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## Letters to the Editor / Cartas al Editor

# BLACKBOARD AND CHALK. A PEDAGOGICAL TALE INSPIRED IN AN EDUCATIONAL PAPER<sup>1</sup>

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### [Version en español](#)

To the Editor:

The teacher went into the classroom, lit by the spring sun, with a certain weary gesture and a smile in his lips.

He respectfully greeted to the students who were involved in a pandemonium, suddenly silenced and peppered with their greetings.

The teacher went to a data projector where he had earlier adapted the power point related with the issue to be developed that day.

Unexpectedly lights blinked and at last turned off *Electrical failure!*! the students screamed.

Maintaining his self-control, he walked to the blackboard hanging from one of the walls and quietly wrote on the black surface the subject to be tackled.

From this moment onwards, graphics, diagrams, linear and branched sequences mixed with clearly written concepts swarmed around on that surface. His voice, scarcely altered by his age but still firm and convincing, preceded, coincided or followed to his drawings.

When the lecture was about to finish, the brightness of the artificial light returned.

Then, clashing his hands for releasing the rests of chalk, he said to his students:

*I would like that this experience may be useful for your future, no matter what you have learnt. Despite we had everything arranged for a technological display on a particular topic, an eventuality deprived us of such a resource but your learning was unaffected. My generation, those preceding it and some of those which followed too, were taught with blackboard and chalk. We had not, as you have: computers, videos and other technological advances. Taking it into account the question is: Have to be avoided these advances? My answer is NO but with a warning: we have to use it in a rational and planned way. Furthermore, though being better for improving your understanding in the classroom, are they also better for learning when you have to recall what you saw, far away and long ago, to*

*rewrite, graph and revise your notes previously to your examinations?*

*To my knowledge, two consequences arise*

- *Students must have permanent access to what it was shown during their learning starting point in the classroom through the employment of traditional and/or present technological devices.*
- *Teachers, without avoiding technological opportunities, must be prepared to face all types of unforeseen events related with teaching since they must fulfill their obligations which are compatible with student's rights. Moreover, what today happened here impacts on your quotidian life since for preventable purposes one has to be prepared to deal with contingencies wherever occurs. In the same way that ignoring laws do not release to us to obey them and to take charge of the consequences of their violation, teachers cannot allege lack of insight in matters similar to which we have lived today.*

*Dear students think about it and decide. If you agree with me keep it in your minds. If not, I said nothing and act as you wish. Option is yours.*

The teacher left the room with weary steps and a smile in his lips.

What would be thinking the old teacher whilst he heard behind him the pandemonium starting again in the classroom?.

#### REFERENCE

1.- Vikas S, Prema U, Mushtaq A, Vijay M. PowerPoint or chalk and talk: Perceptions of medical students versus dental students in a medical college in India. *Advances in Medical Education and Practice* 1: 11-16, 2010.

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