

Student perceptions on the introduction of training in diagnostic laboratory techniques in an African school of medicine

Mimano L.N, Ferrari G, Kapanda G, Lisasi E, Kulanga A, Nyombi B, Muiruri C, Kessi E, Bartlett J and Ntabaye M

<http://dx.doi.org/10.15694/mep.2015.005.0008>

Abstract

Introduction: Laboratory infrastructure and expertise are lacking in sub-Saharan Africa. Historically medical students have not received formal instruction in the use of diagnostic laboratory techniques. Medical students were taught a core competency course that included laboratory safety, sample collection, processing and handling, microscopy and the use of rapid diagnostic tests. Training complemented topics covered in their didactic course work, and varied according to their medical school class year.

Methods: A wet laboratory was created and equipped with an audiovisual (AV) system. A questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale was developed to evaluate student perceptions in four domains; Knowledge/skills gained, Course content, Instructor and AV system aspects. Data was collected over 2 months from medical students in years 1, 2 & 4, analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0, and the mean scores and the strength of consensus measure (sCns) were calculated.

Evaluation: 221 students (53 MD1, 110 MD2, and 58 MD3) participated in the survey. Overall, student perception scores were highly positive with a high sCns. The mean scores ranged from 3.9 to 4.7, and the strength of consensus measure exceeded 80% in 12/13 variables measured.

Conclusion: Student perceptions were very positive with a high sCns.

Keywords: Basic laboratory Sciences, African schools of medicine, resource-limited setting