

**Use Of Small Group Learning In Evaluating The Efficacy of Emphasis
On Kayachikitsa In Third BAMS Students**

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ABSTRACT:

Small Group Learning (SGL) is typically organized with small groups of learners, accompanied by an instructor, faculty person, or facilitator. An experiment was done to use SGL technique to teach a subject in Ayurved. The evaluation was done on the basis of check list observed by seniors as examiners. It was seen that 75 % students showed active participation in the activity as on the contrary of 15 % students being passive and 10 present out of them remained inert during the activity. 80 % of the students raised the problems related to social issues while 20 % students raised them from the personal problems they face in their routine work. As far as the issues that were brought for discussion, 60 % of the issues were raised from routine day to day problems while dealing with the patients, 20 % were from the emergency and 10 were basic issues from the theory. 10 % problems were IPD based while 70 % were OPD based. 50 % of the students made best presentations during the activity while 35 present students' presentations were better in contrast to 15 of the good ones. The most interesting point to be noted was about the student's working in a group and active participation in the activity. 85 % students showed best involvement and group activity while 15 had a better involvement while 5 % showed good involvement in the group activity. Another point to be noted here was that of the innovative ideas that came out of the students minds 60 % of the students came up with innovative ideas while 40 % students had a discussion on routine issues.

KEYWORDS: *small group learning, Microteaching*

INTRODUCTION

Small Group Learning (SGL)

Small Group Learning (SGL) is typically organized with small groups of learners, accompanied by an instructor, faculty person, or facilitator. During this process, a series of problems are provided to learners with guidance early in the SGL process (with introductory problems), and then later guidance is faded as learners gain expertise (Merrill, 2002). Guidance is faded as group members feel more confident with the subject matter and become more competent with the learned procedures.

Merrill (2007) suggests beginning with worked examples and then later, introduces students to smaller less complex problems. But as the process progresses, Merrill suggests changing problems by adding components to make them more realistic (Merrill, 2002, 2007).

During the SGL process learners should discuss problems, define what they know, generate hypotheses, derive learning goals and organize further work. Results may be subsequently presented to larger groups (under guidance from an instructor). A SGL cycle should conclude with learners reflecting on the learning that has taken place. From a constructivist perspective (SGL), the role of the instructor is to guide the learning process rather than provide knowledge (Hmelo-Silver & Barrows, 2006). From this perspective, feedback and reflection on the learning process and group dynamics are essential components of SGL.

Using a Small Group Learning approach engages students in discussion of specific situations, typically real-world examples. This method is learner-centered, and involves intense interaction between the participants. SGL learning focuses on the building of knowledge and the group works together to examine the case. The instructor's role is that of a facilitator and the students collaboratively address problems from a perspective that requires analysis. Much of SGL learning involves learners striving to resolve questions that have no single right answer.

Ayurved is the science of life. In ancient times Ayurved was taught by **Guru Shishya Parampara (In-House Training)**. Few students in a small batch were taught and the Guru used to observe each and every student individually because of small group. Interaction between student and teacher had a wide scope and was at a intimate level. Similarly small group teaching

is also a method which can be related to this. Ayurved science is the science in which the lessons are to be taught particularly by small group learning because in this science there are lot of aphorisms , verses which student should know rather must to know. In a small group these aphorisms can be made by heart from students and the topic can be explained in depth. Students become more attentive.

Now the situation has changed. The teaching has now been limited to an hour basis. The teacher hardly gets time to interact with the students. Also the burden on the students has also increased. The schedule is now integrated into a degree to be completed in a specified time frame. The knowledge gained by the students has been bookish. Innovativeness, individual thinking, group activities has now become a time par. Taking this point into consideration, we would like to select Small Group Learning pattern in teaching Ayurved. Our objective is to build innovative thinking in students, bring out versatility among them.

Methodology

1. The teacher will select a Chapter of *Aam Vat* (Rheumatoid Arthritis) to be taught and teach the chapter theoretically.
2. After half an hour the students will be told to make six groups of five members per group.
3. The chapter was then divided into six topics from the chapter and each group assigned one topic for further study.
4. The students will be asked to think of one realistic situations or scenarios, observed in their day to day practice in the college and hospital, depending on the chapter thought that will explore that topic.
5. Then each individual will be told to write a brief paragraph on the topic given to their group, describing the scenario/situation.
6. The members in the group will then discuss each one of their experiences in their own group and finalize one situation/scenario to be discussed in the class.
7. One member from each group (the group leader) will be told to explain their groups topic and the situation/scenario, and how it was relevant to the topic been thought. They were also told to highlight any new things they could think, observed, and experienced.

8. Then members from the group were given liberty to talk in support of their leader and also share their experiences.
9. The topic was then made open for other groups for discussion. Outcomes were noted in the form of points on the blackboard.
10. Same method was followed for the other groups as well.
11. At the end depending on the points written on the blackboard, the teacher re explained the chapter and made it simple to understand.

The assessment of the students will be done with the help of a check list initially prepared and standardized. The views of the Group leaders were also taken into consideration to evaluate the process.

Check list to assess the students undertaking Small Group Learning

Class:

Group No:

Student Name/ Roll No:

Sr. No.	Activity	Rating		
		Active	Passive	Inert
1	The students participation and contribution to work in groups			
2	The kind of issues they identified	Social	Self-centered	
3	The questions they develop that arise from	Routine	Emergency	Basic
4	Where and how they locate resources	IPD	OPD	
5	The presentations they make.	Good	Better	Best
6	Students working in a group.	Good	Better	Best
7	Innovative ideas input.	Yes	No	
8	Additional, if any			

(Source:Primary Data)

Results:

The students were to make groups of six students each. Thus there were five groups formed out of a total 30 students. The teacher explained the theory of “Aama Samprapti” that is the formation and aggravation of the acidic condition in the stomach and its symptoms. The students were then told to consider various aspects of Aama Samprapti. Accordingly each group selected one aspect viz. Dietary habits and its relation to Aama Samprapti, Environmental factors and Aama Samprapti, Lifestyle and Aama Samprapti, Junk food and Aama Samprapti and Stress and Aama Samprapti. The students were told to make out points related to their topic, discuss it in the group and draw common points important in context to the topic given to them. They were told focus on the points giving consideration to the Lakshana i.e. symptoms, Parikshana i.e. diagnosis, upaya i.e. Treatment. They were also told to focus on the metabolism and incidence of occurrence of Aama Samprapti. The students were allowed to refer to notes given during the theory lectures as well as allowed to refer the text books i.e. the granthas.

After 45min, the students were told to compile each ones points into common points and the group leader, which was initially decided by the group, was told to read out the points one by one. At points the other students spoke in support to the points read by the group leader. Then students from other groups were allowed to ask questions to the group which was presenting the case. The students from other groups were also allowed to share their views and experiences related to the topic. This process was followed with rest of the groups as well.

The evaluation was done on the basis of check list observed by seniors. It was seen that 75 % students showed active participation in the activity as on the contrary of 15 % students being passive and 10 % out of them remained inert during the activity. 80 % of the students raised the problems related to social issues while 20 % students raised them from the personal problems they face in their routine work. As far as the issues that were brought for discussion was concerned 60 % of the issues were raised from routine day to day problems while dealing with the patients, 20 % were from the emergency and 10 were basic issues from the theory. 10 % questions were IPD based while 70 % were OPD based. This shows the social outlook of the students as well as this also reflects the difficulty they face during the day to day dealing with the patients. 50 % of the students made best presentations during the activity while 35 % students presentations were better in contrast to 15 of the good ones. The most interesting point to be

noted was about the student's working in a group and active participation in the activity. 85 % students showed best involvement and group activity while 15 had a better involvement while 05 % showed good involvement in the group activity. Another point to be noted here was that of the innovative ideas that came out of the students minds 60 % of the students came up with innovative ideas while 40 % students had a discussion on routine issues.

The examiners also reported their observations as observed during the course of the activity. As pointed out by them, a big topic was started applying the granthokta lakshana and treatment while doing case taking. Correlation between the presenting symptoms and granthokta lakshanas was done by learner which was not done before. Also treatment part was studied in the same way. Students became more attentive in the class. They did not hesitate to ask questions. Confidence level of students was increased which initially was very low. They became more open to ask questions and clear doubts. Students got motivated to perform better because healthy atmosphere. Facilitator also had to prepare thoroughly about topic and had to emphasize on applied aspects from his own experience. Facilitator had to encourage diffident and withdrawn students to participate in the discussion. This particular way enhanced the students to think about all subjects and not only kaychikitsa.

Discussion:

The students first were not confident as to what is to be written and how was their ideas to be presented which itself was descriptive one. After proper instructions the students made points out of the total descriptive matter which they were finding it to be explained. Each one wrote his or her own points. One student drive out not less then ten points on his her paper. After this was over in twenty minutes, the students were instructed to discuss the points amongst themselves. The students after discussion found that there were many such points which were in common with all of them. Common points were eliminated. At the same time discussion facilitated new points to come up and also two- three points which were common were modified into new points. After five minutes, the group leader read the points aloud as well as one person wrote them on the blackboard. Now the points were set open to rest of the groups to discuss. Questions were raised by the students from other groups and the group leader of the presenting group defended the questions. Some new Ideas also came out which were very well noted down. A the

five groups presented their chapters in the similar manner. A whole chapter was covered in this procedure (SGL). The students very well noted the points and also discussed the points with out quarrel. Here the students self study and thinking ability was facilitated. The interaction of the students among themselves was also very well seen and working in a group as a team was enhanced. A good team work was seen. The presentation of the group leaders was also well. Here boldness and confidence was developed in the students. Noting down the points made an opportunity to each student to take their point into consideration, thus, involvement of every student in the class was created. The Small group learning is a good interactive method beneficial for both students as well as teachers. It provides an opportunity to students to interact with teachers and other batch mates. This particular type of learning broadens the intellectual orchestration. Students are stimulated more and learning of specific topic is enhanced. Learner and facilitator relation is enhanced. Students get a chance to seek clarification of doubts and it is observed they are more interested to learn in this way. They started correlating the granthokta lakshanas, chikitsa panchakarma to be given accordingly as per the case presenting symptoms. Their thinking power was increased and all the students liked this type of learning method. This technique was beneficial for teacher also. It provided an excellent opportunity for a teacher to understand a student's frame of mind. A teacher can also learn many things from students and can broaden his outlook. Especially for Ayurved science teaching small group learning can be the most effective way for learning. Student teacher relation developed in a nice way. Third BAMS students thought such type of learning if done from first year would be much helpful. Also I could observe the pace of learning amongst students varies and some students are dissatisfied. Some find this session very interactive and nice but some find it not of much importance.

Conclusions:

Small Group Learning (SGL) is typically organized with small groups of learners, accompanied by an instructor, faculty person, or facilitator. An experiment was done to use SGL technique to teach a subject in Ayurved. It was observed that the use of SGL happened to be a very nice tool in motivating students for self learning and self development. It provided an opportunity to the students to interact with teachers and other batch mates on the respective topic. This particular type of learning broadened the intellectual orchestration among the students. Students are stimulated to a far extent and learning of specific topic was enhanced. Confidence level of students was increased which initially was very low. Students enjoyed learning in a group with sharing of knowledge. The SGL technique, overall, was found to be very interesting and appreciable to the students in learning chapters in ayurved. It was like peeping back into the history with refreshing memories.

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