



Perspectives of MBBS Students on The AETCOM Module After the Second Year of The Competency Based Medical Education Curriculum

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Article History	Abstract
Received: 06 June 2023 Revised: 05 Sept 2023 Accepted: 25 Nov 2023	<p>Knowledge of proper Attitude, Ethics and Communication Skills with the patients plays a vital role in success of medical professionals. So, AETCOM module has been formulated to train the medical students from first MBBS itself as a part of their foundation course. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the change in the students' behaviour towards attitude, ethics and communication at the end of their second professional course. METHODS This cross-sectional observational study was carried out over the course of a month with second-year MBBS students who enrolled in Tagore Medical College in the academic year 2019–20. 100 students were included in this study. The teaching schedule of AETCOM Module had four sessions three hours each. At the end of the module feedback on their perception was obtained by pre validated questionnaire and was analysed. RESULTS: A majority of the students (96.1%) opined that the AETCOM Module will definitely improve their communication skills with the patients. They also felt that such training should be integrated in regular teaching curriculum and done continuously in all the semesters. All the 100 students were given the same questionnaire. Most (30) of the first-year students joined the foundation course late because of the delay in the counselling; whereas, at any given time, 20 students were absent for these teaching sessions. AETCOM Module was satisfactory for 84% of students. For 12% it was just satisfactory, the other extreme, 4% students were highly satisfied. Students' views on AETCOM were- asset for gaining confidence of the patients (72%), useful for themselves and for future practice (10%), excellent method for improvement of diagnosis (8%), wanted multiple exposures continuously throughout the UG course (6%) and can avoid medicolegal issues (4%). CONCLUSIONS: The AETCOM Module will be good for the second year MBBS students on the whole for communicating better with the patients in their medical course. Strengths of this study include feedback from the students for further improvement in the long-term outcome.</p>
CC License CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0	Keywords: AETCOM, Perception, second MBBS Students, Curriculum

1. Introduction

Medical education encompasses knowledge, clinical skills, attitude, and communication. Attitudes manifest in behaviour, and AETCOM theory suggests that changing behaviour can change attitudes. A study by Neumann et al. (2011) reported that communication skills training in medical education can lead to improved patient-centred care. In the past, soft skills were part of the implicit curriculum, but the Competency-Based Undergraduate Medical Education Curriculum of 2019 introduced a structured program on "Attitude, Ethics, and Communication." This program aims to provide the necessary knowledge and skills for medical professionals to be effective physicians, which is particularly crucial given the increasing conflicts between doctors and patients in today's era. It is essential that Indian medical graduates are aware of the rights of doctors and patients, as well as ethical issues that may arise in the doctor-patient relationship. This study's objective is to assess how the behaviour of students has changed in relation to attitude, ethics, and communication by the end of their second professional course. The results of this survey-based research present valuable insights

into the perspectives of MBBS students concerning the AETCOM module following a two-year training program in competency-based medical education.

2. Materials And Methods

This cross-sectional observational study, which involved second-year MBBS students who enrolled in Tagore Medical College in the 2019–20 academic year, was conducted over the course of one month. This study consisted of 100 students. The teaching schedule of AETCOM Module had four sessions three hours each. After completing attitude, ethics, and communication training as part of the new competency-based medical curriculum, second-year MBBS students were given pre-validated questionnaire forms at the end of the module to evaluate.

3. Results and Discussion

The study was conducted on 100 students, including 30 male and 70 female participants. The outcomes suggest that an overwhelming majority of the students, 96%, consider knowledge about medical ethics among doctors to be of utmost importance, with only a small proportion believing it to be marginally important (Fig 1). It is noteworthy that most students, 87%, reported gaining knowledge about medical ethics through lectures, seminars, and clinical discussions, whereas only 7% relied on online sources. A few students mentioned acquiring knowledge from media and medical journals (Fig 2). Concerning the availability of medical ethics committees in the college, 79% of the students were aware of their existence, while 21% were not (Fig 3). The study further found that the majority of the students, 74%, strongly agreed that they must communicate with patients in a respectful and non-threatening manner (Fig 4).

100 responses

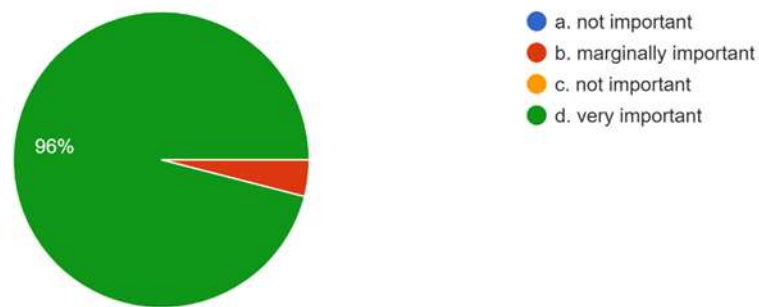


Fig 1: Students perceptions on awareness of importance of knowledge about medical ethics among doctors(N=100)

100 responses

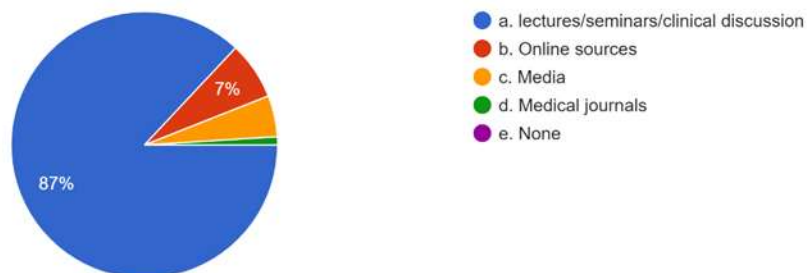


Fig 2: Students perceptions on awareness of importance of knowledge about medical ethics during 2nd year of MBBS(N=100)

100 responses

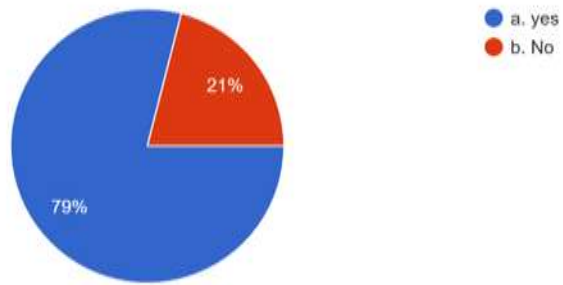


Fig 3: Students perceptions on Awareness of medical ethics committee in the college(N=100)

100 responses

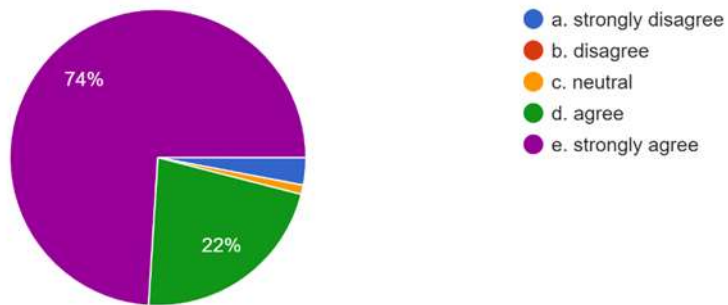


Fig 4: Students perception on communication to patient in respectful and non-threatening manner(N=100)

100 responses

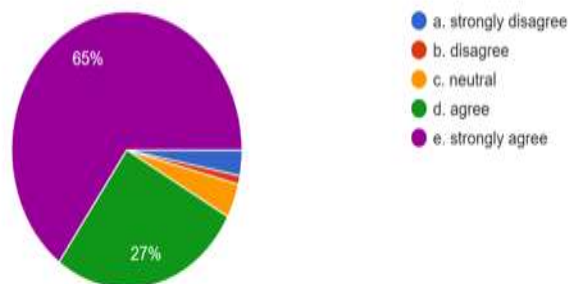


Fig 5: students' perception on communication to the patient in a respectful manner (N=100)

100 responses

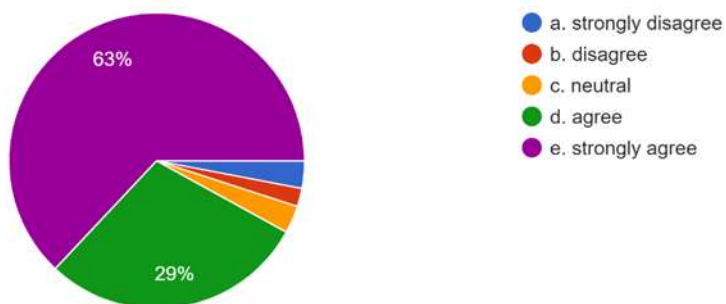


Fig 6: Students perception on communication to the patient should be non-judgemental (N=100)

100 responses

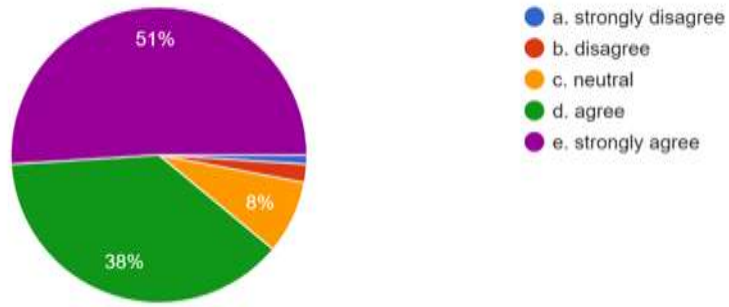


Fig 7: Students perception on non-maleficence(N=100)

100 responses

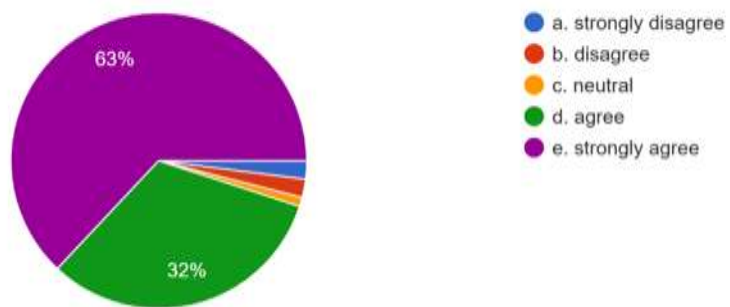


Fig 8: student's perception on patients' autonomy(N=100)

100 responses

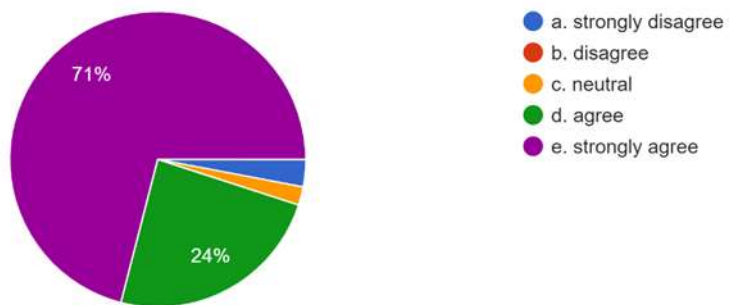


Fig 9: students' perception on receiving healthcare services equal irrespective of age, gender, religion, financial status, disability(N=100)

100 responses

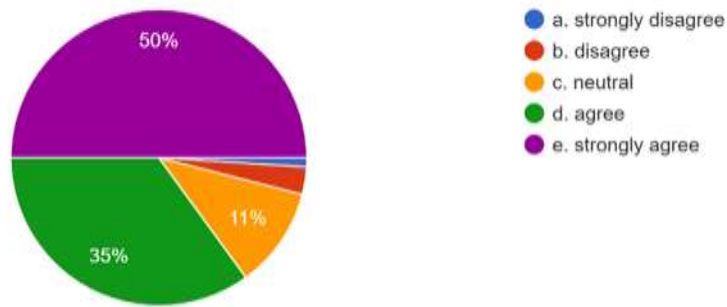


Fig 10: Students perception on disclosing all the information to the patient (veracity)(N=100)

100 responses

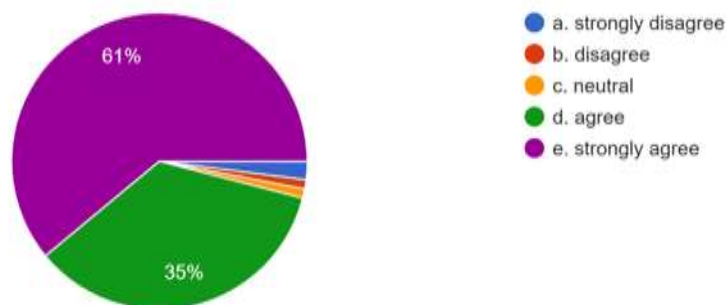


Fig 11: Students perception on developing respect in relationship with patients, fellow team members, superiors and other health care workers to work as an integral part of health care team(N=100)

Knowledge of proper Attitude, Ethics and Communication Skills with the patients plays a vital role in success of medical professionals. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the change in the students' behaviour towards attitude, ethics and communication at the end of their second professional course. **METHODS:** This cross-sectional observational study was carried out for 100 students over the course of a month with second-year MBBS students who enrolled in Tagore Medical College in the academic year 2019–20. The teaching schedule of AETCOM Module had four sessions. At the end of the module feedback on their perception was obtained by pre validated questionnaire and was analysed. **RESULTS:** A majority of the students (96.1%) opined that the AETCOM Module will definitely improve their communication skills with patients. They also felt that such training should be integrated in regular teaching curriculum in all the semesters. All the 100 students were given the same questionnaire. AETCOM Module was satisfactory for 84% of students. For 12% it was just satisfactory, the other extreme, 4% students were highly satisfied. Students' views on AETCOM were- asset for gaining confidence of the patients (72%), useful for themselves and for future practice (10%), excellent method for improvement of diagnosis (8%), wanted multiple exposures continuously throughout the UG course (6%) and can avoid medicolegal issues (4%). **CONCLUSIONS:** The AETCOM Module will be good for the second year MBBS students on the whole for communicating better with the patients in their medical course.

Similarly, 65% of the participants strongly agreed that they should communicate with patients in an empathetic manner (Fig 5), while 63% strongly agreed on the need to be nonjudgmental in their communication with patients (Fig 6). With respect to patient care, more than half of the students, 51%, strongly agreed that non-maleficence should be the guiding principle (Fig 7). When asked about respecting patient autonomy, 63% of the students strongly agreed, while 32% simply agreed (Fig 8). The majority of the students, 71%, strongly agreed that healthcare services must be available and equitable to all, regardless of gender, religion, financial status, or disability (Fig 9). Regarding the disclosure of health information, 50% of the students strongly agreed that all information should be disclosed to the patient, while 35% just agreed (Fig 10). Finally, the study found that most students, 61%, strongly agreed that developing respectful relationships with patients, fellow team members, superiors, and other healthcare workers is critical to working as an integral part of the healthcare team (Fig 11).

4. Conclusion

Effective communication is a fundamental prerequisite of the medical profession and plays a crucial role in ensuring professional success for doctors. As emphasized in the module, communication skills are essential for doctors to actively listen and gather data from their patients. Numerous studies have shown that effective communication can improve patient satisfaction, adherence to treatment plans, and ultimately, clinical outcomes (Barr et al., 2015; Makoul and Clayman, 2006). In addition to communication skills, ethical principles are also crucial for medical professionals. The introductory session on bioethics provides an overview of the cardinal pillars of ethics, including autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice. It is essential for medical students to understand the ethical principles that guide their profession to provide high-quality care to their patients (Varma and Singh, 2018). Furthermore, the module's emphasis on collaborative work and interprofessional learning reflects the current trend in healthcare delivery, which prioritizes team-based care. It is essential for medical professionals to understand the importance of collaborative work in healthcare and the roles of each member of the healthcare team in providing quality care (Reeves et al., 2016). The module's focus on the patient care experience, including support systems, coping, and emotions of families, and the difference between healing and curing, highlights the need for medical professionals to take a holistic approach to patient care. Doctors deal with human suffering throughout their professional careers, and it is crucial for them to understand the emotional and psychosocial needs of their patients to provide comprehensive care (Shanafelt et al., 2012). Our study provides valuable insights into the perspectives of MBBS students regarding the AETCOM module and highlights the importance of incorporating ethical principles, effective communication, and patient-centered care into medical education. The findings of our study underscore the need for medical schools to prioritize teaching these essential competencies to produce competent and compassionate medical professionals. Our research also sheds light on the role of medical ethics committees and the need for healthcare services to be available and equitable to all, regardless of their social status.

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