Abstract

Results of a test given to participants in a symposium on alcoholism and drug abuse are presented. The symposium was broadcasted via satellite simultaneously to five cities in Mexico, and included 8 pretaped panels covering topics on alcoholism and drug abuse. The methodology used for broadcasting the symposium allowed the interactive exchange of information between expert lecturers and participants. The quantitative and qualitative evaluation used the pretest-posttest design. Most of the participants were physicians (28.9%) followed by psychologists (25.7%) and social workers (18.1%). The global cognitive change among participants was 6 per cent. Almost 77 per cent of participants had scores between 51 and 70 points (over a possible maximum score of 100) in the preevaluation test, and 76.4 per cent had scores between 61 and 80 points in the postevaluation test. Health professionals with 1-3 years of experience had the largest change in scores (9%), followed by those with 3 to 5 years experience (8%). Professionals with 5 to 10 years of experience had a change of 5 per cent. Physicians showed the greatest cognitive change (7%) followed by psychologists and social workers with 5 per cent change. In the qualitative evaluation, 87.6 per cent of participants thought that the educational method used was "Excellent" of "Good". With respect to the satellite transmission, 79.4 per cent of participants thought it was "Excellent" or "Good". It is concluded that this type of educational events are useful in reaching health professionals who otherwise would not have access to specialized and updated information. Participants suggested to integrate this type of events in formal continuing education programs in order to refresh and update their knowledge in these areas.

Keywords

education, evaluation communication, via satellite, alcoholism, drug abuse, Mexico