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## Bridging Expectations and Reality: Student Experiences in Outcome-Based Medical Education at Defence Services Medical Academy, Myanmar

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### Abstract

*This study investigates the perceptions and expectations of internship students participating in the Outcome-Based Medical Education (OBME) program at the Defence Services Medical Academy (DSMA) in Myanmar. A mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data, was employed to explore students' experiences. The Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) questionnaire was used to assess students' perceptions of their educational environment, while in-depth interviews and focus group discussions provided deeper insights into their challenges and expectations.*

*The findings indicate that students generally have a positive perception of the educational environment, with an overall DREEM score of 130 out of 200. However, significant challenges were reported in transitioning from a traditional curriculum to OBME, particularly in adapting to new learning methodologies and assessment strategies. Faculty support and peer interaction were identified as critical factors in helping students navigate the program, though some students faced social challenges. Additionally, a gap between students' expectations and their actual experiences, especially regarding workload and assessments, was observed.*

*The study highlights the need for enhanced faculty development, improved communication, and better support systems to address the identified challenges. The findings provide valuable insights for improving the OBME program at DSMA and contribute to the broader field of medical education by offering empirical data from the context of a military medical academy. Recommendations for future research include longitudinal studies and expanding the scope of research to other institutions.*

**Keywords:** Defence Services Medical Academy, Outcome-based Medical Education, DREEM, Student-centred learning, Faculty development

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Medical education is an evolving field that consistently strives to enhance the training quality for future healthcare professionals (Karkera et al., 2024). A notable development in recent years has been the transition from traditional curricula to Outcome-Based Medical Education (OBME), a framework that focuses on competencies rather than educational processes (Ross et al., 2018). The Defence Services Medical Academy (DSMA) in Myanmar has adopted this modern approach, aligning with global trends in medical education to better prepare students for the challenges they will encounter in clinical practice. OBME emphasizes the development of specific competencies that students are expected to achieve by the end of their education. This shift from traditional process-based education represents a fundamental change, requiring the integration of innovative teaching methods, assessment tools, and a reassessment of the educational environment (Ross et al., 2018). Consequently, the quality of the educational environment becomes a pivotal factor, influencing students' learning experiences, satisfaction with the program, and overall academic success. The World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) underscores the importance of evaluating this environment as part of global standards for medical education.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

The adoption of an outcome-based integrated curriculum at DSMA marks a significant transformation in the institution's educational approach. However, the success of this transition depends on the perceptions of the primary stakeholders—students. In particular, the perspectives of internship students, who are among the first to experience the OBME program, serve as crucial indicators of its effectiveness. Despite the global recognition of OBME's advantages, its implementation is often accompanied by challenges that can affect student perceptions and satisfaction. Identifying and understanding these perceptions are essential for refining the curriculum and enhancing the educational environment at DSMA.

## 1.3 Research Questions

The primary research question guiding this study is:

- What are the challenges and expectations of internship students participating in the Outcome-Based Medical Education (OBME) program at DSMA?

In pursuit of this overarching question, the study also seeks to answer the following sub-questions:

- How do internship students perceive the educational environment within the OBME program?
- What specific challenges do internship students encounter during their participation in the OBME program?
- How do the expectations of interns align with their actual experiences in the OBME program?

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for several reasons. Firstly, it offers critical insights into the effectiveness of the OBME program from the students' perspective. Understanding their perceptions will enable DSMA to refine its educational strategies and improve curriculum quality. Secondly, the findings will contribute to the broader field of medical education by providing empirical data on the challenges and expectations associated with OBME. These

insights may prove valuable for other institutions undergoing similar curricular transitions, allowing them to anticipate and address the needs of their students more effectively. Finally, the results of this research will inform policymakers and educators at DSMA and beyond about the practical implications of OBME implementation. This could guide future curriculum development and educational reforms, fostering a more effective and student-centered learning environment.

## 1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on the perceptions and expectations of internship students currently enrolled in the OBME program at DSMA. A mixed-methods approach will be employed, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to capture a comprehensive view of the students' experiences. However, the study is subject to several limitations. The findings are specific to DSMA and may not be fully generalizable to other institutions with different educational environments or curricula. Additionally, the research is limited to the first cohort of interns experiencing the OBME program, and their perceptions may differ from future cohorts as the program evolves and matures.

# 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

This section reviews the existing literature on Outcome-Based Medical Education (OBME), the educational environment in medical schools, and the use of the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) tool to assess students' perceptions of their learning environment. The review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the context for the current study and to identify gaps in the literature, particularly in the perceptions and expectations of internship students under the OBME framework.

## 2.2 Implementation of OBME in Medical Education

OBME has transformed curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and assessment practices across medical schools globally (Preston et al., 2020). At DSMA in Myanmar, the adoption of OBME reflects the institution's commitment to improving medical education. However, implementing OBME presents challenges, including the need for faculty development, alignment of curricula with outcome-based frameworks, and the creation of reliable methods for assessing competencies.

## 2.3 Educational Environment in Medical Schools

The educational environment plays a critical role in shaping students' learning experiences, influencing their academic performance and professional development.

### 2.3.1 The Importance of the Educational Environment

A positive educational environment is essential for student success. It fosters engagement, motivation, and a sense of belonging, all of which contribute to students' overall satisfaction and academic performance (Genn, 2001). Conversely, a negative environment can lead to stress, burnout, and disengagement, adversely affecting students' learning outcomes and mental health.

### 2.3.2 Factors Affecting the Educational Environment

Several factors influence the educational environment in medical schools, including the quality of teaching, availability of resources, faculty support, and social dynamics among students (Langness et al., 2022). The shift from traditional to outcome-based curricula introduces additional variables that can impact the environment,

such as changes in teaching methods, assessment strategies, and student engagement.

## **2.4 The DREEM Tool for Assessing Educational Environments**

The Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) is widely used to evaluate students' perceptions of their educational environment in medical schools.

### **2.4.1 Structure of the DREEM Tool**

The DREEM tool consists of 50 items grouped into five subscales: Students' Perceptions of Learning (SPL), Students' Perceptions of Teachers (SPT), Students' Academic Self-Perception (SASP), Students' Perceptions of Atmosphere (SPA), and Students' Social Self-Perception (SSSP). Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating a more positive perception (Noreen et al., 2018).

### **2.4.2 Application of the DREEM Tool in Medical Education**

The DREEM tool has been extensively validated and used in various educational settings to assess the quality of the educational environment. It has proven to be effective in identifying both strengths and areas for improvement in medical curricula (Noreen et al., 2018). As a feedback mechanism, it enables institutions to tailor their educational strategies to better meet student needs.

### **2.4.3 Relevance of the DREEM Tool to OBME**

The DREEM tool is particularly relevant for assessing students' experiences in OBME programs. By evaluating perceptions across multiple domains, it provides a comprehensive view of the educational environment, offering insights that can inform curriculum adjustments and support the successful implementation of outcome-based education (Noreen et al., 2018).

## **2.5 Gaps in the Literature**

While there is extensive research on OBME, the educational environment, and the application of the DREEM tool, there remain gaps in understanding the specific perceptions and expectations of internship students in OBME programs, especially in the context of Myanmar. Limited research exists on the challenges faced by students transitioning from traditional curricula to OBME and how these challenges impact their perceptions of the educational environment. This study seeks to fill these gaps by exploring the unique experiences of interns at DSMA.

# **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

## **3.1 Research Design**

This study adopts an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis (Ivankova et al., 2006). This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The study starts with a quantitative phase to collect broad data on student perceptions, followed by a qualitative phase to delve deeper into their experiences and expectations.

### **3.1.1 Quantitative Phase**

The quantitative phase uses the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) tool to assess students' perceptions of their educational environment. DREEM was chosen due to its established reliability and validity for evaluating medical education environments.

### **3.1.2 Qualitative Phase**

In the qualitative phase, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions are conducted with selected students to explore their experiences in the OBME program. This phase is informed by the constructivist grounded theory approach, which allows the research to explore new phenomena without relying on pre-existing theories (Mills et al., 2006).

## **3.2 Sampling Procedure**

The study employs purposive sampling to select participants for both quantitative and qualitative phases. This ensures the inclusion of students who meet specific criteria, representing the population of interest—internship students in the OBME program at DSMA.

### **3.2.1 Inclusion Criteria**

- Internship students currently enrolled in the OBME program at DSMA.
- Students who have completed at least one clinical rotation under the OBME curriculum.
- Students willing to participate and provide informed consent.

### **3.2.2 Sample Size**

For the quantitative phase, the entire eligible population of internship students is invited to participate in the DREEM survey. For the qualitative phase, 12 students are selected for in-depth interviews, while each focus group discussion consists of approximately 5-6 participants.

## **3.3 Data Collection Methods**

Data collection is conducted in two phases: quantitative and qualitative, using methods suited to the type of data being collected.

### **3.3.1 Quantitative Data Collection**

The DREEM questionnaire, comprising 50 items grouped into five subscales (Students' Perceptions of Learning, Students' Perceptions of Teachers, Students' Academic Self-Perception, Students' Perceptions of Atmosphere, and Students' Social Self-Perception), is administered to all eligible participants. Responses are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

### **3.3.2 Qualitative Data Collection**

Qualitative data is collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The interview guide is based on themes that emerged from the quantitative phase, allowing for deeper exploration of student experiences. Focus group discussions are conducted to gather collective insights, which reveal shared challenges and expectations.

## **3.4 Data Analysis**

The study uses a two-phase data analysis approach corresponding to the quantitative and qualitative data collected.

### **3.4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis**

Quantitative data from the DREEM questionnaires are analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, are calculated for the subscales. Univariate analysis is used to assess the relationship between demographic variables and students' perceptions of the educational environment.

### **3.4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis**

Qualitative data is analyzed using thematic analysis, facilitated by MAXQDA software. Thematic analysis involves coding the data to

identify recurring patterns and themes. A deductive approach is used, with codes developed from both the interview guide and themes that arose in the quantitative phase. This ensures that the qualitative findings enrich the quantitative results, providing a more comprehensive understanding of student experiences.

### 3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are integral to this study, given the involvement of human participants. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethical Review Committee of the Defence Services Medical Academy. Informed consent was sought from all participants, ensuring they were aware of the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results from both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. The quantitative data were obtained using the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) questionnaire, while the qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The findings are presented in two sections: quantitative data analysis and qualitative data analysis.

### 4.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

#### 4.2.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The demographic characteristics of the participants (N=35) are presented in Table 4.1. All participants were male, aged between 22 and 24 years. Most participants (65.7%) had completed 3-4 clinical rotations, while 34.3% had completed 1-2 clinical rotations.

**Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N=35)**

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	35	100.0
<b>Age</b>		
22-24 years	35	100.0
<b>Clinical Rotations Completed</b>		
1-2	12	34.3
3-4	23	65.7

#### 4.2.2 DREEM Scores

The overall mean DREEM score was 130 out of 200, indicating a generally positive perception of the educational environment. The scores for each of the five subscales are presented in Table 4.2.

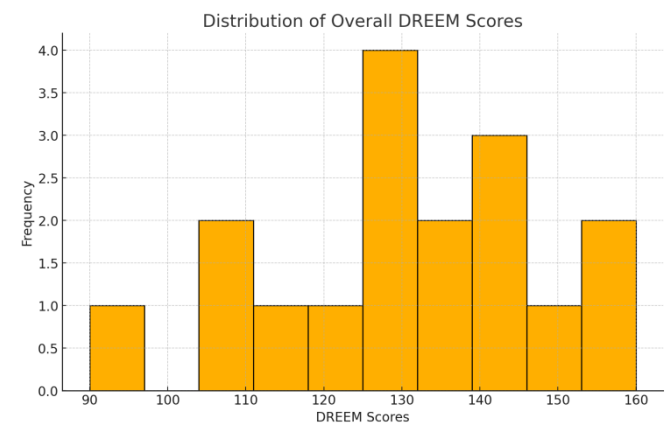
**Table 4.2: DREEM Subscale Scores**

DREEM Subscale	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Students' Perceptions of Learning (SPL)	31.2	6.5	Positive perception
Students' Perceptions of Teachers (SPT)	28.7	5.8	Moving in the right direction

Students' Academic Self-Perception (SASP)	24.5	4.7	Feeling more on the positive side
Students' Perceptions of Atmosphere (SPA)	27.3	5.2	A more positive atmosphere
Students' Social Self-Perception (SSSP)	18.3	4.0	Not too bad

The DREEM scores indicate that students generally have a positive perception of their educational environment, particularly in learning, teacher support, and atmosphere. However, the lower score in the Social Self-Perception subscale suggests that students may experience social challenges.

#### 4.2.3 Distribution of DREEM Scores



**Figure 4.1: Distribution of Overall DREEM Scores**

The histogram illustrates the distribution of overall DREEM scores for participants. It shows that the majority of participants scored between 120 and 140. Fewer participants scored above 150 or below 100, indicating that most of the scores are concentrated in the middle range. The distribution highlights a central tendency with fewer extreme outliers in both the low and high score ranges.

### 4.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

#### 4.3.1 Themes from In-Depth Interviews

Several key themes emerged from the qualitative analysis, summarized in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Key Themes from Qualitative Data Analysis**

Theme	Description
Transition Challenges	Students experienced challenges in adjusting to the OBME program.
Faculty Support	Faculty guidance was crucial, but varied in accessibility.
Peer Interaction	Collaborative learning was valued, though social interactions were limited.
Expectations vs. Reality	A gap existed between students' expectations and actual experiences.
Positive Learning Environment	Students appreciated modern facilities and a supportive atmosphere.

### 4.3.2 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis revealed that students appreciated the objectives of the OBME program but faced challenges with self-directed learning and assessments. Peer support and faculty guidance were critical to their adaptation, but inconsistencies in faculty availability created difficulties for some students.

### 4.3.3 Student Narratives

One student shared their experience:

*"The shift to OBME was overwhelming at first. We had to take on more responsibility for our learning, which was both empowering and challenging. The faculty were supportive, but it was difficult to adjust to the new assessment methods."*

Another student emphasized peer support:

*"Collaborative learning with my peers made a big difference. We were all navigating the new curriculum together, and helping each other out was key to our success."*

These narratives highlight the varied experiences of students, reflecting both positive and challenging aspects of the OBME program.

### 4.3.4 Focus Group Discussion Outcomes

Focus group discussions revealed additional insights, particularly regarding the need for more consistent communication from faculty about expectations and assessments, as well as the desire for greater peer collaboration opportunities.

## 4.4 Conclusion

The findings from both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study offer a comprehensive view of students' perceptions and expectations in the OBME program at DSMA. While students generally have a positive perception of their educational environment, there are challenges related to the transition to OBME, faculty support, and social interaction. These findings will be further discussed in the next chapter.

## 5. DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Interpretation of Quantitative Findings

#### 5.1.1 Overall Perceptions of the Educational Environment

The quantitative data revealed that the overall DREEM score of 130 out of 200 indicates a generally positive perception of the educational environment. This finding is consistent with prior research, which underscores the significance of a supportive learning environment in enhancing student satisfaction and academic performance (El-Hilali et al., 2015). The positive perception is further reinforced by the high scores in the Students' Perceptions of Learning (SPL) and Students' Perceptions of Teachers (SPT) subscales, reflecting students' appreciation for the quality of teaching and the educational opportunities offered by the OBME program. However, the relatively lower score in the Students' Social Self-Perception (SSSP) subscale suggests that students may face social challenges, such as difficulty in building peer relationships and feelings of isolation. This is significant, as a positive social environment is crucial for student well-being and can influence overall educational experiences.

#### 5.1.2 Challenges and Expectations

The distribution of DREEM scores highlights that while most students reported positive perceptions, a significant portion scored below the mean, indicating some dissatisfaction. This points to

underlying challenges that some students may be experiencing, particularly in relation to the transition to the OBME curriculum. The gap between expectations and reality, as reflected in the lower scores for certain subscales, suggests that students may not have been fully prepared for the demands of the OBME program. This misalignment between expectations and experiences underscores the need for improved communication and support mechanisms to help students navigate the new curriculum.

### 5.2 Interpretation of Qualitative Findings

#### 5.2.1 Transition Challenges

The qualitative data provided deeper insights into the challenges students encountered during the transition to the OBME curriculum. Many participants described the shift from a traditional curriculum to OBME as overwhelming, particularly due to the increased emphasis on self-directed learning and new assessment methods. These findings are in line with existing literature, which notes that students often struggle with the increased responsibility required by outcome-based education (Harden, 1999). While the OBME framework aims to foster greater independence and critical thinking, the study highlights the need for additional guidance and support during the transition period.

#### 5.2.2 Faculty Support and Peer Interaction

Faculty support emerged as a critical factor in student success within the OBME program. Students who felt supported by their instructors reported more positive experiences, reinforcing the role of faculty in facilitating a smooth transition to a more student-centered curriculum. However, the inconsistent availability of faculty support noted by some participants suggests that further efforts are needed to ensure that all students receive adequate guidance. Peer interaction also played a key role in students' learning experiences, with collaborative learning and group discussions highly valued. However, the lower social self-perception scores indicate that not all students benefited equally from peer interactions, pointing to a need for more structured opportunities to foster a supportive and inclusive social environment.

#### 5.2.3 Expectations and Reality

The gap between students' expectations and their actual experiences in the OBME program was another significant finding. Students reported that the workload was more intense than anticipated, and assessment methods required a higher degree of self-directed learning and critical thinking than expected. This misalignment between expectations and reality highlights the need for better orientation and preparation for students entering the OBME program. Providing clear information about the program's demands and equipping students with the skills needed for success could help bridge this gap and reduce the adjustment difficulties experienced by students.

### 5.3 Implications for the OBME Program at DSMA

#### 5.3.1 Enhancing Faculty Development

One of the key implications of this study is the need for continuous faculty development. Faculty members play a pivotal role in supporting students through the transition to OBME, and their ability to provide effective guidance is crucial for the success of the program. Ongoing training in outcome-based education, coupled with strategies to better support student-centered learning, would likely enhance the overall effectiveness of the OBME curriculum at DSMA. Faculty development programs should focus on equipping instructors with the skills needed to mentor students in a more independent and self-directed learning environment.

### 5.3.2 Improving Communication and Support Mechanisms

The gap between students' expectations and their actual experiences indicates a need for improved communication and support mechanisms within the OBME program. Clearer communication about the program's expectations, workload, and assessment methods could help reduce the confusion and anxiety experienced by students. Additionally, structured support systems, such as orientation programs for new students, regular check-ins with faculty, and peer mentoring programs, could provide the necessary guidance and reassurance to students as they adjust to the OBME framework.

### 5.3.3 Fostering a Supportive Social Environment

The lower scores in the social self-perception subscale point to the need for fostering a more inclusive and supportive social environment within the OBME program. Students who feel isolated or disconnected from their peers may struggle to fully engage with the curriculum and achieve their academic potential. Creating opportunities for peer interaction, such as group projects, study groups, and social events, could help enhance students' social experiences and foster a sense of community. Ensuring that these opportunities are accessible to all students is key to building a more supportive and collaborative learning environment.

### 5.3.4 Addressing Workload and Assessment Challenges

The qualitative findings suggest that the workload and assessment methods in the OBME program were more demanding than students had anticipated. Addressing these challenges may require a review of the curriculum to ensure that the workload is manageable and that assessments are aligned with learning outcomes in a way that supports student success. Providing additional resources, such as study guides, workshops on time management, and self-directed learning strategies, could also help students better navigate the demands of the program.

### 5.4 Comparison with Existing Literature

The findings of this study are consistent with existing literature on OBME and medical education environments. Similar to other research, this study found that the transition to OBME presents significant challenges for students, particularly in adapting to new learning methods and assessment strategies (Harden, 1999; Ross et al., 2018). However, this study also contributes new insights into the unique challenges faced by internship students in a military medical academy, where the expectations and demands may differ from those in civilian institutions. The findings underscore the importance of tailoring support mechanisms to the specific needs of students in this context.

### 5.5 Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable insights into the perceptions and expectations of internship students in the OBME program at DSMA, there are several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study is based on data from a single institution, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other settings. Second, the sample size for the qualitative phase was relatively small, which may have restricted the depth of insights obtained. Future research could address these limitations by conducting similar studies in other institutions and with larger sample sizes. Longitudinal studies that track students over time would also provide a more comprehensive understanding of how their perceptions and experiences evolve throughout their medical training.

## 6. CONCLUSION

### 6.1 Summary of Key Findings

This study aimed to explore the perceptions and expectations of internship students in the Outcome-Based Medical Education (OBME) program at the Defence Services Medical Academy (DSMA). By utilizing a mixed-methods approach that integrated quantitative data from the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) questionnaire and qualitative insights from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the study provided a holistic understanding of the students' experiences.

The key findings from the study include:

- **Overall Positive Perception:** Quantitative data indicated that students generally have a positive perception of their educational environment, with an overall DREEM score of 130 out of 200. The highest scores were in the areas of learning and teacher support, indicating that these aspects of the OBME program were particularly well-received.
- **Challenges in Transition:** Both the quantitative and qualitative data highlighted significant challenges associated with transitioning from a traditional curriculum to OBME. Students reported difficulties in adapting to new learning methodologies and assessment strategies, which impacted their overall experience.
- **Faculty Support and Peer Interaction:** The qualitative findings underscored the crucial role of faculty support in helping students succeed in the OBME program. Peer interaction was also identified as an important factor in facilitating learning, although some students faced challenges in this area.
- **Expectations vs. Reality:** A gap was identified between students' expectations and their actual experiences, particularly regarding workload and assessment. This highlights the need for better communication and support systems to help students manage the demands of the OBME program.

### 6.2 Implications for Practice

The findings of this study have several important implications for the OBME program at DSMA and potentially for other institutions implementing similar reforms:

1. **Faculty Development:** Ongoing faculty development is essential to ensure that instructors are well-equipped to support students in a student-centered learning environment. Faculty training programs focusing on outcome-based education principles, effective teaching strategies, and student support mechanisms are crucial.
2. **Enhanced Communication and Support:** Improving communication regarding the OBME program's demands, expectations, and assessments is vital. Implementing structured support systems such as comprehensive orientation programs, regular progress monitoring, and peer mentoring schemes can help bridge the gap between student expectations and reality.
3. **Social Environment:** Addressing the social challenges faced by students is crucial for fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Initiatives that promote peer interaction, collaborative learning, and a sense of community can enhance students' social self-perception and overall educational experience.

4. **Curriculum and Assessment Adjustments:** A review of the curriculum and assessment methods in the OBME program may be needed to ensure that they align with students' capabilities and learning outcomes. Providing resources such as study guides, time management workshops, and self-directed learning strategies can help students better manage the demands of the program.

### 6.3 Contributions to the Literature

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on OBME and the educational environment in medical schools, particularly in the context of a military medical academy in Myanmar. It offers new insights into the specific challenges and expectations of internship students, which may differ from those in civilian institutions. The findings also emphasize the importance of considering students' perceptions and experiences when implementing educational reforms. By doing so, institutions can make more informed decisions that enhance the effectiveness of their programs and better meet the needs of their students.

### 6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

While this study offers valuable insights, it raises several questions for future research, including:

- Conducting longitudinal studies to track students over time and examine how their perceptions and experiences evolve throughout their training.
- Expanding the research to include other institutions, both within and outside Myanmar, to assess the generalizability of the findings.
- Investigating the impact of specific faculty development programs on student outcomes in an OBME context.
- Exploring the long-term effects of OBME on students' professional development and career success.

### 6.5 Final Thoughts

The successful implementation of an Outcome-Based Medical Education program requires careful consideration of students' perspectives and experiences. This study has shown that while the OBME program at DSMA is generally well-received, there are key areas that need attention to ensure that all students can thrive in this educational environment. By addressing the challenges identified in this study and building on its strengths, DSMA can continue to advance its educational mission and better prepare students for the demands of the medical profession. The journey towards continuous improvement in medical education is ongoing, and the insights gained from this research can serve as a foundation for future efforts to enhance the quality of training provided to future healthcare professionals.

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