

A COMPARATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE BASED STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF SMALL GROUP TEACHING WITH LARGE GROUP TEACHING FOR MEDICOS

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ABSTRACT- In the past decade there has been revolutionary change in the field of Medical Education both in curriculum development and learning methodologies. The present study is done on 1st MBBS students and faculty to observe the effectiveness of small group teaching in comparison with large group teaching. The results revealed that most of the students felt it student friendly (92%) and about 95% students were comfortable with this teaching strategy, with (81%) students feeling small group teaching as better learning method, promotes critical thinking in (91%) there by suggesting the wide acceptance of small group teaching even though there are few drawbacks like huge infrastructure and resources.

Key words- small group, large group teaching, student centered learning

1. BACKGROUND

In the past decade there has been revolutionary change in the field of Medical Education both in curriculum development and learning methodologies. The advancement in the field of science and technology has made use of various modalities of teaching. Group discussions are at the center of medical education, as the students learn more efficiently by SGT's. George Brown (1988) describes small group teaching as "getting students to talk and think". A typical small group includes 8-12 learners and a facilitator. The students are given definitive objectives, which they achieve working as a team. The role of facilitator is to monitor that learning outcomes are attained in prescribed time.

AIM: To find out whether the small group teaching is really effective modality compared to large group teaching on medical undergraduate students.

Methodology: A prospective study was conducted on 1st MBBS students and faculty were asked to respond to structured questionnaire based on 3-point LIKERT scale regarding small group teaching.

2. RESULTS

A questionnaire regarding small group teaching

S.NO	QUESTIONNAIRE	POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE
1	Do you think that small group teaching a better learning method compared to large group teaching?	81%	7%	12%
2	Do you feel comfortable with small	95%	1%	4%

	group teaching compared to large group teaching			
3	Is small group teaching student friendly compared to large group teaching?	92%	5%	3%
4	Is there motivation from small group teaching compared to large group teaching?	84%	9%	7%
5	Will critical thinking be improved by small group teaching compared to large group teaching?	91%	5%	4%
6	Is everyone in group getting equal opportunity for participation compared to large group teaching?	92%	3%	5%
7	Does small group teaching help in better retaining knowledge compared to large group teaching	85%	9%	6%

Faculty based questionnaire regarding effectiveness of short group teaching or large group teaching-

S.NO	QUESTIONNAIRE	POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE
1	Is small group teaching preferred over didactic lectures?	87%	9%	4%
2	Is small group teaching useful for your professional development compared to large group teaching?	82%	7%	11%
3	Will small group teaching promote student centered learning compared to large group teaching?	74%	12%	14%
4	Are the resources adequate for small group teaching	38%	5%	57%
5	Are the grades of students improved by small group teaching compared to large group teaching?	91%	6%	3%
6	Will small group teaching helps in standardization of goals and objectives?	76%	12%	12%
7	Will small group teaching help in better teacher –student relationship compared to large group teaching?	87%	8%	5%

3. DISCUSSION

A total of 152 MBBS students and 15 faculty members responded to questionnaire. Analysis showed that, most of the students felt it student friendly (92%) and about 95% students were comfortable with this teaching strategy, with (81%) students feeling small group teaching as better learning method, promotes critical thinking in (91%), (84%) are motivated, retaining of knowledge in (85%) and (92%) students felt that every one has equal opportunity for participation in small group teaching compared to large group teaching. The faculty also preferred small group teaching over didactic lectures (87%), it being helpful for their professional development (82%), promoting student centered learning (74%). However, they

had concerns regarding the resources available (38%) and standardization in delivery of goals and objectives (76%), and 87% of faculty felt that student teacher relationship is better in small group teaching and the rest all are in the favour of large group teaching. In small group teaching the team of students have to prepare for explaining the topic to other students and for answering the questions during the discussion, while the students in large group teaching do not have the necessity to prepare earlier due to their passive role. Small group teaching requires large accommodation and man power whereas for large group teaching such large man power is not needed. One important positive regarding of small group learning is that it can target knowledge which is relevant to learners is delivered more effectively compared to traditional lecture-based teaching. There are various studies that proved the effectiveness of group discussions for greater synthesis and retention of materials, when compared to traditional teaching. Small group teaching and learning activities have been in the limelight of medical education for many years, which includes problem-solving, role-playing, team-based learning, brainstorming, leading, and debating. In late 1950s the concept of small group learning started in the late 1958 by Michael and Enid Balint in England. They initiated small group seminars on real patient problems for general practitioners. Small group discussions have greater advantage in reasoning and problem-solving skills of students, which are essential for solving real-life problems in clinical practice. Teaching and learning in an active way help students become better doctors by developing problem-solving and reasoning skills. Although the didactic lecture format may be effective for disseminating a large body of information to a large number of students, it presents many challenges to both teachers and learners because it often promotes passive learning and fails to motivate students.

4. CONCLUSION

Overall small group teaching for medical students has wide acceptability among students and faculty as it promotes effective learning, acquire good communication skills and integrated approach towards effective medical education.

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