

Evaluation of Epidemiological Research Training Course VI-1

1. Characteristics of participants

There were 121 registrants, and 104 completed the course successfully. Seventeen graduates were from outside Ho Chi Minh City; Dong Nai, Can Tho, Binh Dinh, Vinh Long, Tra Vinh, Dong Thap, Vung Tau, Khanh Hoa, and Ha Noi, covering the south region and the capital city in the north.

2. Course evaluation survey

Eighty-nine participants answered the end-course evaluation survey. Median duration of working in medicine was 5 years (ranged from 0 to 29). Eighty-nine percent of participants were first time attendants. Most agreed that the course was useful and at an adequate level, and were interested in attending a future course. As for the EBM Open Seminar, 77% answered that it was interesting.

| | | N (%) (Total N=89) | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Usefulness of the course | Poor | - | - | 5 (6) | 40 (45) | <u>44 (49)</u> | Superior |
| Overall level | Easy | - | 5 (6) | <u>42 (48)</u> | 35 (40) | 6 (7) | Difficult |
| Selection of topics | Poor | - | - | 18 (20) | <u>41 (47)</u> | 29 (33) | Superior |
| Useful of materials | Poor | - | 4 (5) | 11 (13) | <u>45 (52)</u> | 26 (30) | Superior |
| Course duration | Too short | 1 (1) | 8 (9) | <u>51 (59)</u> | 19 (22) | 8 (9) | Too long |
| Interest in future course | Not at all | - | 1 (1) | 4 (5) | 27 (31) | <u>55 (63)</u> | Very much |

Note: Most frequent answers are underlined.

| | | N (%) (Total N=89) | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------|--------------------|-------|---------|---------|----------------|----------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Interest in the EBM Open Seminar | Poor | - | 5 (6) | 14 (17) | 41 (50) | <u>22 (27)</u> | Superior |

Fifty-four participants answered what they learned most in a given free space. The most frequent answer was "Study designs and designing", followed by "Research aims and processes" and "Literature search and reference management". Under the "Research aims and processes" category, participants wrote; *"I really enjoyed ... especially the way the lecturers emphasized the ultimate aim of research is to bring benefits to community. ..."*, *"Research → improve clinical skills → improve patients' health"*.

| Categories* | N |
|---|----|
| Study designs and designing | 32 |
| Research aims and processes | 11 |
| Literature search, reference management | 10 |
| Confounders, bias | 9 |
| Epidemiology in general | 6 |
| Protocol development | 4 |
| Understanding scientific evidence | 2 |
| Communication | 2 |
| Qualitative research | 2 |
| Ethics | 2 |

*Categories with more than one answer were listed.

3. Self-evaluation of achievements

Eighty-one participants responded to the self-evaluation survey. Around 70% answered that their knowledge in epidemiology and confidence to design a study increased. As for knowledge in biostatistics and data analysis skills, which will be taught in the subsequent course, participants' self-evaluations were relatively lower as expected.

| | N (%) (Total N=81) | | | | |
|--|----------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | 1. Strongly disagree | 2. Disagree | 3. Neutral | 4. Agree | 5. Strongly agree |
| "My knowledge in Epidemiology increased" | - | 2 (2) | 9 (11) | <u>59 (73)</u> | 11 (14) |
| "My knowledge in Biostatistics increased" | 1 (1) | 4 (5) | 28 (35) | <u>41 (51)</u> | 7 (8) |
| "I gained confidence in understanding scientific evidence / articles." | 1 (1) | 3 (4) | 18 (22) | <u>49 (60)</u> | 10 (12) |
| "I gained confidence in my skills to design a study." | - | 3 (4) | 18 (22) | <u>55 (68)</u> | 5 (6) |
| "I gained confidence in analyzing data." | - | 14 (17) | <u>37 (46)</u> | 28 (35) | 2 (2) |
| "I gained confidence in conducting epidemiological research." | - | 7 (9) | 25 (31) | <u>48 (59)</u> | 1 (1) |

Note: Most frequent answers are underlined.

Thirty-five participants wrote their ideas for the next course. Frequent requests were more focus on biostatistics and data analysis and more practice sessions, followed by better printing quality and clearer oral presentation.

| Categories* | N |
|---|---|
| More on biostatistics and data analysis | 9 |
| More practice sessions | 6 |
| Better printing of course materials | 5 |
| Clearer speaking and translation | 4 |
| More advanced content | 3 |
| More basics | 2 |
| Match teaching and review test | 2 |

*Categories with more than one answer were listed.

4. Summary

A team of Japanese and Vietnamese lecturers succeeded in training over 100 participants. On the management side, significant achievements were recruitment of participants from a wide southern region and having supports from guest lecturers from Hanoi and the United States. Most participants thought the course was useful, and around 70% answered that their knowledge in epidemiology, as well as their confidence in designing a study, increased. It was noteworthy that some commented that they learned about a contribution of evidence to community health, indicating positive influences of the EBM Open Seminar. The next course will focus on biostatistics and data analysis, with more hands-on exercises. We will keep our emphasis on teaching how to utilize data in order to improve health care services and people's health as our ultimate goal.