Teaching Professionalism and Ethics among Undergraduate Students: A Tertiary Hospital Base Study

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Introduction

Professionalism is defined as the habitual and judicious use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, clinical reasoning, emotion, values and reflections in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and community. Professionalism is a competency which can be taught to the undergraduate students and can be incorporated through well designed educational strategies. We therefore conducted this study to know the perspectives about professionalism and ethics among undergraduate students in a tertiary medical college in India.

Aim and objective

To explore the perceptions of Medical Undergraduate students and assess their attitude on Professionalism and ethics.

Materials and methods

Methods: A Qualitative study. **Study Design:** The study evaluated undergraduate medical students at Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal, a Tertiary Hospital on importance and need of Teaching Professionalism and Ethics among undergraduate students. Data collection is done by conducting four focus group discussion of different phases of undergraduate students of Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal, Manipur, India. Data collections were done by conducting four focus group discussion. The FGD guide consists of broad open-ended questions on the qualities of good doctors, need and ways of teaching professionalism. The FGDs were audio recorded and transcripts were prepared verbatim.

Results

Manual content analysis of the transcripts were done. Inductive codes were derived from the transcripts. Similar statements were merged together to form the categories and similar categories were merged to form themes. Quantitative analysis of the themes indicated a significant predominance of attributes such as knowledge, ethical conduct, compassion and selflessness in defining a good physician. The thematic framework identified key areas for enhancement in medical education. These findings supported by statistical patterns offer empirical evidence for refining medical curricula to address these areas and foster the development of competent, ethical and empathetic physicians

Table 1. Sampling distribution characteristics

Sampling distribution	Sex		N
	Male	Female	
Under-graduate Phase I	7	7	14
Under-graduate Phase II	7	7	14
Under-graduate Phase III (Part I)	7	7	14
Under-graduate Phase III (Part II)	7	7	14

Themes arising from the data.

Theme A: Qualities of a good doctor
- ❖ Committed to excellence
- ❖ Responsive and accountable to patients
- ❖ Selfless
- ❖ Personal attributes
- ❖ Integrity
- ❖ Knowledge and skills
- ❖ Physician – Patient relationship

Theme B: Need for teaching professionalism
- ➢ Being a good professional
- ➢ Reason to teach professionalism

Theme C: Learning Professionalism
- ❖ Role of faculties and seniors
- ❖ Personal Experiences:
- ❖ Role modeling by faculties
- ❖ Group Discussion on scenarios

Theme D: Ways of teaching professionalism

Theme E: Assessing professionalism

Theme F: Factors promoting Professionalism
- ➢ Media
- ➢ Patients

Theme G: Factors hindering professionalism.
- ❖ Money
- ❖ Unfair Practices
- ❖ Society

Discussion

Teaching professionalism entails "setting expectations, providing experiences, evaluating outcomes. The study also highlights approaches that have been found, valuable for learning professionalism by the students. Prior work that had used the American Board of Internal Medicine foundational elements of professionalism for assessing student opinion has found that all students group agree upon these electees. It is now globally agreed that professionalism is a core competency for physicians(22) and should be taught explicitly. Both teaching and evaluation of professionalism is best done in a longitudinal fashion, by different methods and across different contents, since professionalism is context specific.

Conclusion

This study confirmed the need of teaching professionalism and ethics, to identify and trained the students by role modelling, group discussion.

Reference

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