Medical Students' Views on the Use of Multiple Mini-Interviews for Medical School Admissions [Letter]

This article was published in the following Dove Press journal:
Advances in Medical Education and Practice

Ali Al-Azzawi
Areeb Iqbal Rauf
Danial Ghafoor

The University of Manchester, Faculty of
Biology, Medicine and Health,
Manchester, UK

Dear editor

We appreciate the work accomplished by Haider et al¹ in analysing the role of Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs) and recognising the challenges in the search for an effective process in medical school admissions. In this letter, we present our comments on certain aspects of this study.

The article acknowledges the need for additional student follow-up by comparing MMI scores to academic performance. Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) are used throughout medical schools in the UK to test communication skills as well as clinical knowledge. The use of MMIs in medical school admissions was deemed vital in preparing students for OSCEs; previous research established a positive correlation between MMI scores and OSCE performance. However, in this article there is no mention of the use of OSCEs which could be key in comparing performance to the previous cohort. It will be interesting to see if the cohort that underwent MMIs would feel better prepared for tackling their OSCEs.²

In assembling the stations, the authors took into account the non-cognitive attributes assessed by MMIs and the importance of these skills. The extent to which these were assessed or how they were performed was not discussed. The authors also make it clear that timing proved to be a limiting factor when assessing certain key skills, such as problem solving and teamwork. Alternatively, stations that explore personal statements and extracurricular activities can be used to look for evidence of these skills. This can also highlight candidates with a greater drive to pursue a career in medicine.³ Furthermore, the authors propose that MMIs allow institutions to identify specific areas of improvement to target these skills in the student's curriculum. Banjeree et al proposed a simulation-based curriculum to tackle this. A similar targeted approach could be used for these students over the next six years, therefore utilising the ability of MMIs to identify specific weaknesses in the cohort.⁴

Additionally, the main appeal of using MMIs as opposed to traditional interviewing is the ability to standardise the admission process. Consequently, we feel this demonstrates a need for interviewer training to also be standardised, ensuring reliability in assessing students. Investigating the effectiveness of MMI training sessions proved to be helpful in preparing examiners and improving knowledge regarding the overall process. This was explored by comparing the interviewer's perceptions of MMIs post-training and after completion of the MMIs. These

Correspondence: Ali Al-Azzawi
Email ali.al-azzawi@student.manchester.ac.uk

findings could potentially be applied in the future through the use of mock interviews as part of the interviewer training.⁵

In summary, the article incisively highlights the use of MMIs as a reliable method of assessing prospective medical students. The points exemplified throughout this letter aim to further improve the implementation of MMIs. We also support the conclusions made about tailoring MMIs according to the values and ethos of the medical school. Further research on future cohorts can assess the reproducibility of the results obtained, potentially with a view to increase the weightage of MMIs in medical students' admissions.

Disclosure

The authors report no conflicts of interest in this communication.

References

1. Haider SI, Bari MF, Ijaz S. Using multiple mini-interviews for students' admissions in Pakistan: a pilot study. *Adv Med Educ Pract*. 2020;11:179–185. doi:10.2147/AMEP.S246285
2. Yusoff MSB. Multiple mini interview as an admission tool in higher education: insights from a systematic review. *J Taibah Univ Med Sci*. 2019;14(3):203–240. doi:10.1016/j.jtumed.2019.03.006
3. Kelly ME, Dowell J, Husbands A, et al. The fairness, predictive validity and acceptability of multiple mini interview in an internationally diverse student population—a mixed methods study. *BMC Med Educ*. 2014;14:267. doi:10.1186/s12909-014-0267-0
4. Banerjee A, Slagle JM, Mercaldo ND, et al. A simulation-based curriculum to introduce key teamwork principles to entering medical students. *BMC Med Educ*. 2016;16:295. doi:10.1186/s12909-016-0808-9
5. Ali S, Shoaib H, Rehman R. Exploring the usefulness of interviewers' training before and after Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI) for undergraduate medical students' selection: was it really helpful? *Pak J Med Sci*. 2016;32(6):1459–1463. doi:10.12669/pjms.326.11175

Dove Medical Press encourages responsible, free and frank academic debate. The content of the Advances in Medical Education and Practice 'letters to the editor' section does not necessarily represent the views of Dove Medical Press, its officers, agents, employees, related entities or the Advances in Medical Education and Practice editors. While all reasonable steps have been taken to confirm the content of each letter, Dove Medical Press accepts no liability in respect of the content of any letter, nor is it responsible for the content and accuracy of any letter to the editor.

Advances in Medical Education and Practice

Dovepress

Publish your work in this journal

Advances in Medical Education and Practice is an international, peer-reviewed, open access journal that aims to present and publish research on Medical Education covering medical, dental, nursing and allied health care professional education. The journal covers undergraduate education, postgraduate training and continuing medical education

including emerging trends and innovative models linking education, research, and health care services. The manuscript management system is completely online and includes a very quick and fair peer-review system. Visit <http://www.dovepress.com/testimonials.php> to read real quotes from published authors.

Submit your manuscript here: <http://www.dovepress.com/advances-in-medical-education-and-practice-journal>