

*Original article-Medical Education***Do ‘Patient Management Problems (PMP)’ act as ‘Motivators’ in Internal Assessment examinations?**Dr. Ramakrishna Tirumalabukkapatnam^{1*}, Dr. Dinesh Singh T², Dr. Jyothi Ramakrishna³¹Professor, ENT NMC Nellore²Associate Professor, Deccan Institute of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad³Consultant, Durgabai Deshmukh Hospital, Andhra Mahila Sabha, Vidyanagar Hyderabad**ARTICLE INFO:****Article history:**

Received: 11 December, 2014

Received in revised form:

20 December, 2014

Accepted: 25 December, 2014

Available online: 30 December, 2014

Keywords:

Motivation

Internal Assessment

Formative assessment

Problem based learning

Patient management problems (PMP)

ABSTRACT

Context: Problem based learning when used with adult learners stimulates deep learning. Internal motivators are essential as envisaged in principles of Adult learning. In educational spiral, the Internal assessment (formative) provides a feed-back on the learner's understanding to the teacher. Educational spiral consists of educational objectives, teaching/learning activities and evaluation. In the evaluation process, teacher gets a knowledge of effectiveness of students' understanding. However a feed-back on the question paper, can be designed to elicit the responses which will highlight the motivational factors during assessment examinations. When Questionpapers are set with Patient Management Problems (PMP), will they act as stimulators? Two feedbacks encounters one with traditional QP setting and other with PMPs in the QP setting showed an insight into students' perspectives. When analysed, they throw light on newer insights on 'self-confidence, self-respect, and self-actualization'. Analysis of student feedback showed 'problem based clinical encounters' as questions in the Internal Assessments do act as motivators.

1. Introduction

Student feedback about the effectiveness of teaching and relevance of curriculum is universally accepted to be a method in improving the quality of course. However it is generally viewed with skepticism as faculty members are apprehensive about student ratings. The feedback from students is essential in all aspects of teaching learning encounters, including Internal Assessments. Internal assessment examinations are meant to assess the amount of understanding periodically such that corrective measures can be taken. However, the examinations are conducted to assess the performance rather than the 'depth of understanding'. This often results in students' efforts being directed towards a 'pass' mark. The assessment can be utilized to stimulate their thinking and promote self-directed learning. Thus the assessment examination should adequately motivate the learner.

Motivation is self-induced behaviour that occurs in order to bring about need fulfilment. Maslow theorized that people get motivated when their physiological, security, affection, esteem & status oriented needs are fulfilled and they follow a hierarchy[1].

Thus motivation in students occurs for achieving self-esteem and self-actualization which is at the peak of a pyramid of needs (Figure 1). Malcolm Knowles put forward principles of Andragogy where adult learners seek knowledge from problem-centered activities and respond better to Internal motivators[2]. Where do learners find internal motivators? Ideally the content of the subject, the T-L method and assessments should contain the motivators. For a teacher, it is easy to pick up a topic with interesting content and also a 'teaching-learning method' to deliver the content. But how can a teacher conduct an assessment that motivates the learners? According to principles of 'andragogy' adult learners need deep involvement and high levels of motivation at every level of educational spiral which includes assessment. Do our Internal Assessment examinations stimulate deeper involvement and motivation that is essential for learning? Do 'Problem based questions' in the Internal Assessments act as stimulants for deeper learning?

Aim: To know the effect of Internal motivators in the Assessment examinations

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Objectives: To evaluate the self –efficacy, self-confidence, and self-actualization after Internal Assessment examinations by student feed- back forms (specifically designed to evaluate the Internal Motivation).

2. Subjects and Methods

The current project is done with the students of 6th semester who are attending ENT classes in the final year M.B.B.S. The first Internal Assessment is conducted in a routine way. A two-day workshop on assessment methods was conducted with special emphasis on validity, reliability and objectivity along with blue printing on question paper setting. After sensitization programme, faculty members prepared question papers with patient management problems (PMP) and “modified essay question (MEQ)”. The second Internal Assessment was conducted with a question paper consisting of PMP& MEQs. A student feedback Questionnaire (Figure 2) was prepared with statements (25 in numbers) with responses on a scale of disagreement to agreement. The statements are based to elicit a response affirmative or negative to identify;

- (a). Whether they perceive their needs are met
- (b). Whether they have ability to succeed with reasonable effort (self- confidence)
- (c). Whether they found it most realistic

Table 1: Consistent responses after first and second Internal Assessments. The Internal motivators (Needs are Met, Realistic etc.) are given in the left column

Internal Motivators	Internal (N=65)	Assessment-1	Internal (N=65)	Assessment-2
Needs are met	22		59	
Ability to succeed	27		43	
Realistic	16		48	
Performance focused	43		12	
Learning focused	22		53	
Self- Assessed	10		52	

3. Discussion

Motivation is of central Importance as it is linked to self-confidence, self-efficiency and self-esteem. It is determined by;

- (a). Whether the learners feel that their own needs are being met.
- (b). Whether they have the ability to succeed with reasonable effort
- (c). Whether they have realistic problem to deal with
- (d). Whether they can predict accurately their own performance

In our study more than 90% of the students expressed that their needs are met in second Internal Assessment as against 33% in Internal Assessment-I. Similarly “ability to succeed with reasonable effort” was found to be 66% amongst students during Internal Assessment-II examinations. Thus the ‘PMP’ questions make students more motivated while taking on

- (d). Whether the focus is on performance or learning
- (e). Whether the process makes them self-assessed (self-efficacy)

4. Results

The Internal Motivators were evaluated based on the responses given by students in the feedback forms. The feedback form contained 25 statements. Among the 25 statements, a set of statements are structured in such a way that dissimilar answers collectively represent a true response and considered for evaluating motivation. The results are given in Table: 1

Example:

Q2: “They are many vague questions”

Q16: “I really liked this paper, because of its practical and real life situations”

Explanation: “The above sets of questions are intended to get internal consistency”.

Q23: “I can accurately predict my marks with this question paper
Explanation: “Ability to succeed with effort”

Q18: “Questions are out of syllabus and that is the reason for my performance”

Explanation: “Whether the focus is on performance or learning”

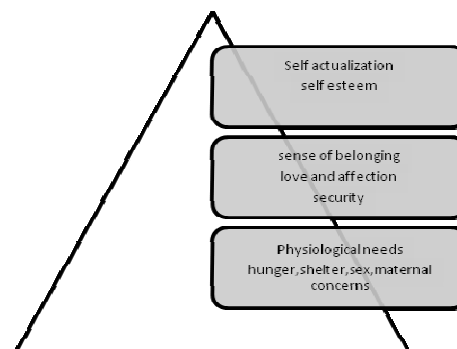


Figure 1: Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow)

assessment examinations and act as stimulants for further learning (motivators).

In assessment examinations, Internal Assessment-II was found to be more realistic than internal assessment-I (73% vs. 24%). According to Alderfer’s ERG theory “Growth needs consist of desire for self-esteem and self-actualization[3]. They are concerned with individual’s intrinsic desire for personal development. The Growth needs are essential in the adult learning principles as they correspond to training program relevance, variety of experience and subject relevance. Malcolm Knowles stressed this fact as ‘Internal Motivators’. In the IA II, the learners found the questions realistic and challenging experience. Internal motivators are essential in every stage of learning that also includes evaluation. Assessment examinations in the colleges are traditionally conducted in the pattern of University Question settings.

1. The question paper is based on prescribed syllabus for the examination.
2. There are many vague questions.
3. The clinically oriented questions are challenging and we should have more questions like them.
4. Previous methods of questions are easy to write, because answers are readily available.
5. The break up in the Marks system is not good. I lost marks because of that.
6. The essay question on clinical situation is good because it makes me to think
7. The time required to answer the questions is not adequate.
8. The problem based questions are not difficult, if we are allowed to discuss in the examination
9. The Problem based questions are difficult, because they are not given in the book.
10. The graphs and x-rays are difficult to answer but they are practical.
11. It has been bothering me for more than a week, about what would have been a proper answer
12. The question paper is not standard one, as there were no questions from previous years.
13. I have to strike the answer two or three times in the answer script, as it takes time to think
14. I don't think this question paper will bring the "best" out of my performance.
15. I don't understand the questions as the teachers never taught them before.
16. I really liked this paper, because of its practical and real -life situations.
17. I don't need to discuss this paper with my close friends regarding best answers.
18. The questions are 'out of syllabus' and that is the reason for my performance
19. This type of question paper requires in-depth understanding of the subject.
20. I want my teachers to discuss these questions after the hospital hours.
21. I like to see how my friends' wrote their answers, so that i can check my answer.
22. This type of question paper is 'useless' as university will not ask such questions.
23. I can accurately predict my marks with this question paper.
24. I don't think the questions are useful in any way in professional practice.
25. I copied from my friend's paper, that's why we both failed to get good marks.

Note: Please read the following statements on your experience with recently held internal assessments. You can choose your answer on a scale which ranges from 1 to 7. It starts at the fully disagree to completely agree scale. You are requested to mark your opinion on the scale .You can choose to write your name. It is not mandatory.

Figure 2: Questionnaire for Student feedback

It normally includes one essay, 5 to 6 short note and 7 to 8 brief note questions. The number of questions varies from university to university. However, as we can see from the study, the motivators in the first internal Assessment were few. Probably it may be due to the pattern of questioning based on memory rather than critical thinking. Such internal assessments do not motivate the students for deeper learning, but rather gear them up for 'high stakes assessments' (where marks are important). According to Harlen & Crick (2013) these types of assessments have a negative impact on motivation for learning[4]. Dweck (1999) cautioned on this matter that such assessments without motivators encourage students to focus on performance goals rather than learning goals[5]. In IA II, the feedback showed 66% of students felt the question paper to be 'learning focused' as against 34% in paper I.

Student feedbacks on question papers need not be looked down with scepticism. On the other hand, teachers should periodically evaluate whether the setting of question papers provide adequate motivators to stimulate students for deep learning. It would be interesting to note that 'Patients Management Problems' were effective in motivating students. However, teachers should balance between performance grading and motivators in setting

up question papers. It would be interesting to study the impact of PMPs in the short answers or brief answers such that teachers can prepare question papers with adequate motivators without sacrificing performance assessments. It is now time for teachers to set question papers with 'motivators' to stimulate deep learning in Medical Colleges.

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Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared