

Faculty Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development Plan during Mentoring and Learning Web Sessions

Rahul Ramesh Bogam^{1,*}, Mariya Jiandani², Chinmay Shah³, Shakuntala Prabhu⁴, Bharati Taksande⁵

¹Assistant Professor, Dept. of Family & Community Medicine, King Faisal University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, ²Associate Professor, P.T. School & Center, Seth GS Medical College & KEMH, Mumbai, ³Associate Professor, Dept. of Physiology, Govt. Medical College, Bhavnagar, ⁴Professor & Head, Dept. of Paediatrics, B.J.Wadia Hospital for children, Mumbai, ⁵Professor, Dept. of Medicine, Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Sewagram

***Corresponding Author:**

Email: rhl_bogam@yahoo.co.in

Abstract

Continuing Professional Development refers to the process of tracking and documenting the skills, knowledge and experience that one gains in their career after the initial training. There is no structured and uniform way of assessing and documenting ones progress professionally in our country. Every medical teacher wishes to perfect him/herself. They do so at their own pace by identifying the resources available and time permissible. This observational questionnaire based study was conducted to understand the perceptions of medical teacher on various aspects of 'Professional Development Plan' through Mentoring and Learning (ML) Web sessions. Six open ended questions which were answered by participants were analyzed. Seven out of 32 (21.87%) responded to survey questionnaire. All (100%) showed interest in learning about various topics related to teaching, research and career planning, 42.85% mentioned 'Internet services', 42.85% 'Support from administration, family and seniors' with 14.28% reporting 'Medical journals' as major resources used to accomplish professional development plan. Overall participants in present study stated that continuous learning- medical and teaching related as the most important factor of their professional development.

Key Words: CPD, Medical faculty, ML web session

Introduction

Continuing professional development (CPD) is the process by which learner updates his/her knowledge and skills related to their professional lives. It is continuing education pertaining to professional development. It includes all of the activities that health's workers undertake both formal and informal to maintain, update, develop, and enhance their professional skills, knowledge and attitudes.¹

Various scientific studies reiterated the need of CPD activities for health worker to grow as 'Competent Health Care Professional'.^{1,2,3} Higher education institutions have found it also necessary to implement professional development activities to assist faculty in developing the skills and strategies necessary to provide effective instruction.²

It seems that teachers tend to do a variety of activities to develop professionally. They also view CPD as needed so that they can keep themselves updated.³ A considerable part of the research agenda has focused on teacher's professionalism and professional development and the factors which affect their formation. However, as it has been indicated, little is known about the views of teachers themselves regarding this issues.⁴

The present study was conducted to explore perceptions of faculties about their professional development plan through Mentoring and Learning (ML) Web sessions.

Material and Methods

This was an observational study, conducted in one of the regional FAIMER training institutes of India. All 32 FAIMER Fellows, enrolled at same institute, were included as study participants. A structured, validated, self-administered survey questionnaire was given to all participants through Mentoring and Learning (ML) Web sessions and were requested to fill up and submit it within one week. Anonymity of participants was completely maintained. All 6 questions in survey were open ended and based on various aspects of 'Professional Development Plan' of participants. The data was analyzed after entering into Microsoft Office Excel Sheet.

Results and Discussion

Out of 32 participants, only 7 (21.87%) responded to survey questionnaire as non-response rate is 78.12%. Five (71.42%) participants were from Community Medicine, Physiology, Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, ENT and Dentistry department; one from each department respectively. Two (28.57%) members did not mention their discipline in questionnaire.

In present study, all (100%) respondents showed interest in learning about various topics related to teaching, research, career planning etc. (Table 1 to 4). This study finding corroborates with study finding of Haden NK et al.⁵ where most of the participants expressed interest in learning related to same aspects. Similar findings were observed in study conducted by Hendrik Daniel Esterhuizen et al.⁶

Table 1: Responses by participants for Question 1 (n=7)

| Question | Responses |
|--|--|
| Where do I want to be by the end of this period? | I want to complete one part of my FAIMER project and plan and implement the second part. |
| | After successful completion of FAIMER, I want to be more actively involved in Medical Education Unit (MEU) at our institute and well as at others and our team will try to become nodal or regional center for MET as per MCI. |
| | I want to be successful medical education specialist who has capability to contribute some revolutionary changes in medical education and make systematic, well organized and effective medical education system at institute level. |
| | Better as a clinician, better as a faculty, more publications, more research. |
| | I want to be proficient in NCV, EEG, EMG techniques by the end of this period. I also want to implement my project in the department for improving teaching learning methods. |
| | I want to create a well-structured and organized UG and PG training program customized to our own situation and needs. |
| | To complete the data collection of Educational Innovation Project of FAIMER |

Analysis of the data in study of David Hustler et al.⁷ showed that overall (mean rank: 4.57) teachers were most likely to think of courses, conferences and workshops in connection with CPD activities and least likely to consider on-line learning (mean rank: 2.29). Present study reported contrast findings where only 1 (14.28%) faculty opted for conferences and workshops and 5 (71.42%) faculty preferred online sessions for professional development. The preference of faculty towards online learning might be due to that it allows for 24/7 access to learning material and more convenient to access; out of their busy official commitments.

Table 2: Responses by participants for Question 2 (n=7)

| Question | Responses |
|-----------------------------|---|
| What do I want to be doing? | I have to continuously learn from previous mistakes and produce quality work worth publishing so that it can be referred by colleagues. |
| | M-L web has opened new doors of learning via internet and at distance. I am learning daily via M-L web regarding medical education and research and I want to establish at my institute E- learning resources and MCQs for under graduate students. |
| | I have to build strong network among people working in field of medical education so that I can take guidance and support from them. I have to read a lot on medical education literature. |
| | I have to read more medical education related journals |
| | I want to train other faculty about interactive teaching methods |
| | I want to teach my UG and PG students much better than at present. |
| | I want to do the data formats |

Three (42.85%) participants mentioned 'Internet services', 3 (42.85%) said 'Support from administration, family and seniors' and one (14.28%) faculty reported 'Medical journals' as major resources required to accomplish professional development plan. When participants were asked about what would be success criteria of their professional achievements; majority of the participants opined that their success criteria would be establishment of well-organized and effective medical education system at their respective institute level with their contribution.

Table 3: Responses by participants for Question 3 (n=7)

| Question | Responses |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| What do I want/need to learn and why? | I want to learn about "Qualitative Research" as it is new to me so that I can venture into studies which have more value. |
| | As I am serving as medical teacher, I have to up date myself regarding new trends and technology of teaching for betterment of students as well as for myself and for institution. All the topics of M-L web are very interesting so far and I came to know and experience a newer way to learning. |
| | I need to learn network building, communication skills, evaluation of existing medical education system at institute level. |
| | I want to learn more about Antibiotic resistance , infection prevention etc. |
| | Training in proper techniques and learning more about interactive teaching and also training other faculty. |
| | Study a variety of curriculums and teaching programs of reputed medical schools and universities |
| | I want to learn how to validate questionnaire |

Around 71.42% of participants mentioned ‘Reading medical literature’ as one of the ways for continuous professional development. (Table 4) Two (28.57%) participants specifically said that they wanted to strengthen medical education system at Institute level (Table 1). This is welcoming sign from participants as it will create motivated workforce to organization and help to develop effective medical education system at institute level.

Table 4: Responses by participants for Question 4 (n=7)

| Question | Responses |
|---------------------------------|--|
| What will I do to achieve this? | I would need to go through literature. |
| | Our institute has already started skill lab and we are planning to launch soon educational videos and lectures in our institute to provide E- learning. |
| | I am going to attend various professional development activities like seminars, workshops, CME. I am also willing to organize these type of activities at institute level. |
| | I will read more journals |
| | I will take proper steps to gain permission from institute to go for training. I will apply for training and dedicate time towards my goal. |
| | Reading research articles and speaking to resource persons |
| | I will read articles and published materials |

Present study discussed the perceptions of participants about their CPD activities through online Mentoring and Learning Web sessions. A key finding was that participants viewed CPD as effective and growing tool for long term personal and professional development. Overall participants in present study showed continuing learning as the most important factor of their professional development. This study finding was supported by studies of Day et.al⁸ as well as Bredison.⁹ In this study, the majority of participants underlined their intrinsic motivation to become professionally competent medical teacher and their positive attitudes to enhance their professional growth through CPD plan.

Conclusion

Present study revealed multiple responses regarding their own continuous professional development plan. It included learning of combined aspects like teaching, research, administration, career

planning etc. It indicates positive learning behavior among medical faculties towards professional development activities.

Limitations

Our study is limited by small sample due to high non response rate and hence its conclusions cannot be generalized. However, further studies on this aspect and recording professional developmental activities would help to find gaps which can be bridged so as to empower medical teachers professionally.

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Conflict of Interest: Nil

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