

Perception of faculties and students on Implementation of 'electives' and its' perceived challenges- in a medical college of Kolkata

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Abstract: *Objective:* 'Elective posting' was continuing from the 2021 academic calendar (2019 entrant batch), in two blocks in different disciplines, with wide variations & varieties across the medical colleges of same university. So far the literature searched, till date no work in the state was been found to explore students & faculties perception on implementation of elective. To explore students' & faculties perception on implementation of electives, challenges to implement electives & probable solutions to overcome those challenges. *Methods:* Explanatory mixed method (QUAT→QUAL) study was conducted among all the students undergoing elective-sessions and the faculties involved in the teaching. In first phase a quantitative replies was obtained followed by focussed group discussion in the second phase. *Result:* Majority of the students opted the elective modules by their own choice. They perceived good academic activities during the sessions (86% felt they met learning goals, 94% said that faculties were helpful & responsive, 90% students found well engagements during the class), although there were different astringents. Faculties found the courses would be more effective if more structured uniformities could be framed with more recruitment of teachers. *Conclusion:* Year after year the elective course is going on since 2021. But no literature came out in the state to explore the views of the students & faculties on the ongoing course. So this work could be a pioneer in the state, to uplift the education.

Keywords: Curriculum, CBME, Elective Experience scale, Elective Rating scale.

Introduction

The term 'elective' in undergraduate medical education has been established as a compulsory block-posting following the completion of the third professional MBBS examination. In conjunction with several new elements of Competency Based Medical Education (CBME), which was introduced in 2019 and included the elective module in 2020, electives have been integrated into the undergraduate curriculum as two-phase mini-duration postings in diverse areas that are typically not emphasized in traditional teaching methods [1-4].

According to the CBME guidelines, the current Indian undergraduate curriculum allocates eight weeks for elective rotations following the completion of the MBBS Phase III examination

and prior to the start of MBBS Phase IV. Electives are structured into two blocks, each lasting two weeks: [1]

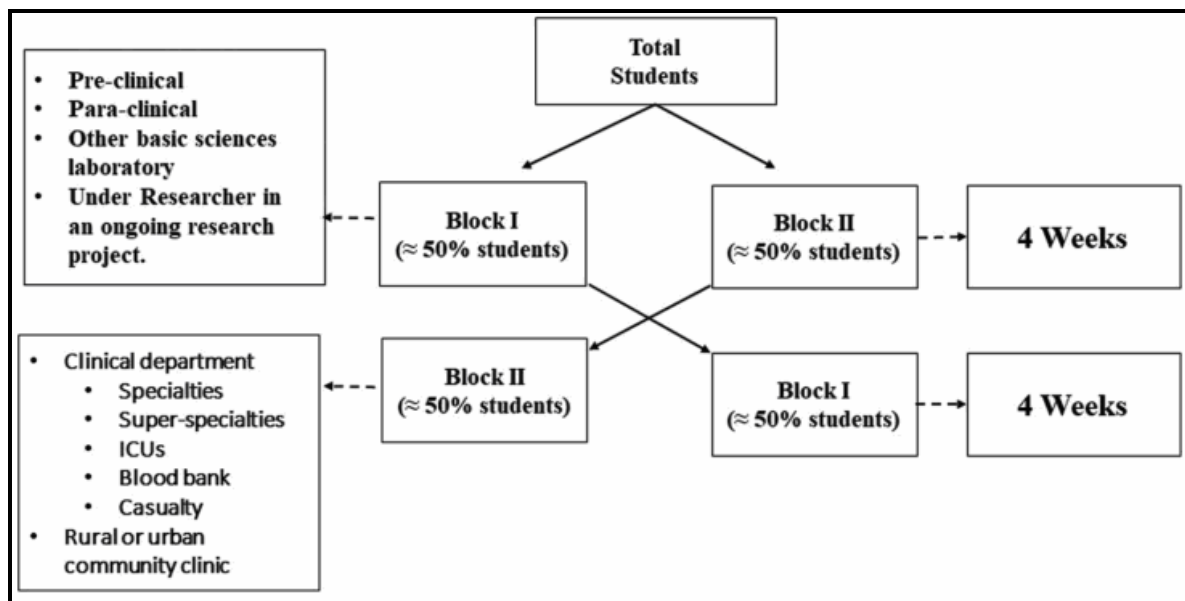
- *Block 1:* In a pre-clinical or para-clinical or other basic sciences (laboratory) or under a researcher in an ongoing research project and
- *Block 2:* In a clinical orientation department, such as specialties, super-specialties, casualty, blood bank, and ICUs

2019 MBBS entrant batch was the first batch to get exposed to the electives. But the entire curriculum in that batch and its subsequent batch were to some extent jeopardised for the COVID 19 epoch. From the time of 2021

entrant batch, the implementation of elective modules came in actual force stringent way. There exists a limited amount of literature

concerning the perceptions and challenges associated with elective modules in West Bengal, as indicated by the literature review.

Fig-1: The schema of implementation of elective postings in students [4].



Research conducted by Ramalho et al. (2020) revealed a positive correlation between students' overall satisfaction with elective courses and various factors, including the grades attained in the elective, alignment with the assessment methods used, agreement with the teaching strategies implemented, and the number of students enrolled in the elective [3]. The investigation by Mathur M. et al. (2022) suggests that electives serve as a portal for students to explore their chosen subjects, allowing them to comprehend the intricacies, challenges, and benefits associated with those fields. Departments may consider restructuring electives using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) framework for the benefit of students [5].

Kaur G, Kritika, Arora P from New Delhi in 2023, came out with their evidenced work on students' perception on electives. They have developed, validated, tested two scales namely for this purpose - Electives Experience scale (EES) and Electives Rating Scale (ERS). They demonstrated that the majority of students acquired knowledge in theory, practical skills, AETCOM (ethics and communication), clinical competencies, and research during both posting blocks, with a greater emphasis on research in

block 1 and practical skills in block 2. The median and interquartile range were computed for the Elective Experience Scale (EES) and Elective Rating Scale (ERS) scores. The Mann-Whitney test indicated a significant gender difference in EES-2. Students who selected their preferred elective in block 1 exhibited significantly higher mean ranks for both EES and ERS, while those who chose their elective in block 2 showed significantly elevated scores in overall ERS, ERS-2, and EES-2 [6].

Vidja K, Patel J, Patidhar H, Akhani P, Patel P (2023) explored 63 responses from medical students on the elective modules, where majority students said that objectives of the elective module were largely met and the faculty members were very helpful and responsive, and that they actively participated in the electives. Majority of them agreed that it was a very good academic activity, the time duration was appropriate, and it provided an opportunity to show creativity and for teamwork. Most students rated the overall experience of electives as "good" [7]. Work of Patel J, Akhani P (2023) from Gujrat, has explored the faculties' perception on elective module implementation, where the majority of

faculty members acknowledged the elective module as a valuable academic activity, citing an appropriate time duration that allowed for the demonstration of creativity and encouraged teamwork. Faculty members expressed apprehension regarding the process of students obtaining signatures in the logbooks [8].

Kumar A, Kumar A from Mathura, India (2024) have published their work on Perception of Undergraduate Students and Faculties Regarding Elective, where they explored that 95.8% students and 100% internal preceptors (faculties) have suggested that an orientation/sensitization is the necessary prior to initiate the Electives, to achieve more learning from the concept. 87.5% students and 73.7% faculties have accepted that the goal of elective programme is being realized [9]. Thejeswari H, Metri SS in 2024, did a work amongst 60 ACME participants to explore their suggestions to make their own institute ready for true implementation of elective modules, where unanimously it was decided to frame institutional elective module implementation committee to oversee the entire project [10].

Priyanka S, Vasundhara K, Subha R (2024), from Karnataka, expressed the perception of medical students after their posting. Out of the total 150 students in the batch, 96 consented and filled out the questionnaire. About 81.25% of students were aware of the existence of electives, and 76% were aware of both their purpose and importance. About 51% agreed that the postings were useful, and 46.9% felt that it was necessary for both clinical and nonclinical postings to be included in the study. About 43.75% felt that it was confusing to select the topics, and 60.4% opined that there were sufficient topics to choose from. The study's findings overall indicated a positive reception of the elective module among faculty [11].

Sharma M, Verma M, Dengani M, Manju A, Das D from Chattishgarh have very recently published one article (2025 July) on a validated scale to assess students perception after block 2 posting of electives [12]. Recent works from different medical colleges of India explores overall perception of faculties & students on the implementation of elective-modules in the curriculum. In West Bengal, although one work been found so far searched for, on

implementation of elective in Anatomy discipline, but, for other blocks, it could not reflect faculties perception as well as challenges. [13-15].

Till date, so have been searched for, inadequate evidence has been found for the students' as well as faculties perception on elective modules in medical colleges of West Bengal. So this study was aimed to explore the students' & faculties perception on conduction of elective sessions, challenges as well as probable solutions to overcome them.

Objectives: To explore;

1. Students' perception on
 1. Implementation of electives
 2. Challenges to implement elective sessions
 3. Solution to overcome
2. Faculties' perception on
 1. Implementation of electives
 2. Challenges to implement elective sessions
 3. Solution to overcome

Material and Methods

Study type: Descriptive observational.

Study design: Cross-sectional explanatory sequential mixed method (QUAT→QUAL).

Study duration: 10 months (October 2023-July 2024)

Study settings: This study was conducted in a government medical college Kolkata, West Bengal. This college started MBBS course since 2003. Enrolment of MBBS students every year was 200.

Study population:

- *Students:* MBBS students of 2021 entrant batch who was undertaken the 'elective' postings
- *Faculties:* Faculties involved in the implementation of elective modules at our institute

Exclusion criteria: Who not consented to participate & who have submitted incomplete responses.

Sample size and sampling:

- *For quantitative part:* Census method using online Google form and the link was circulated to all participants via WhatsApp group (for students and faculty).
- *For the qualitative part:* Focus group discussions were organized for students and faculties. 05 students and 05 faculties were selected randomly for pretesting and they were excluded from the main study.

Tools:

- *For quantitative part:* Pre-tested questionnaire* was taken from Kaur G. et al [7], modified and validated properly.
- *For qualitative part:* FGD guide – pre-formulated & pretested.

Details of the quantitative questionnaire:* The questionnaire consisted of *four (4)* sections:

- *Section 1:* Questions related to the branch where the student was posted, the branch of choice, and the gender of the student.
- *Section 2:* The *second section* had 10 questions related to the execution of block 1 and block 2 electives.
- *Section 3:* 10 items 5-point Likert scale questionnaire “*Electives Experience Scale (EES)*” designed by Kour G et al. based on 10 possible situations found in pilot testing regarding students’ perception. The 5-point Likert scale was strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree. The 10 possible perceptions were hence graded on 5 points with minimum possible score of 10 and maximum 50. More points meant positive perception on this scale. The 10 items in short were awareness and clarity of objectives, expectations before joining and how much those got fulfilled after the course completion, supervision, hands-on experience, active participation, team work, topic/skill grasping, time utilization, knowledge up gradation, choosing or excluding a specialty in post-graduation, program duration, perception regarding workload and interesting posting. Mean score of EES was taken as cut-off point for categorising good and poor experiences.
- *Section 4:* “*Electives Rating Scale (ERS)*” after extensive literature search and

validation by pilot testing. The students were asked to rate the overall experience of electives on a scale of 1 to 5 (1: very poor, 2: poor, 3: neutral, 4: good, 5: very good) based on 10 items such as relevance, learning, supervision, work load, timing, resources available and benefit. The minimum and maximum possible scores on this rating scale were 10 and 50 respectively. Mean score was considered to categorising good/satisfactory and poor rating.

Data collection method: After the approval of concerned ethics committee, the questionnaire was framed and finalised (as detailed above). Students of 2021 MBBS entrant batch, when they completed their ‘elective’ postings in 2024 (March-April) tenure, was approached with the questionnaire after completion of their postings. List of the respective faculties who were involved in ‘elective’ teaching were collected from the office of the Dean, and were approached for their interview. In the second phase, focussed group discussion were carried on among students’ & faculties to explore their views.

Statistical analysis:

- *For quantitative part:* Frequency distribution analysis was done using SPSS 20 software.
- *For qualitative part:* Thematic analysis was done.

Ethical consideration:

- *Permission & approval:* Institutional Ethics Committee permission was obtained prior to start of the study (IPGMER /IEC/2024/0025 dated 08.02.2024).
- *Consent before data collection:* Written Consent was obtained prior to the interview.
- *Confidentiality:* All ethical principles was strictly adhered to throughout the course of the study. Nowhere the participants’ identity was disclosed. This study was completely academic in nature and all data provided by the study population will be kept confidential.

Results

Out of 200 MBBS students of the 2021 batch, 192 responded through the Google form. The response rate was 84%. A total of 35 faculties in 14 departments participated in this study. About 67% of students were male and the rest were female students who participated in this study. Most of the study participants (65.6%) belong to the 20-22 yrs. And the rest (34.4%) were between 22-24 years of age.

In total 16 departments participated in electives in 2 blocks. Department of Community Medicine had taken in both the blocks. The students were given a chance to choose the elective of their first choice based on their merit in the 7th-semester exam. In block 1 Anatomy Community Medicine & Pharmacology got a maximum students 15.6%.each. In block 2 General Medicine, General Surgery and Gynae & Obst got maximum students 15.6% each [Table 1].

Table-1: frequency distribution of the students in various departments in 2 blocks (N=192)

	Specialty	Topic	No of students (%)
BLOCK 1	Anatomy	Surface anatomy, histology, x-ray CT scan	30 (15.6)
	Biochemistry	Clinical biochemistry, tumor marker, thyroid profile	28(14.6)
	Physiology	Normal ECG, nerve conduction test, pulmonary function test	29(15.1)
	FMT	Legal issues in medicine, ethical principle	19(9.9)
	Microbiology	Virology, Bacteriology, CB NAAT ,	26(13.6)
	Community Medicine	Diet in NCD, Antenatal care, dengue surveillance	30 (15.6)
	Pharmacology	Drug adherence, Adverse drug reaction,	30(15.6)
BLOCK 2	General Medicine	GI system, Cardiology, Nephrology, neurology	30(15.6)
	Pathology	Cytopathology, Immunohistochemistry,	19(9.9)
	General Surgery	Suturing, urology, minimal access surgery	30(15.6)
	G&O	Normal delivery, partograph, antenatal check-up	30(15.6)
	Ophthalmology	Slit lamp examination, tonometry	18(9.4)
	Otorhinolaryngology	Audiology	7(3.7)
	Paediatrics	Essential new born care, congenital heart disease	20(10.4)
	Orthopaedics	sports medicine	10 (5.2)
	Radiology	Pathological Imaging	10 (5.2)
	Community Medicine	Vector surveillance, tobacco cessation counselling	18(9.4)

Students’ perception of implementation of ‘elective’s: More than 90% of students had >75% attendance in both blocks. In all the blocks, preceptors were allotted, and for >50% of cases in both blocks, no prerequisite was required before the beginning of electives. Only 6.2% of students in Block 1 and 17% of students in Block 2 said that learning objectives were not explained at all. Only 5% of students mentioned that no resource list was provided. More than 90% of students said they completed the logbook, but more than 50% did not make any portfolios. Most of the students

said that a guide did the assessment. Almost 50% of students were assessed at the end of the posting [Table 2].

Almost 86% of student had achieved the objective of the elective at the end. Almost 94% said that faculty members were helpful and responsive to their learning needs. More than 90% of students actively participated in this program. Almost 92% got elective of their first choice during selection [Table 3].

Items	Electives	Block 1 n(%)	Block 2 n(%)
Attended with 75% attendance	Yes	184 (95.8)	179 (93.2)
	No	8 (4.2)	13 (6.8)
Preceptors/guides allotted	Yes	192 (100.0)	192 (100.0)
	No	0	0
Any prerequisites before the elective	Yes	90 (46.8)	78 (40.6)
	No	102(53.2)	114 (59.4)
Learning objectives explained	Yes	180 (93.8)	1589 (82.3)
	No	12(6.2)	34 (17.7)
List of learning resources provided	Yes	182 (94.8)	180 (93.8)
	No	10(5.2)	12 (6.2)
Logbook completed	Yes	188 (97.9)	183 (95.3)
	No	4(2.1)	9 (4.7)
Portfolio made	Yes	80(41.1)	90 (46.8)
	No	112(58.9)	102 (53.2)
Assessment is done by preceptor/guide	Yes	180(93.8)	185(96.4)
	No	12(6.2)	7(3.6)
Expectations fulfilled after course completion	Yes	188(97.9)	180(93.8)
	No	4(2.1)	12(6.2)
Frequency of assessment	Daily	80(44.5)	60(32.4)
	End of posting	90(50.0)	105(56.8)
	Both	10(5.5)	20(10.8)
	None	12(6.2)	7(3.6)

Response	Yes N(%)	No N(%)	Can't Say N(%)
Were the objectives of the electives largely achieved?	165(85.9)	27(14.1)	0
Were the faculty members helpful and Responsive to your learning needs?	182(94.8)	7(3.7)	3(1.5)
Did you actively participate in Electives?	180(93.7)	4(2.1)	8(4.2)
Did you get the elective of choice?	176(91.7)	16(8.3)	0

Out of the total students, 91(47.4%) strongly agreed that the perception of workload was clear by elective. 129 (67.2%) students strongly agreed that it was a perfect academic activity. 111 (57.8%) students strongly agreed that it provided an opportunity to develop new skills. Only 5

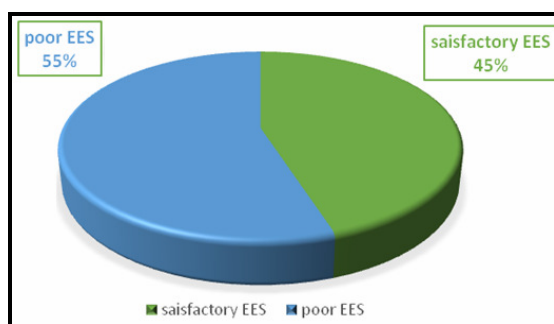
students strongly disagree that it helps in choosing or excluding a specialty in post-graduation. The mean (SD) total score of EES was 40.74(±8.14) with a range of 28-50 [Table 4].

Table-4: Perceptions of students about electives experience scale (n=192)

Perceptions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	N (%)				
<i>It was a perfect academic activity</i>	129(67.2)	50(26.1)	10(5.2)	3(1.5)	0
<i>The time duration was appropriate</i>	81(42.2)	85(44.3)	18(9.4)	8(4.2)	0
<i>It provided an opportunity to show creativity and lateral thinking</i>	86(44.8)	75(39.1)	17(8.9)	12(6.3)	2(1.0)
<i>It provided an opportunity for teamwork</i>	102(53.1)	60(31.3)	26(13.5)	4(2.1)	0
<i>It provided an opportunity to develop new skill</i>	111(57.8)	62(32.3)	10(5.2)	7(3.7)	2(1.0)
<i>Participation should be voluntary</i>	72(37.5)	84(43.8)	20(10.4)	16(8.3)	0
<i>The learning needs of the students were fulfilled</i>	91(47.4)	88(45.8)	9(4.7)	4(2.1)	0
<i>Learning expectations before joining had been fulfilled after the course completion</i>	94(48.9)	78(40.6)	7(3.7)	11(5.8)	2(1.0)
<i>Helps in choosing or excluding a specialty in post-graduation</i>	81(42.2)	63(32.8)	25(13.0)	18(9.4)	5(2.6)
<i>Perception of workload is clear</i>	91(47.4)	70(36.5)	20(10.4)	8(4.2)	3(1.5)
Descriptive statistics of EES	Mean	Median	SD	Range	
	40.74	42.00	8.14	28-50	

55% of students had overall unfavorable experiences during elective posting taking the mean score as the cut-off value of satisfaction. (Elective experience scale) [Fig 2].

Fig-2: Distribution of students according to their Elective Experience Scale (EES)



The learners evaluated the elective module session on the *Elective rating scale*, where they expressed that these were well scopes of active participation, but least scope for career counselling during the elective posting [Table 5].

Table-5: Measures of central tendency and dispersion of the Elective Rating Scale (n=192)

Options	Mean (full score 5)	SD
The elective posting was on 'evidence-based practice'	4.03	0.96

Options	Mean (full score 5)	SD
In the elective posting the learner participated actively (Active participation)	4.41	0.80
The learner could gain confidence on the elective module	4.14	0.88
It was a full utilization of time	4.07	0.86
The learner gained the expertise in Professionalism	4.31	0.87
The elective module & teaching helped the learner to increase the Communication skill	4.14	0.95
The elective module was so planned that the learner could gain better skill on the topic	3.90	0.85
It enlightened on the 'Career option' in definite way	3.69	0.97
The learner perceived the sense of 'workload' (Perception to workload)	4.01	0.83
The module was so planned that it provided the assessment on the 'hands on techniques'	4.25	0.80
Overall score	Mean ± SD	Median
	41.43± 6.00	41.0
		Range
		26-50

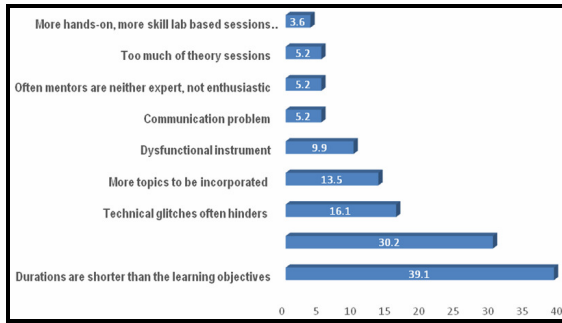
Almost 94.3% of faculty said that the objective of the elective was largely achieved at the end. Around 82.8% of faculty members said that students were responsive to their teaching. About 74% of faculty stated that they actively participated in the elective. Out of the total faculty, 30(85.7%) agreed that the elective was a perfect academic activity, but 11(31.4%) disagreed that the time duration was appropriate. 31(88.6%) agreed that it provides an opportunity to develop new skills. Almost 95% agreed that participation should be voluntary. More than 90% of the faculty agreed that the learning expectation after completion of the module was fulfilled. 28.6% of them disagreed that the perception regarding workload in the discipline was clear by this posting [Table 6].

Table-6: Faculties’ perception on implementation of elective sessions [n=35]		
	Response	Frequency (%)
Section 1- Faculties perception on implementation of electives		
According to you, were the objectives of electives could be largely achieved?	Yes	33 (94.3)
	No	2 (5.7)
	Can’t say	0
Were the students responsive in your class?	Yes	29 (82.8)
	No	2 (5.7)
	Can’t say	4 (11.5)
Do you think, the time you have provided to plan, validate & implement the module is all perfect to achieve the objective?	Yes	20 (57.2)
	No	10 (28.6)
	Cant’ say	5 (14.2)
Section 2- Faculties’ perception for elective rating scale		
Do you think that elective-teaching was a ‘perfect academic activity’?	Agree	30 (85.7)
	neutral	3 (8.5)
	disagree	2 (5.8)
The time duration was very much appropriate	Agree	19 (54.3)
	neutral	5 (14.3)
	disagree	11 (31.4)
It provided an opportunity to show creativity and lateral thinking in planning, validating, implementing & assessing the elective module	Agree	24 (68.6)
	neutral	5 (14.3)
	disagree	6 (17.1)

	Response	Frequency (%)
It provided an opportunity for teamwork for me, while I used to seek help from my departmental colleagues in implementation of the module	Agree	26 (74.4)
	neutral	3 (8.5)
	disagree	6 (17.1)
It provided an opportunity to develop a new skill to me, to plan & validate the module.	Agree	31(88.6)
	neutral	0
	disagree	4 (11.4)
To me, every year, new faculties need to volunteer for the teaching of electives.	Agree	33 (94.3)
	neutral	2 (5.7)
	disagree	0
The learning need of the students should to be assessed before the session and accordingly the session would to be planned	Agree	31(88.6)
	neutral	4 (11.4)
	disagree	0
The elective module was so nicely executed that I do feel it would help the students in choosing their future career in PG entrance	Agree	24 (68.6)
	neutral	3 (8.5)
	disagree	8 (22.9)
I feel that this exposure would give the learners for the sense of ‘workload’ in hospital set up	Agree	19 (54.3)
	neutral	6 (17.1)
	disagree	10 (28.6)

Students’ perception of challenges on implementation of ‘elective sessions: The above table shows that short duration (15days) and uncomfortable teaching environment were the most common challenges faced by the students. 16.1% of students faced technical problems related to instruments or clinical samples. 13.5% thought the number of topics was not sufficient. Students also have pointed out for lack of a definite structure of the module, too much theory discussion have perceived as a barrier to them to get interest in the concerned subject [Fig 3].

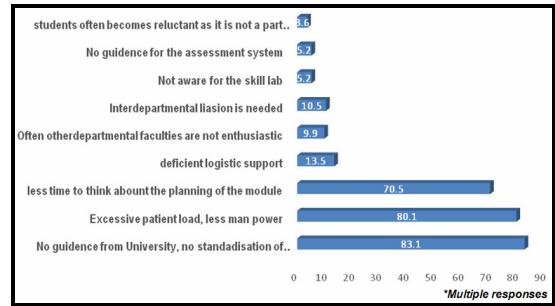
Fig-3: Frequency distribution of students as per perceived challenges during elective posting (n=192)



Teachers' perception of challenges on implementation of 'elective sessions: Lack of university guideline, standardized format (83%) in teaching as well as assessment of the elective module- were mentioned to be a great challenge for a faculty to lead the students. Excessive patient's load, less man-power in the department (80%), less enthusiastic colleagues (9.9%)- were also been mentioned as challenges to continue the elective sessions. faculties also mentioned for the lacking of interdepartmental liaison especially with the central skill lab (5.2%), often felt as barrier in the sessions [Fig 4, Table 7].

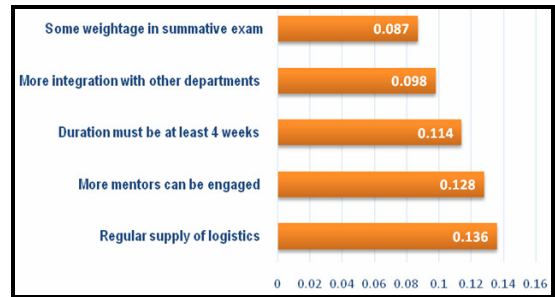
Table-7: Thematic analysis of qualitative responses of faculty about challenges faced during elective program (n=35)	
Theme	Verbatim
Logistics	'Lack of adequate functional equipment and irregular supply of reagents and diagnostic kit.' 'no guidance from university' 'no booklet for university' 'No study material'
Workload	'The doctors were already overburdened with patient load, so they wouldn't have been able to take the responsibility of electives.' 'Lots of patients, less manpower' 'Needs separate pool for looking after patients & students'
Lack of motivated faculty	'The faculties were mostly felt apathetic about the job during elective module preparation and assessment'. 'no extra remuneration'
Lack of interested students	'Since there is no marking in the electives, students are reluctant to attend class and appear in the assessment.' 'not a part of summative examination, so students are reluctant'
Duration	'15 days was a very short duration to develop, organize and implement any intervention in clinical subjects.'

Fig-4: Distribution of faculties as per challenges faced during elective teaching (n=35)



Perception of 'solution': Faculties opined that regular supply of logistics, recruiting more manpower, providing more duration, integration with other departments, and weightage in summative exam- etc. came up as the solutions for successful implementation of 'elective teaching programme', whereas on the other hand, students opined that inclusion of more hands-on exercises, rather than theoretical discussions, and procedures on real patients, rather than virtual/simulated patients, more exposure in 'clinical scenarios' might be more attractive for successful implementation of electives [Fig 5, 6].

Fig-5: Suggestions by faculties on effective implementation of elective

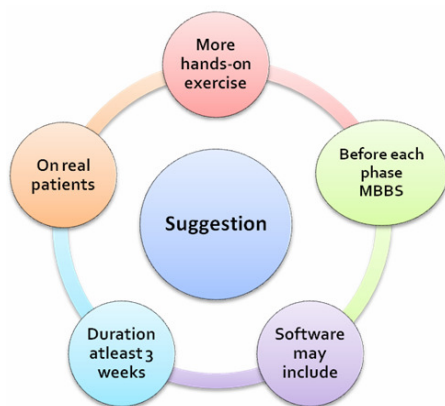


This figure-5 shows that out of a total of 11 items of free listing, 5 items were selected for pile sorting i.e., regular supply of logistics, more manpower, more duration, integration with other departments, and weightage in summative exam

This figure-6 shows that students in the focus group discussion mentioned that more hands-on exercises, rather than theoretical discussions, and procedures on real patients, rather than virtual/simulated patients, may be preferable suggestions for effective elective implementation. They also coined that

software applications may include the topic of electives. They preferred a longer time (≥ 3 weeks) to help achieve the objectives. A few of them suggested that it would be better to start before the commencement of each phase.

Fig-6: Suggestions by STUDENTS on effective implementation of elective



Discussion

As guidelines given by the National Medical Commission (NMC) of India (Medical Council of India, 2020) the elective module is in implementation in this medical college for MBBS students of batch 2019. Since this was the 3rd year of its kind implementation in this college and across the country, the researcher planned a cross-sectional mixed-method survey to study the perception of medical students and faculties regarding the implementation of this elective module at this present institution.

So far the literature reviewed, very little work were found on students’ perception on electives. In present state, till date no work has been found out. Moreover till date there is neither any standardisation, nor any uniformities of the

syllabi on electives across different medical colleges of same university. So present study was conceived to explore students as well as faculties’ perception on implementation of electives, their challenges and the probable solutions.

92 % student’s got their preferred elective. 86 % of students felt they met the elective’s learning goals. 94 % students rated faculty as helpful and responsive. >90 % actively took part in the program. Majority of them mentioned that workload was clear in the sessions with involved academic activities. Nearly 60% stated that it was helpful in skill development. In short, the elective scored high on objective achievement, faculty support, and participation, but showed mixed satisfaction overall, with notable gaps in career-counseling guidance. Shorter duration, too much theory sessions, dysfunctional logistics were mentioned by the students as shortfalls in the teaching sessions. They also mentioned that often mentors were neither enthusiastic, nor proactive. They desired for inclusion of more hands-on sessions especially exposure to real life scenarios with involvement of less mentor: mentee ratio would be more successful in elective sessions.

94 % faculties said the elective met its goals. 80% faculties felt satisfied with the students’ active involvement although they mentioned that due to heavy workload, less manpower they felt sometimes ‘burnt out’ to carry on the elective sessions fruitfully.

Since 2020 to 2026, multiple studies from different regions of India even outside India, can be presented in matrix as-

Sl. No	Year	Authors	Place of work	Work on students’ perception	Work on faculties’ perception
1	2020	Ramalho et al. (2020) [3]	Abroad India	Students appraised on the mode of implementation of elective.	<i>faculties’ perception not been addressed</i>
2	2022	Mathur M. et al. [5]	Rajasthan	Students’ perceived it as to explore their chosen subjects, allowing them to comprehend the intricacies, challenges, and benefits associated with those fields.	<i>faculties’ perception not been addressed</i>

Sl. No	Year	Authors	Place of work	Work on students' perception	Work on faculties' perception
3	2023	Kaur G, Kritika, Arora P	New Delhi	(a) Developed, validated, tested two scales namely for this purpose - Electives Experience scale (EES) and Electives Rating Scale (ERS) . (b) Learners acquired knowledge in theory, practical skills, AETCOM (ethics and communication), clinical competencies, and research during posting.	<i>faculties' perception not been addressed</i>
4	2023	Patel J, Akhani P [8]	Gujrat	<i>Students' perception not been addressed</i>	Majority of faculty members acknowledged the elective module as a valuable academic activity, citing an appropriate time duration that allowed for the demonstration of creativity and encouraged teamwork. Faculty members expressed apprehension regarding the process of students obtaining signatures in the logbooks.
5	2024	Kumar A, Kumar A [9]	Mathura, UP	Responses of both categories - Perception of Undergraduate Students and Faculties Regarding Elective- all suggested that an orientation/sensitization is the necessary prior to initiate the Electives, to achieve more learning from the concept. 87.5% students and 73.7% faculties have accepted that the goal of elective programme is being realized	
6	2024	Thejeswari H, Metri SS [10]	Faculties from different institutes of India	<i>Students' perception not been addressed</i>	Work on 60 ACME participants to explore their suggestions to make their own institute ready for true implementation of elective modules.
7	2024	Priyanka S, Vasundhara K, Subha R [11]	Karnataka	Work on both categories - expressed the perception of medical students after their posting. The study's findings overall indicated a positive reception of the elective module among faculty.	
8	2025	Sharma M, Verma M, Dengani M, Manju A, Das D [12]	Chattishgarh	Validated scale to assess student's perception after block 2 posting of electives.	<i>Faculties' perception not been addressed</i>
9	2025	Godara V, Kulkarni P, Rakesh M, Ravali A, Pushpalatha K, Kumar DS [13]	Mysore	197 students- Regarding the effectiveness of elective postings in evoking students' interest in the subject, the majority, i.e., 49.4% agreed, whereas 19.4% expressed neutral opinion.	36 teachers- faculties appraised the selection process, implementation, utility, and effectiveness of the electives. ' <i>Challenges to implement</i> ' was not addressed.

Sl. No	Year	Authors	Place of work	Work on students' perception	Work on faculties' perception
10	2026	Roy R, Roy H, Biswas A [14]	West Bengal	30 students- those had postings in Anatomy 'elective' module. Students desired the incorporation of a digital learning platform, integrated sessions can be added on-line and the on-site sessions can be totally used up for the hands-on practical class. <i>ERS & EES scales were not implemented.</i>	<i>Perception of faculties not been addressed</i>
11	2026	Gupta R, Upadhyay S, Singh P [15]	Rajasthan	Students agreed for help in development of clinical skills, promoted critical/lateral thinking, and reported overall high levels of satisfaction. They also mentioned the challenges with time allotment, student & faculty adaptation, and limited resources.	<i>Faculties' perception not been addressed</i>
12	2026	This work	West Bengal	Data of 2023-2024 tenure- 192 students- EES & ERS scale were implemented	35 faculties across different departments- FGD done to explore faculties perception & challenges

What is the strength of the present work?: This work involved all the students undergoing elective sessions and all the faculties who were involved in elective teaching. It was two-phased work. In first phase a quantitative assessment was done. After that to explain the findings, necessary qualitative Moreover a qualitative focussed group discussion were been carried out.

Where is the limitation?: The study was not multi-centric, neither longitudinal to follow up the effectiveness of the teaching programme.

What can be the future scope from this work?:

- Multicentric work can be done
- Can be done over five successive batches to gather trend
- Effectiveness of the programme can be evaluated by Kirkpatrick model.
- Ultimate target is to frame uniform standardised elective modules in the University

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Conclusion

The said work was an honest endeavour to explore the students' and faculties' perception/opinion regarding the ongoing elective courses in different disciplines, the challenges to implement as well as the possible solutions; with sole academic ambition to uplift the 'elective' studies in MBBS students by propagating the message to the administrators.

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