

Pathology Teaching Methods in Different Curricula in Undergraduate Medical Education: A Pilot Study

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Introduction: There are many different versions of curricula at medical schools which makes it difficult to understand the teaching methods and pathology subjects being taught. We compared the different teaching methods in general and systemic pathology within traditional curricula (TC), semi-integrated curricula (SIC), and integrated curricula(IC) from fourteen medical schools.

Methods: A pathology survey was sent out to evaluate general and systemic pathology teaching methods taught at medical schools with different curricula affiliated with Group Research in Pathology Education. Pathology lecture hours, TBL hours, PBL hours, and hours spent in other forms of teaching pathology were counted and compared in general pathology and systems pathology subjects in four schools with TC, four schools with SIC, and six schools with IC.

Results: The total number of mean lecture hours taught in general and systemic pathology was greater in traditional curricula (TC) than integrated (IC) or semi-integrated (SIC) curricula (TC-153 hours vs IC-104 hours vs SIC-73.1 hours). Overall active learning methods using PBL and TBL had much greater hours in IC compared TC (IC-267.5 hours vs TC-52 hours) with PBL being the most utilized method in both general pathology and systemic pathology (IC-171 total hours). Lastly, other teaching methods total hours were greater in IC compared to SIC or TC (IC-103.3 hours vs SIC-32 hours vs TC-24.5 hours).

Conclusion: Lectures are the most preferred method of teaching in TC where active learning methods such as PBL are utilized more in the IC. IC also utilized other teaching methods more than other curricula.