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Letter to the Editor

## Adapting to Gen Z: Innovative educational strategies in medical education

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Dear Editor,

I wish to highlight the intriguing results from a recent study on the effectiveness of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) versus Team-Based Learning (TBL) at the University of Bisha College of Medicine.<sup>1</sup> The study aimed to compare student performance between self-directed learning (SDL) through Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and directed self-learning (DSL) through Team-Based Learning (TBL) at the University of Bisha College of Medicine. Both learning strategies yielded similar student outcomes, suggesting that institutions can choose between PBL and TBL based on their resource availability and student numbers, with PBL requiring more resources for implementation compared to TBL.

Institutions should assess their unique needs and resource availability comprehensively to determine the most suitable approach.<sup>2</sup> Factors such as the student-to-faculty ratio, financial constraints, and infrastructure capacity should play a

significant role in this decision-making process.<sup>3</sup> For instance, while Problem-Based Learning (PBL) offers deep, student-centered engagement, it demands substantial resources and smaller group sizes. Conversely, Team-Based Learning (TBL) facilitates large-group collaboration and is resource-efficient but may not provide the same level of individualized attention.<sup>4–6</sup> Therefore, institutions must carefully balance these elements to implement a strategy that aligns with their specific educational goals and logistical capabilities, ensuring both effective learning outcomes and efficient resource utilization.

Institutions should recognize that Generation Z (Gen Z) students,<sup>7</sup> who are distinctively tech-savvy and inclined towards interactive and engaging learning environments,<sup>8</sup> may significantly benefit from a blended learning approach. This generation values flexibility, immediate access to information, and collaborative experiences, making them particularly suited to educational methods that integrate technology and active participation. A hybrid approach combining elements of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Team-Based Learning (TBL) can cater to these preferences by offering a comprehensive learning experience.<sup>9,10</sup>

By merging these methodologies, educational institutions can create a dynamic and adaptable learning environment. This blended approach would not only accommodate the diverse learning styles of Gen Z students but also enhance their engagement and retention of knowledge. It provides the best of both worlds: the in-depth, personalized exploration of

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PBL and the collective, interactive nature of TBL. Such a strategy could prepare students more effectively for the complexities of the medical profession, equipping them with both the technical knowledge and soft skills necessary for success. Implementing such a combined strategy could optimize resource use and address varying educational needs, providing a more versatile and inclusive learning environment. I encourage institutions to explore this blended approach to enhance educational effectiveness and better meet the needs of their student populations.

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