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**ASSESSMENT OF E-LEARNING PRACTICES AMONG
MEDICAL STUDENTS OF FJMU**

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Abstract:

Objectives: To inspect the trends of e-learning among the medical students and to evaluate the outcomes derived from its usage in their acquisition of knowledge.

Methods: The Descriptive study was done in March 2016 at Fatima Jinnah Medical University Lahore using randomized convenient sampling. Participants were all female medical students with the mean age of 23 ± 1 . They were encouraged to participate and fill the questionnaire. The data was collected through well-structured questionnaire. The response was entered in Excel and analyzed using means and percentages.

Results: Of the total participants, overall 98% had access to internet and 82% used it more often and only 41% used it for medical purposes most of the time.

Moreover 83% of respondents said that e-learning made them globally aware and it also helped in improving concepts in a total of 84%. 54% reported it to have promoted self-study by its usage and 38% saw their class scores getting improved. Though 55% of the respondents felt it to be wastage of time but in total 80% also said that it made them succeed in their medical profession.

Conclusion: This research depicts the growing popularity of e-learning in medical education and the increasing percentage of positive benefits acquired through it. In conclusion, it is important to integrate e-learning with traditional system of medical education in an appropriate manner for better understanding and desirable approach to patient.

Keywords: E-learning, medical education, students, learning practices.

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INTRODUCTION:

E-learning is the connotation of a bigger inclusion which implies all kinds of technology relevant to the procurement of knowledge encompassing self-directed and instructor-led online learning. In today's era, fast-paced world of e-learning has provided novel and exciting courses to give students very latest and quick information [1]. It has a pivotal role in enhancing students approach to education, contemplating concepts and applying them on practical grounds. It cuts all barriers and provides worldwide information. Medical education is an amalgamation of vast information, skills and approach towards humans for overall health benefit. Considering its vastness and importance it is crucial to have a broader approach encompassing all the domains. E-learning practices provide hand-on providence of the desired sea of knowledge besides a more comprehensive depiction of all the skills facilitated by audiovisual inputs [2]. Keeping in view such facts, present study was designed to firstly investigate the access to e-learning as then only we can know its impact and then observe its effective outcomes among medical students.

METHODS:

A Descriptive type of study in a cross sectional design was done on March in the year 2016. The subjects included were the medical students of fourth and final year of Fatima Jinnah Medical University. All the participant students were females and had an average age of 23 ± 1 years. The total of 100 student participated in the research. This sample was selected by the method of Randomized convenient sampling. A self-administered Questionnaire was provided to the students which comprised of relevant questions regarding their access to e-learning practices and its usefulness in their education. Data was analyzed by means and percentages in the Microsoft Excel.

RESULTS:

Of the total of 100 female medical students, 98% of them had access to internet at times. Among these 82% used it more often for different purposes. 41% of them used it more often and 54% worked on it sometimes for the purpose of adding-on to their medical education alone.

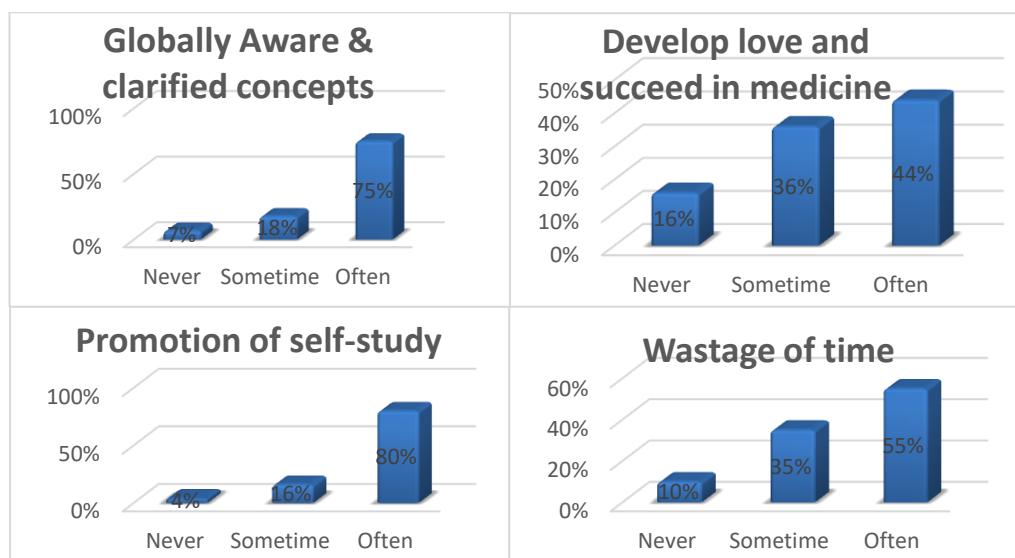
sr.	Parameters	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
1	Have internet access	2%	14%	84%
2	Frequency of usage	2%	16%	82%
3	Usage for medical purposes	5%	54%	41%
4	Development of interest in medical education	10%	24%	66%
5	Provision of better patient approach	16%	26%	58%
6	Clarification of concepts	7%	18%	75%
7	Distraction from main stream	5%	29%	66%
8	Help in memorizing things	9%	41%	50%
9	Awareness of new skills and techniques	9%	49%	42%
10	Guide in absence of instructor	8%	30%	62%
11	Promotion of self-study and understanding	4%	16%	80%

Moreover, exploring about the outcomes it was found that a total of 83% of respondents said that e-learning made them globally aware and it also helped in improving concepts in the same percentage of students. 80% reported that e-learning helped in the promotion of self-study by its usage as 92% believed it to be a pretty good guide in the absence of the instructor. Overall, 91% accepted that it assisted them memorize things more conveniently and made them aware of new skills and techniques. Hence, 84%

approved that it made them capable of having a better patient approach.

A total of 90% students agreed that it helped them develop interest in medical education. 44% (often) and an another 36% (sometimes) also said that it helped them succeed in their medical profession as 38% saw their class scores getting improved.

Contrarily, 66% of the students considered it to be a distraction from main stream and a wastage of time according to 55% (more often).



DISCUSSION:

The study evaluated the popularity and usefulness of e-learning practices among medical students of Fatima Jinnah Medical University. It implied that majority of the students of current era have access to internet and they make use of it for one purpose or another [3]. Our study targeted medical education so we evaluated the inclination of students towards using e-learning practices for acquiring knowledge in the field of medicine. It became evident that overall 95% of the medical students used internet for learning purposes [4]. It depicted that students have found it beneficial for their medical education so most of them depend on it for a variety of effective outcomes. Most of them acknowledged it as a source of clarifying their concepts, helping them being globally aware of new set of information, making it easy for them to keep things in mind and assisting them to develop interest in their field of medicine. Besides students also require some resource of aiding them at times when they get stuck with newer concepts and face difficulty in understanding [5, 6]. So the participants also believed that e-learning practices provided them with guidance in the absence of the professor, promoting self-learning and a better comprehensive study. Students find it difficult to

grab all information in a short span of lecture delivered to them based on traditional method. So provision of a platform for exploring their deficiencies and rectifying them by building new and right concepts help them to succeed in their profession [7,8]. Also, newer skills learned from a broader perspective aid them to have a better patient approach. Hence, e-learning practices have been proven useful in the arena of medical education and require further promotion for using it rightly and effectively for better outcomes.

A good percentage of students also marked it to be a deviation from mainstream. As it indulges you in irrelevant topics and events so they believed it to be a wastage of time in almost 50 percent of the cases [9, 10]. This requires directional and peer guided approach to extract maximum benefits and minimize its unwanted outcomes. Limitations of this study include the small sample size with no sex variability. But the inclusion of the students of two years of the university did provide good generalization of results.

CONCLUSION:

Participant's response delineated that e-learning is beneficial in the procurement of medical knowledge.

Majority had internet access and they also used it for medical purposes. Therefore, students have inclination towards e-learning process. It should be applied and molded in our methods of teaching for better understanding and implementation on practical grounds.

DISCLAIMER: None declared.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None.

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