:** None

© 2022 Author. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

We read with interest the article “Perception and Challenges of Health Science Students toward E-learning in a Sub-Saharan African Country: A Multi-institutional Study,” by Kabare et al., that was published in your esteemed journal (1). The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated a shift to distance e-learning in medicine, which has posed many challenges to medical universities even in the most developed countries. The use of information and communication technologies in the education of medical students has provided new opportunities for both control and management of the quality of education and automation of these processes. These technologies have a crucial role and importance for the quality of medical education, which is designed to ensure the implementation of the program plan of the Bologna Process (2).

Surveys of students' opinions on the need, advantages, and disadvantages of distance e-learning, such as that of Kabare et al. are implemented in almost all countries and

are significant for the management of each university (1, 3). Most show that students generally approve of e-learning, which facilitates the acquisition of knowledge and increases opportunities for professional enrichment (1, 3).

Distance e-learning has complemented the traditional one and helped to realize effective dynamics between the different subjects in the learning process, creating partnerships between different countries in the educational process and realizing effective cognitive communication between them (3). The new way of teaching has set new requirements for teachers. In these conditions, their principal task and responsibility is to create a supportive and stimulating interactive educational environment for students, which will provide them with freedom of choice and increase their cognitive activity in a positive microclimate (3). In the new conditions, the main function of the teacher is not only to provide the necessary information in medicine,

but also to be a manager who, in a democratic style, is in charge of the learning process in close cooperation with the students in order to help build significant professional and social qualities of the individual (4). The traditional role of the teacher of an expert in the respective discipline is complemented by the need to become a skilled moderator of the educational process to stimulate, correct, and upgrade the work of students. The teacher must model the joint activity of the students, making it easier for them to achieve the set goals and solve specific practical tasks (4).

It is vital for every university to maintain high quality and standards of medical education, which will provide students with the scientific knowledge and practical skills needed for medical practice (5). For this it is essential to create the necessary educational standards and to systematically and consistently prepare students for independent preparation and work. This will help to form opportunities for orientation in complex practical situations, and the knowledge and experience gained during the education will increase self-confidence and security in the independent work of future medical professionals.

The quality of education provided by medical universities is directly dependent on the opportunities it gives to its students to develop according to their own needs and to form the necessary competencies that will help their future realization.

Distance e-learning in medical universities cannot completely replace the traditional one, but it can upgrade it. The opinion of the students is crucial for the management of each university. Their assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning in higher education will help to develop pedagogical and administrative-managerial processes that meet the interests of society. The COVID-19 pandemic has posed many challenges to medical universities, but it has also created an opportunity for a revolution in medical education that we must take advantage of.

## References

1. Kabare G, Muthuuri N, Sarna K, et al. Perception and challenges of health science students toward elearning in a Sub-Saharan African country: a multi-institutional study. *Ann Afr Surg.* 2022; 19(1): 16-22.

2. Masic I. Quality assessment of medical education at Faculty of Medicine of Sarajevo University—comparison of assessment between students in Bologna Process and old system of studying. *Acta Inform Med.* 2013; 21(2): 76-82.
3. Kilova K, Kitova T. Student opinion on the quality of distance medical learning in pandemic conditions. *J Environ Protect Ecol.* 2021; 22(4): 1706-4.
4. Mihaylova V, Liochkova M, Semerdjieva M, et al. Innovative approaches in the preparation of management disciplines of managerial staff in public health. *Knowledge Int J.* 2017; 20(4): 1803-10.
5. Mihaylova A, Hadzhieva B, Papanov P, et al. Challenges of a distance learning for health care students - our experience at Medical University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria. *Proc INTED2022 Conf.* 2022; 7654-8.