

Exploring the Perception of Competency Based Medical Education Curriculum Among Medical Students and Faculty and Challenges in its Implementation: An Evaluation

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Background: India is transitioning from traditional teacher-centered medical education to competency-based medical education (CBME). This study aimed to analyze faculty and student perceptions of CBME and anticipated implementation challenges.

Materials and Methods: A mixed-methods approach was used. Faculty and CRMI (2019 batch) at Thanjavur Medical College completed a validated structured questionnaire via Google Forms. Scores compared using the Mann Whitney U test. Focus group discussions were conducted and thematic analysis was applied to the data.

Results: A total of 83 students and 48 faculty members participated. Faculty rated the utility of the Foundation course ($p=0.015$), small group discussions (SGD) ($p<0.001$), large group discussions(LGD)($p=0.009$), formative ($p<0.001$) and summative assessments ($p=0.024$), self-directed learning(SDL) ($p<0.001$), and logbooks ($p<0.001$) higher than students. Students strongly disagreed on the utility of log books. Both groups equally agreed on the benefits of early clinical exposure, AETCOM, Alignment and Integration, skill training and feedback. Students were more positive about electives enriching their career goals ($p<0.001$) but doubted CBME's effectiveness in preparing them for the NEXT exam.

Key challenges identified included faculty shortages and time constraints affecting the implementation of early clinical exposure, small group discussions, skills training and assessments. Students highlighted the need for a shorter foundation course, more interactive teaching, better inter-department coordination, uniform skill learning opportunities and standardized assessment methods. They also found logbook maintenance wasteful and laborious.

Conclusions: The study highlights differing perceptions of CBME, with faculty viewing reforms more favorably than students. Both groups value early clinical exposure, AETCOM and skill training. Addressing these challenges such as faculty shortage, time constraints and standardized assessment is crucial for successful CBME adoption.

Keywords: Competency-based medical education, Faculty perceptions, Student perceptions, Implementation challenges

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