



Pilot Evaluation of a Preceptor Development Program for Continuing Health Professional Education Programs in Qatar the “Practice Educators’ Academy”

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Background

- Experiential education is a fundamental component of health profession education programs (1)
- Clinical preceptors are indispensable in the experiential training of health professional students; however, the vast majority of preceptors do not possess formal training as educators (2)
- The “Practice Educators’ Academy” Program is an innovative educational intervention that was informed by an empirical evidence in the form of a preceptor-focused needs assessment (3)
- The “Practice Educators’ Academy” aims to develop the teaching knowledge, skills, and attitudes of multi-disciplinary healthcare professionals who serve as clinical preceptors for students at Qatar University (QU)-Health Cluster (HC) (Colleges of Pharmacy (CPH), Medicines (CMED), and Health Sciences (CHS))

Aims

- Primary aim** { To evaluate the program’s impact on self-efficacy and knowledge of multi-disciplinary preceptors who precept students across the HC at QU. 
- Secondary aim** { To assess the preceptors’ satisfaction with the program’s comprehensiveness, appropriateness and relevance. 

Methods

- The program’s impact was assessed utilizing a pretest-posttest (before-after) pilot intervention study on a single group of preceptors
- Preceptor self-efficacy was assessed using a Preceptor Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (PSEQ) which is a validated 21 item, 4-point Likert-scale questionnaire
- Preceptor knowledge was assessed through a 25 item multiple choice question (MCQ) test
- Preceptor satisfaction with the course was assessed through a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire with open comments

Results

1st Primary outcome: Self-efficacy

- A significant improvement in preceptors’ self-efficacy median score was demonstrated after attending the program

Table 1: Overall change in self-efficacy score of participants after attending the “Practice Educators Academy”

	N	PSEQ median score	IQR	Z value	P value
Pretest	30	3.33	0.93	-3.33	0.001
Posttest		3.57	0.89		

- **Profession:** Dietitians showed higher self-efficacy score than physicians at the posttest assessment
- **Years as a preceptor:** Preceptors who had more than 20 years of preceptorship experience showed higher self-efficacy score than preceptors with 1-9 years of experience at the pretest assessment
- 12 out of 21 self-efficacy questionnaire items showed a statistical difference between pretest and posttest assessments

Results – Cont.

2nd Primary outcome: Knowledge

- A significant improvement in preceptors’ knowledge mean score was demonstrated after attending the program

Table 2: Overall change in knowledge score of participants after attending the “Practice Educators Academy”

	N	Knowledge score Mean (SD)	Mean difference (SD)	95% CI	P-value
Pretest	26	10.15 (5.17)	-5.50 (5.26)	Lower: -7.626 Upper: -3.374	<0.001
Posttest		15.65 (6.46)			

- **Number of students:** preceptors who precept more than 20 students per year showed higher knowledge score than preceptors who precept 1-10 students at the pretest assessment
- 11 out of 25 knowledge test items showed a statistical difference between pretest and posttest assessments

Secondary outcome: Satisfaction

Examples of positive feedback provided by participants

“This is a world class workshop. I have finished 2 years in UK and acquired higher certificate in education, but I still found this extremely helpful. I learnt so much!”

“The good thing is that it can be marketed in the future as useful for absolute ‘beginners’ AND ‘experienced’ in medical education.”

Examples of suggestions for program improvement

“To teach each module in a separate time; like a day for assessment and evaluation, and another day for teaching methods.”

“Some activities can be given to participants as assignments to practice.”

“To be physically attended is better.”

Conclusions

- The program appears to be effective educational intervention to improve preceptors educational knowledge and skills, as demonstrated through a favorable impact on preceptor self-efficacy, knowledge, and satisfaction
- The inter-disciplinary nature of this program allowed for preceptors of different professional backgrounds to share their knowledge and interact

Future Directions

- Strong preceptor training results in improved student training (4), which has significant long term effects on patient care, health outcomes, and organizational effectiveness.
- The assessment of these downstream effects was outside the scope of this study but should be considered when implementing such a program in the future research

References

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