

Abstract

Studies on medical student perceptions of their lecturers, in a resource poor setting is scarce. Lack of basic infrastructure hampers learning. Quality lecturers can compensate this handicap to some extent. In 2009, as a new medical school located in rural Sri Lanka 220 km away from Colombo, the Faculty of Medicine and Allied Sciences at Rajarata University had scarce human resources and lacked sufficient lecture halls, labs, and clinical space. In order to understand qualities students sought in a lecturer, 55 medical students were given a single, self-administered open-ended question, and responses were subjected to direct thematic analysis. Themes of Lecturer Qualities, Lecture Preparation Procedure, and Lecture Delivery Procedure were identified, and then further divided into sub-themes, the most common of which being Speaking Style, Content Design, and Content Organization. While the findings in this study closely mirrored those of similar studies, identified qualities were underpinned by implicit meaning that accurately reflects the emotional stressors among students coping with limited educational resources. Students emphasized the importance of clear communication due to language barriers and a strong desire for lecturer loyalty to their faculty and country. The examination of these real-life perceptions will not only help us better identify how to improve medical education in this medical faculty and may be useful to similar resource poor rural medical colleges around the world.

Key words: Medical students' expectations; Lecturer qualities; Qualitative method; Resource poor new setting; Sri Lanka