Training and evaluation of surgical education needs a change

Sir,
I read with great interest the article by Gupta et al.[1] I must congratulate the authors for highlighting an extremely important issue in a very elaborate fashion. There is indeed no published report in the peer-reviewed Indian surgical journals on the subject of teaching, training and evaluation in surgery probably because most of our teachers don’t want to undermine their authority and autocratic manner of functioning. For them a surgical trainee is an easy prey to exploit!

The authors have covered most of the aspects of improvement in surgical curriculum; however, the utility of a log book during training has not been mentioned. I feel that a log book must be an integral part of surgical training since it is the only genuine document to evaluate a resident’s competency and ability to operate without supervision. I must emphasize the importance of maintaining a log book religiously. It should be signed by the concerned unit head every few days so that its authenticity cannot be questioned. At the end of three years of training an evaluation of the log book should be the basis of certification and not a single day’s performance.

Indeed, work hours need to be limited so that the trainee can work as well as study. The filling of investigation forms can be done equally well by the paramedical staff; however, the history and examination need to be done and documented by the trainee himself since it is a part of training and forms the basis of clinical education. It should not be considered as clerical work and ignored since it is equally important to know when not to operate and it can come only by being a good clinician, the basis of which is a thorough history and examination.

As regards thesis, in most state medical colleges it does not represent original work and its utility is indeed questionable. Publication of original work in peer-reviewed and indexed journals should instead be encouraged.
To conclude I would request the concerned authorities to take note of this elaborate study and implement new guidelines for surgical education.

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REFERENCES