

5.7 Using regular student feedback to improve the MBBS course

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ABSTRACT

Introduction:

A new MBBS curriculum was introduced in the Medical Faculty in 2004. In order to monitor the quality, feedback is obtained from students at regular intervals, both on completion of learning modules and at the end of longer learning phases and conveyed back to teachers through the Medical Education Centre. In this study, feedback from two consecutive batches, regarding their learning experiences in the 3rd and 4th years of study was analyzed in order to ascertain changes in student satisfaction.

Methods:

Questionnaires were administered to the 1st and 2nd batches of students to follow the new curriculum, at the end of their 4th year of study. Feedback was obtained on 10 learning modules; the clerkships conducted by the Faculty; and the Community Health and Behavioural Sciences, Mental Health & Ethics strands. Students were asked to indicate their satisfaction with the different learning activities in these course components and the proportion of responses indicating satisfaction were compared between batches.

Findings:

Completed questionnaires were returned by 158/168 students and 140/164 students in the 1st and 2nd batches respectively. The proportion of responses expressing satisfaction with specific learning activities ranged from a low of 24.3% for a 4th year module to a high of 96% for the Family Medicine Clerkship, both for the 1st batch. Comparison of the level of satisfaction with two 4th year modules where the 1st batch had expressed the lowest levels of satisfaction showed that student satisfaction with both modules increased significantly from one year to the next: from 221/909 responses (24.3%) to 451/853 (52.9%) for one module (chi-squared=152.1, P<0.001); and from 595/857 (69.4%) to 631/845 (75.7%) for the other module (chi-squared=5.81, P=0.016).

Conclusions:

Regular student feedback is useful in identifying course components that need improvement, and can be an effective means of initiating appropriate changes that improve the overall quality of the course.