



EXPLORING FIRST-YEAR MBBS STUDENT'S PERCEPTION ON THE ORIENTATION PROGRAM AND FOUNDATION COURSE AT THE START OF THEIR STUDIES

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ABSTRACT **Background:** The transition from school to medical college can be challenging for first-year MBBS students. A well-designed orientation program and Foundation Course (FC) play a vital role in helping students adapt to the demands of medical education. **Aim And Objectives:** This study aims to explore the perceptions of first-year MBBS students regarding the orientation program and Foundation Course conducted under the 2024 Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME) curriculum. Objectives include assessing student views on the content and structure, and identifying perceived strengths and areas for improvement. **Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among first-year MBBS students at Government Medical College, Akola, during the 2024 academic year. Out of 182 students invited, 152 responded (response rate: 85%). Feedback was collected using a 5-point Likert scale. **Results:** The orientation and personal development modules received the highest average mean score of 4.48, indicating strong satisfaction. Modules covering computer skills, language, learning strategies, and extracurricular activities scored slightly lower, with a mean of 4.3. **Conclusion:** The study highlights the overall effectiveness of the orientation and FC in supporting students' transition into medical education. While student satisfaction was generally high, targeted improvements in certain modules could enhance the overall impact.

KEYWORDS : CBME, Foundation Course, MBBS, Student Perception, Orientation

INTRODUCTION:

The competency Based Medical Education (CBME) curriculum for Undergraduates medical students started from the year 2019 academic onwards. This curriculum has introduced many new and innovative teaching learning method including Foundation course which has to be taken before commencement of medical syllabus for the new medical students who have joined 1st year MBBS.

The CBME has been introduced to align medical education with international standards, emphasizing not only academic proficiency but also personal and professional development.

In this curriculum, the orientation and foundation course have become integral in preparing students for the demands of medical education, introducing them to essential areas such as study techniques, time management, communication skills, and professional behavior. It also aims to familiarize student with the institutional culture, support services, and ethical expectations in the medical profession.

But during the coming years and due to shortage of time the foundation course duration has been shorten to 15 days. The duration of foundation from 2019 i.e 175 hours has been cut down to 80 hrs in CBME 2024. This Includes [1]

1. Orientation Module including History of Indian Medicine - 15 hours
2. Skills Module - 15 hours
3. Community orientation module -5 hours
4. Professional Development and Ethics Module (P&E) including Mental health -20 hours
5. Enhancement of Language and Computer Skills Module including clinico-laboratory communication -10 hours
6. Sports and Extra curricular Activities -15 hours

This study aims to investigate the Perception of first-year MBBS students at GMC Akola regarding the orientation program and FC.

It seeks to assess the effectiveness of these programs in terms of content, structure, and relevance, with the ultimate goal of identifying strengths and areas for improvement. By understanding student's perspectives, medical institutions can enhance these foundational programs, ensuring that they better support students in adapting to the academic and emotional demands of medical education.

Assess Perceptions: To evaluate student's views on the content and structure of the orientation program and foundation course.

Identify Strengths And Weaknesses: To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the orientation program and FC as perceived by the students

MATERIAL & METHODS:

It is a descriptive cross sectional design to explore first-year MBBS students' perceptions on the orientation program and FC during the academic year 2024. The study was commenced after the approval from Institution Ethic committee.

This design allows for the collection of data from a large sample within a short period, making it well-suited for studies aimed at evaluating specific interventions or programs such as orientation and foundation courses.

The study focused on first-year MBBS students enrolled, these students were at the start of their medical education and had recently participated in the orientation program and foundation course.

Inclusion Criteria:

All first-year MBBS students who were enrolled at GMC, Akola during the academic year 2024 were included in the study.

Exclusion Criteria:

Students who were absent during the orientation program or who did not complete both parts of the foundation course were excluded from the study, as their experience would not fully reflect the intended program outcomes.

Data Collection Tools:

The primary data collection tool was a structured questionnaire designed to gather detailed information on students' perceptions of the orientation program and foundation course.

The questionnaire was developed based on the key objectives of the study, specifically focusing on student's assessments of the content, structure, relevance, and effectiveness of the two programs.

Questionnaire Design:

The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions using a 5-point Likert scale in decreasing order of agreement (5=highly satisfactory, 4=satisfactory, 3=neutral, 2=unsatisfactory, 1= highly unsatisfactory). This scale allowed for quantifiable data on student satisfaction and perceptions of each component of the programs.

An initial briefing of 15 minutes was done regarding the motive behind the study and how to fill the questionnaire.

Statistical Analysis : The data was collected and analysed in the form of frequencies and percentage analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

The study was conducted in the first semester of the academic year 2024, shortly after the completion of the orientation program and foundation course. Data collection occurred as follows.

All first-year MBBS students were told to fill the google form, to participate in the study. The invitation included information about the purpose of the study, confidentiality of responses, and the voluntary nature of participation. Informed consent was taken before the start of study.

Duration:

Students were given a specific time frame (2 weeks) to complete the survey. Reminders were sent periodically to maximize participation.

Once students completed the questionnaire, they submitted their responses electronically. The study aimed to achieve a high response rate by making the process as accessible and straightforward as possible.

Sampling

The total number of first-year MBBS students enrolled during the 2024 academic year was 182 students and those completed the FC are 152. The study sought to gather feedback from as many students as possible to ensure the findings were representative of the student body. A response rate of 85% was achieved, with 152 completed surveys returned and some students transferred to higher preferences.

Out of 152 students 51.3% were girls and 48.7% were boys.

Completion And Submission:

Table 1: Feedback On Orientation Module

FEEDBACK ON ORIENTATION MODULE								
SL.NO	TOPIC	5	4	3	2	1	TOTAL STUDENTS RESPONDED	MEAN SCORE
		N %	N%	N%	N%	N%		
1	Introduction to Institute and facilities	91 (59.9%)	47 (30.9%)	12 (7.9%)	2 (1.3%)	0	152	4.49
2	History of Medicine, alternate systems	86 (56.6%)	41 (27.%)	21 (13.8%)	3 (2%)	1 (0.7%)	152	4.37
3	Orientation to MBBS Curriculum	99 (65.1%)	36 (23.7%)	15 (9.9%)	2 (1.3%)	0	152	4.53
4	Anti ragging Guidelines and introduction to anti-ragging committee	91 (59.9%)	44 (28.9%)	13 (8.6%)	4 (2.6%)	0	152	4.46
5	Principle of Bioethics - Medical Ethics and Professionalism	108 (71.1%)	30 (19.7%)	12 (7.9%)	2 (1.3%)	0	152	4.61
6	Orientation Mentorship Programme	93 (61.2%)	39 (25.7%)	19 (12.5%)	1 (0.7%)	0	152	4.47
7	Carrer pathways and opportunities for personal growth	103 67.8%	37 24.3%	11 7.2%	0 0%	1 0.7%	152	4.59
8	MUHS rules Guidelines/exam policies /importance of attendance	101 (66.4%)	38 (25%)	8 (5.3%)	5 (3.3%)	0	152	4.55
9	Animal Ethics	79 52%	44 28.9%	24 15.8%	2 1.3%	3 2%	152	4.28

(5=Highly satisfactory, 4=satisfactory, 3= neutral, 2=unsatisfactory 1= highly unsatisfactory) Average mean =4.48

As shown in table 1 in the feedback on orientation module, the topic principle of bioethics –Medical ethics & professionalism was liked by many students followed by, Carrer pathways and opportunities for personal growth & MUHS Guideline and Exam policies /importance of attendance. Among these Topics highly satisfactorily response were given by 71.1%, 67.8% & 66.4% respectively. And average mean of Orientation module Average mean is 4.4.

Table 2 : Feedback On Skill Module

FEEDBACK ON SKILL MODULE								
SL.NO	TOPIC	5	4	3	2	1	TOTAL STUDENTS RESPONDED	MEAN SCORE
		N %	N%	N%	N%	N%		
1	FirstAid	96 (63.2%)	32 (21.1%)	23 (15.1%)	1 (0.7%)	0%	152	4.47
2	Training in Basic life support and mannequin	79 (52%)	46 (30.3%)	24 (15.8%)	2 (1.3%)	1 0.7%	152	4.32
3	Concept of Bio Safety & Universal Precautions	94 (61.8%)	46 (30.3%)	10 (6.6%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.53
4	Needle/Scalpel Stick injuries	96 (63.2%)	36 (23.7%)	17 (11.2%)	0 (0%)	3 (2%)	152	4.46
5	Infection Control Biomedical Waste Management And Techniques Of Hand Washing	97 (63.8%)	41 (27%)	13 (8.6%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	152	4.54
6	Disaster Management	76 (50%)	43 (28.3%)	30 (19.7%)	2 (1.3%)	1 (0.7%)	152	4.26

(5=Highly satisfactory, 4=satisfactory, 3= neutral, 2=unsatisfactory 1= highly unsatisfactory) Average mean =4.43

In the feedback on skill module (table -2) Infection control Biomedical Waste Management and techniques of hand washing, first Aid, Needle and scalpel injuries & concept of Biosafety and universal precautions are the three topics liked by the majority of students with highly satisfactory score of 63.8%, 63.2%, 63.2% & 61.8 respectively. Among the highly unsatisfactory response in this module needle & scalpel injuries score maximum 2%.

Table 3 : FeedBack on the Professional Development Module

FEEDBACK ON THE MODULE ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT								
SL. NO	TOPIC	5	4	3	2	1	TOTAL STUDENTS RESPONDED	MEAN SCORE
		N %	N%	N%	N%	N%		

1	Medical Profession and role of physician	88 (57.9%)	47 (30.9%)	16 (10.5%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	152	4.46
2	Principles of CBME -2024	83 (54.6%)	45 (29.6%)	21 (13.8%)	3 (2%)	0 (0%)	152	4.37
3	Importance of Research - introduction of Ethical committee	87 (57.2%)	40 (26.3%)	23 (15.1%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.39
4	Obtaining Patient Consent	101 (66.4%)	37 (24.3%)	14 (9.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	152	4.57
5	Introduction to Research Methodology & Briefing of ICFMR STS	81 (53.3%)	48 (31.6%)	22 (14.5%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	152	4.38
6	Leadership in Medical Profession	94 (61.8%)	45 (29.6%)	11 (7.2%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.5
7	Time & stress Management	88 (57.9%)	39 (25.7%)	24 (15.8%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	152	4.41
8	POCSO & Vishakha samiti	97 (63.8%)	41 (27%)	14 (9.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	152	4.55
9	InterPersonal Relationship	89 (58.6%)	50 (32.9%)	13 (8.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	152	4.50
10	Immunisation need of Health care professionals	97 (63.8%)	40 (26.3%)	14 (9.2%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	152	4.53
11	. How to behave with Seniors & faculty	100 (65.8%)	40 (26.3%)	11 (7.2%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	152	4.57
12	Doctor -patient relationship and communication skills	104 (68.4%)	38 (25%)	10 (6.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	152	4.62
13	Commitment of Lifelong Learning s an important part of physician's growth	86 (56.6%)	50 (32.9%)	14 (9.2%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.45
14	Mental Health & stress Management	93 (61.2%)	42 (27.6%)	15 (9.9%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.49
15	Medical Profession & Physicians role in Society, Emphasis on clinico Laboratory Communication	87 (57.2%)	48 (31.6%)	15 (9.9%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.45
16	Maintaining confidentiality	94 (61.8%)	47 (30.9%)	10 (6.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.7%)	152	4.53
17	Values of Integrity , honesty & respect n Medical profession	95 (62.5%)	40 (26.3%)	15 (9.9%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.50

In The feed back module on professional development module, Doctor patient relationship and communication skill and obtaining patient consent was the topic liked the most , 68.4% and 66.4% respectively. Principles of CBME 2024and value of Integrity, honesty and medical profession was the least liked.

Table 4: Feedback On The Module On Computer, Language, Learning And Extracurricular Activities

FEEDBACK ON THE MODULE ON COMPUTER,LANGUAGE, LEARNING AND EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES								
SL.NO	Response TOPIC	5	4	3	2	1	TOTAL STUDENTS RESPONDED	MEAN SCORE
		N %	N%	N%	N%	N%		
1	Basic Computer skills & use of information Technology and ArtificialIntelligence (AI	70 (47.3%)	41 (27.7%)	29 (19.6%)	4 (2.7%)	4 (2.7%)	152	4.14
2	Communication Skills	97 (63.8%)	41 (27%)	11 (7.2%)	2 (1.3%)	1 (0.7%)	152	4.52
3	Language skills	93 (61.2%)	43 (28.3%)	14 (9.2%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.49
4	Methods of Self-directed Learning skills	94 (61.8%)	39 (25.7%)	16 (10.5%)	3 (2%)	0 (0%)	152	4.47
5	E- Learning	77 (50.7%)	43 (28.3%)	23 (15.1%)	5 (3.3%)	4 (2.6%)	152	4.21
6	Healthy Life style	88 (57.9%)	45 (29.6%)	12 (7.9%)	5 (3.3%)	2 (1.3%)	152	4.39
7	Sports and Hobbies	77 (50.7%)	42 (27.6%)	22 (14.5%)	6 (3.9%)	5 (3.3%)	152	4.18
8	Community base learning	93 (61.2%)	20 (13.2%)	36 (23.7%)	1 (0.7%)	2 (1.3%)	152	4.43)
9	Peer Assisted Learning	87 (57.2%)	44 (28.9%)	17 (11.2%)	3 (2%)	1 (0.7%)	152	4.40
10	Privileged communication in Medical Ethics	90 (59.2%)	42 (27.6%)	18 (11.8%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.7%)	152	4.44
11	Social Media And Cyber Law	81 (53.3%)	44 (28.9%)	22 (14.5%)	2 (1.3%)	3 (2%)	152	4.30
12	Assessment Driven Learning	83 (54.6%)	46 (30.3%)	19 (12.5%)	4 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	152	4.37
13	Evidence Based Medicine	85 (55.9%)	48 (31.6%)	17 (11.2%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.42
14	Maintaining Diary and portfolio management	85 (55.9%)	40 (26.3%)	23 (15.1%)	4 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	152	4.36
15	Feedback and Reflective writing	78 (51.3%)	48 (31.6%)	23 (15.1%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	152	4.32

In the feedback module on computer language learning and extracurricular activities, communication skills and method of self directed learning was liked by the most; 63.8% and 61.8% respectively. Basic computer skills and use of information technology and Artificial intelligence and E learning are the least liked. Average mean of this module is 4.35 %

Table 5 : Feedback Module On Field Visit.

FEEDBACK ON THE MODULE ON FIELD VISITS								
Response								
SL.NO	TOPIC	5 N %	4 N%	3 N%	2 N%	1 N%	TOTAL STUDENTS RESPONDED	MEAN SCORE
1	Visit to Immunization Clinic & Urban Health Training centre	80 (52.6%)	40 (26.3%)	20 (13.2%)	2 (1.3%)	10 (6.6%)	152	4.17
2	Health Care Delivery system	85 (55.9%)	40 (26.3%)	23 (15.1%)	4 (2.6%)	0 (0.0 %)	152	4.36
3	National Health Policies and priorities- Alternate Health system in country	85 (55.9%)	44 (28.9%)	20 (13.2%)	2 (1.3%)	1 (0.7 %)	152	4.38
4	Documentation Of Medical Records and Consumer Protection ACT	83 (54.6%)	47 (30.9%)	18 (11.8%)	4 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	152	4.38
5	Dean's address/Shramadan & tree Plantation	96 (63.2%)	37 (24.3%)	15 (9.9%)	4 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	152	4.48
6	Awareness & rights of person with disabilities	85 (55.9%)	38 (25%)	24 (15.8%)	4 (2.6%)	1 (0.7%)	152	4.33

In feedback module on field visit Deans address and Shramadan & tree plantation was liked the most with 54.6% and visit to immunization and urban health training centre was liked the least 6.6%. Average mean was 4.35 %.

DISCUSSION:

As the students enter medical profession they are least exposed to interrelatedness of scientific, social, professional and interpersonal elements in the field of medical education.

The present study was conducted on phase 1s MBBS batch 2024-25 to obtain the Foundation course which was carried out in accordance to CBME guidelines. Literature review on this topic revealed few published article.[2-4] Before the implementation of CBME, this FC was not mandatory in the curriculum only welcome cum orientation program was conducted previously i.e before 2019 for 1 or 2 days to introduce fresh MBBS students about the college and curriculum. There were no clear guidelines before CBME.

Many topics that are covered now in foundation course were untouched like skill module, professional development module and module on attitude, ethics and communication (AETCOM). [5]

In this study, most of the students rated their overall experience to orientation 51.3 % as highly satisfactory. 35.7% as satisfactory and Foundation course 54.8% as highly satisfactory and 36.5 as satisfactory.

In our study so the orientation module, skill module, module on professional development, module on computer, language, extracurricular activities, module on field visit has the mean score as 4.48, 4.43, 4.48, 4.35, 4.35 respectively.

This orientation and foundational course proves to be invaluable in shaping newly admitted students. It equips them to handle both the challenges and rewards that come with medical education, as well as their future professional practices. This includes a deep understanding of medical ethics, enhancing communication skills with colleagues and nurturing effective interactions with patients.

The distinguishing feature of the present study is that the feedback of students on all the major modules of FC such as orientation program, skill module, professional development module, Field visit module and the module on learning and extracurricular activities. In the present study, the average mean score on 5 point likert scale were same in orientation module and professional development module mean 4.48 respectively. And feedback module on computer, language, learning & extracurricular activities and module on field visit is 4.3 respectively which was least.

In a similar study conducted at Kerala by Francis et al 40%, 60%, 5 and 3% students rated the overall orientation program to be excellent, very good, good and satisfactory. [6]

Limitations:

1. As all the 200 students of the batch 24-25 could not attend the program we could not study the perception of whole batch, instead our study participants were limited to 152.

2. Orientation and FC should be taken after final counseling of 1st MBBS students or should be done after all admission as this Programme is necessary to shape the future of the students.

CONCLUSIONS:

The findings of this study emphasis the importance of a well-structured orientation program and foundation course in facilitating first-year MBBS students' transition into medical education. While the majority of students expressed satisfaction, several areas for improvement were identified, particularly in enhancing content relevance and awareness of support services. The foundation course helped to assimilate and acclimatize the newly joined phase 1 MBBS students with the main stream of medical course.

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