5.4 Comparison of undergraduate student performance in Anatomy practical examination after studying prosected anatomy specimens and after doing anatomy dissections.

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: In the subject of Anatomy, students are expected to identify parts of the human body and their relationships to each other. This could be studied by dissecting human cadavers by students themselves according to the manual or using the already dissected/ "prosected" specimens. Prosected anatomy specimens are prepared by the staff.

Objective: To compare the performance in anatomy practical examination (OSPE) of students who had studied prosected specimens with the students who did dissections.

Method: A batch of students was divided into two groups by using random numbers. One group was given prosected specimens (prosection group) to study the pelvic walls and pelvic organs. The other group was given cadavers to dissect (dissection group) and study the same areas. Two weeks time period was given to both groups. At the end of two weeks both groups had to face an OSPE. The OSPE involved identifying structures in prosected specimens. None of the students had access to these specimens prior to the OSPE. Results were analysed using EPI6 statistical package.

Results: Prosection group had 80 students. Dissection group had 72 students. Age range was 20 -28 years. Mean ages for both groups were 21.6 years. There were 43 (55%) and 34 (47%) females in prosection and dissection groups respectively. In prosection group 30 (38%) passed the practical test. In dissection group 14 (19%) passed the practical test. There was a significant difference (based on X^2 test, P= 0.02) in the performance of these two groups.

Conclusion: Prosection group performed significantly better than the dissection group. It is probable that when prosected specimens are used time used for dissecting can be used to identify and study structures.