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USE OF POST GRADUATE RESIDENTS AS TRAINED VOLUNTEERS IN TEACHING AND ASSESSING CLINICAL EXAMINATIONS SKILLS

Surgery

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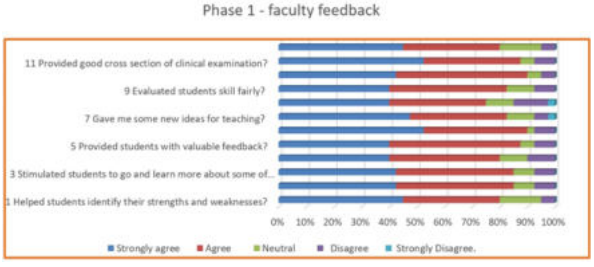
KEYWORDS

INRODUCTION:
The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the design, delivery and processes in medical education. Non- availability of clinical cases & the risk of exposure of covid to patient, students & faculty have become major limitations in both teaching & assessment. Present study was planned to use a method involving virtual power point presentation cases along with post graduate residents (PGRs) as trained volunteers on whom clinical examination skills can be both demonstrated for both case based learning and assessment.Virtual patients (VPs) have been used both for formative and summative purposes (1), with value for knowledge application across differing scenarios and clinical reasoning and as another practice tool that allows opportunities for mastery (2,3). The concept has been derived from moulage patients used in Advance Trauma Life Support Course of American College of Surgeons (4).

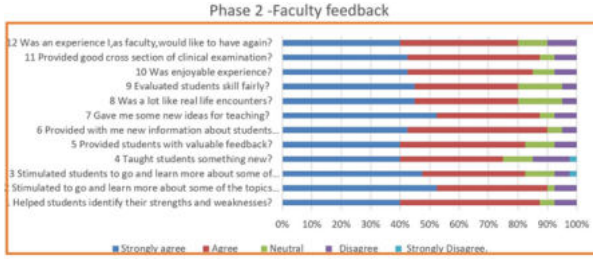
Objectives:
To study the feasibility of using PGRs as trained volunteers in teaching & assessing clinical examination skills.

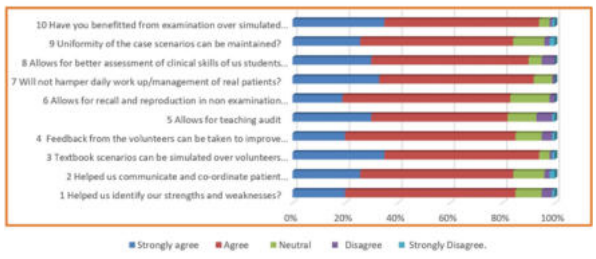
METHODS:
Post Graduate residents (PGRs) & Faculty of the department of a tertiary university hospital were involved in conducting this study after ethical committee approval. Both Faculty and PGRs were briefed and trained about the nature of study. PGRs were trained to act as volunteers by senior faculty. This was followed by preparation of questionnaire for both faculty and students on google forms for ease of recording and analysis and internal validation by faculty of the department. The study was carried in two phases:- First phase (Teaching phase) & Second phase (Assessment Phase). Both student & faculty were given a questionnaire based on Likert scale for first and second phase separately to assess the feasibility, advantage & disadvantage of this format. PGRs acting as volunteers were told to fill a form about their perception of this method. The response forms of both faculty & students were evaluated.

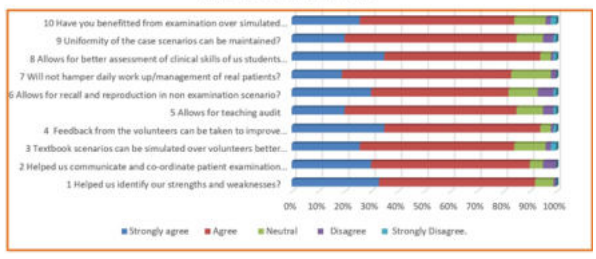
RESULTS



Phase 1 (Teaching phase), 80% of faculty and 90% of students felt that there was an increased understanding of topic and examination skills when volunteer was used. Phase 2 (Assessment phase) more than 85% of both faculty and students felt that this model helped in standardisation of examination format of clinical skills. PGRs acting as volunteers felt that present study helped them in better understanding of patients perspective as well as clinical skills.







DISCUSSION
Experiential learning is a key component in teaching clinical and communication skills to medical students. There are a number of challenges that arise from patient involvement in medical education. These range from practical considerations relating to the organization of clinical placements to patient concerns about consent and confidentiality. Present study was designed to explore innovative solution of using trained PGRs as volunteers or standardised patients for teaching and assessing medical students. The terms simulated patients and standardized patients are often used interchangeably; however, the emphasis for simulated patients is in portraying the signs and symptoms of real patients, whereas the emphasis for standardized

patients (SPs) is on consistency. As consistency is important in testing students, SPs should be the norm in examination settings and if these SPs are volunteer PGRs, there training to act like a patient becomes easy. Present study explored this fact and used PGRs as volunteers or standardized patients for teaching and assessing clinical examination skills. More than 80% of both faculty & PGRs felt that present model was helpful. This method benefitted PGRs in learning both patients' perspective and clinical skills.

Limitation:

Certain clinical skill examinations could not be done on volunteers like breast examination, genitalia in hernia and hydrocele, etc. However, mannequins can be used to resolve this issue. The clinical signs and findings which are seen on real patients could not be demonstrated.

CONCLUSION:

Present study has shown that use of PGRs as volunteers in teaching and assessing clinical examination skills is feasible. It also offers a standardised solution in a situation where clinical cases are not available. Multicentric studies will help in improvising this method.

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