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Implementing competency-based dynamic curriculum in homoeopathic medical education: A case study of ASRHMC

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Abstract
The Competency-Based Dynamic Curriculum represents a significant shift in Homoeopathic education. This article presents a case study of its implementation at ASRHMC, focusing on innovative approaches to anatomical learning. Key initiatives include Anatomica Homeopathica, a monthly magazine integrating anatomy with Homoeopathic principles, and the Anatomy Board, a platform for student collaboration and feedback. The article discusses the impact of these initiatives on student learning, research aptitude, and the overall quality of Homoeopathic education at ASRHMC.

Keywords: CBDC, homoeopathic education, curriculum implementation, Anatomica Homoeopathica, ASRHMC, anatomy education, medical education, case-based learning, problem-based learning, student engagement

Introduction

ASR Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital, Tadepalligudem, is dedicated to delivering high-quality Homoeopathic education, with a strong emphasis on research and innovation. The college prioritizes curriculum development and implements innovative teaching methods to foster student engagement. ASRHMC strives for continuous improvement through feedback and quality audits, ensuring a supportive learning environment for all students.

The Competency-Based Dynamic Curriculum, a ground-breaking initiative by the National Commission for Homoeopathy, marks a significant shift in Homoeopathic education. Designed with the modern Homoeopathic student in mind, this student-centric approach empowers learners to actively participate in their educational journey, with educators serving as guides. Recognizing the vastness of medical knowledge, the CBDC provides essential direction and learning tools, ensuring focused and effective learning experiences.

At ASRHMC, we are actively engaged in implementing the CBDC, embracing its innovative approach to teaching and learning. The NCH's meticulous efforts in tailoring the curriculum to the unique needs of Homoeopathic education are evident in its structure and guidelines. This approach acknowledges the necessity of adapting modern pedagogical methods to the specific demands of Homoeopathy.

While the CBDC provides a well-defined framework, its dynamic nature allows for flexibility and innovation at the implementation level. This adaptability empowers institutions to tailor the curriculum to their specific context, fostering creativity and responsiveness to evolving educational needs. This introduction sets the stage for a detailed exploration of ASRHMC's CBDC implementation strategies and outcomes.

Initiatives taken at the ASRHMC Department of Human Anatomy for Implementing CBDC

Anatomica Homoeopathica: A Unique Approach to Anatomical Learning

Anatomica Homeopathica, a monthly magazine published by the Department of Human Anatomy at ASRHMC, offers a novel approach to anatomical education, viewed through a Homoeopathic lens. The magazine's primary aim is to integrate anatomical knowledge with Homoeopathic principles, aligning with the core tenets of the Competency-Based Dynamic Curriculum.

While anatomy remains a fundamental subject for all medical students, *Anatomica Homeopathica* emphasizes the interconnectedness of anatomy with pre-clinical, clinical, and Homoeopathic subjects, starting in the first year of the BHMS program. This integrated approach clarifies the relevance of anatomy to Homoeopathic practice, highlighting its importance and application.

The magazine follows a monthly theme, aligned with the CBDC anatomy syllabus. This ensures students focus on current classroom topics, reinforcing their learning through articles that explore these subjects in greater depth. *Anatomica Homeopathica* encourages innovative thinking and research aptitude, prompting students to examine various textbooks and reputable journals, compiling information into original, plagiarism-free articles (with a plagiarism threshold of less than 20%). This process reinforces proper referencing techniques, further enhancing their research skills.

Beyond traditional anatomical content, the magazine incorporates case-based learning, problem-based learning, fun facts, and core anatomical concepts, catering to diverse learning styles and promoting a deeper understanding of the subject. Each issue also features a profile of an anatomy pioneer, celebrating their contributions to the field.

Importantly, *Anatomica Homeopathica* dedicates a section to ethical and legal considerations within anatomy, ensuring students develop awareness of these crucial aspects. This comprehensive approach makes *Anatomica Homeopathica* a unique and innovative tool in ASRHMC's implementation of the CBDC. Overseen by a dedicated student magazine committee, the magazine actively engages students in the learning process, fostering a dynamic and enriching educational experience.

Anatomy Board: A daily dose of anatomical knowledge

The Anatomy Board serves as a dynamic platform to showcase the activities of the Anatomy Department and provide students with a daily opportunity to engage with the subject matter. It functions as a continuous learning tool, reinforcing anatomical knowledge through active participation.

One key feature of the Anatomy Board is the "Anatomy Building Blocks: Learn a New Piece Daily" initiative. Each day, a different student presents information on one bone, one muscle, one vein, one artery, and one nerve. This includes key points about each structure, encouraging focused learning and retention. A dedicated student Anatomy Board committee oversees the daily activities, assigning topics, supervising content, and ensuring smooth operation.

All students are required to visit the board daily to review the presented material and reinforce their understanding of the material. This consistent engagement promotes active learning and improves knowledge retention. The board also displays student assessment results and features a daily motivational quote with an explanation, fostering a positive and encouraging learning environment. This multifaceted approach makes the Anatomy Board a valuable tool for enhancing anatomical education.

Student groups in competency-based dynamic curriculum

A core element of the CBDC's success lies in its dynamic teaching and learning methods. At ASRHMC's Department of Human Anatomy, this is implemented through a unique group system, dividing first-year students into nine eponymous groups, each named after a prominent figure in Homoeopathy. These groups are integrated with various departmental committees, ensuring representation from each committee within every group. This structure fosters inclusivity and ensures active student participation in college activities, each group has a designated leader.

Student group composition

1. Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843)
2. Clemens Maria Franz von Bönninghausen (1785-1864)
3. Constantine Hering (1800-1880)
4. Wilhelm Heinrich Schüßler (1821-1898)
5. Allen Group (TF Allen, JH Allen, HC Allen)
6. James Tyler Kent (1849-1916)
7. Cyrus Maxwell Boger (1861-1935)
8. Sarkar Group (BK Sarkar, Mahendra Lal Sarkar)
9. Rajendra Lal Dutt

Purpose and function of student groups

These groups, while initially designed for discussions, serve a broader purpose within the CBDC framework. Their functions include:

Representation and Communication

Each group includes representatives from all student committees. This facilitates interaction and communication regarding ongoing activities, enabling each group to undertake any activity effectively.

Enhancing learning activities

- **Case-Based Learning:** Groups analyze different case studies related to specific anatomical topics, presenting their analyses and proposed Homoeopathic treatments.
- **Problem-Based Learning:** Groups tackle anatomical problems or scenarios, researching and collaborating to find solutions using their anatomical knowledge and Homoeopathic principles.
- **Debate and Discussion:** Groups engage in debates or discussions on controversial topics within anatomy or homoeopathy, fostering critical thinking and communication skills.
- **Peer Teaching:** Each group teaches a specific anatomical topic to its peers, promoting a deeper understanding and collaborative learning.
- **Inter-group Competitions:** Friendly competitions, such as anatomy quizzes or case presentation challenges, are held between groups.
- **Student-Led Seminars:** Groups organize and present seminars on topics of their choice, sharing their knowledge and research with the broader college community.

Student Committees for CBDC Implementation

Nine student committees have been formed to facilitate the understanding and implementation of the Competency-Based Dynamic Curriculum. This student-centric approach ensures that each student gains comprehensive knowledge of the curriculum. The committees are as follows:

1. **Magazine Committee**: Responsible for creating and publishing a magazine, Anatomica Homeopathica.
2. **Anatomy Board Committee:** Manages and maintains the anatomy board, a valuable resource for students to

learn and review anatomical structures and concepts.

3. **Social Media Committee-1 & 2:** Utilises social media platforms to disseminate information about the CBDC and share the activities of the Anatomy department.
4. **Content Editing Committee:** The Content Editing Committee reviews and edits educational materials created by students, such as presentations, magazine content, and anatomy board materials. These edited materials are then submitted to the faculty for final approval. This ensures quality control and accuracy of the information used for educational purposes.
5. **Student Assessment Committee:** The Student Assessment Committee collaborates with faculty to develop and implement assessment methods aligned with the CBDC's learning objectives. A key component of this is self-assessment, a valuable tool for implementing the CBDC. This student-led assessment, conducted under faculty supervision, uses pre-defined criteria, including attendance, seminar participation, engagement in group discussions, and other relevant factors. A monthly report is generated and provided to students for self-evaluation, promoting reflective learning and continuous improvement. This unbiased process empowers students to take ownership of their knowledge and identify areas for growth within the CBDC framework.
6. **Practical, models and charts committee:** The Practical, Models, and Charts Committee develops and maintains practical resources, such as anatomical models, charts, and other learning aids, to enhance students' understanding of anatomical concepts. This committee focuses on improving practical classes by exploring innovative methods of demonstrating anatomical concepts through models, projects, dissections, and other hands-on activities. Student input is actively encouraged to foster creative thinking and develop practical learning resources. This approach aligns with the CBDC's emphasis on diversified practical classes, moving beyond traditional methods to promote innovation and critical thinking in anatomy education.
7. **Syllabus Committee:** The Syllabus Committee plays a crucial role in orienting students to the anatomy curriculum. Their primary responsibility is to ensure students understand the course structure, learning objectives, and assessment criteria. This is particularly important within the CBDC framework, which introduces new concepts like "must know", "nice to know", and "good to know" categories within the syllabus. The committee also clarifies the newly implemented three-semester system. By providing clear explanations and guidance, the Syllabus Committee enables students to navigate the curriculum and achieve the desired learning outcomes effectively.
8. **Question Bank Committee:** The Question Bank Committee develops and maintains a question bank aligned with the CBDC's learning objectives and revised question patterns. This resource provides students with practice questions and supports self-assessment. The committee analyzes previous university question papers, categorizing questions by chapter to highlight important topics alongside the current syllabus. This enables students to easily identify key concepts and practice answering various question types within the CBDC framework.

These committees work collaboratively to ensure that the CBDC is effectively implemented and that students have the necessary resources and support to succeed. They provide a platform for student involvement, feedback, and continuous improvement of the curriculum.

Case-based learning and problem-based learning

Furthermore, we have integrated case-based learning and problem-based learning into our anatomical studies, recognizing their effectiveness in enhancing understanding and application of knowledge. Our approach encompasses a wide range of learning methodologies, ensuring a comprehensive and engaging learning experience.

The implementation of the Competency-Based Dynamic Curriculum at ASRHMC's Department of Human Anatomy represents a transformative approach to Homoeopathic education. Through innovative initiatives like *Anatomica Homoeopathica*, the Anatomy Board, and a unique student group system, ASRHMC fosters active learning and a deeper understanding of anatomy within a Homoeopathic context. Dedicated student committees, focused on various aspects of the curriculum, ensure effective implementation and student engagement. By embracing diverse learning methodologies, including case-based and problem-based learning, ASRHMC is cultivating a dynamic and enriching learning environment that empowers future Homoeopathic practitioners.

Conclusion

This article has presented a case study of CBDC implementation at ASRHMC, highlighting the unique initiatives undertaken by the Department of Human Anatomy to enhance anatomical learning within a Homoeopathic framework. The success of these initiatives, including Anatomica Homeopathica and the Anatomy Board, demonstrates the potential of CBDC to transform Homoeopathic education. By adapting modern pedagogical methods to the specific demands of Homoeopathy, ASRHMC is paving the way for a new generation of skilled and knowledgeable Homoeopathic professionals.

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Abbreviations

- **ASRHMC:** Akula Sree Ramulu Homoeopathic Medical College, Tadepalligudem
- **CBDC:** Competency-Based Dynamic Curriculum
- **NCH:** National Commission for Homoeopathy, New Delhi.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

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