

Medical Education in Bangladesh: Time to Re-think to Face Global Challenges

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Bangladesh is at a decisive point in its medical education evolution. With more than 120 medical colleges producing over 11,000 new doctors every year, the country is rapidly increasing its physician workforce [1,4]. However, the question is no longer about the number of doctors we produce, but about the quality of doctors we are preparing for the future.

In a world disrupted by pandemics, climate emergencies, migration, mental health crises, antimicrobial resistance, and rapid advances in digital health, our traditional teacher-centered, exam-oriented medical curriculum is proving inadequate (2). Bangladesh—one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world with high burdens of NCDs, infectious disease, and trauma—requires a new generation of physicians who are globally competent, research-minded, community-oriented, and ethically grounded.

1. From Degree Production to Skill-Based Global Competence

Although Bangladesh is now a leading exporter of healthcare manpower to the Middle East, UK, and beyond, many graduates still lack structured exposure to global standards, research skills, simulation-based learning, soft skills, and digital health literacy [7]. The newly passed Bangladesh Medical Education Accreditation Act, 2023 marks an important step toward aligning with WFME standards [5,8], but implementation must be national, mandatory, and continuous—not symbolic.

2. From Hospital-Focused to Community-Centered Training

Nearly 70% of the population lives outside city centers, yet over 80% of medical training takes place inside tertiary hospitals [3]. Real-world Bangladesh needs doctors who understand rural health systems, climate-linked diseases (dengue, heat stress, flood-borne infections), disaster medicine, and public health leadership.

3. From Static Curriculum to Continuous Reform

Medical education cannot wait 15–20 years for revision cycles. It must be living, adaptive, flexible, and regularly updated—integrating telemedicine, AI, ethics, inter-professional learning, global health diplomacy, and research culture from the undergraduate level onward [2,6].

Role of SOMCJ

As an academic voice, the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Journal (SOMCJ) carries a responsibility to stimulate this conversation. We invite educators, policymakers, students, and global health leaders to contribute research, reflections, and reform strategies on the future of medical learning.

The next generation of physicians must not only treat disease, but also shape health systems, lead scientific advancement, and defend human dignity in an increasingly complex world.

It is time to rethink.

It is time to realign.

It is time to prepare medical education for the challenges—and opportunities—of tomorrow.

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