



Book Review: Principles of Assessment in Medical Education, 2nd edition

Purnima Barua, MD, PGD (Epid), CMCL-FAIMER Fellow, ACME

Associate Professor of Microbiology and Medical Superintendent, JMCH, Assam; Convener, NMC Regional Centre for Medical Education Technologies; Member, NMC Expert Group on Implementation and Monitoring of the Competency based UG Curriculum

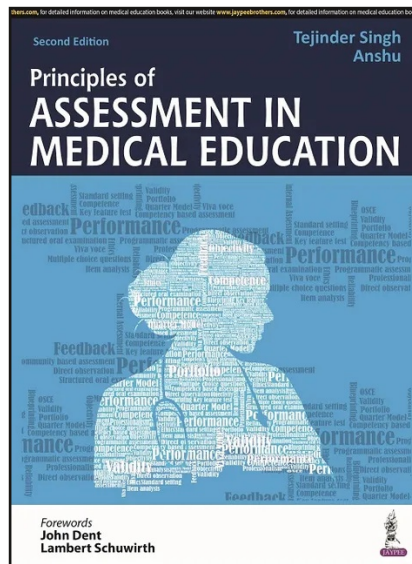
Corresponding Author:

Dr. Purnima Barua
Medical Superintendent
Jorhat Medical College
KK Road, Jorhat, Assam
Email: drpurinmabarua at gmail dot com

Received: 02-DEC-2021

Accepted: 10-DEC-2021

Published: 17-DEC-2021



Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers

January 2022

Paperback: 412 pages

ISBN: 9789354652479

Price: INR 1295.00

Principles of Assessment in Medical Education is a multifaceted introduction and tour through the process of assessment in medical education. The book, authored by Professor Tejinder Singh and Professor Anshu, is an exemplary compilation that every medical teacher can look forward to, and can read and apply to make an impact on students' assessment. The outstanding contribution of all the authors involved in this work is

commendable. A look at the list of chapters encourages one to believe that the book will enrich the knowledge of the reader with respect to assessment in various domains of learning.

A deeper perusal of the book shows that it fulfills its promise. Besides refurbishing the chapters presented in the first edition, there has been an add-on of material demystifying assessment in the era of

Cite this article as: Barua P. Book review: Principles of Assessment in Medical Education, 2nd edition. RHIME. 2021;8:122-4.

Competency based Medical Education (CBME). This is timely, and makes the book a useful, effective and relevant resource.

This authors offer guidance not only on the conventional methods which are currently in use to assess the cognitive domain, but also emphasize on the need and the ways to assess the student at various levels of Bloom's taxonomy. I was particularly pleased to find details of the methods in the assessment toolkit that is suggested for competency-based assessment. The information on each one of these has been presented in a lucid manner which will keep the readers engaged and will compel them to refer to the book frequently.

The entire book, I find, is a bonus for faculty who are passionate about medical education, are keen to learn the characteristics of a good assessment, are interested in developing an assessment plan and administering assessment methods, and are seeking expert guidance on the diverse facets of assessment. The chapters are crafted meticulously by authors who are experts in the field and who have kept in mind teachers' requirements in the present-day context.

Readers will be specifically benefited by new chapters: Assessment of Clinical Competence, Direct-Observation-based Assessment of Clinical Skills, Workplace-based Assessment, The Quarter Model, Assessment in Online Settings, Competency-based Assessment, and Programmatic Assessment. Some of the topics and chapters from the previous edition have either been thoughtfully merged or have been further segregated and elaborated upon keeping in mind new learning in the area and current needs.

The authors have accomplished the task of demystifying the denotation of 'clinical competence' as a harbinger in the making of a 'good doctor'. Therefore, assessment of the attributes of a 'good doctor' remains

the mainstay. The authors state that, while some of these attributes are easy to define and measure, there are others which are not compliant to 'description or measurement'. Assessment of such non-cognitive abilities like professionalism, communication, ethics - which greatly contribute to becoming a 'good doctor' - is challenging. These cannot be assessed solely based on conventional methods, but require subjective judgments, and the ability to self-assess and reflect. It necessitates the maintenance of a portfolio as an instrument to assess development of competence and to document student learning over a period of time. These activities enable the student to develop the ability to continuously improve oneself. The most essential ingredients to achieve the desired is direct-observation of the student while they display these non-cognitive abilities grounded in sound technical knowledge and skills. The chapter on Workplace-based assessment (WPBA) discusses in detail how to set up WPBA in a discipline and also suggests tools that can work.

The authors stress the need for providing immediate feedback for improvement and giving opportunities to practice and refine performance. Educational feedback to students has been tempered from its earlier version and provides all that a teacher could expect to learn about the techniques of giving feedback.

Internal Assessment (IA), which has the potential to bewilder medical college faculty has been simplified, expanded and presented as a separate chapter. The chapter on The Quarter Model should help in resolving concerns around implementing IA as a method of assessment for learning. The authors have deftly connected the content to the new curriculum as notified in the Graduate Medical Education Regulation, 2019 guidelines. In fact, the Quarter Model - which had been devised way back in 2012 - has been updated to

sync with the 2019 regulation.

Readers are introduced to Programmatic Assessment (PA) with the authors suggesting that 'the concept of PA is well aligned with the principles of CBME and is perhaps ideal for such curricula.'

The versatility of online teaching-learning and online assessment has been on display during the pandemic. Assessment in online settings is a welcome move as we move towards blended learning. This chapter underlines the concepts for design and implementation of online assessment, which could not have come at a better time.

It is an accepted fact that assessment is the heart and soul of a competency-based curriculum. The successful implementation of CBME majorly depends on how the students are assessed. In a nation with over 500 Medical Colleges, where faculty development training is heterogeneous and there are infrastructural and resource constraints, having an in-depth knowledge of the principles of assessment and implementing it in true letter and spirit is a

Utopian dream. A book such as this one can fill the lacunae that are bound to exist in such a scenario.

Over and above everything else, the book details strategies that could lead to the development of a robust system of assessment at Medical College level or at the level of the Health University. Standard setting, Question paper setting, Item Analysis and Question banking are the must-read parts, especially for faculty who are pivotal in designing assessment to enhance students learning and measure outcomes.

I would recommend this book to anyone who is a Health Professions' Educator, and is engaged in teaching-learning, assessing students, setting question papers or participating in any activity that determines students' learning outcomes irrespective of the stakes involved. This book must belong to all those who believe that assessment is the cornerstone for learning and who are, thereby, willing to exploit all opportunities for laying a robust foundation for assessment in their respective workplaces.