

## Teaching Performances of Trained Teachers at Tutorial Classes of Selected Medical Colleges in Bangladesh: Student's view

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Faculty development has become an essential part of any medical college for effective teaching-learning session. Centre for Medical Education (CME) has been organizing 'teaching methodology' workshop to train up the medical teachers in Bangladesh as a part of the faculty development programme.

**Objectives:** To assess the students' views regarding teaching performances of the teachers who had attended the workshop of CME.

**Materials and Methods:** A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in thirteen selected medical colleges of Bangladesh. Students' opinions were collected by a structured questionnaire of 5-point Likert scale that included 13 separate positive statements regarding teaching performances. For each statement, the mean score was calculated and interpreted as, excellent  $\geq 4$ , Good  $\geq 3$  to  $\leq 4$ , satisfactory  $\geq 2$  to  $\leq 3$ , unsatisfactory  $\leq 2$ . But mean score  $\leq 3$  indicates deficit aspect of performances.

**Results:** According to students' aggregated views, teaching performances of 15% teachers were excellent, 51% were good, 25% were satisfactory and 9% were unsatisfactory.

**Conclusion:** The trained teachers are not practising the expected standards in the tutorial classes in all aspects. Initiatives should be taken to pay more attention to deficit aspect of performances.

**Key-words:** Teaching performances, Trained teachers, Students views, Tutorial classes.

### Introduction

Once it was a common notion that the "teachers are born, not made". Now, it is proved by several studies that teaching can be learnt through proper training and practice. In addition to respective subject expertise, medical teachers need to gain some basic teaching skills & competencies to facilitate students learning. Training is an educational process and by

systematic training, teachers can upgrade themselves<sup>1,2</sup>. Teaching in a medical school was not recognized as a separate skill before the second half of the 20th century. As a result, teacher training programmes started in late 1970s. At that time medical schools started to train their teachers through workshops, seminars, microteaching and some short courses<sup>3</sup>. The educational system has transformed massively over the last few decades. The traditional concept of teacher-centred teaching has changed to student-centred now. The main goal of teaching is to assist learning and teachers are not just a transmitter of knowledge. Teachers are now considered as a facilitator of the learning process for building self-directed learners. For becoming an effective facilitator, all teachers need to know 'how to teach' first. For that reason, formal training for teachers has become a routine job in many medical schools to improve teaching skills of junior faculties. Effective teaching techniques can be learnt and made perfect like any other medical skills which are now a basic requirement for doctors. Over and above other professional activities, every doctor is expected to deliver effective teaching to medical students, allied health professionals and postgraduate trainee<sup>4,5</sup>.

There is a compelling need for teachers training for producing quality physicians. Therefore, globally different types of workshops are planned for medical teachers to encourage their attitude towards student-centred medical education<sup>6</sup>. For keeping the teachers of medical colleges up-to-date about the current practices of teaching-learning, Centre for Medical Education (CME) of Bangladesh has been organizing the 'teaching methodology' workshops<sup>7</sup>. But to what extent the trained teachers are utilizing their acquired skills and competencies during conduction of a tutorial class is not known. In the undergraduate medical curriculum of Bangladesh, a major part of teaching-learning hours is occupied by tutorial classes as small group sessions. As students are the direct consumers of any teaching-learning session, their perceptions about teaching performance could be an excellent source of information. It might be explored from students' opinion- the extent to which the trained

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teachers are practising small group teaching principles in their tutorial classes. This study tried to find out deficit aspect of teaching performances in the tutorial classes. The identified deficit aspects might be addressed during the planning of the subsequent 'teaching methodology' workshops of CME.

### Materials and Methods

This cross-sectional descriptive type of study was conducted in thirteen (six public and seven private) medical colleges of Bangladesh. Written permission was taken from the principals of the respective medical colleges. The students who voluntarily participated were enrolled in the study and their identities were kept confidential. From the study population six hundred (600) students were selected by convenient sampling. A self-administered structured questionnaire was used for the collection of student's view. The questionnaire was prepared on the basis of "The Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM)" inventories and literature review in an improvised manner<sup>8</sup>. It included 13 separate positive statements regarding the teaching performances of the teachers. Each statement was followed by a 5-point Likert scale with a maximum score of 5 and a minimum score of 1. Statements having a mean score of 4 or more were considered as a positive aspect and mean score of 3 or less were be considered carefully as those indicate the deficit aspect of performances. Statements with mean score between 3 and 4 emphasize on further improvement of performance. The data collection instrument was pretested in 4 tutorial classes of one medical college and refined as per feedback of the respondents but data collected during pretesting was not included in the sample.

At the beginning of a tutorial session, the researcher briefed the students about filling in the questionnaire. The filled in questionnaire used for getting students' views were collected and then serially numbered from 1-600. All the tick-marked score from the questionnaire was entered in the Excel sheet of a computer according to the prior serial number. A worksheet was made in Microsoft Excel sheet to count the view of the students. Calculated values were transferred to SPSS version 19 for analysis.

### Results

About 67.5% of respondents stated that they were informed regarding learning objectives of the session in advance; 39% showed dissatisfaction regarding face to face seating arrangement and 61% showed dissatisfaction regarding explanation of the task to the group. Nearly 51.3% were informed about the sequence of activities and 47% got guideline for discussion of the selected topic. About 57.4% respondents found the audiovisual aids helpful, 51.7% agreed about their

active participation and 60% agreed that necessary feedback were taken. Approximately 48% were satisfied about content coverage, 55% agreed upon the good summarization and 54% believed that the sessions guided them for self-directed learning.

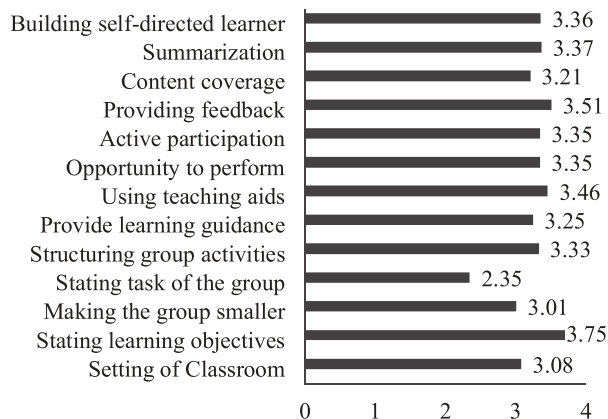


Fig-1: Mean scores of teaching performances of the teacher by students' views (n=600)

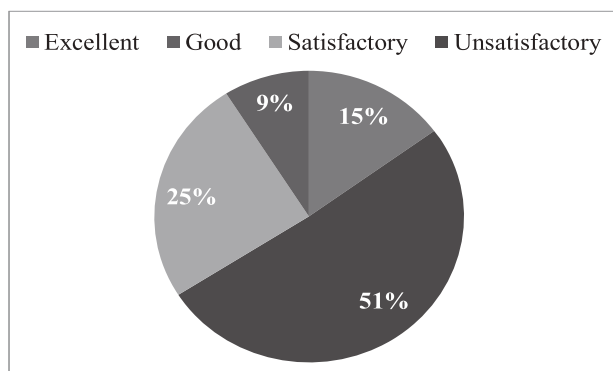


Fig-2: Students' views about the teaching performances of the teachers (n=600)

### Discussion

A considerable number of students (41.4%) showed dissatisfaction regarding classroom size, light, temperature and distracting noise. Study findings of Ahmed R in Bangladesh also found that some efforts were needed to reach a good standard regarding these aspects<sup>9</sup>. Ahmed A mentioned that in medical colleges of Bangladesh there were certain limitations in conducting small group teaching<sup>10</sup>. She suggested that appropriate physical environment was needed for conduction of small group teaching, such as a room of adequate area for group discussion, sufficient light and any negative factors such as noise, heat should be controlled. Boyle and Crosby considered that people learn better when they feel positive about their learning environment<sup>11</sup>. Regarding learning objectives, the majority of the students (67.5%) agreed that they were well informed about the learning objectives of the session in advance.

Ahmed R in Bangladesh found that a minimum effort was necessary on that aspect<sup>9</sup>. Her study findings are compatible with the present study. Begum mentioned that if the expected learning outcomes were conveyed to the students in advance that would serve as a guide for students learning activities<sup>12</sup>. Walton also considered that learning was facilitated when the students knew what was to be learned and why<sup>13</sup>. About seating arrangement, the mean score was found to be below 3 which indicate a problem area of performance. Begum in Bangladesh considered that small groups require suitable accommodation which allowed chairs to be set in a circle for maximum interaction<sup>12</sup>. Face to face effective discussion depends on interaction which is much easier to achieve around a small table or in an open circle rather than with the students sitting in rows. Newble and Cannon mentioned that effective discussion required communication which was not only verbal but also nonverbal for example gestures, facial expressions, eye contact and postures<sup>14</sup>. This is only achieved by allowing the group to sit in a circle and workable seating arrangements can help to make teaching-learning easier. Walton<sup>13</sup> considered that roundtable might be helpful for texts, notebooks and elbows. Participation requires that all group members sit in a circle, each participant fully visible to all others, so that body language, as well as verbal communication, is evident. Majority (61%) of the students expressed their dissatisfaction regarding explaining the task to the group. Students' survey findings of Ahmed R<sup>9</sup> showed that minimum efforts were needed on that aspect. Her findings differ from the present study, as her study was on histology practical classes. Study findings of Rahman<sup>15</sup> in a large group session showed that 69.1% students the proper explanation of the topic by the teachers also incompatible with the findings of present study. Newble and Cannon<sup>14</sup> mentioned that teachers have to explain how the session will run in a group e.g tutor's role, students' role and method to be used. Students' opined that some efforts were needed on the sequence of activities in the group. Newble and Cannon<sup>14</sup> mentioned that tutor needs to have a clear plan so that the group discussion will proceed with purpose and in an organized fashion. A structured approach to tasks with the allocation of the time available is a useful tool for maintenance of sequence. Jaques<sup>16</sup> added that a tutor can minimize his/her involvement in the group process by organizing or structuring groups into smaller units. A sequence of tasks might then be set; particularly to mobilize a sense of coherence and full participation among a large group of students. Some efforts are needed on providing learning guidance to the students. In the context of Bangladesh, students always consider their teacher as a content expert and expect to get some information from them. Though Edmunds and Brown<sup>17</sup> suggested that for a successful small group teaching (SGT), tutors who were supportive and provided needed learning guidance were

more likely to be able to reduce anxiety, build confidence and self-esteem, improve task performance and promote reflective learning of the students.

Some efforts are needed on using teaching-learning aids in the classes. Brown and Atkin<sup>18</sup> suggested that suitable audio-visual aids would make the teaching-learning session more attractive and ultimately would lead to deeper understanding and better retention of knowledge. Although a majority of the students (67.2%) of this study agreed that they had got the opportunity to perform on their learnt lesson; still some extents of efforts were needed to reach a required standard. In Bangladesh, the students are not used to perform their learnt lesson in the tutorial classes. Khadjooi<sup>19</sup> stated that eliciting performance provides an opportunity for learners to confirm their correct understanding, and the repetition further increases the possibility of long-term retention. Kaufman<sup>20</sup> also added that learners should be given opportunities and support for practicing their learnt lesson. The study showed that some efforts are needed to reach the desired level regarding active participation of all students. In the study of Ahmed R<sup>9</sup>, it was found that in 30% of classes active participation was <70%; it indicated that moderate efforts were needed on that aspect. The findings are more or less consistent with that of present study. According to Knowles<sup>21</sup>, features of adult learning include active and self-directed, rather than teacher-centred approaches and opportunities for the learner to identify problems, pose questions and explore solutions. It has been suggested that active learning facilitates a deep, rather than a superficial approach to learning.

Majority of the students (61%) of this study agreed that they got immediate feedback regarding their performance but their views indicated that some extents of efforts are still needed to reach a good standard. Khadjooi<sup>19</sup> stated that while observing each learner performing the procedure, immediate feedback and guidance can be provided and any question can be answered. In addition, feedback from other learners observing the performance is very helpful. Harden and Laidlaw<sup>22</sup> believed that small group teaching particularly encourages active rather than passive learning and provides learners with immediate feedback in regard to their understanding and attitude to a subject. Regarding content coverage within the allocated time, some efforts are also needed to reach a required standard. Ahmed R<sup>9</sup> showed that regarding total time management for covering content as per stated objectives, some efforts were needed to reach a good standard. Findings of the present study also showed a similar result. More than one fourth (26.3%) students stated that good summarization was not given at the end of the class. Ahmed R<sup>9</sup> showed that 50% of teachers did not provide a summary at the end of the teaching-learning session. She also indicated that this problem area should be evaluated more closely. Harden and Laidlaw<sup>22</sup> cited "towards the end of

the session summarize what has been achieved and plan what is expected of the group before they next meet". For building self-directed learner some efforts are needed to reach the standard level. Kaufman<sup>20</sup> cited that self-directed learning could be viewed as a method of organizing teaching and learning in which the learning tasks were largely within the learners' control as well as they are empowered to accept personal responsibility for their own learning.

### Conclusion

The mean score of almost all the statements is in-between 3 and 4 which indicates that the trained teachers are not practising required standards in tutorial classes. So, due attention should be paid to this fact and efforts should be made for improving the present scenario. To make tutorial classes more effective and student-centred, an appropriate and modernized training programme is the need of time.

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