

# Feedback about Foundation Course among Medical Students - A Cross Sectional Study

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## Abstract

**Background:** Medical institutions throughout the world implement foundation course at the initial phase among Phase IMBBS, to overcome the diverse challenges faced by the students and to improve their academics. Indian students preferably get enrolled into the medical profession at the age of 17-19 years with dissimilar psychological characteristics, diverse expectations from family and society.

**Aim and Objective:** This study was aimed to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the foundation course among Phase IMBBS.

**Materials and Methods:** This cross-sectional study was conducted among 150 phase I MBBS students, inclusive of males and females, within the age group of 17-19 year. Their responses were statistically analyzed through Microsoft excel.

**Results:** 150 students participated in this study and about 82% of Phase I MBBS students showed positive responses regarding the various sessions of foundation course.

**Conclusion:** Foundation course for Phase I MBBS students is found to be useful for initiation and smooth transition into medical field and justifies the mandatory suggestion done by the Medical Council of India, as it reduces the factors which create stress and improves the academic performance.

**Keywords:** Medical Council of India, Foundation course, Phase IMBBS, Stress and academics.

## Introduction

The newly implemented curriculum by the Medical Council of India (MCI) has a foundation course for a duration of one month for Phase I MBBS students, to overcome the stress and challenges, with a view to prepare them from high school to Medical Institution. Students face diverse forms of stress from family and society to perform well in academics, before they even have an idea about life in a Medical Institution. Alternative factors like language and communication

skills, peer and parental pressures, homesickness, and panic about ragging are factors that may psychologically disturb the students.<sup>[1]</sup> The foundation course has been implemented for helping the students to overcome the aforementioned factors and also to perform effectively in academics and in their career.<sup>[2]</sup> The Medical Education Unit (MEU) with the help of other disciplines of every Medical Institution conducts a one-month foundation course to orient the Phase I MBBS students, to gain knowledge regarding National health scenarios, medical ethics, attitudes, health economics, communication skills, basic life support, demographics, biohazard safety, sports and extracurricular activities, environmental issues and community orientation. This foundation also provides an overview of the preclinical and clinical subjects. Every Medical Institution must train the phase I MBBS students in diverse aspects

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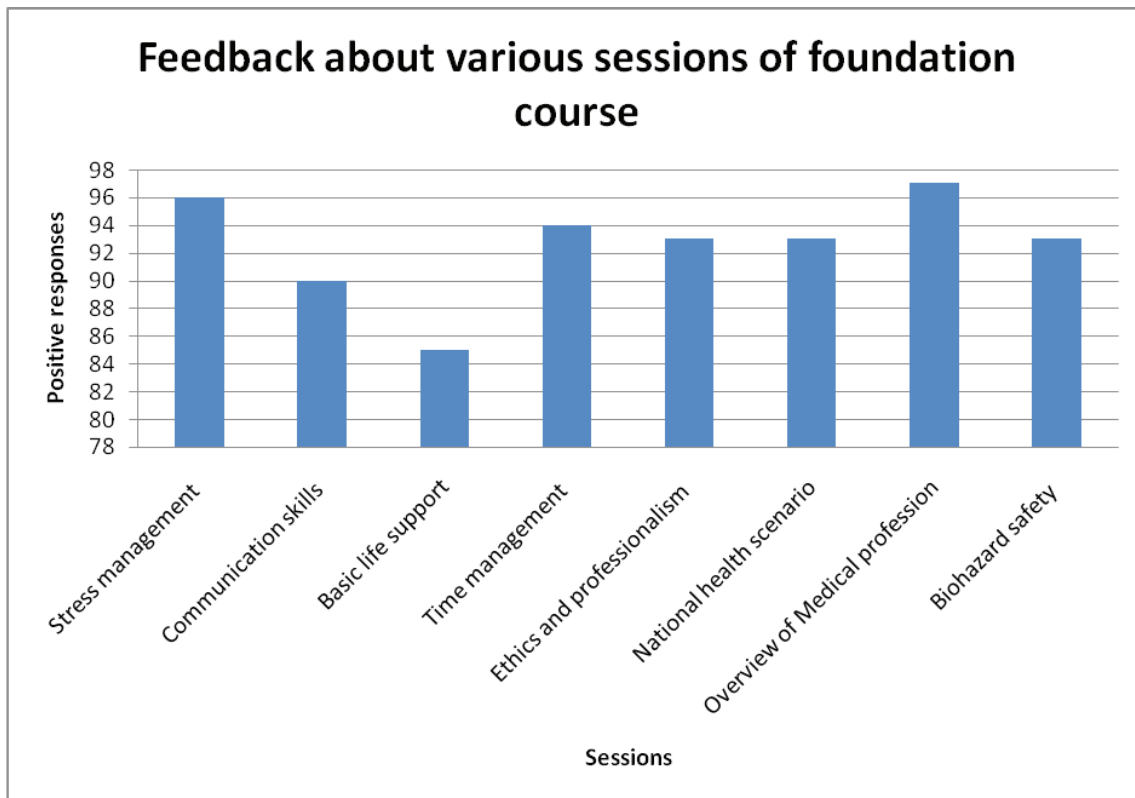
like professionalism, learning methodology, computer-aided skills before they start their career in the medical profession.<sup>[3, 4]</sup>The students also need adequate training in interpersonal relationship with peers and faculties, which will help them to maintain a positive team working culture, throughout their student life. The present study aimed to analyze the effectiveness and impact of the foundation course among Phase IMBBS.

**Materials and Methods**

This cross-sectional study was conducted in the Department of Anatomy after obtaining proper Institutional Ethical Clearance (IEC), from the Saveetha Institution of Medical and Technical Sciences. Around 150 phase I MBBS students participated in the study. A self-designed pre-validated questionnaire was prepared in Google form which fulfills the criteria of the study and was shared with the students. The students voluntarily participated in the study and their responses were confidentially maintained.

**Results**

The results presented in Table 1 showed that, the participants were able to gain and update their knowledge in medical course using foundation course. Majority of the participants stated that they gained knowledge in topics covered in most of the sessions which was unexplored by them previously. Similarly the participants were able to change their perception and upgrade themselves in sessions such as stress and time management, communication skills and library usage. Further, participants appreciated the sessions explaining Basic life support, faculty interaction, overview of medical curriculum and skill development. Majority of the participants positively correlated the knowledge gained with various sessions of foundation course. 89% of the participants were satisfisctory about the introduction to departments and faculties and 82% of the participants were able to orient better with the help of foundation course.



**Figure 1: Shows the positive responses of various sessions of foundation course**

**Table 1: Shows the feedback of assorted sessions of the foundation course**

Feedback	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Stronglydisagree
Effectiveness of orientation program	72%	10%	9%	4%	5%
Effectiveness of skill module	52%	24%	13%	8%	3%
Effectiveness of community based program	66%	14%	10%	5%	5%
Effectiveness of introduction classes	66%	11%	11%	9%	3%
Overview of the Medical profession	63%	14%	9%	8%	6%
Time management	66%	17%	7%	7%	3%
Introduction of departments and faculties	75%	14%	5%	4%	1%

## Discussion

Medical institutions across the country implement foundation course as per MCI norms, to acclimatize students to institutional environment, sensitize them with teaching and learning programs, helping them to overcome the academic challenges as they move from high school to medical school.<sup>[5]</sup> Indian students enter medical institution based on their performance in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) as per the Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Act, 2016.<sup>[6]</sup> This results in bringing together students from various states with different lifestyles, into medical institutions to study with lot of passion and dreams. The medical profession is all about improving quality and saving lives of patients, so students need to have a sound knowledge in academics and environmental changes, hence the need for a foundation course is mandatory to handle challenges. To enable our medical students to face the global competition, the Medical Council of India has revised the medical curriculum and introduced a foundation course for Phase IMBBS students and to also hone our students into a multifaceted professional.<sup>[7,8]</sup> Through foundation course MCI intends to sensitize the new students, to the medical curriculum, institutional environment and introduce them to some of the essential aspects of medicine, such as, national health scenarios, basic life support, biohazard safety, sports and

extracurricular activities, communication skills, ethics and professionalism and leadership and computer skills. In the forthcoming years, MCI can include research also as a part of the foundation course, as research improves critical thinking, analytical process and documentation among students.

According to the feedback received from students, the foundation course is necessary for all the medical undergraduate students, to reduce apprehension and other factors that affect their academic performance. The students have given positive responses regarding the foundation course and its significance. Similarly, this study also correlates with Srimathi et al, (2014) and Mishra et al, (2017). The various sessions such as national health scenarios, basic life support, biohazard safety, communication skills, stress management, time management, ethics and professionalism, leadership and computer skills were attended by the students and their responses are shown in figure 1. These results expressed the benefits of foundation course and they were appropriately correlated with similar studies conducted by Suman S et al, (2007) and Mittal R et al (2013). Based on the feedback received from the students and previous literature, foundation course is mandatory for medical students as per the guidelines of Medical Council of India.<sup>[9]</sup> Very few studies are available regarding foundation course and its significance, hence this study

was attempted to throw more light on the benefits of foundation course.

### Conclusion

Majority of the students have rated that foundation course was useful and satisfactory. This new concept declared by the MCI has proven to be useful for the students to a large extent. This course will act as a preparatory period for Phase IMBBS students, who envisage to acquire a wholesome knowledge in the new competency-based medical education (CBME).

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