

A Study on Student's Perception of Community Oriented Learning in Community Medicine Dept Clinical Posting



Medical Science

KEYWORDS :
perception, learning, community

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Community oriented education is an important strategy to train undergraduate medical students for understanding health care needs of the community and for delivering health care services. This training enables students to relate theoretical knowledge to practical training in a primary care context. This method of teaching and training of medical students has been recognized at various levels. This activity provides students ample opportunities to interact with people of different socioeconomic class to understand their problems as well as needs. The present study was conducted to assess the level of satisfaction gained by students through community oriented learning and to study students semester preference for community oriented learning.

Materials and methods: This is a cross-sectional study was based on feedback taken from 93 students of IV semester posted in Community Medicine department during their clinical posting. These students were divided into four batches during the period of four months from February 2011 to May 2011. Each batch was divided into groups with two students in each group.

With the help of predesigned questionnaire students conducted a family health survey in field practice area of Urban Health Training Center of Dept of Community Medicine which is in Guntur.

Results: A total of 69% students rated their level of satisfaction for the project as good to excellent and 9% felt that it was satisfactory. 63% students rated the level of community exposure as good to excellent followed by 21% who rated it as satisfactory. 81% students felt that this survey should be a routine part of their curriculum and 48% students preferred VI semester is the ideal semester for doing this work; 43% were not ready for extension of the same survey.

Conclusion: Understanding the community while communicating with people was the unique task for students rather than routine classroom teaching in the college or in a hospital which has made students to understand Community Medicine thoroughly. Thus community based learning helped in sensitizing the young medical undergraduates to the community health problems.

Introduction

Community oriented education is an important strategy to train undergraduate medical students for understanding health care needs of the community and for delivering health care services.¹ This training enables students to relate theoretical knowledge to practical training in a primary care context. This method of teaching and training of medical students has been recognized at various levels.^{2, 3} The medical college in general works with aim to improve the health status of the people by providing holistic health care through training of socially accountable health professionals. Therefore the MBBS curriculum and the teaching program are need based, integrated, community oriented, student centered and partially problem solving.³ Also the MCI curriculum revised in 1997 has increased teaching learning hours in community medicine to emphasize community based learning.⁴ Accordingly Department of Community Medicine, Katuri Medical College, Guntur (A.P) gives family health survey to IV semester students during their practical posting of one month. This activity provides students ample opportunities to interact with people of different socioeconomic class to understand their problems as well as needs. The present study was conducted to assess the level of satisfaction gained by students through community oriented learning and to study students semester preference for community oriented learning.

Materials and Methods

This is a cross-sectional study was based on feedback taken from 93 students of IV semester posted in Community Medicine department during their clinical posting. These students were divided into four batches during the period of four months from February 2011 to May 2011. Each batch was divided into groups with two students in each group.

With the help of predesigned questionnaire students conducted a family health survey in field practice area of Urban Health Training Center of Dept of Community Medicine which is in Guntur. They have collected information on family composition, socio-economic status, health problems, the needs perceived by the families, recreational facilities, availability of health services,

maternal and child health and family planning services etc. Before survey the students were oriented with a complete explanation of proforma. Adequate time was allotted to them to solve their queries regarding proforma and survey through discussion with teacher.

The data collection, compilation, entry, analysis of the survey was done by students. On the last day of posting of each batch presentation was done by students in front of all faculty members and students have submitted a comprehensive report. Feedback on this work was taken with maintaining anonymity and students were encouraged to express their views freely. The feedback consisted of closed ended and open ended questions.

Close ended questions like level of satisfaction, level of community exposure, opinion on exclusion or inclusion of survey in their curriculum were asked. Students graded level of satisfaction and community exposure from 0 to 5. (0-bad, 1-poor, 2-average, 3-satisfactory, 4- good, 5 -excellent) Their preference for 'ideal semester' for doing survey and extension of the same for more than one semester was obtained. Open ended questions based on the strengths, weaknesses of the study were included. Students were also asked to express their unique experiences they have got during data collection.

Results and discussion

A total of 69% students rated their level of satisfaction for the project as good to excellent and 9% felt that it was satisfactory. 63% students rated the level of community exposure as good to excellent followed by 21% who rated it as satisfactory. 81% students felt that this survey should be a routine part of their curriculum and 48% students preferred VI semester is the ideal semester for doing this work; 43% were not ready for extension of the same survey.

For the preference of type of study work, 74% students preferred to do observational as well as interventional study rather than doing only one type of study.

In the open ended questions, 58% students perceived that good exposure to community was the strength of project in which they came across the real life situations at grass root level. 34% students opined that cooperation amongst students, cooperation from community side was the strength of project while others have mentioned that it will be helpful for doing project work in future and useful while practicing as a doctor.

Premarajan KC et al 3 mentioned in their study done amongst medical undergraduates from eastern Nepal that eighty five percent of students felt the posting was useful in understanding the practical aspect of epidemiological studies and seventy six percent rated the program from good to excellent. Sixty one percent of students gave the opinion that this posting would help them in their future research activities and in becoming community oriented doctors.

Inadequate time allotment for the project was ranked as important weakness by thirty students while Second important weakness ranked by twenty nine students was language barrier.

In a study done by Sharma AK et al 2 on community based medical education, students were not agree with existing duration for the exercise. In our study we also asked students to mention the

unique experience perceived by them while being in the community. 'Satisfied families though living in the slum' area was the unique experience for 44% students followed by 37% students perceived 'getting a chance of interaction with people outside the college campus' as a unique experience .

Conclusion

Feedback on community based learning showed that it was a very good learning experience for

undergraduate students. Understanding the community while communicating with people was the unique task for students rather than routine classroom teaching in the college or in a hospital which has made students to understand Community Medicine thoroughly.

Thus community based learning helped in sensitizing the young medical undergraduates to the community health problems.

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