

EDITORIAL

Difficulties Faced by II MBBS Students While Learning Microbiology

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Abstract

The teaching of microbiology to second year MBBS students is mainly through conventional methods and it has been observed that there is inadequate retention of the subject microbiology. In most of the Medical Colleges, Microbiology is taught in classrooms & practical lab and its clinical application is almost negligible, so that is why students could not understand its clinical application in their routine management

of patients. Active learning is required to facilitate student's learning. Active learning in microbiology is a useful tool to improve tool to improve and bring changes in student's attitude towards application of microbiology in clinical practice. It also develops the learning interest in students and better understanding of microbiology. Therefore, here we are discussing first the difficulties faced by II year MBBS students while learning microbiology step by step and then the role of active learning.

Key Words: *Microbiology; MBBS Students; Learning; Teaching*

MBBS students enter the medical field with high ambitions and lot of dreams. They start learning new subjects. In II year MBBS, they have Microbiology as a subject in their curriculum. The subject Microbiology deals with the study of microorganisms. Now, what are the difficulties faced by II year MBBS students while learning microbiology:

Related to Subject

1. Microbiology is a vast subject; it is a pure science. Therefore, understanding the subject becomes tough. Many a times students by heart the maximum topic and try to recollect it, therefore chances of

forgetting the things on the spot occur more.

2. The conceptual knowledge of the subject is necessary for clinical correlation and applications. Majority of students do not acquire this by self-learning.
3. Difficulty in remembering the names of different organisms. In initial stages, genus and species names of different organisms are interchanged while answering. They get bombarded with many new words. Names of fungus are tongue twisters; students find difficulty in pronunciation.

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4. Students find tough to remember pathogenesis. They find the subject matter volatile.
5. Confusion in remembering together lifecycle of all parasites and drawing diagrams.
6. In the beginning, to remind the drug of choice in case of individual organism becomes tough.
7. If multiple choice questions (MCQs) are asked, confusion between options occur in initial stages. Hence, the practice of solving MCQs is needed.
8. Some students face problems in writing descriptive answers in the examination. They can write only few sentences although they know the subject.
9. Some topics in microbiology like sterilisation, disinfection, biomedical waste are dry so to make them insisting uses and implementation of it should be taught.
10. Students find Immunology, tumour immunology hard to learn by themselves though books.

Related to Teaching Method

1. Majority of students understand the subject better with interactive sessions.
2. Some students understand better with audio-visual aids like pictures, charts, rather than didactic lectures.
3. Repeated revision of topics with different teaching methods like lectures, practicals, seminars, and discussions make students better to remind the topic.
4. Methods like Integrated teaching and objective assessment methods like structured viva should be tried [1].

Related to Teacher

1. The voice of teacher may be inaudible.
2. The speed of talking of teacher may not be appropriate.
3. There may be language problem of some students. Few students may find difficult to understand pronunciation of the teacher.
4. There may be fear in mind of students to ask doubts, questions to few teachers.

Related to Environmental Conditions

1. During the lecture, if power point presentation is going on lights are switched off, few students may feel sleepy.
2. Usually microbiology lectures & practicals are post lunch; so, some students find difficulty to concentrate.
3. The absenteeism due to health issue, climatic conditions such as heavy rains, festivals, holidays are the reasons to miss the teaching sessions.
4. Students feel hungry, feeling hot in tropical countries due to afternoon hour lecture.

These are genuine difficulties faced by II MBBS students while learning microbiology, can easily be overcome by little efforts taken by students and teachers which can simplify the microbiology subject learning and fear for the subject will be removed. Traditional teaching-learning process is perceived by students as boring and less relevant to their goal [1]. The study conducted by Maria et al, shows that the initial background of Medical students in Medical Microbiology contents and the role of the active learning strategies implemented helped in the promotion of short and long-term retention [2]. Active learning is student centred, which makes better teacher student relationship which enhances interest in Microbiology.

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