

Reutilization of multiple-choice questions

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Multiple-choice questions (MCQs) (one-best-answer type, with five alternatives) used for assessment of fifth-year medical students in the Pediatrics course are thoroughly discussed and analysed with the students after each test. This study was undertaken with the aim of establishing whether this kind of exposure precludes the reutilization of questions in future years. In all, 197 questions were used more than once from 1994 to 1998. Considering the first and last time they were included in a test, 50 (25%) increased their difficulty, 39 (20%) diminished it, and 108 (55%) remained unchanged. The correlation coefficient between the percentage of students that answered correctly each question the first and last time they were used was 0.51 ($p < 0.001$). It is concluded that the kind of exposure students are given by our course to MCQs, seems not to preclude their future reutilization.