



EXPLORING THE PERCEPTION AND FEEDBACK OF STUDENTS AND FACULTY ON ELECTIVE PROGRAMS IN COMPETENCY-BASED MEDICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

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Abstract

Elective programs act as a key constituent in the Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME) curriculum, thereby rendering openings to expand the unique learning experiences of the students, advance applied skills, and explore varied areas of interest. These programs permit the faculty to engage in student-directed learning. Also, they offer a platform for research and interdisciplinary collaboration. The study source availability is limited although the program provides greater impacts on the medical curriculum. Hence, investigating the perceptions and feedback of the students and faculty concerning the CBME elective program for the betterment of the future program and developing a dedicated Faculty Development Program (FDP) later on is the main aim of the present research. A questionnaire-centric cross-sectional study is carried out for one month in phase 3 part 2 students and faculty members. Moreover, via Google Forms, the responses are gathered. Primarily, a total of 107 participants participate in the program. However, 38 faculties and 28 students' responses are considered grounded on the eligibility criteria. Centered on the feedback and perception of the eligible participants, the significance of the program is evaluated. Differences in the level of satisfaction between the students and the staff were depicted by the results. Furthermore, the majority of them expressed interest in para-clinical elective courses instead of the clinical program. The outcomes also displayed that when contrasted with the male participants, the female participants depicted more interest in the elective program. Then, all the chosen participants submitted the details of the challenge and rendered recommendations for sorting out issues and enhancing the impact of future sessions.

Keywords: CBME, Elective Program, Medical Education, Questionnaire-based Study, Perception and Feedback.



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INTRODUCTION

A keystone for future doctors to understand the scientific basis of patient care, decision-making, and efficient illness approach is termed medical science. The conventional Indian medical curriculum concentrated on instructional strategies and management of diseases. However, it didn't prepare the students for real-world challenges (Shanmugam et al., 2024). The medical education curriculum failed to set a standard match with the global health professions even though India succeeded in establishing government and private medical colleges across the country (Sarkar et al., 2022). It had been criticized for graduates with inadequate practical skills and critical thinking in clinical settings. Therefore, the requirement for change became evident with the growing healthcare progressions in medical science (Shanmathi et al., 2024). Thus, the National Medical Council (NMC) changed the traditional medical curriculum into a skill-centric learning course, which

was adopted in 2019 in India. An outcome-based approach named CBME curriculum is used to develop, implement, test, and assess students grounded on a framework of established skills (Princess & Bhushan, 2025). The newly introduced CBME curriculum has several modules like a 1-month foundation course, mentor program, Self Directed Learning (SDL), Attitude, Ethics, and Communication (AETCOM), and early clinical exposure. The National Medical Commission, erstwhile Medical Council of India (MCI), conducted a support program for training the faculty members with the implemented curriculum. Next, the CBME modules were discussed, planned, and implemented on all preclinical subjects (Anusuya et al., 2024; Selvi et al., 2023). A valuable opportunity for students to explore the vast range of experiences and skills as well as to make decisions about careers and course content was offered by the elective programs in

CBME (Kaur et al., 2023). The elective programs depicted an insufficiency of sources although they rendered students an opportunity to explore topics beyond the core curriculum. Earlier, (Sethi et al., 2024) evaluated the relevance and significance of the electives program by assessing the experiences, perceptions, and recommendations of the 243 Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) students. 79% of participants enjoyed the elective postings, whereas 80% of participants were satisfied with the allocation methodology. Moreover, 90% of the participants perceived that the electives enhanced their learning skills. The major advantage of the research was the sample size. Nevertheless, the purpose of the timeline change for electives was not clear. Likewise, (Patil et al., 2023) examined the medical students' perception and challenges faced with CBME utilizing a questionnaire-based cross-sectional study. As per the outcomes, the student's enthusiasm and other content of the curriculum were encouraged by the CBME curriculum. The selection of a large population was the major advantage of the study. However, the challenge was the study duration.

Later, (Shetty et al., 2024) investigated the student's perception of different concepts of the CBME curriculum by carrying out a cross-sectional study. Positive perceptions about the CBME concepts were expressed by 88% of the students. The students also recommended that the course interest be raised by increasing the clinical-based teaching, thus making them liable to patients, the community, and the profession. The students underrepresented some viewpoints on the CBME curriculum owing to the weak framework even though the study examined the numerous concepts of the curriculum. Furthermore, (Sharma et al., 2024) explored the students' perspectives on the CBME curriculum utilizing a structured questionnaire-based cross-sectional survey. The outcomes depicted a higher level of agreement with the integrated learning approaches (100%) and professionalism (99%). Also, in small-group teaching ($p = 0.048$) and assessment understanding ($p = 0.015$), significant differences were found. The advantage of the study was consecutive years of investigation. But, the research had drawbacks like logistical and educational barriers. Likewise, (Priyanka et al., 2025) also evaluated the students' perception of the elective postings using a structured and pre-validated questionnaire session. According to the results, the

students were aware of the elective posting existence (81.25%), the purpose of elective postings (76%), and course needs (51%). It was up to the decision-makers to enhance the process further for improving its implementation. The selection of a pre-validated questionnaire was the strength of the study, whereas the exclusion of the faculty's opinions was the limitation. Then, (Ramanathan et al., 2021) also carried out a cross-sectional study among the teaching faculty all over India to evaluate the faculty's perceptions toward the CBME utilizing a structured questionnaire. More than 80% of faculty members accepted the contents. However, they recommended providing adequate infrastructure and increasing the faculty strength for skill development. The advantage of the study was the selection of participants from the entire country. Nevertheless, the responses were only attained from 20 states, which questioned the study's efficacy. Similarly, (Patel & Akhani, 2023) designed to gauge the faculty's perception of the elective module utilizing a survey with a pre-validated cross-sectional questionnaire. As per the responses, the objectives of the elective module were efficiently valuable in academic activity and creativity and encouraged teamwork. The objective of the research was a survey-based investigation. However, the limitations were the small sample size and apprehension concerning the timely issuance of logbook signatures. Therefore, exploring the perception and feedback of students and faculty with respect to the elective program in the CBME curriculum is the main aim of the present research.

1.1 Objectives

This research states the following objectives to report the boundaries of existing research,

- To evaluate the relevance and significance of elective programs on student's career development.
- To render a comprehensive understanding of the student and faculty perception of different concepts of the CBME curriculum.
- To assess the feedback to refine the study process for future batches.

The structure of this research is organized as: The framework of the materials and methodologies utilized is depicted in Section 2, the investigational results are presented in Section 3 with discussion, and lastly, the research paper is concluded in Section 4 with drawbacks and future scope.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To examine the perceptions and suggestions about the elective courses implemented in the CBME program, a questionnaire-centric study was carried out on the Phase 3 Part II MBBS students and faculty members. Figure 1 outlines the study process.

2.1 Selection of participants

Concerning the elective courses of the CBME curriculum, the perception and opinion of students and faculty members were investigated by a one-month orientation program, which was conducted in the month of Feb 2025. In this study,

Citation: Mishra H, Saha Roy S, Prasad N, Kumari N, Mohan L, Kumar M EXPLORING THE PERCEPTION AND FEEDBACK OF STUDENTS AND FACULTY ON ELECTIVE PROGRAMS IN COMPETENCY-BASED MEDICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM. *Int. J. Med.*, 2026;**8**(4):381-388.

participants from several medical colleges and universities were randomly chosen for joining the program. After the participant validation, the data were gathered utilizing a questionnaire that was made into a Google Form.

2.1.1 Inclusion criteria

- Faculty members and students who were exposed to the CBME curriculum and elective courses were chosen.
- The willing faculty members and medical students were selected as the participants.

2.1.2 Exclusion criteria

- The participants who were not exposed to the curriculum and electives were excluded.
- The participants who had not given the consent were excluded.

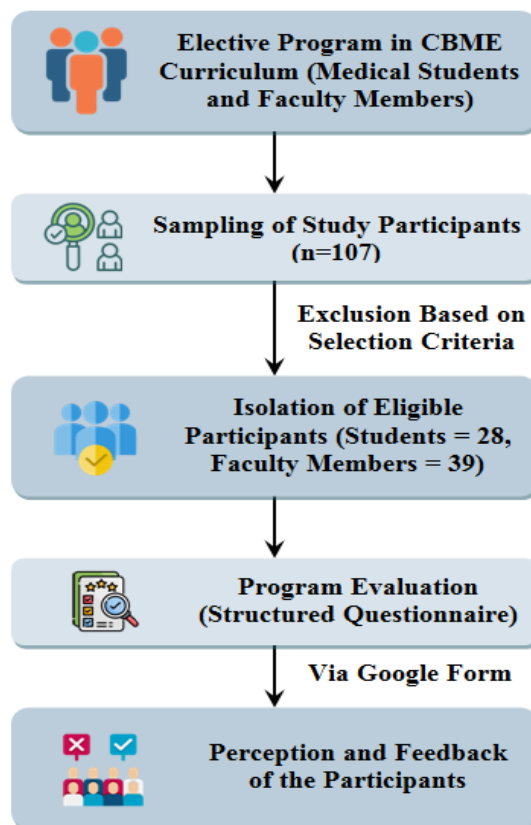


Figure 1: Workflow of the present study

2.2 Assessment

Concerning the elective program, the perception and feedback of participants were assessed using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. For obtaining the perception and feedback scores about the choice of electives, a five-point Likert scale was utilized. These points were regarded as 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, and 5= strongly agree. Three parts were comprised in the questionnaire. The questions regarding the perceptions of students and staff about the elective program were encompassed in Part 1, the understanding of the electives was explored in Part 2, and open-ended questions about the suggestions and further progression were included in Part 3.

2.3 Statistical analysis

The predesigned questionnaires were created as a Google Form. Further, they were sent individually to all the participants. By using manual and theoretical content analysis methods, the open-ended questions (qualitative data) were investigated. Next, the participant response data were individually extracted and further exported to Microsoft Excel for examining the n (%), mean, and Standard Deviation (SD) of the obtained data.

2.4 Ethical Consideration

Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) clearance was attained. Personal information about the person was not exposed. Regarding the new curriculum, the questions were mainly associated with the participant's opinions and perceptions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the present study, the perception and feedback of the medical students and faculty members of different colleges and universities about the elective program in the MBBS-CBME curriculum were investigated.

3.1 Demographic details of the participants

In the study, the students and staffs from several medical institutions participated. Primarily, Table 1 depicts the population data.

Table 1: Basic population analysis

Characteristic Features		Obtained Values	
		Faculty Members (n=38)	Students (n=28)
Age (Mean $\pm$ SD)		37.6 $\pm$ 9.31	23.5 $\pm$ 2.11
Gender (%)	Male	47.4	46.4
	Female	52.6	53.6

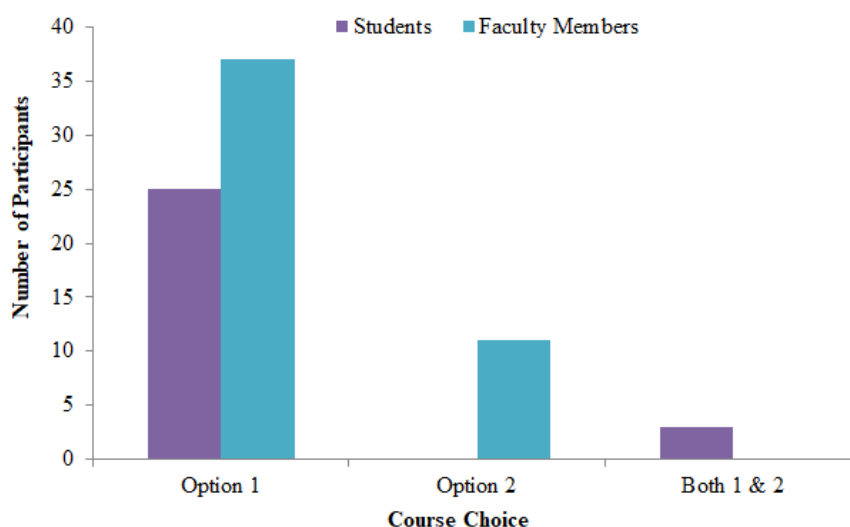


Figure 2: Participant's choice of elective program

The figure showed that when compared to option-2, the participants exhibited more interest in option-1. Additionally, during the elective training, some of the students selected both courses. (Nayak et al., 2024) also recommended that the choice of course should be participant-oriented, which assisted them in understanding their area of interest and led them to select it as their major in higher studies.

Table 2: Perception of the students

Variables	Response in percentage				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Aligned with Career	7.1%	3.6%	10.7%	32.14%	21.4%
Course Relevance	7.1%	7.1%	28.57%	35.71%	21.4%
Skills and Objectives	7.1%	7.1%	32.14%	28.57%	25%
Competency Development	7.1%	7.1%	35.71%	25%	25%
Course Engagement	7.1%	3.6%	28.57%	32.14%	8%
Interest Maintenance	7.1%	3.6%	46.42%	17.8%	25%
Course Organisation	7.1%	7.1%	35.71%	32.14%	17.8%
Theory and Practical Balance	7.1%	14.3%	42.85%	25%	10.7%
Instructors' knowledge and support	7.1%	7.1%	32.14%	25%	28.57%
Course recommendation to other students	10.7%	7.1%	32.14%	32.14%	17.8%
Overall Satisfaction	7.1%	10.7%	50%	21.4%	10.7%

3.3 Response of the participants

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In the current research, the standardized questionnaire was sent to all the participants via email in a Google Form format. By utilizing a Likert scale, the response was scored. Furthermore, every single score indicated a different level of satisfaction. The response of participants is computed in percentage, and it is documented in Table 2.

In the table, the standard mean values of the students and staffs were displayed separately. The faculty depicted 37.6 ± 9.31 mean values, whereas the students expressed 23.5 ± 2.11 mean values. The outcomes showed that when analogized with the student population (28), most of the faculty members (38) participated in the discretionary program. It also displayed that among the gender disparity, the female participants (faculty - 52.6% and students - 53.6%) were more involved in the course when contrasted with the male (faculty - 47.4% and students - 46.4%).

3.2 Choice of elective courses

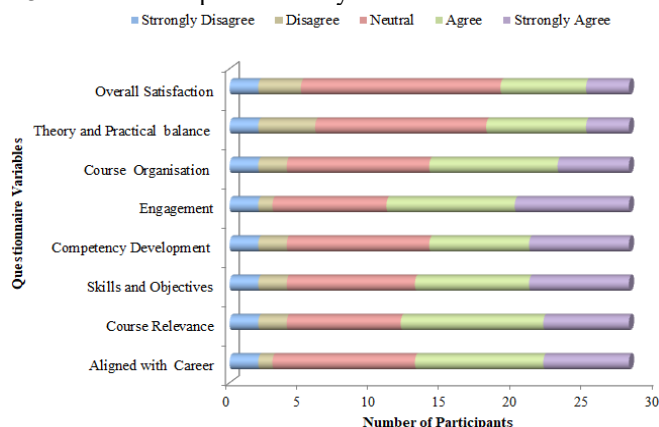
The current program introduced two different courses, namely option-1 (para-clinical course) and option-2 (clinical course), among the participants. Figure 2 demonstrates the participant's choices.

As per the aforementioned table, the students felt overall satisfaction about the program, particularly the career interest (32.14%), course relevance (35.71%), and course engagement levels (32.14%) that highly satisfied the students. In contrast, many students expressed their neutral stand about the course results. Nevertheless, the outcomes also displayed a minimal degree of program disagreement (7.1%) among the students. Likewise, (Vidja et al., 2023) also carried out a perception investigation. It proved that the study opportunity enhanced the lateral thinking of the students to work as a member of the healthcare team. In Table 3, the opinions of the faculty members are listed.

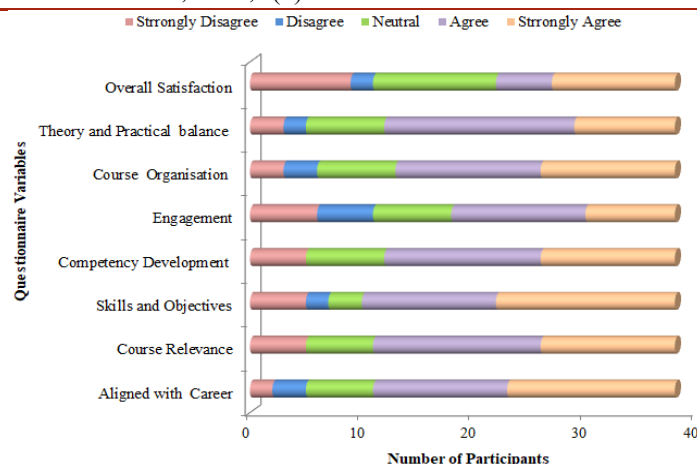
Table 3: Response of the faculty

Variables	Response in percentage				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Aligned with Career	5.26%	7.8%	15.78%	31.57%	39.47%
Course Relevance	13.15%	0	15.78%	39.47%	31.57%
Skills and Objectives	13.15%	5.26%	7.8%	31.57%	42.1%
Competency Development	13.15%	0	18.42%	36.84%	31.57%
Course Engagement	15.78%	13.15%	18.42%	31.57%	21.05%
Students learning objective level	18.42%	10.52%	18.42%	23.68%	28.94%
Course Organization	7.8%	7.8%	18.42%	34.21%	31.57%
Theory and Practical Balance	7.8%	5.26%	18.42%	44.73%	23.68%
Sufficient resources and support	18.42%	10.52%	21.05%	21.05%	28.94%
Overall Satisfaction	23.68%	5.26%	28.94%	13.15%	28.94%

As per the reports, the participants had the highest level of satisfaction with course alignment (39.47%), course relevance (39.47%), skill development (42.1%), course competency (36.84%), engagement (31.57%), organization (34.21%), balanced content (44.73%), and resource support (28.94%). But, some of the staff expressed disagreement about the elective course (23.68%) and learning objectives (18.43%). Similarly, (Dhandapani et al., 2025) assessed the effect of elective programs on faculty members. Regarding the course, the majority of the faculty members displayed higher satisfaction. It also proved that the electives were crucial in recognizing practical challenges, which directly influenced CBME implementation. Figure 3 shows the comparative study results of the course.



(a)



(b)

Figure 3: Comparative analysis of participant response - (a) Student and (b) Faculty Member

The highest level of course satisfaction by the faculty members was depicted in the above-illustrated figures. Most of the students did not take any stand. Moreover, their responses fell to the neutral level. According to the reports, 56.7% of the staffs were satisfied with the learning objectives and resources provided by the organizers during the course sessions. Furthermore, 51.4% of students were satisfied with the instructor's knowledge and course recommendation to others. Likewise, (Ramanathan et al., 2021) also displayed varied opinions concerning the elective program. For overcoming the perception obstacles, the elective program urged the program organizers to create an improved program in the future.

3.4 Feedback of the participants

In the present investigation, overall recommendations about the elective programs were provided by both the students and staff members. In Figure 4, the challenges faced by the participants during the course are documented.

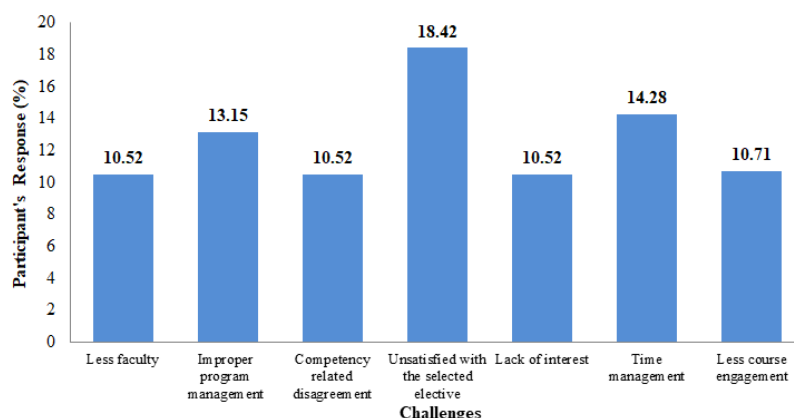


Figure 4: Problems addressed by the participants

As per the figure, the participants depicted disappointment in numerous program areas like elective course (18.42%), time management (14.28%), program management (13.15%), course engagement (10.71%), and interest, faculty participation, and competency related dissatisfactions (10.52%). Similarly, (Poorey et al., 2024) also explained that the efficacy of the program was vastly affected by poor program management and less interest of the participants. But, 42.85% of students appreciated the program arrangement and organizers, whereas 39.28% of students were satisfied with the selected course. Also, 14.28% of students expressed their enhanced interest in the elective program. (Thomas et al., 2024) displayed that course satisfaction with newly introduced elective programs in the CBME curriculum gave an opportunity to remove hesitations about research and increased interest in research.

3.5 Participant's suggestions for the improvement of the course

For the betterment of the future program, recommendations were provided by the students and staffs. For a thorough analysis and for overcoming previous complications in future sessions, the current study suggestions were extracted separately from the participants. 13.15% of faculty members recommended involving the students to choose their own elective course, 7.1% suggested including electives with industrial and clinical exposure, 5.26% proposed to enhance the technical assistance, 5.26% stated to create a uniform elective course curriculum for all the medical institutions, and 5.26% asked to carry out a pre and post-test for understanding the course impact. Afterward, the students were asked to recommend additional electives to include in the curriculum. 10.71% of students recommended digital and technological advancement

in the medical curriculum, whereas 7.14% of students proposed conventional food practices in nutrient and diet planning of the patients. Furthermore, 3.17% of students suggested Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) courses in future programs, and 3.17% stated psychiatry, neurology, and endocrinology electives. Likewise, (Majeed et al., 2023) also recommended that the introduction of incorporated electives enhanced the skills and improved the knowledge of medical practitioners.

CONCLUSION

The elective programs played an essential role in medical education under the new CBME curriculum. The topic choices made the students feel more composed and aided them in discovering their areas of interest. For assessing the importance of the program, a questionnaire-based study was utilized in the present research. To evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the training program, an investigation was conducted on the students and faculties. Concerning the program between the students and faculty members, the outcomes depicted varied satisfaction levels. The results exhibited different opinions about the electives for the students and teachers. 51.4% of students were pleased with the instructor's knowledge and course recommendation, whereas 56.7% of the staffs were contented with the learning objectives and resources. When contrasted with the clinical program, the majority of the participants expressed more interest in the para-clinical elective program. In the present study, a noticeable difference in interest was observed. When analogized with male participants, female participants showed a higher level of interest. Afterward, to overcome the challenges and advance the impact of future programs, suggestions were rendered by the selected participants. Although the research analysis illustrated a strong understanding of the course content, it had some drawbacks like the small sample size of students and faculty. However, in the study, one batch of students was only included.

Future scope: The number of participants will be increased in the future by including multiple batches of MBBS students, who undergo the elective program.

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