

Perception of the 2nd year MBBS students about the Content, Structure and Teaching of the Head and Neck Module in an Integrated Curriculum

HUMAIRA GULNAZ¹, NADIA MAJEED², SHAISTA ARSHAD JARAL³, SADIA HAFIZ QURESHI⁴, IMTIAZ ASLAM⁵, NABILA KAUKAB⁶

¹Associate Professor of Anatomy, University of Lahore

²Assistant Professor of Anatomy, Niazi Medical and Dental College Sargodha

³Associate Professor of Anatomy, CMH Lahore

^{4,5}Senior Lecturer, Anatomy Department, University of Lahore

⁶Professor of Anatomy, University of Lahore

Correspondence to Dr. Humaira Gulnaz, Email: gulahmad.gill@gmail.com Cell: 0300-8412895

ABSTRACT

Background: Our College has developed and implemented integrated curriculum with an aim to enhance learning by using different teaching methodologies. An integrated, theme based module of head and neck module was developed and implemented. This study was designed to evaluate the perception of students about content, structure and teaching of head and neck module.

Method: This was a cross sectional descriptive study conducted through a survey questionnaire with all the students of 2nd year MBBS in University College of Medicine and Dentistry. Survey questionnaire was used to evaluate the perception of students about the content, structure and teaching of the module. Survey questionnaire was developed on qualtrics software and distributed via social media (Whatsapp)

Results: 88.18% of the students agree that learning outcomes of the module were clearly stated and 69.09% of the students felt that they were achieved fully. Module's subjects were covered in breadth and depth in the opinion of 44.54% of the students. Majority of the students were of opinion that module was well structured and helped them to build their knowledge. The number of students agreed and disagreed was equal as far as adequacy of duration of the module was concerned. The majority (48.18%) of students disagree that module was well organized and 52.73% disagree that workload of the module was manageable. 69.64% students felt that objectives of the module were explained well and 67.86% of opinion that they were encouraged to participate in class discussions. Lectures of the module were well planned and presented in the opinion of 65.77% of the students and tutorials were organized in the view of 61.82% of the students. Different teaching methodologies helped the students in achieving course objectives in the opinion of 63.06% and 45.04% felt that the ratio was appropriate between different teaching methodologies. The ideas and concepts were presented clearly in the perception of 61.61% of the students.

Conclusion: Majority of the students graded the content, structure and teaching of the module as good. But some of the areas are highlighted which need improvement for example: students felt that module was not well organized and its workload was not manageable.

Keywords: Integrated curriculum, Head and neck module, 2nd year students

INTRODUCTION

Innovative approaches have been used worldwide to start the integrated curriculum in undergraduate medical colleges over the last few decades¹. Learning is enhanced when instruction is given in a relevant and stimulated patterns. Shredded learning schedules and lack of connections and relationships among disciplines led to a drive towards integrated curriculum^{2,1}. Medical educationist realized that there is need for integrating basic and clinical medical sciences, removing sharp boundaries separating disciplines as bordered in conventional teaching³.

Our college recognized by PMDC programmed to shift to integrated curriculum in year 2016 for MBBS curriculum. Spirally integrated modules were developed and implemented. Head and neck module was studied for many years in a non-integrated curriculum where three preclinical departments of anatomy, physiology and

biochemistry educated their respective syllabus principally by means of didactic lectures combined with tutorials and practical exercises⁴.

In integrated curriculum, a 7 week long, theme based integrated module of head and neck was developed and implemented. Teaching methodologies used in the modules were lectures, PBL, skill labs and small group discussions.

Despite the curriculum reforms during the past decade, there's a dearth of data regarding the construction and evaluation processes⁵. Estimation of the course and curricula gives us the direction for course revision and use of new approaches in medical education⁶.

The present study was planned to evaluate the viewpoint of the students who attended head and neck module in respect to the design and teaching of the module with a focus to bring in improvements in its performance.

Research question: What is the perception of 2nd year MBBS students about the content, structure and teaching of head and neck module in an integrated curriculum?

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METHODS

This was cross sectional study conducted through a survey questionnaire with all the students of 2nd year MBBS at University College of Medicine and Dentistry (UCMD) Lahore from Feb 2018 to May 2018. The MBBS programme at UCMD is a 5 year curriculum.

Data collection: Survey data sheets used was taken from the University of Liver Pool. The questions were modified to build up a version which have compatibility with our culture. The survey questionnaire was discussed and evaluated by expert panel in a meeting.

After that questionnaire was pilot tested on a body of students prior to distribution to determine the perception of questionnaire by the students so that it may be processed subsequently. Pilot questionnaires were excluded from the survey.

Final questionnaire consisted of 43 questions on five point Likert scale in which strongly agree was graded as 5 and strongly disagree as 1. Anonymous survey questionnaire was generated which may take almost 15-20 minutes to answer. The local ethical review board approved the study.

An information sheet was attached to the questionnaire wherein propose of the study was expressed and consent was taken. Questionnaire was categorized into sections and its shortened link was generated over qualtrics. It was distributed by means of a Whatsapp group.

RESULTS

Response rate was quite high. 112 students responded out of 143 students in Whatsapp group which is 78.32%.

The content and structure of module: Over all perception of the students about the content and structure of the head and neck module was good. The mean response rate for the section of content and structure of the module is 3.13. The majority (88.18%) of the students agreed that learning outcomes of the module were clearly stated and 69.09% of the students felt that they are achieved fully. 10.91% of the students are of opinion that learning outcomes were not clearly stated and 16.36% were not satisfied with the achievement of learning outcomes in the module. 0.91% of students were not sure about statement of learning outcomes and 14.55% neither agree nor disagree about the achievement of the learning outcomes (Table 1)

About 44.54% of the students found that modules subject were covered in breadth and depth and 51.82% felt that module was well structured and helped them in building their knowledge. 23.64% of the students disagree and 11.82% of the students neither agree nor disagree that module subjects were covered in breadth and depth. 29.19% of the students disagree while 19.09% neither agree nor disagree that module was well structured and it helped them in building up of their knowledge (Table 1).

As far as duration of the module was concerned 44.54% (49) of the students agree and 44.55% (49) of the students disagree that the duration of the module was adequate. 10.91% of the students neither agree nor disagree that duration of the module was adequate (Table 1).

Majority of the students 48.18% disagree and 36.37% agree that module was well organized and they have timely

access to material. 15.45% of the students neither agree nor disagree that the module was well organized (Table 1). 52.73% of the students disagree and 34.55% of the students agree that the modules workload was manageable. 2.73% of the students were not sure about it (Table 1).

43.63% agree and 33.64% disagree that the pace of the module was manageable. 22.73% of the students neither agree nor disagree about the adequacy of the pace of module (Table 1).

Table 1: perception of the students about the content and structure of the module.

Statements	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
Learning outcomes of the modules were clearly stated	88.18%	0.91%	10.91%
Module's learning outcomes were achieved fully.	69.09%	14.55%	16.36%
Module's subjects were covered in breadth and depth.	44.54%	11.82%	43.64%
Overall module was well structured in terms of building up your knowledge	51.82%	19.09%	29.19%
The duration of the module was adequate.	44.54%	10.91%	44.55%
The module was well organized (e.g. timely access to materials notification of changes, etc.)	36.37%	15.45%	48.18%
The module's workload was manageable	34.55%	12.73%	52.73%
The pace of module was manageable.	43.63%	22.73%	33.64%

Teaching of the module: Overall Perception of the students about the teaching of the module is good. The mean response in the section of teaching of module was 3.49.

69.64% of the students are of opinion that objectives of the module were explained well before the start of teaching session. 18.75% of the students disagree with the above statement. 11.61% of students neither agree nor disagree about the explanation of the module objectives (Table 2).

About 67.86% of the students stated that they were encouraged to ask questions and participate in class discussion. 15.96% felt that they were not encouraged to ask questions and participate in class discussions 15.18% of students neither agreed nor disagreed about encouragement in class discussions (Table 2).

65.77% agreed and 23.42% disagreed that lectures of module were well organized and presented. 10.81% neither agreed nor disagreed about module's lecture (Table 2).

61.82% agreed and 20.91% disagreed that module's tutorial were well organized. 17.27% neither agree nor disagree that module's tutorials were well organized (Table 2).

There is agreement of 63.06% of the students that lectures and other methodologies helped in achieving the course objectives while 18.01% of the students disagree

from this statement. 18.92% neither agree nor disagree about role of lectures and other teaching methodologies in achieving the course objectives (Table 2).

45.04% of the students felt that ratio between small group discussions, lectures and practical was appropriate while 38.74% of students had opposite opinion. 16.22% neither agree nor disagree about the ratio of teaching methodologies used. There is agreement of 61.61% of the students that ideas and concepts were clearly presented while 21.43% of students disagree from the statement. 16.96% students neither agree nor disagree about the clear presentation of the ideas and concepts in the module (Table 2).

Table 2: perception of the students about the teaching of the module.

Statements	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
The module's objectives were explained well	69.64%	11.61%	18.75%
Students were encouraged to ask questions and participate in class discussions.	67.86%	15.18%	15.96%
Module's lectures were well organized and presented	65.77%	10.81%	23.42%
Module's tutorials were well organized	61.82%	17.27%	20.91%
Lectures and other methodologies' helped in achieving the course objectives	63.06%	18.92%	18.01%
The ratio between SGD, lectures and practical was appropriate.	45.04%	16.22%	38.74%
The ideas and concepts were presented clearly	61.61%	16.96%	21.43%

DISCUSSION

Focus of medical education has shifted from traditional curriculum to the integrated curriculum for the last decade. Sharp boundaries between different disciplines are blurred in integrated fashion³.

In our setting, integrated curriculum, is in place for last two years. Head and neck module was taught to 2nd year MBBS which was of 7 weeks duration. Student's perception at the end of module was recorded with the help of questionnaire.

Majority of the students thought that the module was well structured as far as learning objectives are concerned. 44.54% of the students are of opinion that module subject were covered in breadth and depth. This is steady with previous surveys which announced that 43% of the students agreed that learning targets were secured and exams are from the learning goals instructed¹. This perception may be due to the fact that study guides were given to the students before the start of module in which learning objectives were clearly stated.

In current study 51.82% of students felt that module was well structured and helped them to build their knowledge. In integrated curriculum, students had multiple encounters with patients in which there is application of basic science knowledge. Ghosh in 2008 announced that incorporated learning program is believed to be more valuable in consequent clinical years⁴.

In our study dominant part (48.18%) of students differ that module was well organized (for example: timely access to material, notification of changes). The reason for this recognition might be the way that all the information was given through MOODLE programming which was generally new for the students. This finding is in opposition to the reality revealed in past examinations in which 43% of understudies believed that module was well managed¹.

In this study, 52.73% differ that workload of module was reasonable. This finding may be explained by the fact that duration of the module was perceived adequate by 44.54% and inadequate by 44.55% of the students. This was in agreement to the finding in a past report in which greater part of the students (55%) differ that the scheduled time was adequate to manage¹.

In our review, majority (69.64%) of students had the feeling that objectives of the module were well explained to them before the beginning of the session. There is agreement of 45% of the students that they received proper directions from faculty in past inquiries¹.

67.86% of students were encouraged to ask questions and participate in class discussion. In our study, 65.77% of students agreed that lectures of the module were well organized and presented. There were well trained faculty members for interactive sessions in which learning is enhanced. Interactive sessions are accounted for the improvement in learning and enhanced practical skills in past overviews⁷. Interactive lectures were rated as good by 79.6% of the students during planning and implementation of integrated programme in previous studies⁴.

Majority of student had an opinion that module tutorials are well organized in our report. There is a suggestion to reduce the number of tutorials by the students in earlier studies⁵.

63.06% of students had an opinion that lectures and other methodologies are appropriately blended to achieve the learning objectives in our survey. The ratio between small group discussions, lectures and practical was appropriate for 45.04% of students. This finding is consistent with the previous studies which showed that lectures, clinical rotation and tutorials are well balanced to achieve better outcomes⁵. Use of different teaching methodologies are reported to enhance learning in a prior investigation^{6,8}.

CONCLUSION

Overall impression about the content, structure and teaching of head and neck module was good. There are some areas like organization of the module and workload of the module which need improvement.

Impact of the study: This study guides us for the revision of the workload, duration and organization of the module.

Limitations: In this study perception about the implementation of head and neck module was received only from students so it is not a conclusive evidence. We have not asked for adequacy of teaching hours and types of case scenarios presented to them during PBL.

Way forward: Perception of the faculty members can also be evaluated about development and implementation of the module.

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