

Favorable Student Attitudes Towards Pharmacology in a Medical College in Western Nepal

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ABSTRACT

Traditional pharmacology teaching in medical schools does not adequately prepare the student for rational practice. Recently a number of modifications have been introduced in pharmacology teaching and learning. At the Manipal College of Medical Sciences, Pokhara, Nepal pharmacology is taught in an integrated manner with the other basic science subjects during the first four semesters of the undergraduate medical course. The present study was carried on second and third semester students during the month of March 2004 to obtain information on student attitude towards pharmacology, feedback on the assessment process, suggestions to improve pharmacology teaching and learning, basic demographic information about the respondents and to note the association, if any, of the student attitudes with demographic variables. Student attitude was assessed by noting their degree of agreement with 15 statements using a modified five-point Likert-type scale. The statements were grouped into those dealing with student attitude towards the subject and those concerned with improvements in pharmacology teaching and learning. The mean total, subject and improvement scores were calculated. Differences in the mean scores among different subgroups of respondents were analyzed ($p < 0.05$). One hundred and thirty-one students participated in the study and successfully completed the questionnaire; 83 were male. The overall student attitude towards pharmacology was positive. Differences in the mean scores were seen among the different subgroups. Differences were also noted in the mean scores of individual statements among different subgroups of respondents. Deficiencies were noted in the system of assessment, which was felt to mainly test factual knowledge. System based assessment using clinical problems, greater number of hospital visits and more problem-stimulated learning sessions were suggested. Improvements in the teaching-learning process and the system of assessment are required to make pharmacology learning more interesting and effective. The sessions on rational drug use should be continued and strengthened.
