migration while higher earning capacity (118, 83.7%) and more career development opportunities (103, 73%) were also agreed by the majority. A minority, yet a significant proportion agreed better healthcare (65, 46.1%) and better education (66, 46.8%) as important promoters. Family bond (125, 88.7%) was the strongest factor discouraging migration. Only a minority considered cultural issues (35, 24.9%), moral and ethical reasons (55, 39%), job security (63, 44.6%), strict regulations in developed countries (55, 39%) and unwillingness to become a "second class citizen" (33, 23.4%) as discouraging factors. Only 16(11.3%) agreed it is unacceptable to migrate for personal gains while 47(33%) supported the freedom of migration. Majority (78, 55.6%) agreed that, it should be decided by circumstances. Among participants 52(38.4%) had active plans to migrate and Australia (22, 44.2%) was the most preferred destination.

Conclusions: Significant proportion of young medical graduates has already considered migration as an option even before starting the career. Policy makers should take prompt actions to counter this brain drain.

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Learning Styles ~~Approaches~~ among Medical Undergraduates and Pre-Intern Doctors of University of Sri Jayewardenepura

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Introduction: Medical education is an ever-evolving process. Gaining required knowledge, attitudes and skills within a stipulated period of time to become a competent doctor is a challenge. The shift from teacher-centered and subject-based teaching to the interactive, problem-based, student-centered learning is an important concept in the medical education. This study evaluates the learning styles (visual, auditory, read/write and kinesthetic) among medical undergraduates and pre-intern doctors.

Methods: A validated self-administered VARK questionnaire was used to assess the learning styles among 238 Medical Undergraduates and Pre-intern doctors of University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Data was analyzed using SPSS v-16 and Brown-Forsythe t test.

Results: The study sample consisted of 67% (160/238) pre-clinical undergraduates and 33% (78/238) pre-interns. The total male (72/238) to female (166/238) ratio was 1: 2.3.Among participants, the majority 81 %(192/238) had unimodal learning styles. Majority of the pre-clinical undergraduates [78 %(125/160)] and pre-interns [86 %(67/78)] were unimodal learners. Similarly, majority of males 82 %(59/72) and females 80% (133/166) were unimodal learners. Among unimodal learners, majority had verbal [30% (58/192)] and auditory [29% (55/192)] learning styles. Multimodal learners had a combination of auditory-kinesthetic 28% (13/46) and verbal-kinesthetic 26% (12/46) learning styles. A statistically significant difference (p=0.02) was observed in reading/writing style among pre- clinical and pre-intern groups whereas other learning styles did not.

Conclusions: Learning styles were similar among medical undergraduates and pre-intern doctors although reading/writing styles were significantly different. Besides, comparable results were observed in local and international studies. Encouraging multimodal learning styles would help to develop a better undergraduate medical curriculum.

PP-25

Establishing a pool of simulated patients for teaching and assessment of communication skills:perceptions, challenges and progress

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Introduction: Teaching and assessing communication skills have become important aspects of medical training. Simulated patients (SPs) have been recognized as one of the most effective means of teaching communication skills as it allows repeated practice, reflection and feedback.

Objectives: To evaluate the processes and the challenges experienced during setting up and