

Students' viewpoints on the educational methods used in Shaheed Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences

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ABSTRACT

Background: An education of desirable quality is the one which ends in an effective learning. Students interest on the educational method used may enhance their learning.

Purpose: To determine Students' viewpoints on the educational methods offered in medical universities

Methods: This cross sectional study investigates the student's viewpoints on the educational methods used in the medical university teaching. The cases were selected by randomized sampling and a questionnaire was completed by the subjects.

Results: Of all subjects, 63% who were 24 years or older considered group discussion as the best educational method. 53.1% of the students valued group discussion as a prior educational method and 51% of the students deemed it an effective method while 13.4% preferred lectures and 75.3% marked "the professors skill and enthusiasm for teaching" a effective factor in the education process.

Conclusion: More interactive methods such lecture with question and answers is rather a simple change but may improve the students' satisfaction.

Keywords: EDUCATIONAL METHODS, EDUCATION, STUDENTS' PREFERENCE.

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Introduction

Education is the basis for all kinds of learning (1). In today's world the role of investment in education is well recognized as it is a key determinant in the process of culture-o-economic development. In the universities one of their major responsibilities is to recognize and introduce solutions for the social problems. In fact university is one of the most valuable organizations in every society which is capable of promoting progression and development (2) Obtaining knowledge and information as well as developing the ability to recall them is one important outcome of all educational systems (3). In the Islamic Republic of Iran after reaching the quantitative targets in terms of medical graduates it is now of critical importance to focus on assessment of educational programs. (4)

Results of studies on evaluation of faculty's teaching methods showed that feedback of teachers to students and objective assessment can lead to improvement in outcomes of educational program. (5). A study by Speer et al on educational quality clarified that the teachers' skill and enthusiasm is more important as compared with the method of teaching(6). Khaksari et al (2000) research performed in Rafsanjan University of Medical sciences showed that in many courses the teaching methods in use were far from those considered appropriate internationally; therefore we should try to select the teaching methods which exploit as many senses as possible. (4) Shahbazi et al, studied the status of clinical education in nursing and midwifery courses and realized that none of the educational programs and teachers style and performance were viewed satisfactory by the students (7).

Materials and methods

This cross sectional study was performed on the students of Shaheed Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences in 2000-2001. The subjects were selected by simple random sampling. From a total of 390 questionnaires, 350 were completed and returned by the students among which 251 were studying in day courses and 99 were students of evening courses.

Results

According to the results provided in table 1, there is no statistically significant relationship between the student's age and his/her preferred method. As 63.9% of the students of the age 24 years on more considered group discussions the best educational method and only 2.8% of the members of this age group preferred conferences (Table 1). Of all subjects, 53.1 % selected group discussion as the best method of education and just 7.8% of

them picked conferences as their top priority (Table 2).

Table 3 shows that 50.6% of the students valued lecturing as moderately effective in learning, 3.2% consider it ineffective; 51% marked group discussions as a very efficient means of learning ,and 0.9% of them believed that its efficacy was negligible; 42.2% of the students regarded the efficacy of conferences in learning, as moderate and 4.1% considered it very efficacious; 34.5% of the cases believed that workshop is a very effective method of education and 6% of them marked it as useless 37.8% of the students considered the method of questioning and answering as a useful method and 7% marked it as invaluable. As it can be seen in table 4, 50.1% of the students deemed the professor's educational experience as an effective factor while 0.6% considered it of no importance. 75.3% judged the professor's skill and enthusiasm for education, as very effective and the rest considered it not important.

TABLE 1. Frequency distribution and percent of students preferred educational methods by age.

Age \ Selected Method	Lecturing		Group discussion		Conference		Workshop		Question and answer		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
18-20	10	7.6	72	55	6	4.6	20	15.2	23	17.6	131	100
21-23	17	10	84	49.7	19	11.3	22	13	27	16	169	100
24 and over	3	8.3	23	63.9	1	2.8	3	8.3	6	16.7	36	100
Total	30	9	176	52.9	26	7.8	45	13.5	56	16.8	333	100

TABLE 2. Frequency distribution of the educational methods preferred by the students

Educational Method \ Frequency distribution	Number	Percent
Lecturing	32	9.3
Group discussion	183	53.1
Conference	27	7.8
Workshop	45	13.1
Question and	58	16.7
Total	345	100

TABLE 3. Frequency distribution of the student's attitude towards the effectiveness of the offered educational methods in their learning

The student's attitude The educational Method	Ineffective		Low		Moderate		High		Very high		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lecturing	11	3.2	92	26.7	174	50.6	46	8.8	21	6.1	344	100
Group discussion	3	0.9	17	4.9	65	18.8	176	51	84	24.3	345	100
Conference	21	6.1	102	29.7	145	42.2	62	18	14	4.1	344	100
Workshop	19	6	33	10.3	88	27.6	110	34.5	69	21.6	319	100
Question and answer	7	2	25	7.3	103	29.9	130	37.8	79	23	344	100

TABLE 4. Frequency distribution of the effectiveness of work experience, skill, enthusiasm and the teachers' academic degree in education as viewed by the students

Name	Ineffective		Low		Moderate		High		Very high		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Work experience	2	0.6	16	4.6	44	12.8	110	31.9	173	50.1	345	100
Skill and enthusiasm	0	0	2	0.6	9	2.6	74	21.5	259	75.3	344	100
The professor's degree	20	5.8	25	7.3	92	26.8	109	31.8	97	28.3	343	100

31.8% of the students believed that the faculty's degree is of great importance in education and 5.8% considered it not effective.

Discussion

This study was designed to assess the students' attitude towards the educational methods offered in. Speen et al who have performed a study on education quality (1999) believed that the quality of education is an important part of the education process and therefore it is not easy to be evaluated. Our results showed that the most acknowledged method by the students is group discussions (51%) and the least was conference (18%) followed by lecturing. Students considered group discussions and the teachers' work experience and his skill and enthusiasm as a very effective factor in education which is in line with the results achieved by Shatzer. In his study on educational method he showed that some of the method type is less important than the teacher's skill and enthusiasm (6). Overall, students viewed the teacher's skill and

enthusiasm and his work experiences as the most effective factor in good education. According to a study performed by Karimi et al, 7.4% of the professors of Yazd University of Medical of Medical sciences are teaching although they are not interested on teaching (8). The most common educational method used in the classes, which was lectures, was deemed as of moderate efficacy by the students and conferences were considered as unacceptable by the majority. More interactive methods such lecture with question and answers is rather a simple change but may improve the students satisfaction.

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