CORRELATION OF PERFORMANCE IN VIVA AND SEQ EXAMINATIONS IN PHYSIOLOGY AT FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF JAFFNA

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Introduction:

Physiology examination has four components such as Structured Essay Questions (SEQs), multiple choice questions, viva and practical. The value of viva is controversial as it is subjective. While SEQs assess written skills with subject knowledge, viva evaluates interpersonal skills with subject knowledge. The objective was to correlate the performance in viva and SEQ examinations in Physiology.

Methods:

This was a prospective study with the records of first examination for medical degrees held on August 2014 at Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna. Viva was conducted in 2 panels and each student spent 5 minutes in each panel. Section in which the questions were asked in viva from each candidate was noted during viva examination in both panels. Marks of viva, SEQ and total were analysed with Pearson correlation.

Results:

There was a correlation of 0.487 ($p< 0.001$) in marks obtained between two panels. Candidates who passed the exam (81) obtained a mean of 60.5 ± 6 in viva and 55.5 ± 0.8 in SEQs. The mean marks of the failed students (50) in viva and SEQ were 52.4 ± 0.8 and 37 ± 1 respectively. Statistically significant ($p<0.01$) correlation of 0.452 was noticed between the marks of viva and SEQ in failed group only. But higher marks in viva than SEQ in both groups were statistically significant ($p<0.001$). Section vice analysis had no statistically significant correlation between viva and SEQ except in cardio vascular system (30 candidates) where the correlation was 0.535 ($p<0.01$).

Conclusion:

Students tend to get higher marks in viva than SEQ. Lack of correlation may indicate the difference in the skills evaluated in the examination.