

Priming through Open Book MCQ Test: A Tool for Enhancing Learning in Medical Undergraduates

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Abstract : Medical education is advancing in India, with its advancement newer innovations are being incorporated in teaching and assessment methodology. Our study focusses on a teaching innovation that is more student-centric than teacher-centric and is the need of the day. The teaching innovation was carried out in 1st year MBBS students of our institute. Students were assigned control and test groups. Priming was done for the students in the test group with an open-book MCQ based test in a particular topic before delivering formal didactic lecture on that topic. The control group was not assigned any such exercise. This was followed by formal didactic lecture on the same topic. Thereafter, both groups were assessed on the same topic. The marks were compiled and analysed using appropriate statistical tests. Students were also given questionnaire to elicit their views on the benefits of "self-priming". The mean marks scored in theory assessment by the test group were statistically higher than the marks scored by the controls. According to students' feedback, the 'self-priming' process was interesting, helped in better orientation during class-room lectures and better understanding of the topic. They want it to be repeated for other topics with moderate difficulty level. Better performance of the students in the primed group validates the combination of student-centric priming model and didactic lecture as superior to the conventional, teacher-centric methods alone. If this system is successfully followed, the present teacher-centric pedagogy should increasingly give way to student-centric activities where the teacher is only a facilitator.

Keywords : medical education, open-book test, pedagogy, priming

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