



Background:



The University of The Gambia constitutes of one of two medical schools in the country. Due to lack of specialists and scarcity of resources, ENT is not readily taught within the curriculum.

In September 2017, Mr Simon Browning, an ENT consultant & Dr Chris Summers, an ENT educational registrar, travelled to The Gambia as part of the Swansea Gambia link. There they designed and delivered a Gambian specific ENT curriculum over an intense 8 day course. The period of instruction took many forms including traditional lecture based sessions, group work, interactive quiz sessions and examination practice. Reading materials were sent out prior to the visit and students had access to electronic learning throughout the course.

The visit culminated in a summative assessment consisting of a 2 hour written paper and an OSCE style clinical examination. All students passed the final assessment, demonstrating great enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment throughout.

There are currently no Gambian ENT surgeons practicing in the country, the course hoped to inspire the students to embark on the speciality as a career.

Objectives:

The purpose of this study was to identify the difficulties encountered in delivering such a course in West Africa, whilst also aiming to analyse student perceptions of the teaching to guide future courses.

Methods:

Both tutors were interviewed at the end of the course regarding their experiences in teaching ENT in The Gambia.

Student feedback was sought both during and at the end of the course in the form of a written questionnaire and a group interview.

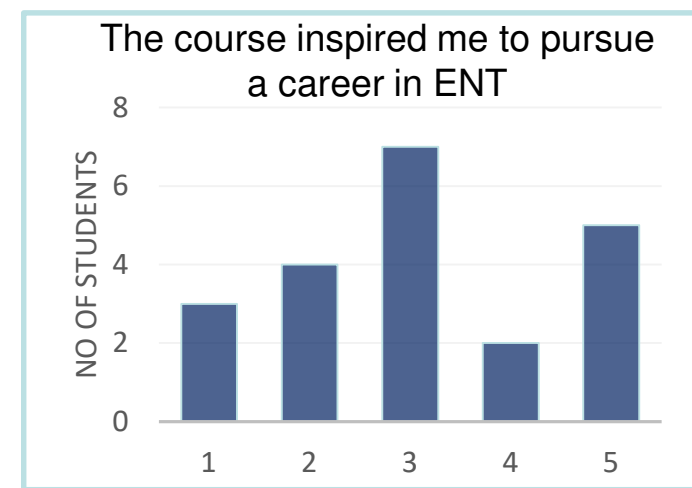
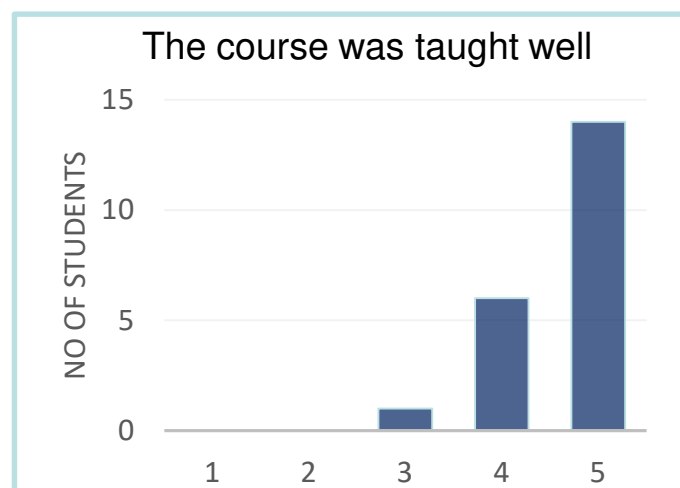
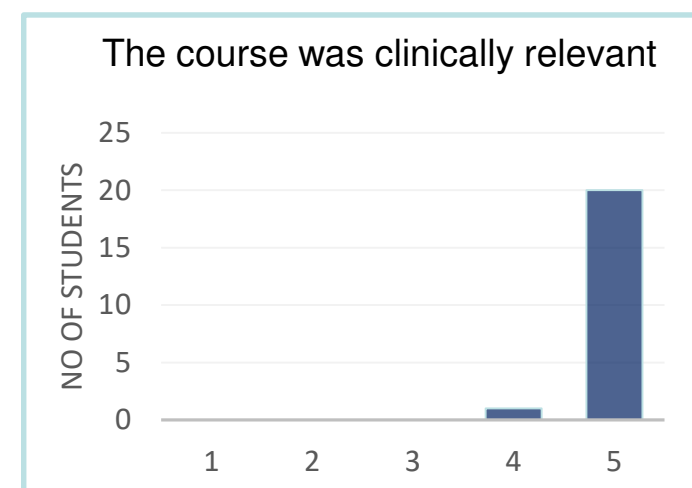
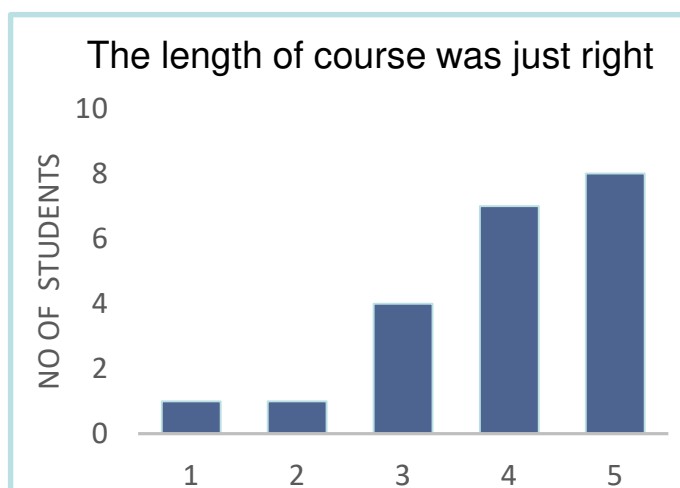


The questionnaire consisted of multiple statements on the teaching. Students were asked to rank each 1 – 5 (Strongly disagree - Strongly agree). The group interview expanded on the questionnaire to ask specific student opinions on areas that the course could be improved in the future.

Results:

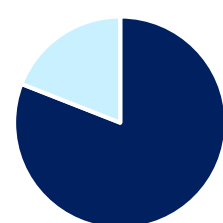
Both tutors thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of teaching in The Gambia finding the students to be enthusiastic and engaging. Despite this, there were significant hurdles to overcome. Difficulties include; significant time constraint, lack of available teaching resources, poor internet accessibility and almost hourly power cuts. These were overcome by a large amount of pre-course preparation of teaching materials and required the tutors to be very flexible and adapt their methods as the course progressed.

Student responses were largely positive. Teaching was deemed clinically relevant and thought to be presented well, however the course length and pace was found very challenging by some.



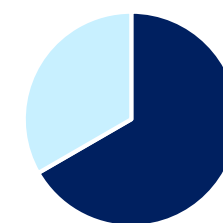
Potential areas for improvement:

The three most popular student suggestions to improve future courses were;



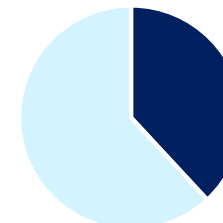
81%

More videos/diagrams



67%

Increase duration of course



38%

Slow down pace

Conclusions:

The 2 week ENT course was a great success enjoyed by both tutors and students equally. This study highlights the challenges in offering medical education in The Gambia and the need to be fully prepared where power and connectivity are unreliable. Future courses must aim to further utilise multimedia and ideally be spaced over a greater time period.

The results of the study highlight that the course has inspired some students to consider a career in ENT. The tutors hope this will translate into further similar courses and help further establish ENT as a discipline in The Gambia.

