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IMPORTANCE OF THE CADAVER FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN ANATOMY FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS

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Relevance. Anatomy is the study of the structure of the human body, particularly gross or topographic anatomy. It forms the foundation of medical education and is crucial for student's practical skills as a future physician. While multiple resources are available in the status quo for training students, cadavers still remain the valuable educational tool in medicine enabling students to visualize real anatomic structures and enhance their understanding of anatomy.

Aim: understanding the importance of the cadaver for the study of human anatomy for medical students.

Materials and methods. A survey was conducted among medical students from various years and universities to gather information on anatomy study materials. The study analyzed the performance of a specific group of first-year medical students at Belarusian State Medical University Minsk who utilized cadaver in their anatomy class. More than 20 articles from PubMed and Google Scholar released in the time frame between January 2007 and December 2023 have been analyzed.

Results and their discussion. A survey of 68 medical students from various years and universities revealed that 67 (98.5%) individuals preferred cadavers for anatomy study, 48 (70.6%) preferred textbooks (Netter Atlas), and 38 (55.9%) preferred an e-learning system, with some preferring a mix of these materials. According to their feedback cadaver is a valuable learning tool for them, providing a hands-on approach to studying human anatomy. It offers a clear view of topographic anatomical locations and helps improve memory and understanding of specimens. Cadavers are realistic and training-friendly method for them to understand life beyond literature and artificial specimens, enhancing their understanding of surgical and anatomical teaching.

A study on specific group of first-year medical students at BSMU, Minsk found that those who spent more time understanding cadaver scored well in both class and semester exams. Students who did not study through cadavers and had low performance improved after going through the cadavers. This highlights the significance of cadavers in anatomy class. Students who studied only notes struggled to identify organs and specimens.

According the analyzed articles, Usage of cadavers experienced a major decrease among modern students, but it remains a crucial part of medical training in various countries. This experience helps practitioners understand body functions and potential symptoms. However, the decline in cadaver dissection has led to lower proficiency in anatomy and surgical skills among graduating medical students worldwide.

Conclusions. Cadaver-based teaching prepares students for medical science careers by allowing them to understand the differences between normal and abnormal human forms. Through hands-on experience with real human bodies, students are able to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities and variations of the human form that cannot be replicated in textbooks or models. Despite advancements in technology, the cadaver continues to be a cornerstone in medical education and will likely remain a vital component of anatomical study for generations to come.