

A Natural Cross-Over Study; How do In-Person vs. Remote Clerkship seminars differ in impact to Learners and Faculty?

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BACKGROUND

In medical literature, distance learning methods have been shown to be effective for medical trainees, but the use of remote teaching for small groups in the clinical years is less clear. The current shelter-in-place allowed for a natural cross-over study to compare in-person vs distanced learning. We sought to investigate if small groups via zoom can delivery the same quality of instruction compared to in-person.

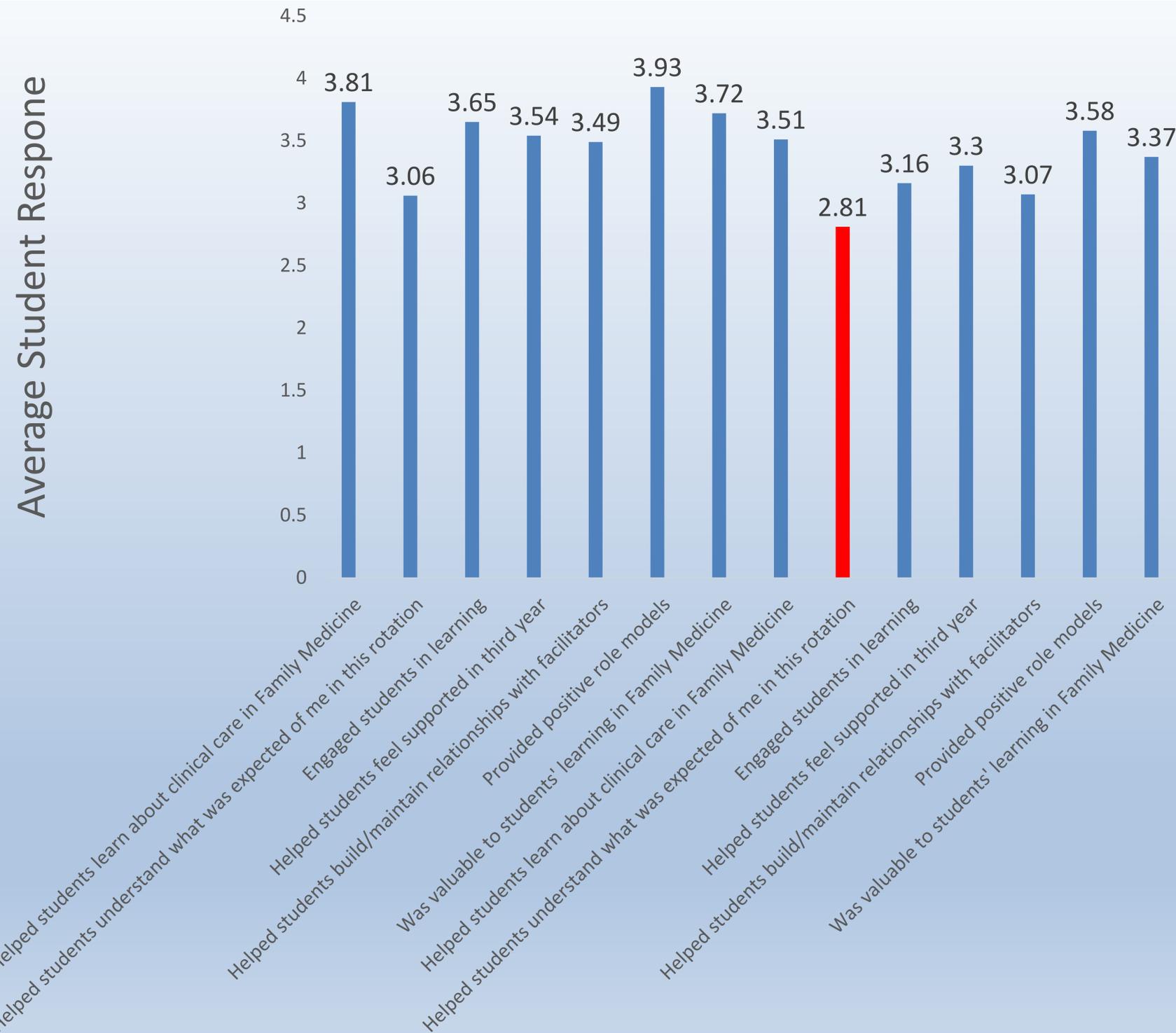
METHODS

1. Collected surveys from 160 third-year FCM clerkship students and 22 volunteer faculty facilitators.
2. Responded to Likkert-scale questions about in-person vs remote experiences.
3. Open-ended questions about strengths and challenges of in-person vs remote format.
4. Conducted faculty and student focus groups.
5. Preformed thematic analysis of open- ended questions and focus groups.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

- Both student and faculty expressed convenience of travel as a virtual seminar pro.
- Both groups also reported difficulties in engagement, repetitiveness, differences in preceptors, and ambiguity in expectations.

Most students were neutral with online-distanced learning.



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QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

- Most students were neutral (3.0 – 3.9) about whether remote versus in-person learning impacted role modelling and group support/cohesion.
- Students felt remote learning was less effective helping with clinical expectations.
- Faculty recommended a hybrid or in-person curriculum.
- Students recommended a complete switch to in-person groups.

FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

- Increase student engagement by varying zoom activities, breakout groups, and decreasing class size.
- Make discussions more efficient by providing more focused material and universalizing expectation of keeping the camera on.

DISCUSSION

Despite the neutral experience for online-distanced learning, both faculty and students recommend a switch back to in-person seminars. However, suggestions generated by both groups provide rich learning strategies to promote distance learning when pandemic or practicality require it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Margo Vener, MD for always encouraging me.