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Project Report

Seminar Presentation by First year Medical students: A PEER ASSESSMENT

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INTRODUCTION:

The traditional lecture oriented training is considered very economical as it permits high teacher student ratio and saves time for the learners. However, it keeps them passive and many times fails to stimulate their thinking / promote problem-solving capacity.^{1,2.} To overcome this problem and in order to develop competence, many other teaching / learning methods such as problem based learning, problem based programmed lectures, role playing, independent/self study, group discussions, voluntary seminar and simulation exercise had been experimented and claimed to be better^{3,7.} The Medical Council of India has also recommended lectures, seminars, group discussions and field visits spreading over 18 months of pre clinical course for teaching community medicine^{6.}

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The first year medical students have been presenting seminars on various topics in the Department of Community Medicine, Maulana Azad Medical College, New Delhi for last four years. The present study was under taken with the objectives: (1) To sensitize and clarify the concepts related to the occurrence, causation, prevention and control of common health problems in Indian community. (2) To inculcate presentations skills among medical students so as to prepare them to address the same in the community setting. (3) To find out utility of the seminars as method of teaching for first year medical students.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

A batch of 90 students of first year MBBS was selected for the study. The students were divided into five groups and allotted subtopics under the main topic. The topic for the seminar was chosen as "Common health problems in Indian Community". Five subtopics were allotted to

the group leaders who were asked to discuss the subtopic with the members of their group. Prior to their seminar presentation the students were briefed by a senior faculty about the contents of the topic and various methods of presenting them during the preparation. ON the day of the seminar presentation only 65 students were present in the class. They were shown a semi structure questionnaire with the help of the overhead projector. They were also given plain papers to answer the questions anonymously to ensure their frank and fair opinion. To avoid mutual discussions students were asked to sit apart and write their answers within two minutes.

OBSERVATIONS:

Out of total 65 students present in the class at the time of seminar presentation, 62(95.4%) students responded to the questionnaire. All of them opined that objectives of the seminar met fully and the topic was covered adequately. Majority of them were of the view that contents presented in various subjects were relevant (98.4%), all the presentations satisfied their queries and curiosities (96.8%). Again most of the students (93.5%) found that seminar was helpful to understand the various common health problems prevailing in the Indian Community. More than two-thirds (73%) students rated the seminar as very good/good while 15(24%) students appreciated presentation as 'Excellent' (Table 1).

Some of the students observed lack of confidence among presenters (17.8%) and themselves lost their interest in the presentation (14.5%) for various reasons such as mutual discussions between some students, too much write-up and lack of proper spacing between the lines on the transparent sheets, direct reading from the same, repeating of the same information in subsequent subtopics and no/improper use of the microphone / blackboard (Table-2)

Among suggestions given by the respondents, two thirds (67.8%) expressed the need that more literature / references should be made available to collect maximum information. Nearly one-fourth (24.2%) students opined that seminar should be more interactive involving maximum students to clarify their doubts

if any. Thirteen (20.9%) students advocated inclusion of pictorial and/linear diagrams, models, graphs and practical exercises to make the presentations more illustrative and impressive.

A few students (9.7%) also demanded more time to prepare for the seminar, proper editing of the material by the supervisors before writing up overhead projections (8.1%) taking from cues rather than reading everything from the OHP (4.8%). Supervisor should sit in the back rows to keep watch over the disturbing students. One student suggested that everyone in the group should be asked to prepare independently and a day before presentation, better ideas or information collected by all the students could be incorporated in the presentations (Table-3)

DISCUSSION:

Before declaring any new technique as successful method of teaching, it needs to be critically evaluated specially when the students have to play role of the teachers, as several studies had observed contradictory findings regarding students' performance on comparing their performance versus faculty's / student tutors' performance⁸. Being a part of evaluation of the perception of medical students regarding quality of undergraduate teaching is important especially if some new technique is introduced⁹. It is considered reliable. Moreover, their structured and constructive feedback when combined with educational training can certainly improve the quality of teaching¹⁰.

Majority of the respondents in present study seemed to be satisfied with the performance of the presenters as they observed good confidence among them (82.2%) and rated their presentations between good and excellent (96.8%). They also noticed that seminar met its objectives, contained adequate and relevant information, satisfied their queries and helped them to understand common health problems prevailing in Indian Community.

In one study the researchers expressed the view that seminars could help the students in the art of writing dissertations, speaking before the audience on a scientific subject by removing their shyness, playing teachers' role and understanding students and teachers' role and

facilitating better student teacher relationship. In their study they also reported that seminars were well accepted by the students being voluntary in nature⁷. However, we feel that choosing and preparing many topics to be presented on a single day on voluntary basis might be too cumbersome especially for the first year students. The loss of interest towards presentations among some students could be avoided by proper editing the material before the final wiring and making presentation more interactive and illustrative by including picture, models, graphs, etc. as suggested by themselves. Providing more time for preparation and active involvement of other group members by seeking their own contribution as demanded by some of the students should also be taken care of throughout the presentation, discipline should also be maintained by keeping watch over the disturbing students from back and taking appropriate action if required.

The provision of some marks in the internal assessment also could be made to give a serious thought to the seminars by medical students so as to ensure active participation of every student as experimented by the earlier workers⁷.

SUMMARY:

To conclude, there is no doubt that seminar is a useful technique of teaching / learning. The supervisors should decide the topic keeping in mind, the vastness of medical knowledge. The students must be provided a proper framework, adequate references, guidance, time and supervision throughout preparation to achieve the desired goals. The hindering factors in seminar method of learning could be overcome by the measures as suggested by the students in present study.

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Variable	Number	%
Objectives met	62	100
Subtopic covered adequately	62	100
Contents relevant	61	98.4
Presentation satisfied quarries	60	96.8
Seminar helped to understand health problem	58	93.5
Presentation rated as		
Excellent	15	24.2
Very Good	16	25.8
Good	29	46.8
Average	2	3.2
Poor	0	00.0

Table 1: Perception of students regarding presentation of seminar (N=62)

Factor	Number	%
Lack of confidence in presenter	11	17.8
Loss of interest due to the reasons	9	14.5
Mutual discussion among students	4	6.5
Too much write up on slide	3	4.8
Direct reading from slide	2	3.2
Information repeated in subtopics	1	1.6
No proper use of microphone	1	1.6

Table 2: Hindering Factors in teaching-learning process (N=62)

Suggestion	Number	%
More literature be made available	42	67.8
Presentation be made more interactive	15	24.2
Presentation be made more illustrative*	13	20.9
Control over mutual discussions by: Proper editing by supervisors	5	8.1
Emphasis on rembering than reading	3	4.8
Supervisors sit in back	3	4.8
Other members in group be involved	1	1.6

Table 3: Suggestions for improvement in future presentations(N=62) (*Pictures, models, diagrams, graphs, etc.)

Note: Responses no mutually exclusive

SEARCH INTERNET EFFICIENTLY

GOOGLE, a search engine created at Stanford University, has rapidly gained acceptance as the No.1 search facility to get information out of the ocean of Internet. This year the number of pages available for search has crossed 200 crores. (2 billion) Google has almost mastered the art of extracting information out of all these pages. However, you have to learn the skill of browsing the web using the special features provided by Google. The article below is extracted from Google itself.

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Google breaks the language barrier with a new translation feature (BETA). Using machine translation technology, Google now gives English speakers access to a variety of non-English web pages. This feature is currently available for pages published in Italian, French, Spanish, German, and Portuguese.

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With PDF files, the familiar "Cached" link is replaced with "Text version". The text version is a copy of the PDF document with all of the formatting commands stripped out.

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Google takes a snapshot of each page examined as it crawls the web and caches these as a back-up in case the original page is unavailable. If you click on the "Cached" link, you will see the web page as it looked when we indexed it. The cached content is the content Google uses to judge whether this page is a relevant match for your query.

When the cached page is displayed, it will have a header at the top which serves as a reminder that this is not necessarily the most recent version of the page. Terms that match your query are highlighted on the cached version to make it easier for you to see why your page is relevant.

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Find out who links to you

Some words, when followed by a colon, have special meanings to Google. One such word for Google is the **link:** operator. The query **link:siteURL** shows you all the pages that point to that URL. For example, **link:www.google.com** will show you all the pages that point to Google's home page. You cannot combine a **link:** search with a regular keyword search.

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For example, to find the homepage for Stanford University, simply enter Stanford into the search field and click on the "I'm Feeling Lucky" button. Google takes you directly to "www.stanford.edu", the official homepage of Stanford University.

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example: Google results **1-100** of about **63,700,000** for **search**. Search took **0.22** seconds.

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Brief Report -

BUZZ GROUP DISCUSSION

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Buzz group discussion following a Lecture- a better mode of training in Pharmacology Lecture is the most common Teaching/Learning method used by non-clinical departments. The main aim of this method is to evaluate the efficacy of one's lecture and capacity of students to apply the gained knowledge during lectures.

The Buzz group discussion is carried out during the last 15 minutes of a lecture class. This discussion is based on the topic lectured. Here are a few examples:

- (a) Prescription exercises
- (b) Patient oriented problem-solving exercises.
- (c) Project flow charts/ diagrams related to the lecture and ask the students to note down the drugs acting at different sites and their significance.
- (d) Give a card containing clinically relevant questions on important drugs related to the topic lectured.
- (e) Exercises on adverse drug reactions and drug interactions.

Advantages

- (a) Immediate feedback on one's lecture
- (b) Adequate repetition of important points
- (c) Application of the theoretical knowledge gained during lecture.

ACTIVITIES SINCE APRIL 2001

1. Conducted Off-site Workshop on "Introduction of current concepts in Medical Education" at Coimbatore Medical College, Coimbatore from 17th to 21st July 2001 sponsored by Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University, Chennai.

2. 8th P.G. Orientation Programme on Research, Ethics and Communication Skills was held from 8th to 14th August 2001.

3. The 45th National Course on Educational Science for Teachers of Health Professionals was held from 17th to 27th September 2001.

4. Dr.K.R.Sethuraman, Head, Dept. of Medical Education had delivered a lecture on "Doctor - Patient communication" on 11th October 2001 at AFMC, Pune.

5. Workshop on "Hospital Contingency Plan in the event of incidence affecting large number of people" held on 6th and 7th November 2001, at JIPMER.

6. Inaugural Tele-conference between JIPMER and Dr.M.G.R. Medical University, Chennai was held on 11.1.2002. Two more were conducted in February and March. Once the initial connectivity problems are sorted out, this will become a regular feature.

7. The Tenth Annual Interns Orientation Programme (2002) on Quality Care held from 23rd -25th January 2002 at JIPMER. Two faculty members from Government Medical College, Mysore attended as observers.

11. The 46th National Course on Educational Science for teachers of Health Professionals was held from 18th - 27th Feb, 2001. Our 1000th participant attended the course.

12. Conducted Off-site Workshop on "Introduction of current concepts in Medical Education" at KAPV Medical College, Trichy from 13th to 16th March 2002 sponsored by Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University, Chennai.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

1. Orientation Course on research methods, ethics & communication skills for Post-graduate in August 2002.

2. 47th National Course on Educational Sciences for teachers of

Health Professionals to be held from 16th - 25th September 2002.

BOOKS FROM NTTC

Books from Alumni Association of NTTC (Run by NTTC faculty)

"Medical Education: Principles and Practice Vol I"

The much awaited second edition of the book has been published in March 2000 by the NTTC Alumni Association, JIPMER.

Price: Rs 150/-

"Medical Education - Principles and Practice Vol.II - Trainer's Manual"

Price: Rs.100/-

"Implementing Innovations in Clinical Skills"

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