

Editorial:

Toward more Objective Teaching Small Group Teaching

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Small Group Teaching:

Small group teaching is one of variety of education method for promoting student learning and can be more wording experience.

This learning modality is indicative of the movement from a teacher-centred approach to a more student-centred approach.

Its needs to be planed carefully and to develop skills in group management.

The organizer of a course or program has to be clear about the rationales for using small group work and the outcome expected of this method.

The use of 50min lectures and small group may be complementally to the learning process.

Small group teaching is characterized by student participation and interaction.

Ideally effective small group work occurs when there are a small number of students.

It is usually difficult to ensure the participation of large number of students, the number of student in each group depend on experience of tutor.

Numbers in small groups are, however frequently fixed by curriculum demands.

Advantages:

There are advantages of small group teaching over large class:-

- It familiarizes the students with an adult approach to learning.
- It encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning.

- It promotes deeper understanding of material.
- It encourage problem – solving skills.
- Encourage participation.
- It develops:-
 1. Interpersonal skills.
 2. Communication skill.
 3. Social team working skills.
 4. Presentation skills.
- It encourages an awareness of different views on issues and has the potential to encourage an attitude of tolerance.

Notwithstanding these advantages, small group work should only be adopted when it is the most efficient approach to achieve these benefits /objective.

There are disadvantages of small group including

The tutor expertise.

The role and the tutor can be crucial of to the success of any small group work.

Staff may be more familiar with tradition mode of teaching and may need training with specific role of small group tutor, preparation need more time and expertise.

Types

- Student – centered discussion /dialog group.
- Structured teacher – centered tutorial group usually focusing on an identified task.
- Between these tow tasks there are a lot of creativity courses.
 - Seminars.
 - Workshops.
 - Clinical skills sessions.
 - Communication skills sessions.

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- Problem- based learning tutorials.
- Clinical teaching sessions
- Ward - based.
- Ambulatory care, outpatient- based.
- Community- based.

These sessions should be integral components of the course content and relate appropriately to the tutor learning offer

For example the week's work may be framed around a patient problem; the lectures and small group work, both theoretical and practical contribute to an understanding of patient problem.

These small group activities must complement the institutions overall curricular strategy, address specific course objectives and enhance the educational program.

The sessions should be seen to be an integral component of the course content.

Preparation of tutor and requirement:

Tutors will wish to confirm the details of their role are perceived by the course organizers and ensure that they are properly briefed on the specific objective of the small group session.

The tutor should be the first to appear.

The success of small group learning may be judged by the extent to which trust is created.

The session:

- The tutor will set the scene, state the objective and suggest some basic ground rules and the session at this and subsequent stages of the session.
- The tutor should visualize the student learning needs specifically from their point of view.
- The tutor may merge with the group.
- During discussion of session these issues should be discussed :-
- Participation of all students.
- Encourage critical thinking.
- Articulation of thoughts.

- Encourage team work.
- Review objectives.
- Summary of achievement.
- Feedback to learners is important and is widely regarded as one of strong things of small group teaching.
- In interconnected sessions (e.g. problem-based model) there will be a need to agree on the topics for discussion at the next session.

Student Role:-

- They are the focus and key figure in any learning events.
- To achieve the benefit , there should be :
- Prior reading.
- a. Contributing actively to the conduct of the session and Contributing effectively on the issued raised.
- b. Have some rules in assessment and evolution.

Evaluation and Assessment:

This needs careful consideration.

The student should be informed on nature of evaluation whether formative, summative or both.

Performance:

To achieve it, it needs:-

1. Students self reporting.
2. Tutor observation and individual development of each student and contribution to discussion and problem solving.
3. External observation assesses the group process which should be in depth analysis of interaction and frequency and contribution by both students and staff.

The assessment should include:

1. Attendance.
2. Contribution and ideas.
3. Research, analysis and preparation of materials.
4. Support and encouragement of team members and cooperation.
5. Practical contribution and end product.

Course Follow-up:

These courses need to be evaluated as any modulation of teaching and this evaluation will be achieved by:-

- a. Evaluation of outcome as far as objective is concern by (OSCE-communication skill).
- b. Did the entire group share in conducting the task?
- c. Did anyone of group dominate?

Conclusion:

This type of teaching is a powerful education tool and method and its benefit achieved when it is conducted carefully and skillfully and obviously the advantages includes:-

- I. Encouragement of independent self learning and critical thinking.
- II. To make this modality of teaching successful, it needs a trained staff.
- III. Development is an important part of the process.

Preferences:

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