

The Effectiveness of Coaches' Manuals for Teaching Professionalism in Problem Based Learning

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ABSTRACT

The coaching is essential for elementary teaching and is even more compelling when applied to a field as complex as medicine. In any structured training program, there is a need for some instructional material and references. These materials can be converted in the form of manuals as tools to be used for the facilitation of the process of teaching and learning. Therefore, this survey was designed to assess the perception of the coaches as regards the effectiveness of the coaches' manual. A one-day work-shop was conducted which involved brainstorming and different modalities of coaching in relation-ship with teaching professionalism and the effectiveness of the coaches' manual were discussed. Re-sults showed that the coaches who had no previous experience or training in coaching had benefited from the coaches' manual. Sub-specialty of the faculty was found to have a significant (<0.05) effect on the use of manuals.

Keywords: Coaching, instructions, teachers' manual, problem-based learning.

INTRODUCTION

The goals of problem-based learning (PBL) include helping students to develop flexible knowledge, effectively problem-solving and self-directed learning skills, and intrinsic motivation [1]. To develop these skills some new teaching strategies for the execution of PBL like coaching, mentoring, and tu-toring are established [2]. Among all, however, coaching is the technique to help students to learn ra-ther than being tutored. It is defined as, unlocking a persons' potential to maximize their performance [3]. Our curriculum is a PBL and competency-based curriculum adopted from the University of Gro-ningen, Netherlands [4]. We have developed our program learning outcomes (PLOs) based on CanMeds [5, 6]. The CanMeds are medical experts, professionals, communicators, scholars, health advocate, leader, and collaborator [6].

Professionalism is one of the CanMeds competencies, which we teach throughout five years as pro-fessional lines. It represents the skill, good judgment, and polite behavior, expected from a trained person to do the job appropriately and could be named as good conduct. Professionalism in teaching requires some special strategy to be imparted and coaching is considered an effective tool for this pur-pose [7]. Therefore, through coaching teachers can accurately analyze the attitudes and behavior of the students towards tackling the things concerning the patients 'issues. The coaching itself requires a high degree of training and understanding [8]. However, the coaching can be assisted by using an in-structional manual for the facilitation of the process of

teaching and learning. Therefore, we have pre-pared the coaches' manuals as guidelines for the coaches for PDL1 (Year 1) to PDL5 (Year 5). The coaches' manuals are prepared for each line separately. So far, no such study is present in the litera-ture, which shows the effectiveness of these manuals in the teaching process. Hence, we designed a survey to assess the perception of coaches involved in the coaching for professionalism regarding the effectiveness of the coaches' manual.

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional study was conducted during a one-day workshop, that was conducted to train the coaches, where all the twenty-eight coaches (Male=15 & Female=13) from all first and second years were invited. Before conducting a workshop, a needs assessment was done to evaluate if the coaches had enough information regarding coaching and professionalism. The result for needs assessment drew the attention towards the training of the coaches. The workshop involved brainstorming and dif-ferent modalities of coaching in relationship with teaching professionalism were applied. In particular, the effectiveness of the teachers' manuals was discussed then the perception of the participants was measured through the structured questionnaire. The experts through Delphi- technique constructed the questionnaire. It was pretested among other faculty before applying to the selected sample. The data collected was entered into SPSS IBM version 22 and chi-square was applied. P-value of < 0.05 was considered as significant.

RESULTS

The results showed that the majority of the coaches were males 54% and females 46%. Almost 50% of the participants belonged to the age group 31 - 40 years followed by 28% who were between the age group of 41 -

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50 years. Almost all of the participants belonged to the basic sciences departments and about 50% had teaching experience of 5 - 10 years. Surprisingly, only a few participants had pre-vious teaching exposure and training in coaching and PBL (Table 1). While checking their perception towards teachers' manual, we had developed five questions and the majority of the questions were found to have insignificant results except for one where we got a p-value near and <0.05 (Table 2) and the question included was, do coaches perceive that model lessons provided by instructional manuals have enabled them to learn additional teaching practices. The question was found to have significant results with three different variables as shown in Table 2. The results of the needs assessment that was done before the workshop had also shown that there was a dire need for training as very few number coaches had an idea about coaching, professionalism, and CanMeds.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the participants.

Characteristics	Frequency (%)
Age in Years	
20 - 30	2 (7%)
31 - 40	14 (50%)
41 - 50	8 (29%)
50 - 60	4 (14%)
Gender	
Male	15 (54%)
Female	13 (46%)
Teaching Experience	
< 5 Years	2 (7%)
5 - 10 Years	14 (50%)
10.1 - 15 Years	6 (21%)
> 15 Years	5 (18%)
Previous Coaching Experience	
Yes	5 (18%)
No	23 (82%)

DISCUSSION

The present study shows that the perception towards the use of coaches' manuals was found to be insignificant for the majority of the questions, which might be due to the reason, the tutors had no previous coaching experience and this might have caused a problem in the understanding of the questions that were posed. Furthermore, the previous training and previous coaching experience were found significant with the perception towards model lessons provided in manuals which means that the majority of coaches who had no training or experience had benefited from the manuals for their teaching practices. The role of training cannot be denied in any learning and teaching process as mentioned in some studies [9], however, so far no such study has been conducted to test the effectiveness of the

Table 2: Comparison of demographic characteristics with coaches' perception.

Comparative Data	Value	P-value
Specialty* Do coaches perceive that model lessons provided by instructional manuals have enabled them to learn additional teaching practices	28.22	0.59
Previous Coach Training* Do coaches perceive that model lessons provided by instructional manuals have enabled them to learn additional teaching practices	33.320	0.001
Previous Coaching Experience* Do coaches perceive that model lessons provided by instructional manuals have enabled them to learn additional teaching practices	10.579	0.012

coaches' manuals. Our results also depicted that the sub-specialty of the coaches had a some-what effect on perception towards coaching material. The needs assessment further showed the same results where the coaches had very little knowledge about professionalism and coaching and there was a need for training and workshop to conduct the coach sessions and coach meetings with students properly. Furthermore, it is second by the significant rise in mean scores of post-test at the end of the workshop. Carl Salzman [10] conducted a similar study in 2005 to assess the usefulness of expert guidelines for teaching psychopharmacology and he found that the guidelines are important in terms of teaching the fundamentals of the subject. Another study done by Knight J [9] showed the perception of the coaches during the interviews regarding instructional material and he found the tutors saying that the model lessons were an essential part of the coaching process. Furthermore, one of the coaches in his study mentioned, "I think it was very important for her to come in and model it". He further describes that providing instructions result in an effective outcome towards educational institutes' improvements in collaboration with teachers to help them find better ways to teach students. The implications of the study highlighted that the coaches' manual in teaching professionalism is effective.

It is a small-scale study and conducted on a group of coaches who were not being properly trained and came from the background of the conventional teaching environment, therefore, might have a bi-ased opinion. Hence, suggested having more large scale and comparative studies within the context of PBL. Nonetheless, there was a dearth of literature regarding the use of manual as a guide for tutors, therefore; we need more studies to prove the effectiveness and efficacy.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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