

## Analysis of Students' Feedback about Teaching in Department of Physiology

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**Abstract:** Background: Students' feedback about teaching-learning process is recognized to be a valuable tool for the teacher who strives for excellence in his performance. In our department, we regularly obtain feedback from students by way of a questionnaire. Objectives: 1.To assess the effectiveness & quality of teaching. 2. To implement changes wherever possible so as to improve effectiveness of teaching and to make it more student-centered. Materials & Methods: A questionnaire was administered to students to obtain their feedback about teaching in Dept of Physiology. It had questions about teaching methodology, evaluation and those of general nature. To enhance validity, it was anonymous & it was taken after the students had passed I MBBS examination. Results: Majority of students seem to prefer greater use of powerpoint along with blackboard. They have expressed interest in computer-assisted teaching. Seminars, quizzes and guest lectures are regarded as good adjuvant to routine teaching. They have suggested MCQ tests and theory viva after finishing a particular system and periodic practical tests. They have found pace of teaching comfortable but have protested about lack of time for extracurricular activities. Discussion & results: Based on students' feedback, certain modifications were made in the Departmental teaching. Students' feedback about positive and negative points of individual teachers was communicated to them. [ Phadke et al NJIRM 2011; 3(1) : 98-100]

**Key words:** Medical Education, Students' Feedback.

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**Introduction:** For the last few decades, lacunas in medical education are increasingly being perceived and deliberations about reforms are going on in various institutes including WHO<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>. As a result of this there has been a sea change in the scenario of medical education. There is a growing realization amongst educationists the benefits of active involvement of students in the process of their education. As a result, students' assessment of teaching activity is considered as an integral part of any deliberations on improving educational standards and is being used by institutes for betterment of teaching learning process<sup>5,6,7,8</sup>.

Keeping this in mind, department of Physiology, Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University Medical College, Pune regularly obtains students' feedback about teaching and evaluation methods employed in the department. A short summary of feedbacks obtained over last 2 years (2008-09 & 2009-10 batches) and the modifications made in the departmental teaching policies are presented in this article.

**Materials and Methods:** Approval from institutional Ethical committee was obtained for the study. A structured questionnaire was used to

obtain feedback. It had 26 questions having 3-4 options with a space for remarks other than provided in the options. Few open ended questions were also asked; especially for describing their best teaching experience, suggestions to improve the teaching in dept of Physiology & factors that disturbed them during learning Physiology. The questionnaire was administered to a total of 191 students (102 students of 2008-09 batch & 89 students of 2009-10 batch). They were requested to express themselves sincerely & in all frankness. It was administered after the students had passed I MBBS examination and were studying in III semester. It was anonymous i.e. they were instructed not to write their names or roll numbers on the questionnaire. As a result of this methodology, we felt that students had minimal inhibition in expressing their honest opinions thereby improving validity of the feedback.

Questionnaire had questions in 3 categories as follows:

1. Questions about teaching methodology.
2. Questions about evaluation techniques.
3. Questions of general nature.

**Results:****1. Responses about teaching methodology:**

- During lectures, majority of students (88%) preferred combined use of blackboard & power point presentation. Lecture notes taken down by students during the session were found to be more useful for preparation of examination rather than textbooks or readymade notes. 35% expressed a desire that lecture synopsis may be provided by the lecturer.
- Disturbing factors during lectures were cited as: lecturer not being audible at the back, latecomers disturbing the class, noise of cell phones & ceiling fans, failure of electricity resulting in non-functioning of teaching aids.
- 68% of students have expressed concern about workload of 2 tutorials per week. 76% of students preferred written tutorials over verbal tutorials.
- 72% students have expressed a desire to have more demonstrations of animal experiments.
- Extra teaching for difficult topics is provided to the students between 1 to 2 p.m. & 9.30 to 10 a.m. This was found to be useful by 71 % students.
- Intensive coaching is a unique activity of department of Physiology. These are revision sessions & are conducted during second half of second semester, in small batches. Topics are declared in advance & students are instructed to come prepared. Sessions consist of rapid revisions in the form of discussions of university questions & solving students' difficulties. 83% of students have found intensive coaching helpful for preparation of university examination.
- Seminars, quiz and guest lectures arranged in the department are regarded as a good adjuvant to the routine teaching by 76% students. Usefulness of students' presentations in learning is reported by other workers also<sup>9</sup>. 61% students felt that they would benefit if more seminars are conducted in each term and that too batch-wise rather than for entire class.
- 72% of students have expressed willingness for computer assisted learning.
- Beneficial role of horizontal and vertical integration is well documented. Therefore,

Medial Council of India desires the incorporation of integration in the medical curriculum in order to provide the students with a holistic rather than fragmented learning perspectives. In our study 58% students have expressed a desire to have integrated teaching between anatomy, physiology & biochemistry departments for some topics.

**2. Responses regarding evaluation techniques:**

- In theory & practical university examination of Physiology there are some questions of case studies. 80% students have expressed a view that it improves understanding of the subject and gives idea about its clinical applications.
- 73% students have suggested MCQ tests and theory vivas after completion of a system and periodic practical tests.
- Majority of students (81%) feel that internal assessment helps them to be regular in studies and to get through university examination with ease. While a small percentage (16%) of students considers it as a burden.
- After every theory examination, department of physiology conducts session of discussion of ideal answers. This is found very useful by 86% of students. They have expressed a desire to see their corrected answer books of college examinations.

**3. Responses regarding general nature:**

- 81% of students have found pace of teaching comfortable but 65% have protested about lack of time for extra curricular activities.
- Majority of students (71%) found discipline observed in the department encouraging and conducive for regular studies whereas 15% have found it depressing.

**Discussion:** Taking various points mentioned by the students into account; following were the actions taken by our department: Students' feedback about positive and negative points of individual teachers was communicated to the teachers for introspection & appropriate modification in their teaching. Small group teaching is preferred by the students; so wherever possible, practicals & tutorials are conducted in small batches. Students have also expressed willingness for computer assisted teaching so we have incorporated the use of educational CDs during small group teaching sessions.

We have also undertaken In house preparation of educational CDs on clinical examination of various systems & animal experiments. Taking cognizance of the fact that 68% of students have expressed concern about workload of tutorials; we have reduced the number of tutorials to 1 tutorial per week. It is written type & is conducted in a batch of 15 to 30 students.

As seminars & quiz programs are found useful by the students; we continue with the same. We have started batch-wise seminars so that more students can participate in them. As students have suggested MCQ tests and theory vivas after completion of a system and periodic practical tests; we have scheduled MCQ tests & theory vivas after completion of each system and also periodic practical tests. These are formative assessments.

We also conduct pre-prelim examination 1 week prior to actual preliminary examination. Corrected answer books of all the college examinations are shown to the students.

**Conclusions:** Due to obvious reasons, all the suggestions made by students cannot be implemented. Our department has made certain modifications in teaching policies based on students' feedback (keeping its limitations in mind). This is found to enhance teaching learning process in the department.

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