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Evaluation of Scientific Rigor of Postgraduate Thesis at a tertiary care teaching hospital in Puducherry

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ABSTRACT

Background: Since 2011, postgraduate training on research methods has been organised every year at the study setting and recently it is updated periodically. The objectives were to find out the scientific rigor of MD/MS thesis, and to find out the effectiveness of postgraduate training program on scientific rigor of MD/MS theses. **Materials and Methods:** It was an education evaluation based on secondary data, where 78 MD/MS thesis records of postgraduates, submitted to the University during the academic year 2017 and 2018 were reviewed. The Kirkpatrick level III framework of the evaluation was used. Thesis records were reviewed by trained postgraduate under the supervision of faculty from the Department of Community Medicine. The Epicollect-5 mobile application was used to enter the data and analysis was done using SPSS software package (version 24). **Results:** Most (90%) of the reviewed studies were hospital-based cross-sectional. Over the period of one year, there was an improvement in practices such as mentioning of the objectives as per SMART criteria (90% to 97.4%), reporting the details of sample size calculation (67.5% to 76.3%), data entry (62.5% to 68.4%) and data analysis (80% to 82%), and citing the references without errors (22.6% to 47.4%). **Conclusions:** Most of the studies were hospital-based cross-sectional studies. Over the period of one year, there was an improvement in some aspects of scientific rigor of MD/MS thesis however; there is scope for further improvement in the postgraduate training program.

Key Words: Evaluation, Kirkpatrick, Postgraduate, Scientific rigor, Thesis.