

Challenges in Medical Education on Student Learning, Teaching and Assessments

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Abstract

Pandemic corona virus situation having progressed and become intensive by the end of academic year of so there is a big question in the minds of every teacher how to assess the students in medical institutes. The purpose of this review is to identify the various challenges in medical education the Universities are facing in learning, teaching and assessments and recommendations for coping strategies. The most pressing challenges that are emerging may include alternative assessments to the pen and paper assessments previously planned. In conclusion no matter what learning, teaching and assessment methods are employed by the various Universities each and every student has to have an individual responsibility to be self-accountable as they need to face the future with the knowledge they gain through these professional courses as online assessments are a significant technological advancement in today's era.

Keywords: Assessments, COVID 19, Learning, Teaching

1. Introduction

COVID 19 situation having progressed and become intensive by the end of academic year of so there is a big question in the minds of every teacher how to assess the students in medical institute. The UNESCO conference in April 2020 had shed light on the various coping strategies countries can use in policy making of learning, teaching and assessments not to delay the students' progression and at the same time not compromising on the quality¹.

The purpose of this review is to identify the various challenges in medical education the Universities are facing in learning, teaching and assessments and recommendations for coping strategies. The most pressing challenges that are

emerging may include alternative assessments to the pen and paper assessments previously planned. Any decision to post pone or cancel the exams has a very long term effect on the students. Self-assessments and home based assessments may be alternative strategies employed by the educational institutes to assess the students during the COVID 19 crisis¹. The concern of online assessments and the possible strategies to be considered to overcome them has been tabulated below.

The factors to be considered in orienting the faculties and students on the various online teaching and assessment strategies are graphically presented below in Figure 1 and 2.

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Table 1. Concerns of online teaching and assessments and strategies to overcome them

| Sl. No. | Concerns | Strategies to be considered to overcome the concerns |
|---------|--|--|
| 1 | Attitude of the faculties | Orientation of the faculties |
| 2 | Cooperation from the students | Orientation of the students |
| 3 | Dishonesty | Reinforcing the importance of fair assessments to the students |
| 4 | Psychomotor skills of the students cannot be assessed | Objective Structured Practical Exams (OSPE) may be conducted |
| 5 | Internet access should be available for all the students | Timings for assessments have to be chosen as per the usage of internet |

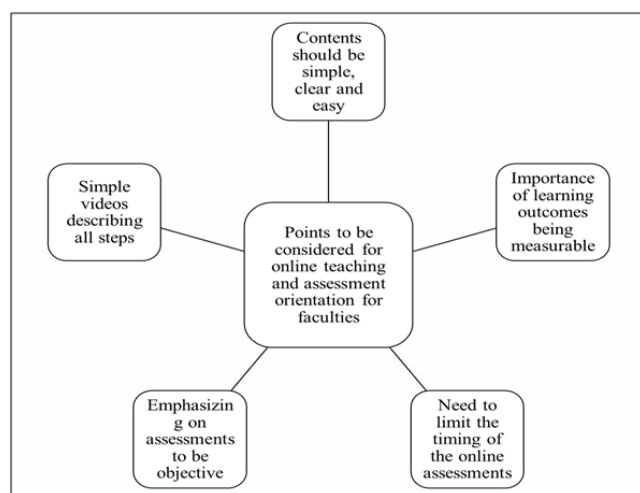


Figure 1. Points to be considered for orientation of faculties.

Some students and faculties believe that online exams are flawed²; self-accountability and ethical standards have to be followed by the students to overcome this barrier. The support from the families of the students also plays a very important role.

There are many platforms for medical Universities to conduct online teaching and assessments like MOODLE. MOODLE is a learning platform which has been designed to provide educators and learners a secure and an integrated system. It provides a collaborative environment for teaching and assessing through a comprehensive set of learner centric tools³.

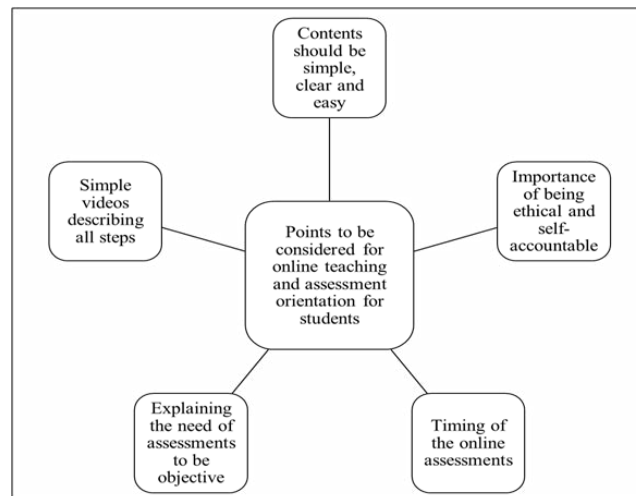


Figure 2. Points to be considered for orientation of students.

There are many Universities that are conducting modified online assessments than deferring assessments as a delay would be increasing the stress and burden on the students. There have been exceptional amendments that have been made trying not to compromise the academic standards of the students⁴.

Many other Asian Universities also have the online assessment barriers during the assessment crisis and it started early on. They are the first to have fought with experiments on online assessments. Large scale in person exams few were cancelled due to lack of an opportunity to conduct them⁵.

Singapore Institute of Technology was one University which had embraced technology enhanced teaching and assessments. They had fully implemented e learning platforms across the entire university for large classes. Strategies were put in place to make sure the learning outcomes were achieved and consistency was maintained across the University. Access to technology such as Zoom was made available for the faculties and students. The outcome of utilizing all these technologies was not to compromise any learning outcomes of the students⁶.

A University in UK also has developed similar plans as well being of the faculties and students are most warranted. Alternate assessments have been planned to replace the standard campus based exams⁷.

Few universities recognize the students assessments till now and based on that have declared the results and this is called as a “no detriment” principle. The benefit is that the students don’t get effected by the various

assessments that may not be as effective as the individual assessments carried out by the Universities earlier⁸.

In conclusion no matter what learning, teaching and assessment methods are employed by the various Universities each and every student has to have an individual responsibility to be self-accountable as they need to face the future with the knowledge they gain through these professional courses as online assessments are a significant technological advancement in today's era.

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