
TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL CURRICULUM TO MODULAR CURRICULUM POSSIBLE CHALLENGES

Safia Rahman
Assistant Professor, Pathology Department
Khyber Medical College, Peshawar

There is a move toward a modular approach to curriculum implementation these years. The approach has gained special attention in most of the world's education systems, particularly in medical education. The modular approach is an emerging trend in educational philosophy that modifies the traditional method of instruction to an outcome-based learning paradigm. Modularization is focused on the principle of dividing the curriculum into small distinct modules or units that are independent, non-sequential, and typically brief. A modular approach to education allows the learner to have governed one learning and accepts greater responsibility for learning. It stresses greater wisdom on the part of the learner; the modules are more applicable for more mature students.

In a modular approach, all the competencies required to perform are closely linked. Sets of tasks are assembled. Moreover, the very essence of modularization is that learners are in the middle of the teaching-learning process. It demands a classroom atmosphere in which students are actively involved in the knowledge construction process and a shift in the role of the teacher from knowledge transmitter to a facilitator of student's learning. Not only that, but modularization also necessitates continuous follow-up and assessment of student's progress throughout the module. Effective continuous assessment allows instructors to modify teaching and learning in response to assessment evidence. This also benefits students receive feedback about their learning with advice on what they can do to progress further.

The starting point was a traditional, discipline-based curriculum that was transformed into a fully integrated, competency-based program during the transition. This conversion process went over three stages: initiation, curriculum development and implementation, and sustainability.¹ Now, the following leading question arises: What are the key elements, if any, that challenge the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment in a modular curriculum? Applying the active learning approach in a Modular curriculum mainly depends on the perception that instructors and learners follow. In addition, instructors may often fear trying different teaching techniques, hence resorting to the traditional teacher-centered teaching methodology. Such concerns could merely be fear of the unknown. Instructors should be innovative and be willing to try new teaching strategies to improve their professional practice in general and augment student's knowledge. The most important challenge is influencing student's approaches toward deep learning, which is complex and appears much more challenging than predicted, even in student-activating learning environments. Deep learner's try to know the meaning of what they are learning, relate facts to previous knowledge, observe basic principles and critically evaluate their knowledge and the inferences they draw.³ There is evidence that learning attitudes are affected not only by the learning situations but also by how students perceive them. Students may have diverse intentions when beginning with a learning assignment and use different learning practices and strategies to deal with it.² However, the modular curriculum positively influences student's attitudes towards health research, as proved in a comparative study on MBBS students. Students of the modular system had significantly higher attitudes than conventional education methods. However, the level of knowledge was the same in both groups.⁴

The modular approach must emphasize (a) the intention of assessment tasks as learning tasks and (b) the provision of feedback that targets assisting students throughout the process of learning, rather than focusing on giving feedback on the completed task (i.e., when they obtain the grade), and (c) the engagement of students in organizing and monitoring their learning.

REFERENCES

1. Dejene W. The practice of modularized curriculum in higher education institution: Active learning and continuous assessment in focus. *Cogent Education*. 2019 Jan 1;6(1).

2. Maaz A, Hitzblech T, Arends P, Degel A, Ludwig S, Mossakowski A, Mothes R, Breckwoldt J, Peters H. Moving a mountain: Practical insights into mastering a major curriculum reform at a large European medical university. *Medical Teacher*. 2018 May 4;40(5):453-60.
3. Gustin MP, Abbiati M, Bonvin R, Gerbase MW, Baroffio A. Integrated problem-based learning versus lectures: a path analysis modelling of the relationships between educational contexts and learning approaches. *Medical education online*. 2018 Jan 1; 23(1):1489690.
4. Munir R, Ghafoor N, Niazi IM, Saeed I, Yousaf A. Approach of MBBS Students receiving Modular vs Students receiving Conventional Mode of education towards Health Research: A Comparative Study. *Journal of Rawalpindi Medical College*. 2021 Sep 30; 25(3):328-32.



LICENSE: JGMDS publishes its articles under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-Alike license (CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0).
COPYRIGHTS: Authors retain the rights without any restrictions to freely download, print, share and disseminate the article for any lawful purpose. It includes scholarly networks such as Research Gate, Google Scholar, LinkedIn, Academia.edu, Twitter, and other academic or professional networking sites.