



ATTITUDE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS (ATCOM) – MBBS STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Effective communication between the doctor and the patient is very important. The Vision 2015 document of the MCI reaffirms the need to schedule dedicated time for training in communication skills for Indian medical graduates.

Aim & Objectives: To know whether Communication skills are important in Medical Profession and are they willing to learn about Attitude and Communication skills in MBBS course. **Materials & methods:** 100 1st MBBS students were taken into the study. A brief introduction about ATCOM is given to the students for 30 minutes. A questionnaire consists of 5 questions were given to the students and the results were analyzed.

Results: 64% students strongly agreed that ATCOM is a good initiative to improve quality in Medical Profession. 69% agreed to learn ATCOM in MBBS course. **Discussion and conclusion:** Students know the importance of ATCOM in their Professional life, and they are very much interested to learn ATCOM skills.

KEYWORDS : ATCOM, Medical Profession, Attitude, Communication skills, MBBS.

Introduction:

Effective communication between the doctor and the patient leads to better compliance, better health outcomes, decreased litigation, and higher satisfaction both for doctors and patients¹. Besides clinical interactions with patients, doctors also have to communicate in writing for clinical documentation and referrals to avoid medico-legal implications. Effective communication goes a long way in building a relationship of trust between doctors and patients. Medical students and several professional bodies have acknowledged the need to incorporate communication skills training within the formal curriculum^{2,4}. The acquisition of communication and interpersonal skills is recognized and documented as a core competency for physician training in many countries. In India, this is included as a requirement in the 1997 Graduate Medical Education (GME) regulations of the Medical Council of India (MCI), but not enough efforts have been made to teach or assess them. Indian medical students often have less than adequate communication skills and the demand for formal training in this area has often been echoed^{2,7}. The Vision 2015 document of the MCI reaffirms the need to schedule dedicated time for training in communication skills for Indian medical graduates. Recently, in a positive move, the MCI has introduced a module for Attitude and Communication (AT-COM) skills training in a phased manner, which is a longitudinal program of communications skills training spread over the entire MBBS course⁸.

Aim & Objectives:

- To know whether Communication skills are important in

Medical Profession.

- Whether they are willing to learn about Attitude and Communication skills
- Whether they need this ATCOM training as a longitudinal programme or Instant programme
- Whether they are willing to have assessment on Communication skills in University exams.

Materials & methods:

After taking verbal consent from 100 1st MBBS students were taken into the study. A brief introduction about ATCOM is given to the students for 30 minutes. A questionnaire consists of 5 questions were given to students and asked them to give their answer by putting tick mark(✓) over one of the options - strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree. The results were analyzed for likert level of each question by using descriptive statistics and percentages.

The Questionnaire is as follows

- ATCOM is a good initiative to improve quality in Medical education
- Interested to learn ATCOM skills
- ATCOM is beneficial, if it is conducted before commencement of MBBS course
- ATCOM is beneficial, if it is programmed on every Saturday during the entire course
- ATCOM assessment must be there in University Exams

FFED BACK on ATCOM programme

1. ATCOM is a good initiative to improve quality in Professional life

① Strongly disagree ② Disagree ③ Neither ④ Agree ⑤ strongly agree

2. Interested to learn ATCOM skills

① Strongly disagree ② Disagree ③ Neither ④ Agree ⑤ strongly agree

3. ATCOM is beneficial, if it is programmed before commencement of MBBS course

① Strongly disagree ② Disagree ③ Neither ④ Agree ⑤ strongly agree

4. ATCOM is beneficial, if it is programmed on every Saturday during the entire course

① Strongly disagree ② Disagree ③ Neither ④ Agree ⑤ strongly agree

5. ATCOM assessment must be there in University Exams

① Strongly disagree ② Disagree ③ Neither ④ Agree ⑤ strongly agree

Results:

Table: 1 Responses from the students for 5 questions in the questionnaire.

	Strongly Disagree ①	Disagree ②	Neither ③	Agree ④	Strongly Agree ⑤	Average score
Q:1				36%	64%	4.7
Q:2			8%	69%	23%	4.2
Q:3		33%	20%	28%	19%	3.3
Q:4		5%	10%	54%	31%	4.1
Q:5	30%	35%	9%	15%	9%	2.3

FIGURE: 1

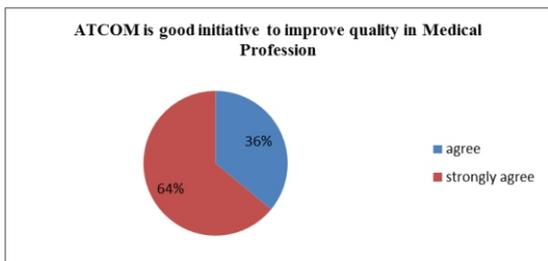


FIGURE: 2

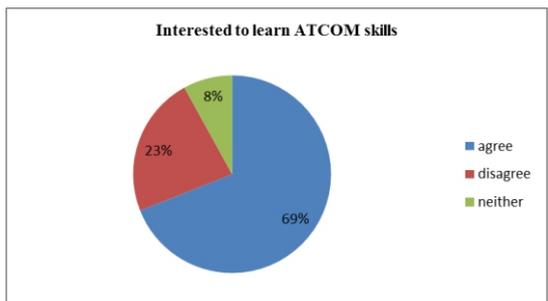


FIGURE: 3

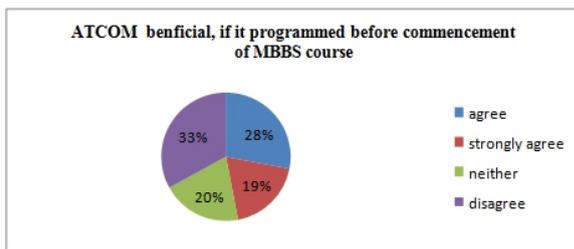


FIGURE: 4

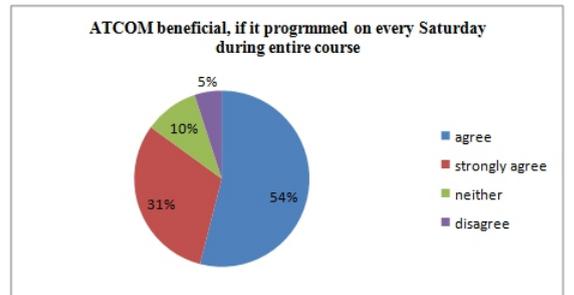
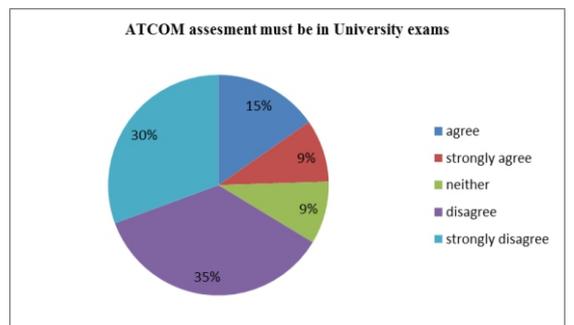


FIGURE: 5



Discussion and conclusion:

The present study shows that,

- students know the importance of ATCOM in their Professional life, and they are very much interested to learn ATCOM skills which go in accordance with Simson et al, Medical school objectives project-UK and General medical council-London
- Most of the students expressed to have a longitudinal spread of ATCOM programme- throughout MBBS on every Saturday.
- Most of the students doesn't want assessment on ATCOM skills
- With this small study it was very clear that students are interested to learn ATCOM, now it is the duty of the faculty to implement ATCOM.
- MCI has given all guidelines, now it is the faculty to transfer ATCOM knowledge effectively by lectures ,role plays, group discussions, group projects, video clippings etc;

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