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Letter to the Editor

Evaluation of medical teachers and traditional teaching in pharmacology

Sir,

Medical teaching is a noble profession in the field of medical science. Everybody is aware of the fact that Health is Wealth. People want to live in good health. This can be achieved with the help of service provided by medical practitioners. Medical practitioners however can only provide good medical health facilities after passing the full MBBS course and acquiring a registration from BMDC. In western countries, the facilities for medical care are widely available as well as of fine quality. In underdeveloped countries however, the story is quite different. Proper facilities are hardly available and the quality is poor and steadily declining. The patients are flying abroad for treatment, the most common destinations being India and Singapore. Since 'Health for all' is our slogan, we must rise to take measures against this and ensure that medical health in our country depends solely on the medical practitioners of our country.

Our doctors acquire their MBBS degree after passing three professional examinations. The full course, along with the training takes six years. A paper has been published in journal of Chittagong Medical College Teachers Association (1996; 7: 59-62) from which it is clear that they are hardly interested in acquiring knowledge; rather they are interested in getting their MBBS certificates in the easiest ways possible. Simultaneously, the medical teachers are the ones held responsible for producing doctors who prove to be national assets.

Pharmacology is one of the vital branches of medical science that acknowledges the doctor on how to write out a prescription rational. Sadly though, in my lifetime of teaching I have discovered a mere 5% of the students to be interested in Pharmacology. The students somehow manage to pass their examinations after which they write out drugs in their prescriptions with help from medical representatives. This leads to me another thought- whether it is the students or rather the teachers who are actually responsible for this lack of interest. There must be some lacunae in the teachers.

We should try to make pharmacology understandable and interesting too, because whichever field in medical science our students undertake, they will always require some knowledge of pharmacology if they are to fulfill the moral and legal duties they have towards their patients. All in all, I conclude that both students and teachers ought to be evaluated: One by the other. Admittedly, it is very difficult to evaluate teachers. I, however, have taken upon the challenge to evaluate teachers with the help of post-graduate medical students.

The study was carried out at the Department of Pharmacology, Chittagong Medical College during the years 1992, 1993 and 1994. Postgraduate students were the subjects, those studying for DA, DCH and DGO. The total number of students present was 45, out of which only 25 agreed to take part in the survey. Six students out of 10 participated in the study carried out in 1992, while 10 out of 15 participated in 1993. In 1994, nine out of 15 were interested.

A questionnaire was prepared and supplied to the students each year after they completed their course of Pharmacology. After completion of the questionnaires,

Table I

Evaluation of medical teachers

Area of valuation	Mean scoring ^a		
	1992	1993	1994
Selection of topic	3.5	3.7	4.2
Clear audible voice	3.6	4.1	3.8
Able to make the subject clear	3.1	3.4	3.3
Interest in teaching	4.3	4.4	4.2
Modern concept in pharmacology	3.0	3.3	2.8
Using audio-visual aids	2.5	3.8	3.3
Behavior of the teacher with the student	5.0	4.8	4.8
Teacher- regular, sincere and punctual	4.8	4.8	5.0
Any other comment	2.6	3.6	3.5

^aBelow average 1; average 2; good 3; very good 4; excellent 5



the data collected was analyzed. The teachers were evaluated on the basis of parameters like, the topics they chose to teach, whether they possessed a clear, audible voice, whether they were capable of clarifying a topic, how interested they were in teaching the students, whether their conceptions of Pharmacology

were contemporary and whether the teacher was regular, sincere and punctual.

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