



## The Use of Games in Medical Education

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**Article Type:**

Letter to Editor

**Article History:**

Received: 8 Jan 2015

Accepted: 30 Apr 2015

ePublished: 4 July 2015

### Dear Editor,

It was not long after we found ourselves in a Ph.D. course that we were tentative about one of the subjects. At first we found class attendance a bit difficult, as we thought it would be conducted in a monotonous way with formal content delivered traditionally. We were totally wrong. We were taken aback by a different method of teaching from our teacher. This was a gratifying teaching experience from our teacher's side that encouraged us and our other classmates to be thrilled to attend class. And that was games!!!

A game can be defined as "an instructional method requiring the learner to participate in a competitive activity with preset rules".<sup>1</sup> We all have attended those boring lectures given on a topic by our teachers over the years. Evidence shows that having a mundane classroom environment can jeopardize students' intellectual interest in the subject and can extinguish students' desire to pursue their study in the targeted subject matter.<sup>2</sup> Applying games in a classroom setting can enhance education outcomes. Learning is a process in which knowledge is created by the transformation of experiences.<sup>3</sup> Thatcher highlights the potential of games in the facilitation and improvement of learning by providing an active experience in which the learner conceives knowledge and experiment with concepts.<sup>4</sup>

The practical uses of games in the classroom setting in different disciplines have been emphasized. These can encompass business and management education<sup>5</sup>, nursing education<sup>6</sup>, and pediatric clerkship program.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, implementing games in order to teach different content areas to college students is of utmost importance.

Games can be considered as a teaching tool in every teacher's wardrobe to create a more positive, fun, and interesting setting to foster each student's learning. We, as college educators who need education and who are in charge of educating others, must be innovative in our methods of teaching. We have students to help them

mature, to take care of them and to guide them in the best way possible. Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate widespread use of games in teaching-learning activities at the university level. The rationale is that 1) teachers should try to use games because they facilitate the learning process and enhance students' learning in a meaningful and much faster way, 2) teachers must maximize the benefits of using games as an instructional strategy and minimize the risks of straying from the point of content, and 3) useful training on how to use games is necessary to better implement games in classroom settings.

Some teachers might feel this is of no use to them, but they should be encouraged to use games in teaching. Then the reality comes true. Why are we still taught with those old fashioned ways of teaching? Why do we still oblige ourselves to lectures and consider ourselves as the people who know everything and see our students as the passive recipient of knowledge in the classroom. Thus, the key to put an end to this monotonous way of teaching is through being a more creative in teaching-learning activities, and if a teacher effectively prepares and uses games in the educational setting, students' learning will be fostered and this in turn makes teaching more fun and enjoyable for both teachers and students.

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