



Original Article

Determining The Feasibility of Peer Assisted Learning in Teaching of AETCOM Module in Microbiology: Faculty and Students Perception

Dr Anjali Kulshrestha^{*1}, Miss Neelima Varania², Dr Shweta Bohra³

¹⁻³Department of Microbiology, Ananta Institute of Medical Sciences & Research Center, Rajsamand, Rajasthan

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Corresponding Author:

Dr Anjali Kulshrestha

Email id:

anjalikulshrestha2185@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of study was to analyze the perception of students and faculty for Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) implementation for AETCOM modules in Microbiology.

Method: After obtaining ethical clearance from Institutional Ethical Committee (IEC), this interventional study was conducted prospectively on Phase II MBBS students for teaching AETCOM modules 2.4 and MI 8.14 of Microbiology by PAL sessions. Student and faculty response was recorded by feedback questionnaires pre-validated by non-participating faculty members on five-point Likert scale.

Result: 150 MBBS students of phase II participated in the present study. Among these 74 students felt that their communication skills have improved after PAL sessions and 72 students had advanced understanding of AETCOM module, which in turn increased their knowledge about the subject. The feedback form of the faculty reflected that PAL is an effective teaching learning method for acquiring better knowledge, improving communication and presentation skills of students.

Conclusion: PAL is a novel method for overall development of MBBS students and a feasible method for teaching AETCOM modules in microbiology.

Keywords: Feasibility, AETCOM modules, peer assisted learning, Microbiology.

INTRODUCTION

Attitude, Ethics and Communication (AETCOM) modules introduced for MBBS students with the aim of improving their attitude and communication skills while dealing with patients or their relatives with full empathy, good clinical reasoning and compassion¹. Traditional teaching learning methods like didactic lectures are used for AETCOM modules, does not fulfill the purpose with which this module was introduced for MBBS students. Hence novel methods should be used for teaching, one among them is PAL². It helps the students in acquiring all 3 domains ie cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains. As it helps them to exchange their views about the subject without fear of judgement, hence it in turn increases self-confidence, self-evaluation, healthy competition among peers³. So, if this teaching learning method is used for AETCOM module, it will help the students to improve attitude and communication skills for interacting with colleagues, patients and their relatives. This will have a long-term impact on students and also will solve the purpose of teaching AETCOM modules for UG learners. This study was carried out to determine the feasibility of teaching AETCOM modules in Microbiology.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design and study population - A prospective study carried out on Phase II MBBS students of Ananta Institute of Medical Sciences and Research Center, Rajsamand.

Sample size- All 150 students were included in the study. They were divided in to 2 groups with 75 students in each group

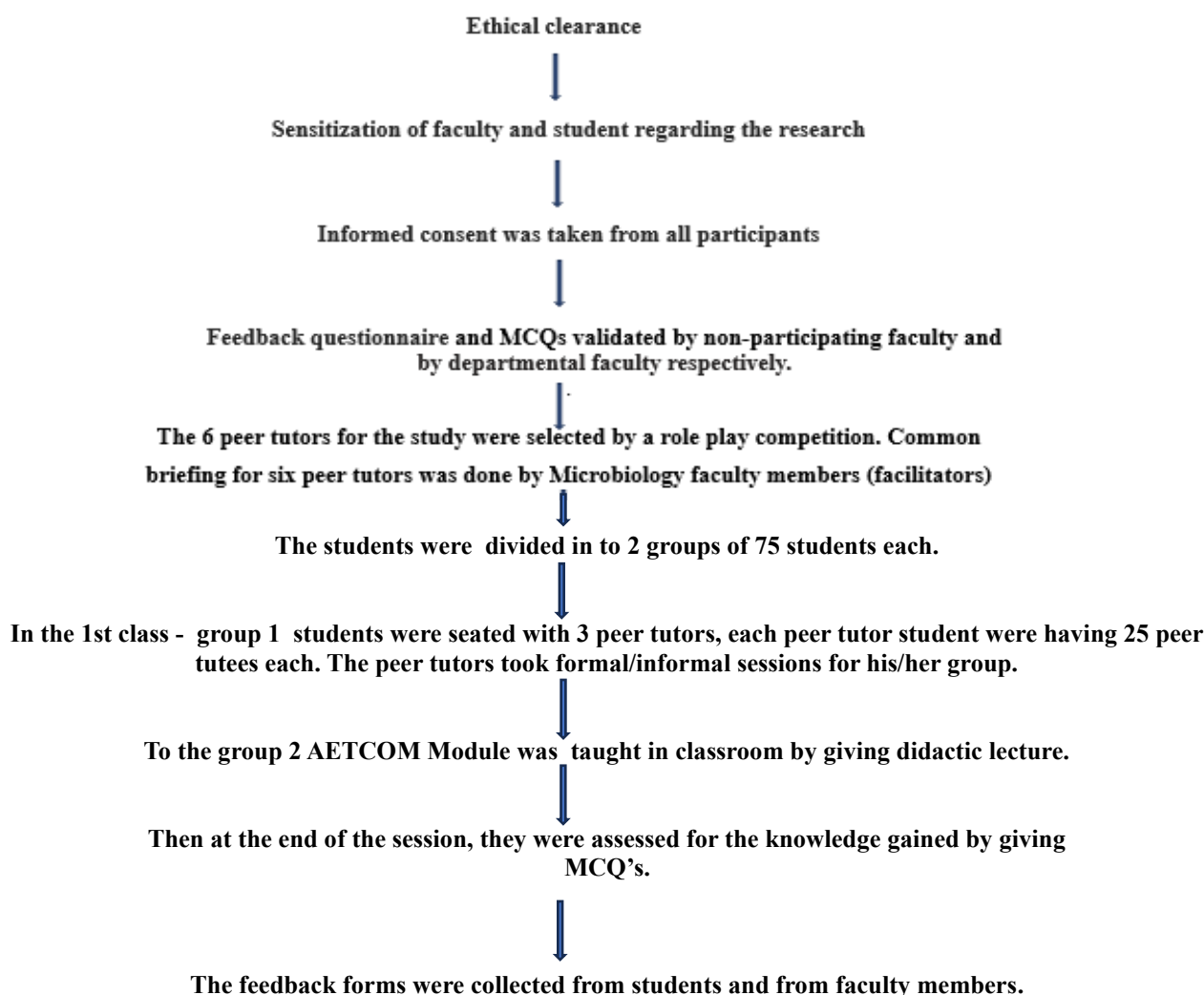
Study duration - 3 months.

Competencies addressed:

AETCOM Module –2.4 (Working in a health care team)⁴

&
MI 8.14 (Demonstrate confidentiality pertaining to patient identity in laboratory results)⁵.

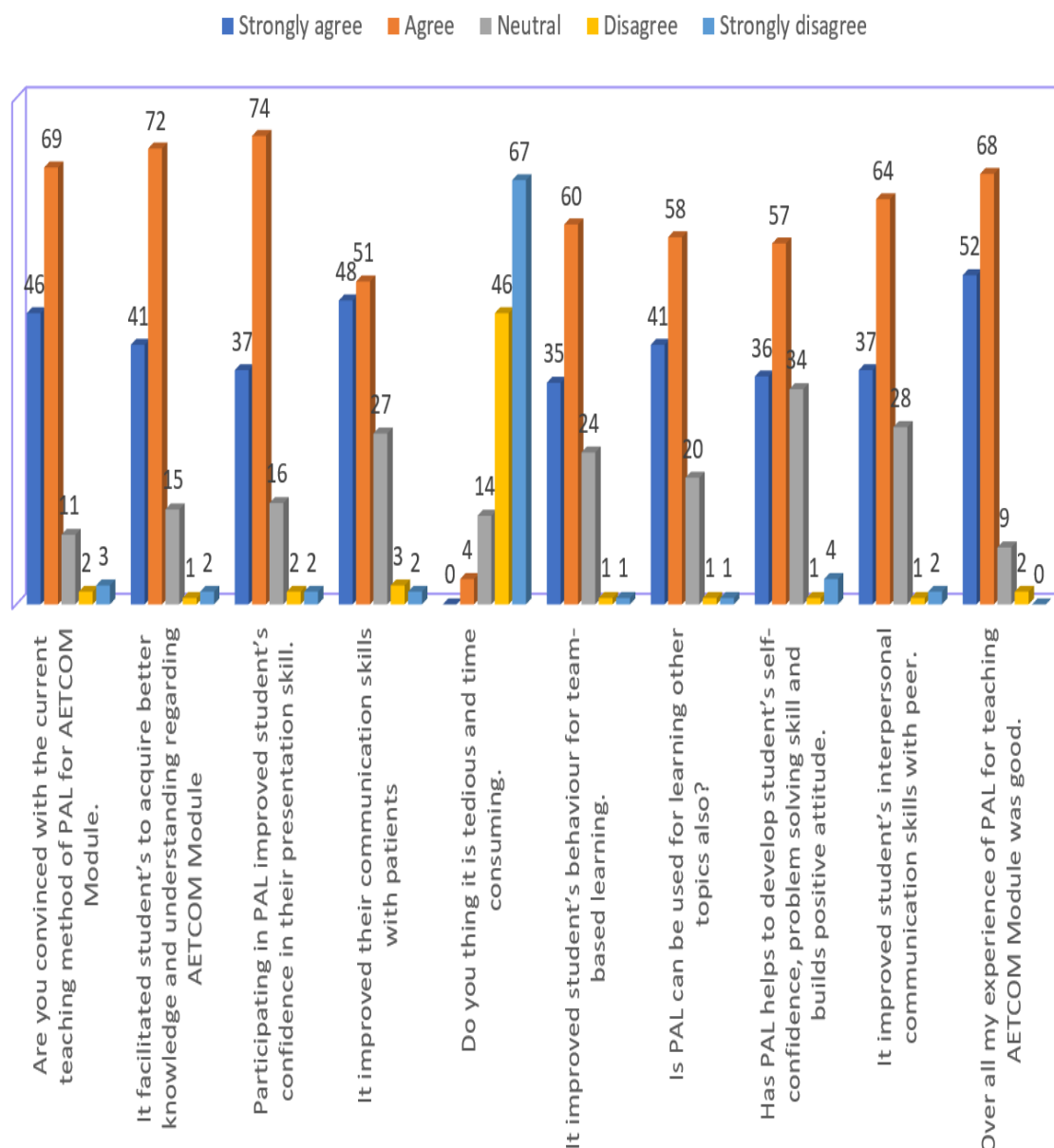
Fig 1 -Flow chart showing sequence followed for implementation of PAL on Phase II MBBS students for AETCOM module of Microbiology



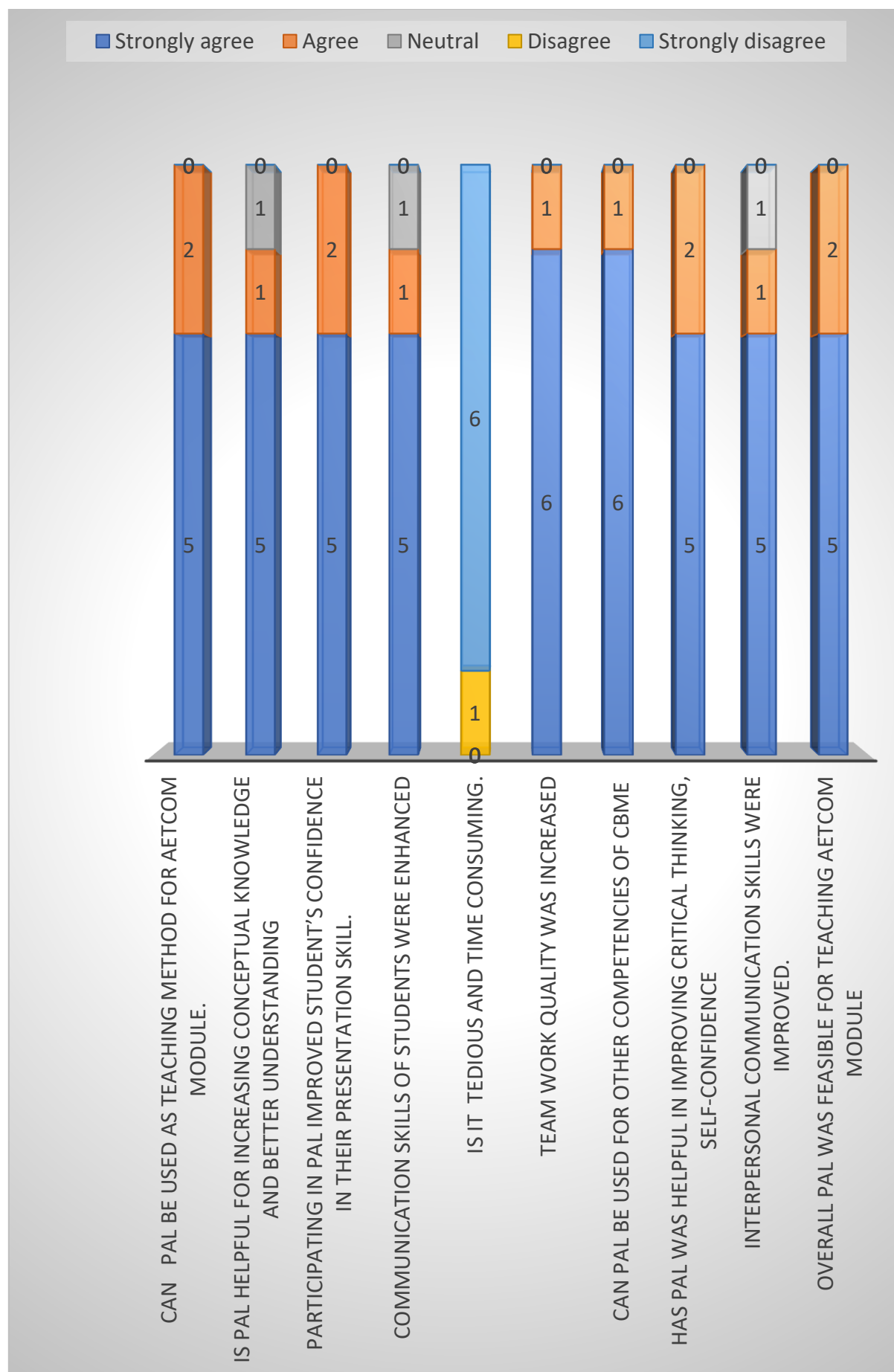
RESULT

Total 150 students participated in the study. Students and faculties perception was taken with pre validated questionnaire shown in the Graph 1 &2. Majority of the students and faculties responded that PAL is helpful in increasing knowledge about the AETCOM module. This study also highlighted the multidimensional advantages of PAL.

Graph1 – Students perception of peer assisted learning



Graph 2 – Faculty perception of peer assisted learning



DISCUSSION

In the year 2019, CBME curriculum was introduced for MBBS students along with this various modules were also included, one among them was AETCOM module which aimed at improving students communication abilities and overall development of students, so that they can show full empathy towards colleagues, patients and their relatives⁶. The teaching learning methods to be used for teaching of these modules should be interactive and bidirectional so that students also actively participate in the teaching learning method which in turn will cause overall development of students⁷.

In this study a total of 150 phase II MBBS students participated, out of which 74 students felt that their present skills have improved after PAL sessions and 72 students had improved understanding of AETCOM modules. 67 students disagreed that PAL is time consuming and tedious. 64 students felt their interpersonal skills have improved. 68 students felt that overall PAL is a good learning method and is feasible for teaching AETCOM modules of Microbiology. This is similar to the study conducted by Pradip B. Barde et al⁸, in which the students felt that their team making qualities, communication skills and learning about the Physiology AETCOM module has increased.

In the present study 5 out of 7 faculties felt that PAL has increased students knowledge about the subject, also they felt that interpersonal, communication and presentation skills of students were improved. 6 faculties felt that team qualities of students were increased also they are of the belief that PAL can be used for teaching other competencies of CBME. This is similar to the study conducted by Divya et al⁹, in which faculties are in favor of teaching AETCOM module by PAL sessions as it helps in retention of knowledge for a longer time and also helps the students in self directed learning, also they were of the opinion that this should be under supervision of teachers so that content errors can be avoided while peer tutors are teaching the peer tutees. This was also recommended by Kapoor A et al¹⁰, that AETCOM modules can be taught by PAL sessions.

CONCLUSION

As the likert scale score shows that faculty and students are strongly in favour of PAL as a teaching learning method for AETCOM modules. So PAL can be used as a teaching method for preparing future educators to be a long term learners, good communicators and with improved team making qualities, which in turn will help them in future for better clinical decision making in management of patients. To the best of our knowledge this is the first study of its kind done on II MBBS students of Microbiology for teaching assigned modules of AETCOM under CBME curriculum, more and more studies on such novel teaching learning methods should be carried out in future.

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Author Contributions

Dr Neelima- data collection, data analysis, drafting of manuscript. Dr Shweta – supervision, data analysis and manuscript revision.

Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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