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An Inquiry into the Relationship between Practice Exam Integration, Study Habits, and Perceived Exam Confidence Among First-Year Medical Students at United States Medical School

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An Inquiry into the Relationship between Practice Exam Integration, Study Habits, and Perceived Exam Confidence Among First-Year Medical Students at United States Medical School

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Outstanding Presentation Award Honorable Mention

Abstract

This investigation delves into the study behaviors and perceptions of first-year medical students regarding the incorporation of practice exam questions, aiming to elucidate potential correlations with perceived exam confidence. Employing a descriptive survey, the study garnered a 46% response rate (n=61) from a 2023 cohort. Noteworthy is the dedication of 68% of respondents to a minimum of 5 hours daily for academic pursuits during their inaugural year, indicative of a robust commitment to scholarly activities. Findings revealed that 75% of participants consistently integrated practice questions into their study routines, with 69% utilizing them proximate to examinations. Importantly, 50 students (82%) report that they perform better on content that is accompanied by practice questions, with 57.4% (n=35) stating that instructor-developed practice exam questions aid in gauging their knowledge on the information to be tested. Qualitative insights from open-text responses underscored the perceived intrinsic value of practice questions in assessing pre-examination comprehension and facilitating the application of acquired knowledge. These identified trends suggest a widespread assimilation of practice exam resources and a concurrent acknowledgment of their efficacy within the medical student cohort. Continuously evaluating curriculum changes is essential, with a specific emphasis on understanding study habits and customizing students' education to meet individual needs. Subsequent research endeavors are anticipated to assess the discernible impact of provided practice questions on subsequent exam performance. This inquiry contributes invaluable insights into the integral function of practice exam questions within the realm of medical student study habits and their perceptions of exam confidence. Keywords: curriculum assessment; exam performance; medical education; practice exam questions; student study habits

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