

Title: A post graduate teaching course a novel way to foster knowledge and interest in teaching – the MUHAS experience

Author: Doreen Mloka

Background: Human Resource for Health crisis is widely acknowledged as being a problem especially in developing countries of sub-Saharan Africa. This is particularly a challenge of universities trying to train adequate numbers of health professionals.

Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) being one of those health universities with inadequate faculty decided that all first year Post graduate students (PG) students at MUHAS will have to attend a teaching as means to alleviate faculty shortage.

The course is expected to impart teaching skills to PG students so that they can effectively assist in teaching UG in their departments. Moreover, it aims to spark an interest in PG to teach, creating a future pool of faculty for recruitment, while at the same time improving health care delivery through effective teaching

Objectives: To evaluate the PG teaching course for imparting teaching skills and fostering a positive interest in teaching among PG students.

Methodology: A cross sectional design was used, involving both quantitative and qualitative approaches to measure knowledge and attitudes on teaching.

A series of 18 workshops were conducted between March and July 2103 covering 1) competency-based education, 2) curriculum development, 3) teaching strategies 4) assessment and of competencies and 5) mentoring. The course was evaluated using self-administered questioners, in-depth interviews to PG and faculty, pre and posttests and final university examination

Results: The course was attended by 154 PG students from 38 departments. Workshop attendance was on average 87%. Prior to the course only 12 departments were using PG to teach.

Pre course assessment of knowledge and positive attitude towards teaching among PG's showed that only 18% and 6% of PG had basic teaching knowledge and had a positive attitude toward teaching respectively

“I do not know why I have to attend this course. I do not want to be a teacher.” - First year OBGY Resident

On average 89% of PGs passed the post workshop posttests. On the final University exam, 82 % of PG scored B+ grade or better. All PG participants recommended similar workshops for their colleagues.

“The course has shown us how teaching can be conducted with a positive attitude toward students... different from what we went through as students...”

“...it will improve how we teach juniors”

“...orients us to become confident in public speaking”

“All PH PG’s must attend...it will help them in providing health education to the public.”

Conclusion: The preliminary findings of this study indicate that is possible to impart teaching skills, confidence and positive attitudes towards teaching in PG students.