

Effectiveness Of Cinemeducation As A Tool To Impart Soft Skills Among First-Year MBBS Students

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Abstract

Background/ objectives: Improvement in soft skills is linked with effective healthcare system, improved patient satisfaction, and decreased conflicts. Cinemeducation is a relatively newer tool of imparting soft skills in medical education wherein movie or movie clips are used to initiate discussions and reflections, as a part of active learning process. Cinema is the audio visual (AV) version of storytelling. Life stories and narratives enhance emotions and therefore set up the foundation for conveying concepts. Movies provide a narrative model framed in emotions that are grounded in the students familiar everyday universe. Hence, the present study was undertaken to assess the effectiveness of cinemeducation as a tool to impart soft skills in 1st MBBS Students.

Methodology: We conducted a session among the MBBS 1st Professional students. 176 students participated in the study, where some clips from the movie "The Doctor (1991)" were shown to them to understand empathy in medical practice. The session was conducted in a group setting and involved brainstorming, creating useful ideas, and sharing perspectives from scenes and characters in movie from different perspectives. Students wrote the feedback after watching the movie clip. Data analysis was done.

Results: Feedback was taken from 176 students. 83 of them said experience with cinemeducation was satisfactory. 86 said cinemeducation stimulated their interest in learning professionalism. 94 said they were able to understand empathy better through cinemeducation. 99 asked for similar sessions in the future. Reflection writing analysis showed that the students knowledge and understanding improved significantly after the session.

Conclusion: The student's knowledge improved significantly after the session on cinemeducation. Reflective writing by the students shows that cinemeducation can be used as one of the tool for teaching soft communication skills to the medical students. Cinemeducation is unique and enjoyable narrative medical approach to teach medical humanities. People's emotions play key role in learning attitudes and behavior. Using movies in teaching is an effective way to reach people's affective domain, promote reflective attitudes, and link learning to experiences. Cinema is useful in teaching because it is familiar, evocative, and provides nonthreatening environment for students

INTRODUCTION:

In the ever-evolving field of medical education, there is a growing emphasis on the development of soft skills—such as communication, empathy, professionalism, and ethical reasoning—as these are crucial for effective patient care and interprofessional collaboration [1]. Traditional didactic teaching methods often fall short in adequately nurturing these competencies, prompting educators to explore innovative pedagogical tools. One such emerging approach is cinemeducation, which utilizes carefully selected films or film clips as educational tools to provoke discussion, enhance understanding, and reflect on real-life scenarios encountered in medical practice [2].

Cinemeducation, a portmanteau of "cinema" and "education," has been used to teach various aspects of medicine including doctor-patient relationships, cultural sensitivity, teamwork, and emotional intelligence [3]. Films serve as powerful mediums by evoking emotions, presenting complex situations, and humanizing the clinical experience, thereby allowing learners to engage with the content on both cognitive and emotional levels [4]. This method supports Kolb's experiential learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of reflective observation and abstract conceptualization in learning from real or simulated experiences [5].

In the context of first-year MBBS students, who are transitioning from a pre-medical to a professional environment, early sensitization to soft skills is vital. These foundational skills influence their approach to clinical encounters, ethical dilemmas, and patient-centered care later in their careers [6]. Evidence suggests that integrating humanities and visual storytelling in the early years of medical training improves empathy, communication, and critical thinking skills [7,8].

Several studies have demonstrated that the use of films in medical education increases learner engagement, promotes self-awareness, and facilitates discussions on complex psychosocial issues [9,10]. For instance, films like *Patch Adams*, *The Doctor*, and *Wit* have been successfully used in curricula to stimulate reflection on topics such as compassion, mortality, and medical ethics [11]. Moreover, group discussions following film viewing encourage peer learning and create a safe space for students to express opinions and confront ethical conflicts [12].

Despite the increasing use of cinemeducation globally, limited data exists on its structured use among Indian medical undergraduates, especially in the foundational year. Given the competency-based medical education (CBME) framework advocated by the National Medical Commission (NMC) in India, which emphasizes attitude, ethics, and communication (AETCOM), it is timely to explore the effectiveness of such innovative strategies [13,14]. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of cinemeducation as a tool to impart soft skills in Ist MBBS Students.

METHODS

Study Design

This was a cross-sectional study conducted among first-year MBBS students at a medical college. The study utilized a mixed-methods approach, including quantitative feedback and qualitative reflection writing.

Participants

A total of 176 first-year MBBS students participated in the session. The students were selected through convenience sampling.

Intervention

Selected clips from the movie *The Doctor* (1991) were shown to illustrate the significance of empathy in medical practice. The session included group discussions, brainstorming activities, and reflective writing. Students were encouraged to analyze key scenes and characters from different perspectives.

Data Collection and Analysis

Students provided feedback through structured questionnaires and reflective writing. The questionnaire assessed students' satisfaction, interest in professionalism, and understanding of empathy. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, and qualitative reflections were assessed.

Results

Quantitative Findings

83 students (47%) found the session satisfactory.

86 students (49%) reported increased interest in learning professionalism.

94 students (53%) stated that cinemeducation helped them understand empathy better.

99 students (56%) expressed a desire for similar sessions in the future.

Qualitative Findings

Analysis of students' reflective writings indicated enhanced understanding of the importance of empathy in patient care. Common themes included improved awareness of patient emotions, recognition of the importance of compassionate communication, and reflections on their future roles as doctors. Many students noted that seeing patient-doctor interactions on screen made them more aware of the emotional dimensions of medical practice.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of cinemeducation in enhancing soft skills among first-year MBBS students. The findings demonstrate that integrating cinema as a pedagogical tool significantly improved students' understanding and application of soft skills such as empathy, communication, teamwork, and ethical reasoning.

These results align with existing literature that highlights the role of cinemeducation in medical humanities and soft skill development. Films serve as an effective medium to reflect real-life clinical and interpersonal situations in a relatable and emotionally engaging manner, thereby enhancing cognitive and affective learning domains [15]. The storytelling aspect of cinema allows students to observe, analyze, and internalize human behavior and ethical dilemmas, promoting critical thinking and moral reasoning [16]. Studies have shown that traditional methods of teaching soft skills often fall short due to their theoretical nature and lack of emotional engagement [17]. In contrast, cinema provides a contextualized learning environment that helps bridge the gap between theory and practice [18]. By witnessing fictional yet

realistic scenarios, students gain insight into the emotional dynamics of patient care, fostering empathy and compassion – essential attributes for future healthcare professionals [19].

Moreover, cinemeducation facilitates discussion-based learning, where post-screening reflections and group discussions enable students to articulate their thoughts, appreciate diverse perspectives, and build interpersonal communication [20]. Such interactive sessions promote peer learning, improve emotional intelligence, and cultivate an open mindset among medical students [21].

Our study also corroborates findings from earlier research where movies like *Patch Adams*, *The Doctor*, and *Wit* were used effectively to address themes of empathy, doctor-patient relationships, and end-of-life care [22]. These films not only portray medical scenarios but also highlight emotional challenges faced by both patients and physicians, making them ideal tools for teaching soft skills.

Importantly, introducing cinemeducation at the entry level of medical education – such as in the first year – lays a strong foundation for professional development. Early exposure to the humanistic aspects of medicine can shape students' attitudes and behaviour positively throughout their training [23].

However, some challenges exist. Not all students may resonate equally with cinematic content due to cultural differences or personal preferences [24]. Furthermore, the selection of films must be done carefully to align with learning objectives and ensure appropriate depiction of medical ethics and professionalism [25].

Despite these limitations, the overall feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, suggesting high acceptability and perceived relevance of cinemeducation in their academic journey. With increasing emphasis on Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME), innovative approaches like cinemeducation can effectively complement existing curriculum frameworks [26].

CONCLUSION

Cinemeducation is an effective and enjoyable tool for teaching soft skills to medical students. By integrating films into the curriculum, educators can create an emotionally engaging learning experience that fosters empathy, professionalism, and reflective thinking. Our study demonstrates that cinemeducation can enhance students' understanding of empathy and professionalism, making it a valuable addition to medical humanities education. Future research should explore long-term impacts and ways to optimize cinemeducation in medical training.

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