

ABSTRACT

Two parallel tests in physiology, one in multiple choice answer form and one in short answer form, were administered consecutively to a group of 104 students. The construction of the questions in the two papers and marking schedules were such that if the form of examination did not influence the students' performance, the scores obtained in the two papers could be expected to be closely similar. The results indicate that the form of the question influences the students' performance significantly. The short answer format offers certain advantages over the multiple choice format and it would appear that greater use should be made of this type of question in testing at medical schools.