

Ensuring Quality Assurance of the Faculty Development Programs in Medical Education Using the Kirkpatrick Model of Evaluation

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Abstract

Faculty development programs (FDPs) occupy an important role in the effective delivery of the medical curriculum to the medical students. Owing to the specific recommendation by the regulatory body, all the medical colleges are conducting a specific number of mandatory FDPs. However, like any other program, the mere organization of any FDP does not serve the purpose, unless the quality assurance of such programs is ensured and the outcomes of the same are evaluated as a follow-up activity. The quality assurance of the FDP can be assessed via either the internal or external quality assurance methods. In conclusion, the FDPs play a crucial role in improving the competence level of the faculty members. However, in order to ensure that we accomplish the set targets, it is extremely essential to maintain the quality of the organized FDPs and follow it up in the subsequent period.

Keywords: Faculty development programs, medical education, quality assurance

INTRODUCTION

Faculty development programs (FDPs) occupy an important role in the effective delivery of the medical curriculum to the medical students.^[1] This is accomplished not only by exposing the faculty members to the various new methods of teaching–learning, assessment, and evaluation, but also by strengthening the delivery of medical curriculum using traditional modes of teaching–learning and assessment.^[1] It is important to note that in the field of medical education, no formal training is required for a postgraduate student to discharge their role as a medical teacher, and thus, the Medical Council of India has made it mandatory for all the faculty members to undergo a fixed number of medical education workshops or sensitization programs.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Owing to the specific recommendation by the regulatory body, all the medical colleges have established a medical education unit (MEU) and is involved in the organization

of at least the mandatory number of FDPs, and if the resources permit, even an additional number of such programs has been advocated. However, like any other program, the mere organization of any FDP does not serve the purpose, unless the quality assurance of such programs is ensured and the outcomes of the same are evaluated as a follow-up activity.^[2] In general, quality assurance of an FDP refers to a set of procedures that are being adhered to ensure that the FDP succeeds in

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accomplishing the intended learning outcomes and has to be a continuous process.

ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

The quality assurance of the FDP can be assessed via either the internal or external quality assurance methods.^[2,3] The internal quality assurance of the FDP can be evaluated through the adoption of Kirkpatrick's model of evaluation, wherein for level 1 of reaction, feedback can be obtained from the participants on the content, facilitators, facilities provided, resource materials, schedule, relevance to the current needs and interests, an adequate mix of theory and practical sessions, accomplishment of the specified objectives, and overall satisfaction.^[4] For level 2 of learning, the participants are made to answer the questions (posttest), which demonstrates the improvement of knowledge, skills, and attitude. In fact, upon analyzing the results of levels 1 and 2, the MEU can organize a review meeting to discuss the strengths and the areas that need further improvements.

A level 3 evaluation regarding changes in behavior focuses on whether the trained faculty member is utilizing the gained knowledge or skills in their routine practice. The inference regarding this can be done through questionnaires, videotape recordings, feedback from students, results of students assessments (which shows improvement in their performance), and maintenance of the portfolio either by the faculty or by the self-assessment reports, wherein faculty members report about their competence and level of confidence after attending the FDPs. It is important to understand that obtaining feedback from students about the faculty member regarding their approach towards teaching-learning, especially after attending the FDP, can be used to gain significant insights into the change in behavior by the faculty and should always be sought.^[3]

Level 4 of results can be evaluated by identifying whether the organized FDP has resulted in a positive impact on the overall functioning of the organization or the produced students in the long run. The external quality assurance of the organized FDP can be assessed with the help of audit involving external experts or by the accreditation body or by the involvement of observers from the Regional or the Nodal Centre for Faculty Development (which is a mandatory practice for the organization of Revised Basic Course Workshops or Curriculum Implementation Support Programme). The most essential aspect of sustaining the quality assurance of the FDP is that it has to be a continuous process and should be done in a transparent manner, and this can be achieved by involving external stakeholders.^[3-5]

At Shri Sathya Sai Medical College and Research Institute, a constituent unit of the Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth,

Deemed-to-be-University, Puducherry, Kirkpatrick model of evaluation has been regularly used to assess the quality of the organized program. As a matter of fact, the Medical Education Unit (MEU) of the institution, under the leadership of the dean organized the fourth Revised Basic Course Workshop between 3 and 5 August 2021, in the presence of an observer from the Nodal Center (Christian Medical College, Vellore). In the workshop, a total of 30 faculty members from pre, para and clinical departments got trained by the 7 resource persons from the MEU team. In order to ascertain the quality of the workshop, pre and post-test were conducted (Kirkpatrick Level 1) and even feedback were also obtained from all 30 participants for all the sessions individually (Kirkpatrick Level 2). All these reports were analyzed and subsequently submitted to the Nodal Center.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the FDPs play a crucial role in improving the competence level of the faculty members. However, in order to ensure that we accomplish the set targets, it is extremely essential to maintain the quality of the organized FDPs and follow it up in the subsequent period.

Contribution details

SRS contributed toward the conception or design of the work, drafting of the work, and approval of the final version of the article, and agreed to all aspects of the work. PSS contributed toward the literature review, revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content, and approval of the final version of the article, and agreed to all aspects of the work.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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