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Importance of integration of medical ethics with undergraduate medical curriculum- Instructors and student's perspectives.

India being one of the highly populated country has the largest health care system. It has the privilege of having highest number of medical colleges (412) and turnover of 50,000 fresh medical graduates per year (). Present undergraduate medical curriculum has been constructed around specific learning objectives concerned with primarily three domains, Cognition (Head), Psychomotor (Hand) and affective (Heart). However, affective component is greatly neglected and it has become a kind of informal curriculum (). Thus Indian Medical Degree fails to provide holistic care to patients with empathy.

As the practice of medicine inevitably raises both ethical and legal issues, it had been recommended since 1999 that medical ethics and human rights to be taught at every medical school. Indian medical schools lack a formal undergraduate medical ethics curriculum. Medical education remains largely focused on traditional medical science components, leaving the medical students to develop medical ethical decision-making skills and moral attitudes passively within institutions noted for relatively strong paternalistic traditions ()

There is no uniformity in what the students learn through the hidden' or 'informal' curricula, and there is no way of ensuring that a minimum standard is being met. The relative decline of ethical/professional standards, coupled with the deterioration of the doctor-patient relationship and the increasing criticisms of physicians by the public, have heightened the need for undergraduate medical ethics education(). Sadly, it has been shown those medical students' moral sensitivity drops as the course progresses(). This has been attributed to hidden curricula (,). Due to the paucity of knowledge and limited studies available among medical undergraduates on ethics and As MCI/ NMC is stepping forward with ATCOM curriculum, it's crucial at this point to assess the knowledge about medical ethics and their attitude and perception about integration of medical ethics into curriculum. Hence the present study is designed to assess the knowledge, attitude and perception of preclinical and para-clinical students of medicine and faculty towards medical ethics and integrating it into medical curriculum

Key words: ethics, empathy, curriculum