

The Implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Group Peer Assessment during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Introduction: Medical education was tremendously affected following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of the lockdown restriction, the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) sessions were migrated to the online platform. However, it is difficult to monitor the participation of medical students in online PBL as compared to physical PBL sessions. An example of the uncertainties was students did not turn on the camera and they were being silent. Therefore, the Group Peer Assessment was implemented to monitor the participation of medical students in online PBL as we believed students can give better feedback to their peers when they work together in groups. **Methods:** This study was conducted at the Universiti Malaya, a public-funded university in Malaysia. Year 1 medical students participated in the PBL Group Peer Assessment. The assessment was carried out on an anonymous feedback basis. Data were analysed to identify the best and poorly rated PBL group peers. The best PBL group peers received positive reinforcements (e.g., customised bookmarks) whereas PBL group peers who were poorly rated joined remediation. In the remediation students reflected and identified their weaknesses to improve in the future PBL session. **Results:** In the first assessment, sixteen students were identified as best PBL group peers and eleven students were rated below the expectations. They were rated poorly in terms of participation and preparation. In the second assessment, the number of best PBL group peers was increased to twenty-two students and the number of under-expectations peers was decreased to four students. The comparison results showed an improvement after the remediation. **Conclusion:** Overall, the PBL Group Peer Assessment was an effective approach to monitor students during the online learning process.

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