Surgical Études: Applying the Experience of Artistic Training to Surgical Training

Samantha Zwiebel, MA; Devra Becker, MD

Abstract:

**Background**: A challenge to education is offering adequate hands-on learning opportunities to residents without compromising safety. Surgical residents may be able to apply artistic training habits to their residency training.

**Purpose**: The first goal is to determine the opinion of surgery residents regarding the degree of attending involvement in difficult procedures. The second goal is to describe the artistic inclinations residents and how this may relate to training techniques in acquiring manual skills.

**Methods**: An anonymous survey was distributed to 691 UHCMC residents questioning learning preferences, efficacious teaching, and artistic skills. Survey questions were adjusted dependent upon previous answers.

**Results**: 152 residents attempted the survey, of which 22.4% were surgery, 26.3% were some surgical/some medical, and 51.3% were medicine. Of surgery residents, 85.3% agreed that allowing a resident to struggle through a procedure was effective teaching and 75.8% preferred being allowed to struggle. 61.3% of surgery residents felt struggle was effective teaching most or all of the time and 74.2% found struggle to be preferable most or all of the time (Figure 1). 45.2% of residents reported that attendings perform procedures too often for residents, and 45.2% reported that their opinion depended upon the attending. The remaining 9.7% felt attendings perform procedures with appropriate frequency (Figure 2). When asked about artistic inclination, 61.3% of surgical residents agreed that they were artistic. Of these, 89.5% were musical and 73.7% visual; 94.7% felt their artistic training could be of help in residency (Figure 3). A targeted sub-study of plastic surgery residents revealed that 90.9% of residents were artistic, with 72.7% being musical and 72.7% visual; 80% reported this training could be of help in residency. 59.1% of strictly medical residents reported being artistic, of which 76.9% felt this training could be of help in residency.
Figure 1. Response of surgery residents regarding educational struggle

- Agree it is an effective teaching method: 85.3%
- Resident agrees this teaching method is preferable: 75.8%
- Effective teaching method most or all of the time: 61.3%
- Preferable teaching method most or all of the time: 74.2%

Figure 2. Resident opinion regarding attending involvement

- Attendings perform procedures too often: 9.7%
- Depends upon the attending: 45.2%
- Attendings perform procedures with appropriate frequency: 45.2%
- Attendings perform procedures not often enough: 0.0%
Conclusions: Allowing a resident to struggle through a difficult procedure is both an efficacious and preferable teaching method from the resident perspective. A majority of surgery residents felt that attendings performed procedures too often. Most residents identify as artistic and believe that their artistic training may help them in their residency training.

References:

Disclosure/Financial Support:
This study was not funded. The authors have no financial interests to disclose.