

Qualities of good medical teacher as perceived by medical (MBBS) students of a private medical college in Lahore, Pakistan.

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A B S T R A C T

Introduction: In human societies, teaching and teachers play a fundamental role, and a teacher is more than just an educator. Qualities determining a teacher to be a role model are intricate and broad. The present research aims to analyze the perceptions of medical (MBBS) students towards the personality traits and qualities of an excellent medical teacher so that we can adequately set standards for our teaching philosophy.

Methodology: This observational cross-sectional study was conducted at Azra Naheed Medical College, Superior University Lahore. After informed consent, 200 medical (MBBS) students of both genders participated in the study. Each student filled out a questionnaire comprising the qualities of an excellent medical teacher. All the data was entered and analyzed through SPSS, version 23.

Result: According to the student responses, the most commonly agreed factor for an excellent medical teacher was 'Medical Teacher uses simple language' reported by 113 (56.5%) students, followed by 'Medical Teacher uses technology' in 107 (53.5%), 'Medical Teacher has command on the subject' in 106 (53.0%), 'Medical Teacher is enthusiastic about the subject' 105 (52.5%), 'Medical Teacher summarizes topic at the end of the lecture' 105 (52.5%), 'Medical Teacher announces topic one week before lecture' 96 (48.0%), Textbooks are allowed by Medical Teacher during lectures' (94 (47.0%), 'Medical Teacher begins class by asking questions related to the topic' 86 (43%), students reported 'Handouts are given to students by medical teacher' 83 (41.5%) and 61 (30.5%) students said 'There are breaks for discussions and group activities for students during class'.

Conclusion: According to medical (MBBS) students, an excellent medical teacher uses simple language technology, has command of the subject, is enthusiastic and summarizes the topic at the end of the lecture.

Keywords: Medical Teacher, Medical Students, MBBS, Lecture, Medical College.

Introduction

As a diverse and continuously evolving race, human beings are adaptive and responsive to environmental changes and alterations. The capability to transfer knowledge is a primary reason for this continual progression in human lives. Therefore, in human societies,

teaching and teachers play a fundamental role. However, a teacher is more than just an educator. Qualities determining a teacher to be a role model are intricate and broad.¹ The approach to teacher education varies from institution to institution, but the educational aim remains the

same: to develop effective and competent graduates. For this purpose, a teacher must be more than an educator.² The teacher's foremost duty is to support students' intellectual/creative development and ethical dimensions, including motivation, character, and self-esteem.³ Teaching is not an easy responsibility in the present era.

A teacher should be flexible and versatile, have much enthusiasm for the subject, have a caring attitude towards students, have a thorough understanding of their subject and have much involvement with parents.⁴ According to Strong et al., a good teacher's responsibility is to create an environment that motivates and intrigues students based on trust, respect, and fairness, wherein a positive learning climate is maintained and cultivated.⁵

According to Walker et al., five characteristics of a good teacher, as described by students, were: he is punctual, the most creative teacher, funny, gives respect to all students, and kind and empathic.⁶ Arnon et al. mentioned another quality that plays a tremendous part in a teacher's personality: being considerate, understanding, caring and patient.⁷ Bakx et al., in the project 'View of characteristics of good primary school teacher' in the Netherlands, indicated that a good teacher's qualities included a teacher's personality, professional role, pedagogic skills, and authority figure while supporting and encouraging the students.⁸ The present research aims to analyze students' perceptions towards the personality traits of an ideal medical teacher so that we can set standards for our teaching philosophy.

Methodology

This observational cross-sectional study was carried out at Azra Naheed Medical College, Superior University Lahore, to determine medical (MBBS) students' views about the qualities of an excellent medical teacher by taking their feedback on a pre-designed questionnaire. Medical students from MBBS classes of both genders were included in the study. Students of paramedical and non-medical fields were excluded from the study. After informed consent, 200 medical (MBBS) students participated in the study. Each student filled out a questionnaire comprising demographic information and the qualities of an excellent medical teacher. The qualities asked included the medical teacher announcing the topic one

week before class, the medical teacher being enthusiastic about the subject, the medical teacher beginning class by asking questions related to the topic, the medical teacher using technology, their breaks for discussions and group activities for students during class, the medical teacher uses simple language, handouts are given to students by medical teacher, textbooks are allowed by the medical teacher during lectures, medical teacher summarizes the topic at end of class, and medical teacher has command on subject.

All the data was entered and analyzed through SPSS, version 23. Mean and standard deviations were calculated for quantitative variables, while frequency and percentages were generated for qualitative variables. A chi-square test was applied, taking $p < 0.05$ as significant.

Results

200 students participated in the study after informed consent, of which 122 (61.0%) were males and 78 (39.0%) were females. The mean age of the participants was 21.3+3.8 years. Sixty-eight (34.0%) students belonged to rural regions compared to 132 (66.0%) from urban areas. Based on their MBBS year, 55 (27.5%) students were from the second year, followed by 51 (25.5%) from the fourth year, 36 (18.0%) first year, 33 (16.5%) third year and 25 (12.5%) students were from final year. The distribution of gender and background regions in each class (Table 1).

Table 1: Background region and Gender distribution of the students according to their MBBS year

Demographic Variable	1 st Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year	4 th Year	Final Year
Background region					
Rural	18 (9.0%)	16 (8.0%)	14 (7.0%)	13 (6.5%)	08 (4.0%)
Urban	18 (9.0%)	40 (20.0%)	19 (9.5%)	37 (18.5%)	17 (8.5%)
Gender distribution					
Male	22 (11.0%)	32 (16.0%)	20 (10.0%)	32 (16.0%)	16 (8.0%)
Female	14 (7.0%)	24 (12.0%)	13 (6.5%)	18 (9.0%)	09 (4.5%)

According to the student responses, the most commonly agreed factor for an excellent medical teacher was 'Medical Teacher uses simple language' reported by 113 (56.5%) students, followed by 'Medical Teacher uses technology' by 107 (53.5%), 'Medical Teacher has command on the subject' in 106 (53.0%), 'Medical Teacher is enthusiastic about the subject' 105 (52.5%), 'Medical Teacher summarizes topic at the end of the lecture' 105 (52.5%), 'Medical Teacher announces topic one week before lecture' 96 (48.0%), Textbooks are allowed by Medical Teacher during lectures' (94 (47.0%), 'Medical Teacher begins class by asking questions related to topic' 86 (43%), students reported 'Handouts are given to students by medical teacher' 83 (41.5%) and 61 (30.5%) students said 'There are breaks for discussions and group activities for students during class (Table 2).

Table 2: Analysis of student’s response to the questionnaire

Questions	Students Response	Frequency	%age
Medical teacher announces topic one week before class:	Agree	96	48.0
	Strongly Agree	22	11.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	31	15.5
	Disagree	30	15.0
	Strongly Disagree	21	10.5
Medical teacher is enthusiastic about subject:	Agree	105	52.5
	Strongly Agree	38	19.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	29	14.5
	Disagree	19	9.5
	Strongly Disagree	09	4.5
Medical teacher begins class by asking questions related to the topic:	Agree	86	43.0
	Strongly Agree	36	18.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	36	18.0
	Disagree	29	14.5
	Strongly Disagree	13	6.5
Medical teacher uses technology:	Agree	107	53.5
	Strongly Agree	35	17.5
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	24	12.0
	Disagree	20	10.0
	Strongly Disagree	14	7.0
There are breaks for discussions and group activities for students during class:	Agree	61	30.5
	Strongly Agree	34	17.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	20	10.0
	Disagree	51	25.5
	Strongly Disagree	34	17.0
Medical teacher uses	Agree	113	56.5
	Strongly Agree	42	21.0

simple language:	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	24	12.0
	Disagree	14	7.0
	Strongly Disagree	07	3.5
Handouts are given to students by Medical Teacher:	Agree	83	41.5
	Strongly Agree	29	14.5
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	30	15.0
	Disagree	42	21.0
	Strongly Disagree	16	8.0
Textbooks are allowed by Medical Teachers during lectures:	Agree	94	47.0
	Strongly Agree	36	18.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	41	20.5
	Disagree	17	8.5
	Strongly Disagree	12	6.0
Medical teacher summarizes the topic at the end of the lecture:	Agree	105	52.5
	Strongly Agree	46	23.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	18	9.0
	Disagree	19	9.5
	Strongly Disagree	12	6.0
Medical teacher has command of the subject:	Agree	106	53.0
	Strongly Agree	68	34.0
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	17	8.5
	Disagree	06	3.0
	Strongly Disagree	03	1.5

Stratification of the 5 most common factors of a good medical teacher concerning the students' background, region, and gender (Table 3).

Discussion

According to Harding et al., a good teacher has acquired the attributes and competencies to excel as an educator, can communicate efficiently with students, loves the process of learning and genuinely enjoys sharing the passion of teaching by engaging in various pedagogical practices to engage learners.⁹ They know how to negotiate, mediate and invite students to participate actively in their learning. Prompt identification of academic weaknesses and subsequent interventions improves retention, academic performance and course commitment.¹⁰

A credible student feedback process may be employed to modify and enhance teaching practices according to available resources and learning objectives.^{10, 11} Lectures, a large-group teaching method, are a mainstay in medical teaching. Lectures are an easy and convenient method of imparting knowledge to many students, especially in settings with limited resources. Therefore, an excellent

medical teacher should equip the students with various tools to engage them and enhance their learning.

Table 3: Stratification of the 5 most common factors of a good medical teacher with regards to the background region and gender of the students.

Background & Gender	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	p-value
Medical teacher uses simple language:						
Rural	35 (17.5%)	15 (7.5%)	09 (4.5%)	05 (2.5%)	04 (2.0%)	0.028
Urban	78 (39.0%)	27 (13.5%)	15 (7.5%)	09 (4.5%)	03 (1.5%)	
Male	76 (38.0%)	23 (11.5%)	11 (5.5%)	07 (3.5%)	05 (2.5%)	0.036
Female	37 (18.5%)	19 (9.5%)	13 (6.5%)	07 (3.5%)	02 (1.0%)	
Medical teacher uses technology:						
Rural	32 (16.0%)	18 (9.0%)	08 (4.0%)	06 (3.0%)	04 (2.0%)	0.005
Urban	75 (37.5%)	17 (8.5%)	16 (8.0%)	14 (7.0%)	10 (5.0%)	
Male	69 (34.5%)	22 (11.0%)	19 (9.5%)	08 (4.0%)	04 (2.0%)	0.041
Female	38 (19.0%)	13 (6.5%)	05 (2.5%)	12 (6.0%)	10 (5.0%)	
Medical teacher has command of the subject:						
Rural	33 (16.5%)	27 (13.5%)	05 (2.5%)	03 (1.5%)	01 (0.5%)	0.691
Urban	72 (36.0%)	41 (20.5%)	13 (6.5%)	03 (1.5%)	02 (1.0%)	
Male	66 (33.0%)	41 (20.5%)	08 (4.0%)	05 (2.5%)	02 (1.0%)	0.608
Female	39 (19.5%)	27 (13.5%)	10 (5.0%)	01 (0.5%)	01 (0.5%)	
Medical teacher is enthusiastic about the subject:						
Rural	42 (21.0%)	11 (5.5%)	09 (4.5%)	05 (2.5%)	02 (1.0%)	0.450
Urban	63 (31.5%)	26 (13.0%)	21 (10.5%)	14 (7.0%)	07 (3.5%)	
Male	64 (32.0%)	22 (11.0%)	17 (8.5%)	10 (5.0%)	09 (4.5%)	0.881
Female	41 (20.5%)	15 (7.5%)	13 (6.5%)	09 (4.5%)	00 (0.0%)	
Medical teacher summarizes the topic at the end of the lecture:						
Rural	39 (19.5%)	16 (8.0%)	05 (2.5%)	07 (3.5%)	02 (1.0%)	0.883
Urban	66 (33.0%)	30 (15.0%)	13 (6.5%)	12 (6.0%)	10 (5.0%)	
Male	69 (34.5%)	22 (11.0%)	10 (5.0%)	12 (6.0%)	09 (4.5%)	0.430
Female	36 (18.0%)	24 (12.0%)	08 (4.0%)	07 (3.5%)	03 (1.5%)	

In the present study, most students (55, 27.5%) were from second year MBBS, followed by 51 (25.5%) from fourth year MBBS. The most agreed factor for an excellent medical teacher in the present study was 'Medical Teacher uses simple language,' which 113 (56.5%) students reported. Other essential factors reported by medical (MBBS) students in the present study were 'Medical Teacher uses technology' by 107 (53.5%) students, 'Medical Teacher has command on the subject' in 106 (53.0%), 'Medical Teacher is enthusiastic about the subject' 105 (52.5%) and 'Medical Teacher summarizes topic at the end of the lecture' 105 (52.5%).

According to students' views, an excellent medical teacher should introduce the relevance of the topic, which can help students develop into engaged, motivated and self-regulated learners. Relevance is the perception that something is exciting and worth knowing. An excellent medical teacher should be able to communicate ideas effectively and straightforwardly.¹²

A good teacher should be kind, have a big heart, and always be ready to listen.^{13, 14} Good lectures trigger enthusiasm, and teachers are often passionate about the subject they teach, even if it is not that exciting.¹⁵ As an aid to learning, laughter should be applied during lectures as it helps relieve students' pressure by lightening the tone and providing a minor break from what may seem like a lengthy, monotonous session. Furthermore, laughter and humor also help as memory triggers.¹¹

Recommendation

A few recommendations to be considered are:

1. Teach skills, not just facts.
2. Make room for new content.
3. Focus more on student's learning.
4. Use simple language to make things easier.
5. Use audiovisual aids and more discussion regarding clinical and recent advances.
6. More animations/videos can be introduced for specific topics.
7. Facilitation of interactivity or self-directed learning (SDL) among students should be included.

Conclusion

According to medical (MBBS) students, an excellent medical teacher uses simple language technology, has command of the subject, is enthusiastic and summarizes the topic at the end of the lecture. It is important to consider students' views so that appropriate changes may be made in teaching styles to improve student learning.

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