



Faculty Development Programs (FDP) - as perceived by faculties of medical colleges of Assam

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ABSTRACT

Introduction – Faculty development programs (FDP) are necessary for improving the teaching skills of faculties of medical colleges. Basic course workshop in medical education technologies (BCW) has made compulsory for all the faculties of the medical colleges by NMC.

Aim & Objectives - This study was planned to evaluate the perception of faculties of various medical colleges of Assam towards faculty development programs of medical education technologies.

Methodology – This study was done in the Department of Physiology, Gauhati Medical College & Hospital, Guwahati, Assam, in the month of February 2021. For this study questionnaire containing 20 questions were formulated and validated. The questionnaire was circulated in Google form among the faculties of medical colleges of Assam.

Result – In this study 53 (56.6% males, 43.4% females) faculties had participated. Out of which 45.3% have not attended any FDPs, total 73.6% had agreed that FDPs are helpful in improving teaching skills. 86.6% agreed that FDPs are necessary for successful implementation of CBME curriculum. 90.6% were willing to attend more FDPs in future if they get opportunity. 81% agreed that more FDPs should be conducted per year per institute.

Conclusion – So from this study this can be concluded that FDPs are useful in acquiring new knowledge, concept, and skills. Most of the faculties agreed that they are willing to attend FDPs, but are not getting opportunity. So FDPs should be conducted in every medical college on regular basis.

Key words – Faculty development program, medical education, Perception of Medical faculties.

I. INTRODUCTION –

In recent years, medical professionalism has received more interest globally, mainly because of issues related to unprofessional behaviour. ⁽¹⁾. It has also been acknowledged by researchers that

students cannot learn effectively if faculties are not trained properly ⁽²⁾.

Faculty Development programs in Medical Education can improve and the skills of faculties in teaching, research, curriculum development, development of assessment tools, leadership qualities, mentoring and promotion of the scholarship of teaching ⁽³⁾. Trained competent faculties can prepare and inspire students to provide quality health care services to the society ⁽⁴⁾. For several reasons like increasing number of Medical Schools, emphasis on quality assurance, significance of Faculty Development programs is increasing in India ⁽⁵⁾

Faculty Development in India began in 1976 with the establishment of the first National Teacher Training Centre (NTTC) at Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research (JIPMER), Pondicherry now Puducherry. In 1997, the Medical Council of India (MCI) recommended the establishment of Medical Education Units (MEU) in each medical college ⁽⁶⁾.

Despite the fact that, most of the faculties in medical education are competent enough as teacher, researcher, leader, the need of Faculty Development Programs is well recognized in Medical Education. ⁽⁷⁾. Assuming that Faculty Development Programs have positive impact on faculties in delivering their various activities, which in turn improve student's learning, many workshops, seminars were conducted in Medical Colleges.

But multiple barriers are also there in successful implementation of Faculty Development Programs like work overload of the faculties, negative attitude towards the programs leading to poor participation, constrain of resources and infrastructures etc.

Faculty development programs (FDP) are necessary for improving the teaching skills of faculties of medical colleges. This has gained recognition from MCI also as basic course workshop in medical education technologies (BCW) is made compulsory for all the faculties in medical colleges for promotion. But yet many



faculties have not undergone any FDPs. This make it necessary to know the following few points - the reason behind not undergoing any FDPs, acceptance of the new law of making BCW compulsory for promotion of the faculties, what faculties consider about usefulness of these programs and whether the faculties those who undergone the FDPs are benefitted or not. If the faculties are benefitted then this may be motivating for others to undergo FDPs.

Study was available at international level reporting positive changes in knowledge, skill and attitude of faculties after attending faculty development program ⁽⁸⁾. Study was also available at national level on perception and feedback of faculties towards these programs ⁽⁹⁾ but it was not analysed in this part of the globe.

So, this study was planned to know the perception of faculties of various medical colleges of Assam towards faculty development programs in medical education technologies. With an intention to identify the gap, to take necessary strategies to improve the programs and also to motivate other faculties to attend these programs, if already attended faculties were benefitted by attending the programs.

Aim & objectives – The aim & objective of this study is to assess the perception of faculties of Medical colleges of Assam towards the faculty development programs.

Methodology – This qualitative study was done in the Department of Physiology, Gauhati Medical College & Hospital, Guwahati, Assam, in the month of February 2021. For this study a single set of questionnaires with 20 questions were formulated and validated. 20 questions were formulated by us as those questions were sufficient to get the desired information. Moreover, a long

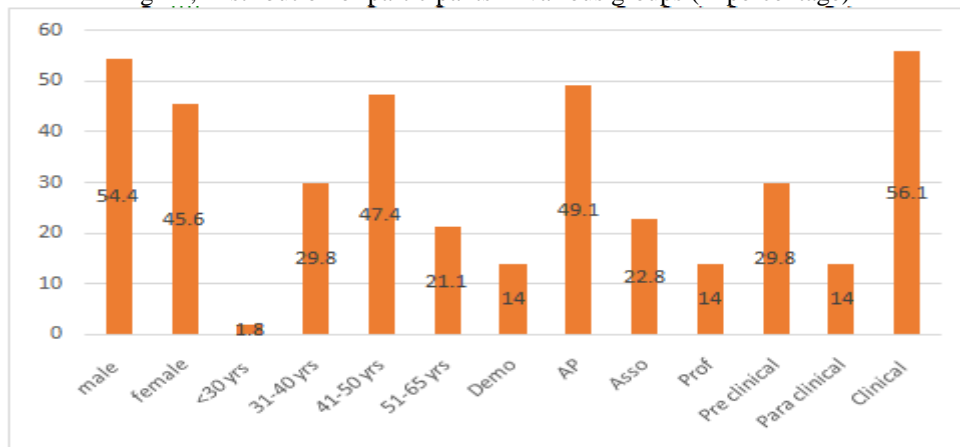
questionnaire increases chances of non-participation by the participants as it becomes time consuming. The questions were close ended so that it remains easy for faculties to answer those questions. The questionnaires were circulated in Google form among the faculties of medical colleges of Assam. The google form was circulated in various groups in social media, in personal contact details and faculties were also requested to forward to their colleagues. The questionnaire also contained a cover page including the brief description of the study purpose, informed consent of the participants and the declaration of confidentiality of the data. Statistical analysis was done using excel software.

II. RESULT –

This cross-sectional study was to understand perception of faculties of medical colleges of Assam towards Faculty development programs.

In this study, only 57 (54.4% male, 45.6% female) faculties from various medical colleges of Assam had participated. Out of these 1.8%(1) was less than 30 years age, 29.8%(17) were of 31 – 40 years age, **47.4% (27)** were of **41-50** years and 21.1% (12) were of 51 – 65 years age group. Again, in this study, 14%(8) were Demonstrators/registerers, **49.1% (28)** were **Assistant Professors**, 22.8%(13) were Associate Professors, and 14%(8) were Professors. Participants in this study were from - **56.1%(32)clinical** department, 29.8%(17)preclinical and 14%(8) paraclinical department. These distributions of the participants in various groups are shown in the figure 1

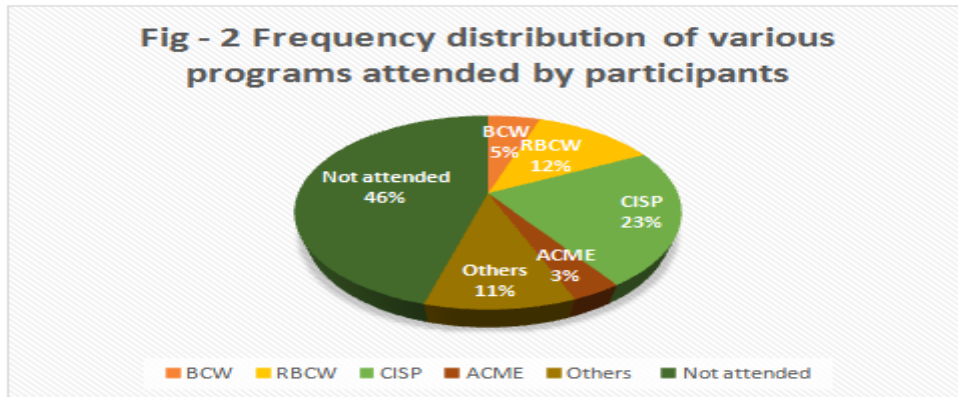
Fig -1 ; Distribution of participants in various groups (in percentage)





Out of the total participants, 54.4% (31) had attended various faculty development programs. Out of which again 5.3%(3) attended BCW, 12.3%(7) attended rBCW, **22.8%(13)** attended **CISP**, 3.5%(2) attended ACME and

10.5%(6) attended some other FDPs. This distribution of various programs attended by the participants is shown in the pie diagram given below in fig 2.

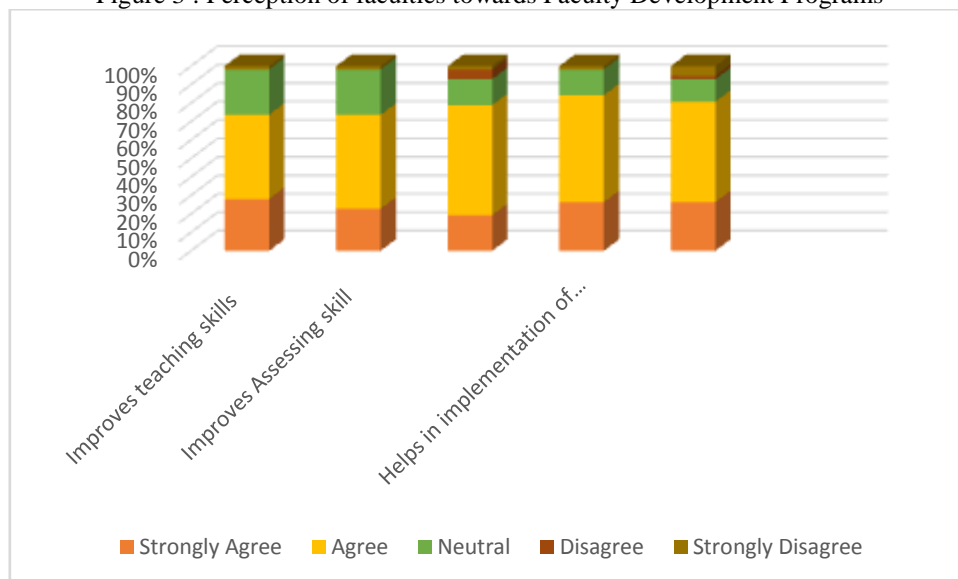


Among the participants who had not attended any faculty development programs, **56.1%**(32) participants stated **not getting opportunity** as the reason for not attending FDPs whereas 1.8%(1) stated that incentives are not given.

82.5%(47) were **aware** and **satisfied** that BCW has made compulsory for promotion but 17.5%(10) were not aware. 7%(4) participants were not even aware of existence of a medical education unit in the institutes whereas 43.9%(25) were interested to be a member of the unit. 73.7% (42) faculties agreed that FDPs are helpful in improving teaching and assessing skills. 78.9%(45)

agreed that FDPs are helpful in improving personal qualities like better communication with students, better team work with colleagues. 42.1%(24) faculties were able to implement the newly learned skills and 84.2%(48) were agreed that FDPs are helpful in successful implementation of CBME curriculum. 89.5%(51) participants were willing to attend more FDPs in future and 80.7%(46) agreed that FDPs should be conducted regularly in each medical college every year. These perceptions of participants towards the faculty development program are shown in the stacked bar diagram given below in figure 3.

Figure 3 : Perception of faculties towards Faculty Development Programs





III. DISCUSSION –

The doctors of medical colleges used to join as faculties in the institutes just after completion of their degree courses with very little or no knowledge of class room teaching, assessing, feedback giving etc. To maintain the quality and standardization of medical education formal training of medical teachers in the principles of higher education and technology is necessary⁽¹⁰⁾. To address this gap various faculty development programs were designed and BCW (Basic course workshop in Medical Education Technologies) was made compulsory for the faculties for promotion⁽¹¹⁾. This study was designed to provide an overview of the perception of faculties towards these faculty development programs and also to highlight the area of concerns.

In this study, faculties showed positive response on making BCW compulsory for the faculties. Similar positive response on compulsion of BCW was also shown in another study done by Yadav AK et al⁽¹²⁾. This could be because of the fact that as the faculties had joined teaching institute so they are bound to teach undergraduate students. Also, there is paradigm change in the curriculum after implementation of CBME (competency based Medical Education). So, training on basics of medical education technologies is better for them in rendering their duties as medical teacher.

Faculties also responded positively that they could implement the knowledge learned in the programs in their field and it improved their teaching, assessing skills as well as improved their communication with students and their colleagues. Similar findings were also reported in another study previously⁽¹²⁾. This again confirm that teacher training programs improve the effectiveness of teaching^(13,14). Faculties also reported that it indeed helpful in implementation of CBME in practical scenario. In CBME there is introduction of few new terminologies like SDL (Self directed learning, ECE (Early clinical exposure), clinical clerkship, Electives, etc, and at the same time the assessment technique has also been changed to competency based from the traditional method. As these programs cover these topics, so faculties might find it easy to implement the new curriculum after attaining the programs.

This study revealed, not getting opportunity as a major cause of non-attending the workshops so far. This could be because the faculties of clinical departments find difficult to attend workshop on the cost of patient care. Managing duties may be difficult. Moreover, it becomes a costly affair to visit regional or nodal

centres to attend these workshops. That may be the reason why the participants in this study supported that more FDPs should be conducted in the institutes regularly.

The strength of this study was that to the best of our knowledge, this was the first study of this type in this part of the globe. Although similar studies were conducted time to time at international, national levels but challenges may be different in different regions. So, this study revealed the perception of faculties of Assam towards the faculty development programs.

Limitation of this study was small sample size; close ended questions and we did not ask for their suggestions to overcome the challenges.

So, future study with large number of sample size and more questions including both open ended and closed ended questions might be helpful in finding the gap, the challenges and the solutions to meet the gap.

CONCLUSION

So, from this study this can be concluded that FDPs are useful in acquiring new knowledge, concept, and skills. Faculties were not attending the programs, mainly because of not getting opportunity. But many faculties are willing to attend the programs. So FDPs should be conducted in every medical college on regular basis.

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Conflict of interest: None

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