



## MEDICAL ENTRANTS' EXPECTATIONS FROM ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE MILIEU - A QUESTIONNAIRE BASED STUDY

### Biochemistry

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### KEYWORDS

#### INTRODUCTION:-

The "educational environment" (EE) encompasses all the events that happen within the faculty, classrooms, departments or university which is integral in determining the success of undergraduate medical education [1,2]. The role of educational environment has received worldwide attention in the past few years due to its crucial role in the lifelong learning experiences of undergraduate students. Providing an adequately healthy and positive environment in a medical college requires the knowledge and understanding of student's expectations from the very beginning of the undergraduate curriculum. This is expected to sufficiently equip the administrators in planning and implementation of the curriculum and also evaluate the program.

A wide range of personal and institutional variables have been emphasized during the research of describing student academic adaptation to EE, and it has been found that expectations play a significant role.[3,4] As described by Byrne et al., "expectations reflect an individual's anticipation of future events and conditions". When the expectations of students match with the academic reality they face, they tend to be more content and graduate with motivation for learning, academic success, and general academic satisfaction.[5] Hence it is of utmost importance to know what the students' expect when they enter the medical college.[6] The Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) was published in 1997 as a tool to evaluate educational environments of medical schools and other health training settings and studies have concluded it to be an effective tool.[7] However, the learning environment in our country is different from the western countries and hence the same questionnaire cannot be administered verbatim to our students. Hence with the intent of identifying the expectations the students have from the EE while entering the medical college, we aimed to develop a descriptive questionnaire that offers an insight into assessing and measuring the student expectations from the EE.

#### METHODS

##### PARTICIPANTS

This cross-sectional, questionnaire based study was conducted at Maulana Azad Medical College, New Delhi. A total of 250 first year MBBS students (133 males and 77 females) were administered the questionnaire during the foundation course and half an hour was given to submit it.

##### 1. Questionnaire

A questionnaire containing 65 statements, regarding the expectations of the students from the educational environment was administered to the respondents, who were asked to read each statement and to respond using a five-point Likert scale ranging 0 to 4, with 0 signifying least and 4 the highest score.

On this scale, a higher score indicates a higher expectation of the students from that particular domain.

**The questionnaire had a maximum score of 260. The five subscales on which the expectations of students were assessed were as follows:-**

- (1) Students' expectations from teachers: 12 items; maximum score,

48

- (2) Students' expectations from administration: 19 items; maximum score, 76
- (3) Students' expectations from seniors: 9 items; maximum score, 36
- (4) Students' expectations from classmates: 10 items; maximum score, 40
- (5) Students' expectations from self: 15 items; maximum score, 60

##### 2. Measures

The responses to the items of the questionnaire were assessed by the method used for assessment of the responses to DREEM, a widely-used tool for assessing the perceptions of students of the educational environment in medical colleges.

Items with a mean score of 3.5 or above have been classed as the 'highest expectation areas'. Items with a mean of two or less are indicative of the 'least expected areas'. Items with a mean between two and three are aspects with moderate expectations.

##### 3. Statistical analysis

The data was analyzed using SPSS version 20.0 (IBM Corp., Armonk, USA).

The scores were represented as means and standard deviations. Total scores and the domain scores were calculated.

#### RESULTS

The questionnaire was administered to 250 first year MBBS students, out of which 210 filled the questionnaire (response rate of 84%). The global score of our medical students was 213/ 260. The highest scores were recorded for the expectations from administration (70/76, 92.1%), followed by expectations from seniors (33/36, 91.7%), expectations from classmates (32/40, 80%), expectations from teachers (35/48, 72.9%), and lastly expectations from self (43/60, 71.7%). There was no gender wise difference in the total score or domain wise expectation scores (P value > 0.05)

##### I. Expectation from teachers:

The mean scores of the items ranged from 1.3 to 3.7 (out of 4). The total score in this domain was 34.57 out of 48, as shown in table 1.

##### II. Expectations from administration:

The mean scores of the items ranged from 1.3 to 3.7 (out of 4). The total score in this domain was 34.57 out of 48, as shown in table 2.

##### III. Expectations from seniors:

Expectations from seniors received a unanimous score of > 3.5 in almost all the items. The total score in this domain was 32.72 out of 36, as shown in table 3.

##### IV. Expectations from classmates:

The mean scores of the items ranged from 1.1 to 3.9 (out of 4). The total score in this domain was 32.40 out of 40, as shown in table 4

### V. Expectations from self:

The mean scores of the items ranged from 1.6 to 3.8 (out of 4). The total score in this domain was 42.91 out of 60, as shown in table 5.

## DISCUSSION

Expectations are the foundation on which a desired outcome or what an individual hopes for in a system is built. [8] It is an important feature of human cognition. [9] They act as a standard against which we can compare our actual experiences and look for the unmet needs from the system. First year students enter medical school with lots of enthusiasm and expectations from the educational environment. If we have insinuation about what they expect from the system from the very beginning, this knowledge can be used to facilitate a positive learning environment.

Even though the importance of systematically analyzing the students' expectations from the EE have been acknowledged as a cardinal tool for the success of the medical institution, not much has been done in this regard yet. In the present study, we have made an effort to fill this lacuna by developing a descriptive questionnaire to gather the student's expectations from the EE relevant to our unique demography. While developing this questionnaire, the student's perspective was considered and each item was phrased to provide the institution an informative understanding of the student's expectations and was also easy enough for all students to understand.

### I. Expectation from teachers:

Items in this domain that scored less than 2 points were that students least expected the teachers to pass them in the exams irrespective of their performance; and that the teachers should emphasize on rote learning. Moderate expectations (percentage) were from the items that teachers should not concentrate on exam oriented learning; teachers should give feedback individually; and teachers should make efforts not to pinpoint shortcomings in front of the entire class. Students expected the most from the following items: teachers should provide a stimulating non threatening environment for learning; teachers should come well prepared for the class; teachers should be approachable and act as mentors; and teachers should be role models. (Table 1). Kiani et al also concluded from their study that the medical students look upon their teachers as role models in such diverse facets as teaching, interpersonal, personal and professional skills. [10] In a study conducted on both undergraduate as well as post graduate students, Maria et al also reported that the students explored more than the teaching skills of their facilitators. [11].

### II. Expectations from administration:

Overall the most expectations in the EE were from the administration, with 18 out of 19 items scoring > 3.5. More than 90 % students wanted the administration to be supportive; not to be discriminatory on the basis of region, religion and caste; wanted the campus to be safe for everyone and the mess to be hygienic; and wanted the information regarding the exam to be prompt and to reach all the students. The students had least expectations for the stringent record keeping of their attendance and academic performance. Medical students are in general satisfied with the training received, though demanding improvements in terms of systems to support their studies and training—libraries, laboratories, access to computers and the Internet, among others. [12]

### III. Expectations from seniors:

More than 95% students do not expect their seniors to discriminate them on the basis of region, religion and caste. Approximately 80-90% wanted their seniors to act as mentors and to be sensitive for students with disabilities. About 70 – 80% wanted their seniors to inform them regarding different activities of Medicos association, and not to misguide them regarding attendance and internal assessment. Around 60 – 70 % students expected their seniors to help them by marking the books, not to indulge in ragging nor force them to complete their files in the hostel, nor act authoritatively if sharing room with them in the hostel.

### IV. Expectations from classmates:

Maximum students (94%) wished not to be discriminated on the basis of region, religion, caste. They expected the least to be helped through proxy in attendance or helped in exams through cheating; neither do they expect to share all resource materials with their classmates. Approximately 70% students wanted their classmates to help them to improve their weak areas and accompany them for sports and other extracurricular activities but did not want to indulge in cut throat

competition with them. Around 70-80% students expected their classmates to be helpful and to be sensitized for fellow classmates with disabilities.

### V. Expectations from self:

Among the five domains, the least score for expectations was from self. The foremost expectation from self was that they should have a good friend circle and they should deal with stress well (>80%). Sixty to seventy percent students expected themselves to perform well in the class and to have a good social life and also wanted to become a doctor to earn respect, and wanted to be free to ask any question in the class. Fifty three percent students expected themselves to stay away from distractions and concentrate on studies. The items which scored '2' in the likert scale and less than 50 % were that they should be popular in the class, they should be an active member of student union, bunking to classes is fine, listening to seniors is always better than listening to teachers, they wanted to become a doctor to earn money, they wanted to become a doctor as they were good in studies and had nothing else to prove myself, nor they wanted to become a doctor as their parents wanted them to.

As we analyze the findings of our study, it is becoming increasingly obvious that students have a positive and encouraging perception regarding medicine with idealistic expectations from self, peers, teachers and administration, at least in the initial years of their studentship. It is pertinent to fulfill majority of the aspirations of the students to maintain their enthusiasm and zeal. [13]

The aspirations and expectations of the students from the EE should be estimated so that the institutions and teachers can recommend measures to incorporate those expectations to generate the most favorable and advantageous conditions for the perseverance and success of the students. [14]

## CONCLUSIONS

The study was targeted to assess the expectations of first year medical students in a single medical college in Delhi. The scoring in this questionnaire can be used for improving and optimizing the learning environment in the medical institution and educational research thereby helping the medical teachers and administrators change the environment in a student centric way and also not compromising the quality and standards of learning. Also this will give an opportunity to explain and counsel to the students, about unreasonable expectations or expectations which due to unique reasons cannot be addressed. This will help in development an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect and will offer an environment of safe learning environment for the students' at the most opportune time.

**Table 1: Scores of students in Likert scale of (0 – 4) on expectations from teachers. (Max score 4)**

| Sl no.        | Item                                                                            | Mean  | SD    |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 1.            | Teaching should be student centric                                              | 3.2   | 0.80  |
| 2.            | Teachers should provide a stimulating non threatening environment for learning  | 3.7   | 0.59  |
| 3.            | Teachers should come well prepared for the class                                | 3.7   | 0.60  |
| 4.            | Teachers concentrate on exam oriented learning                                  | 2.3   | 1.16  |
| 5.            | Teachers give feedback individually                                             | 2.4   | 1.15  |
| 6.            | Teachers make efforts not to pinpoint shortcomings in front of the entire class | 2.8   | 1.10  |
| 7.            | Teachers should be authoritative and ensure discipline                          | 3.1   | 0.88  |
| 8.            | The teaching should be concerned with developing competencies                   | 3.3   | 0.87  |
| 9.            | Teachers should pass us in the exams irrespective of the performance            | 1.3   | 1.37  |
| 10.           | Teachers should be approachable and act as mentors                              | 3.7   | 0.58  |
| 11.           | Teachers should emphasize on rote learning                                      | 1.6   | 1.40  |
| 12.           | Teachers should be role models                                                  | 3.5   | 0.73  |
| Maximum score |                                                                                 | 34.57 | 11.23 |

**Table 2: Responses of students in Likert scale of (0 – 4) on expectations from administration. (Max score 4)**

| Sl no. | Item               | Mean | SD   |
|--------|--------------------|------|------|
| 1      | Must be supportive | 3.9  | 0.33 |

|               |                                                                                    |       |       |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 2             | Should maintain attendance and marks records very stringently                      | 2.9   | 1.09  |
| 3             | There should not be any discrimination on the basis of region, religion, caste     | 3.9   | 0.42  |
| 4             | Should be sensitized for students with disabilities                                | 3.6   | 0.81  |
| 5             | The campus should be disabled friendly                                             | 3.6   | 0.87  |
| 6             | The campus should be safe for everyone                                             | 3.9   | 0.36  |
| 7             | There should be a dedicated clinical psychologist in the campus                    | 3.5   | 0.70  |
| 8             | There should be a grievance cell for students                                      | 3.4   | 0.77  |
| 9             | The hostel should be clean with good living conditions                             | 3.9   | 0.43  |
| 10            | The mess should be clean and hygienic                                              | 3.9   | 0.26  |
| 11            | There should be facilities for sports, reading club, etc.                          | 3.8   | 0.40  |
| 12            | The library should be well equipped with facilities for e learning                 | 3.6   | 0.73  |
| 13            | Book banks and bone banks should be available for economically weaker students     | 3.7   | 0.64  |
| 14            | Well equipped book shop, stationery and grocery store, ATM, cafe should be present | 3.8   | 0.47  |
| 15            | Guest house should be available for parents of out of station students             | 3.6   | 0.74  |
| 16            | Staff should be available during working hours                                     | 3.7   | 0.59  |
| 17            | Information regarding examinations should be prompt and reach all students         | 3.9   | 0.37  |
| 18            | Fee information should be well disseminated                                        | 3.6   | 0.59  |
| 19            | Staff should be courteous and ensure work is done in minimal visits                | 3.7   | 0.60  |
| Maximum score |                                                                                    | 69.90 | 11.19 |

**Table 3: Responses of students in Likert scale of (0 – 4) on expectations from seniors. (Max score 4)**

| Sl no.        | Item                                                                           | Mean  | SD   |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|
| 1             | Should not indulge in ragging                                                  | 3.4   | 0.98 |
| 2             | Should help them by marking the books                                          | 3.5   | 0.75 |
| 3             | Should act as mentors                                                          | 3.8   | 0.48 |
| 4             | Should not misguide regarding attendance and internal assessment               | 3.7   | 0.74 |
| 5             | Should inform them regarding different activities of Medicos association       | 3.7   | 0.59 |
| 6             | Should not force them to complete their files in the hostel                    | 3.5   | 0.85 |
| 7             | Should not act authoritatively if sharing room with them in the hostel         | 3.4   | 0.80 |
| 8             | There should not be any discrimination on the basis of region, religion, caste | 3.9   | 0.26 |
| 9             | Should be sensitized to students with disabilities                             | 3.9   | 0.43 |
| Maximum score |                                                                                | 32.72 | 5.90 |

**Table 4: Responses of students in Likert scale of (0 – 4) on expectations from classmates. (Max score 4)**

| Sl no.        | Item                                                                           | Mean  | SD   |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|
| 1             | Should be helpful                                                              | 3.8   | 0.47 |
| 2             | Should be there to support in stress                                           | 3.7   | 0.56 |
| 3             | Should share all resource materials                                            | 3.3   | 0.84 |
| 4             | Should help in improvising weak areas                                          | 3.6   | 0.64 |
| 5             | Should not indulge in cut throat competition                                   | 3.5   | 0.79 |
| 6             | There should not be any discrimination on the basis of region, religion, caste | 3.9   | 0.29 |
| 7             | Should be sensitized to students with disabilities                             | 3.8   | 0.57 |
| 8             | Should help through proxy in attendance                                        | 2.3   | 1.39 |
| 9             | Should help in the exams through cheating                                      | 1.1   | 1.27 |
| 10            | Should accompany for sports and other extracurricular activities               | 3.6   | 0.62 |
| Maximum score |                                                                                | 32.40 | 7.44 |

**Table 5: Responses of students in Likert scale of (0 – 4) on expectations from self. (Max score 4)**

| Sl no. | Item                                          | Mean | SD   |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------|------|------|
| 1      | I should be popular in my class               | 2.5  | 1.08 |
| 2      | I should be able to perform well in the class | 3.7  | 0.53 |
| 3      | I should have a good friend circle            | 3.8  | 0.48 |

|               |                                                                                         |       |       |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 4             | I should be able to deal with stress well                                               | 3.8   | 0.43  |
| 5             | I should become an active member of student union                                       | 3.1   | 1.01  |
| 6             | I should stay away from distractions and concentrate on studies                         | 3.3   | 0.85  |
| 7             | I should have a good social life                                                        | 3.4   | 0.86  |
| 8             | Bunking classes is fine                                                                 | 1.7   | 1.22  |
| 9             | Listening to the seniors is always better than the teachers                             | 1.6   | 1.10  |
| 10            | I should be free to ask any questions in the class                                      | 3.5   | 0.69  |
| 11            | I am confident of performing well                                                       | 3.3   | 0.81  |
| 12            | I want to become a doctor to earn money                                                 | 2.1   | 1.21  |
| 13            | I want to become a doctor to earn respect                                               | 3.6   | 0.71  |
| 14            | I want to become a doctor as I was good in studies and had nothing else to prove myself | 1.7   | 1.28  |
| 15            | I want to become a doctor as my parents wanted me to                                    | 1.8   | 1.43  |
| Maximum score |                                                                                         | 42.91 | 13.70 |

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