

Problems Faced by International Medical Graduates during the United States Medical Licensing Exam and Match Pathway

Zahra Ali

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Abstract

Most students aspire to pursue higher education and immigrate to countries that offer opportunities to grow their character and succeed in their fields. These immigrants face a lot of issues and challenges in their initial years of hard work to settle in a completely different culture away from home. This opinion article aims to bring forward some of the issues that International Medical Graduates (IMGs) face during the whole United State Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE) and Match Pathway.

Key Words:

Problems OR Issues OR Consequences OR Challenges AND International Medical Graduates (IMGs) OR Students AND United States Medical Licencing Exam (USMLE) OR Match Pathways.

Introduction

"No two things have been combined better together than knowledge and patience" (Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H). International Medical Graduates (IMGs) have become a crucial part of the graduate medical system, research workforce, and United States (US) healthcare system.¹ Despite the challenges they face such as adapting to new cultures, homesickness, financial issues, communication, and dialect issues.² In the initial years of medical college, some students are dependent upon their parents for financial support. During this time, students start preparing their curriculum vitae by participating in research projects and publishing in USA and PubMed-indexed journals. However, participating in conferences costs dollars, which is challenging for IMGs. Additionally, preparing for USMLE examinations and bearing the high cost of medical education requires financial stability.

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Discussion

Leaving one's homeland to pursue a career and showcase one's talents and abilities is essential to becoming the best version of oneself. It is necessary to step out of one's comfort zone, see the world, meet new people, and get polished, just like a diamond that is put under high pressure and temperature to shine. International Medical Graduates (IMGs) have become an integral part of the graduate medical system and the United States healthcare system.

They come to the USA to seek better opportunities, pursue higher education, and become familiar with advanced medical science. However, they often face financial challenges. The cost of the entire pathway, from the USMLE examination fee to buying online resources, and living in the United States for electives and observerships away from home, can be daunting, especially for those from lower-class families.^{2,3} According to a research article, United State Medical Graduates (USMGs) spend \$8,312 on average to pursue emergency medicine, and the cost is even higher for IMGs.⁴

Another problem is not accepted by many US teaching hospitals for clinical clerkship and those that do often have high fees and difficult procedures.⁵ Cultural shock can also lead to anxiety and stress among IMGs, such as loss of family support, frustration, loneliness, and the burden of education expenses.^{6,7} Despite all these difficulties, a community-based report suggests that IMGs scored better in personal growth and self-esteem than United States Medical Graduates.⁸

Conclusion

To Pursue one's dreams and become the best in their field, one must face various challenges. However, it is essential to ensure feasibility and flexibility for the students so that they can demonstrate their abilities. Educational institutions should offer programs and resources that empower students to overcome obstacles to achieve their goals.

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