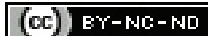


An Effective Self-directed Learning Method for Medical Students: Panel Discussion and Poster Preparation

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Dear Editor,

I have read with great interest the original article titled "Introducing Case Study-based Panel Discussion as an Effective Means of Self-directed Learning (SDL) in Phase 2 Bachelor in Medicine and Bachelor in Surgery (MBBS) Students: A Cross-sectional Study" by Raychaudhuri S et al., which was published in this journal in July 2023 [1]. I would like to take the opportunity to comment on the same article. The faculty made exhaustive efforts and achieved positive outcomes. With the introduction of this teaching method, students showed improvement.

After reading this article, my impression is that panel discussion is a very effective method for studying cases of particular diseases in detail. This study also shows that students' response was very encouraging.

The National Medical Council of India introduced Competency-based Medical Education (CBME), in which importance is given to methods such as Problem-based Learning (PBL) and SDL, where students' involvement is more [2].

Although it appears to be a very effective method, I would like to offer another suggestion that could make it even more effective. The suggestion is that the panel discussion method could be accompanied by another method, such as poster preparation of the cases discussed in the panel. Various studies have shown good results from poster preparation. The panel discussion in this study detailed the case topics, but if poster preparation of these cases is also included, it would be more useful for future studies. These cases will be in written form and available for access at any time in the future. Students might forget some points discussed in the panel, but by creating posters, these cases will be available for study during exams, providing an added advantage to the panel discussion of the topic. Our experience related to poster preparation by students is that they take interest in poster preparation and find it to be a good learning method.

A similar view is provided by another study on poster preparation, suggesting that the concept of poster presentations was comfortable for students and they enjoyed poster preparation [3]. Another study observed that during and after the poster presentation, there was a sense of confidence among students [4]. Yet another study states that preparing a poster is a very effective research skill and enhances creative abilities [5]. Previous literature also suggests that this activity fosters active learning and helps in deep learning [6].

So, my suggestion is that the panel discussion SDL method should be combined with poster preparation so that the discussed topic will be available to the students for reference at any time in the future, as it will be in written form. A combination of the panel discussion method and poster preparation can prove to be more effective.

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AUTHOR'S RESPONSE

Dear Reader,

Thank you for your valuable feedback. I completely agree with your suggestion that panel discussion method could be accompanied with other methods such as poster preparation of cases. In my opinion visual representation will enhance learning. I would incorporate your suggestion in my teaching and learning process.

Regards,

Dr. Namrata Kahlon