PROFESSORS’ ASSESSMENT OF THE OBJECTIVE STRUCTURED CLINICAL EXAMINATION AS A TOOL OF THE TEACHING AND APPRENTICESHIP IN NURSING

AVALIAÇÃO DOS PROFESSORES SOBRE O EXAME CLÍNICO OBJETIVAMENTE ESTRUTURADO COMO FERRAMENTA DO ENSINO-APRENDIZAGEM EM ENFERMAGEM

LA EVALUACIÓN DE PROFESORES DE LA EVALUACIÓN CLÍNICA OBJETIVA ESTRUCTURADA COMO UNA HERRAMIENTA DE ENSEÑANZA Y APRENDIZAJE EN ENFERMERÍA

Raianny Alves Costa, Jéssica Naiara de Medeiros Araújo, Ana Paula Nunes de Lima Fernandes, Diana Paula de Souza Rego Pinto Carvalho, Marcos Antonio Ferreira Júnior, Allyne Fortes Vitor

ABSTRACT
Objective: to describe the professors’ assessment of the using of the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) as a tool for the promotion of the teaching and apprenticeship during the clinical nursing education. Method: descriptive study, with qualitative approach, conducted at a public university from the Brazilian Northeast. The sample consisted of six professors that answered a semi-structured interview, in August 2014. A posteriori, the content analysis technique was used. Results: the professors see the OSCE as an instrument that facilitates the teaching and apprenticeship. Conclusion: the OSCE allows the clinical judgement and the opportunity to improve the skills and attitudes.

RESUMO
Objetivo: descrever a avaliação dos professores sobre a utilização do Exame Clínico Objetivamente Estruturado (ECOE) como ferramenta para a promoção do ensino-aprendizagem na formação superior em enfermagem clínica. Método: estudo descritivo, com abordagem qualitativa realizada em uma universidade pública do Nordeste brasileiro. A amostra foi constituída por seis professores que responderam uma entrevista semiestruturada, no mês de agosto de 2014. A posteriori foi realizada para a análise a técnica de análise de conteúdo. Resultados: os professores perceberam o ECOE como uma avaliação que facilita o ensino-aprendizagem. Conclusão: o ECOE possibilita o raciocínio clínico e a oportunidade de melhorar as atitudes e habilidades.

Nurse, MSc Student, Post-Graduate Program in Nursing, Federal University of Rio Grande Norte/PPGENF/UFRN. Natal (RN), Brazil. E-mail: raiannya@hotmail.com; Nurse, MSc Student, Post-Graduate Program in Nursing, Federal University of Rio Grande Norte/PPGENF/UFRN. Natal (RN), Brazil. E-mail: jasminealara.mel@hotmail.com; Nurse, PhD Student, Post-Graduate Program in Nursing, Federal University of Rio Grande Norte/PPGENF/UFRN. Natal (RN), Brazil. E-mail: anapaulamf@yahoo.com.br; Nurse, PhD Student, Post-Graduate Program in Nursing, Federal University of Rio Grande Norte/PPGENF/UFRN. Natal (RN), Brazil. E-mail: diana-rego@hotmail.com; Nurse, PhD Professor in Health and Development, Graduate/Post-Graduate Program in Nursing, Federal University of Rio Grande Norte/PPGENF/UFRN. Natal (RN), Brazil. E-mail: Allynefortes@yahoo.com.br
INTRODUCTION

Innovative approaches are necessary in nursing education in order to enable the training of qualified professionals, so that they can act critically in everyday situations, without putting the patients at risk. The selected topics for teaching and apprenticeship can be simulated at environments that allow students to practice the skills and with an available space for questioning and doubts.¹

The simulation humanizes the education, contributes for overcoming the difficulties, the emotional control, and strengthens the interactions between professors and students.² It is a reproduction of situations of real life, from a theoretical reference, and based on assistance guidelines for nurses; it makes the students put their knowledge into practice when facing clinical daily situations and make them learn from the mistakes to the right attitudes, without putting the patients and themselves at risk.³

The skills, attitudes and knowledge shall be evaluated before the students get to the practice field; that is why it is important to have a more reliable evaluation, such as the in loco ones at the clinic.⁴

The Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) is one of the most reliable methods for evaluating the students' clinical skills, and it shall be performed in nursing laboratories with the composition of certain number of stations, where professors can elaborate fictitious problems based on real situations and assess the attitudes of the students facing these situations. For the assessment, the professors produce a previously structured checklist, with information about the procedures, and through it, they punctuate the tasks developed by the student during the practical test.⁵

The professor also formulates a protocol containing the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), which describes in detail what each student must follow to ensure a successful result in OSCE.⁶ Thus, the checklist is used by the professor for assessment, while SOP prepares the student for the evaluation.

In a public university of the Brazilian Northeast, professors of the graduate course in clinical nursing complement the education by using the OSCE, in order to improve the process of teaching and apprenticeship of the students in healthcare practice and clinical judgement. Therefore, the following question arises: What is the professors’ perception of using the OSCE as an improvement tool for teaching-learning process? Professors shall develop strategies to improve the teaching-learning process, besides thinking over their own performance, required techniques and assessments. Thus, this study is justified by the need to know the professors’ understandings about the implementation of the OSCE and how this methodology influences the attitudes and skills in hospital practices.

OBJECTIVE

- To describe the professors’ assessment of the use of Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) as a tool for promoting the teaching and apprenticeship at the graduate course in clinical nursing.

METHOD

Descriptive study, with a qualitative approach, about the professors’ evaluation of the Objective Structured Clinical Examination in the teaching-learning process in nursing, in a discipline of the graduate course, which broaches the contents of Clinical Nursing in the attention of adult health, in a public university in Brazilian Northeast.

In order to reach the established objective, the professors’ perception of using the OSCE as a tool for the promotion of the teaching and apprenticeship in Clinical Nursing was analyzed. This study was conducted in the Nursing Department at a public university in northeastern Brazil during August 2014.

The following inclusion criteria were considered: being an active professor of the discipline in the second semester of 2013 and having participated in the implementation of OSCE. The sample consisted of all professors/researchers of the respective discipline that agreed to join the study and signed the Term of Free Consent and Informed, and the term to authorize the voice recording, with a total of six participants.

The data was collected through a semi-structured interview, which consists of open questions with flexible structure and explored issue defined, when the interviewer or the interviewee may differ, in order to keep the idea or answer in major details.⁷

The interview was recorded and, later, analyzed. The interview was prepared according to the theme and the study’s objectives had the following questions: What is your opinion on using the OSCE as a teaching-learning tool? Have you ever used this tool? If so, how was your experience? Using OSCE in clinical nursing facilitates the
practices in hospitals? If so, why? Does the OSCE assist the students in developing the clinical judgement? If so, why?

The data were analyzed using the content analysis technique, divided into the following stages: pre-analysis, inference and interpretation, with categorization a posteriori.9 The data were organized into frames (figures) for better visualizing the results.

This research’s project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee under opinion 617.576 and CAAE number 2866714.3.0000.5537, and followed the provisions of Resolution number 466/2012 of the National Health Council.9 Participants were assured that the data collecting would not cause any damages and that the benefits would be maximized and the harm, minimized. Bioethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, justice and autonomy were mandatorily fulfilled.

RESULTS

All the six professors of the respective discipline joined the study, conducted at the Nursing course of a public university in Northeastern Brazil. Firstly, a request was sent via email to each professor to him/her to join the interview and to schedule the time. The interviews were individually conducted in August 2014 in the rooms of the professors themselves. At the beginning of the interview, the study was explained and they signed the TFCI and the term to authorize the voice recording, in order to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the participant.

The first question inquired about the professor’s opinion regarding the use of the OSCE as the teaching and apprenticeship process tool. At the time of the responses, it was observed that professors knew that the OSCE is an assessment, which helps the teaching-learning. This question originated two categories of responses, as shown in Figure 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OSCE as an assessment</td>
<td>“It is an excellent evaluation and competences tool, mainly, beyond abilities. A clinical situation simulated without putting the patient’s life at risk” (Professor 1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I think it is a very interesting tool, very important, for it can evaluate not only the student’s cognitive, but also the competences and abilities” (Professor 3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE as an assessment and a tool of teaching and apprenticeship</td>
<td>“A priori, OSCE is a form of evaluation; however, it tends to influence the teaching and apprenticeship. All of this doesn’t begin during the process of evaluation, it’s the previous one, which begins in the simulations, in the students’ trainings, in the monitors’ participation, I mean, there is a whole process previous to the evaluation day” (Professor 2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“What we saw in the group and studied between the professor, that is an evaluation method, which doesn’t cease to be also a learning method. Then, I consider as the two processes, the evaluation and the apprenticeship” (Professor 3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“So, by the apprenticeship point of view, it adds a value that the methods used until now can’t, so, in my opinion, it is fantastic” (Professor 4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The use of this tool in the teaching-learning enhances student’s learning, even the cognitive issue, facilitating the memorization and approaches the student to the reality” (Professor 6).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Categories of the professors’ responses regarding the question: What is your opinion on using OSCE as a tool in the process of teaching and apprenticeship? Natal/RN, 2014. N = 6

The second question was about the experience of the professors in using the tool. It was noticed that the participants had no previous experience and that the first contact with OSCE happened in the discipline of Complete Attention to Health I. This question created two categories, as exposed in Figure 2.
The third question was about using OSCE as a tool to make hospital practicing easier, and all participants stated positively, as it allows the student to previously experience some situations, besides connecting theory to practice, making the students more prepared to the hospital practicing. This question originated two categories as seen in Figure 3.

The fourth question of the interview regarded using OSCE as a help in developing the clinical judgement. Professors responded yes, because this method uses clinical cases, scenarios with situations similar to the real ones and exercises the mental functions, so that the clinical judgement is stimulated. This question generated three categories, according to Figure 4.
According to Figure 1 and the listed categories, OSCE is an evaluating tool based on real situations that require a previous training from the student, through theoretical knowledge and simulations in laboratories, in order to obtain a good result, complementing the teaching and apprenticeship process. Confirming these thoughts, some studies state that the high fidelity simulation strengthens the teaching and apprenticeship process, and may be introduced in the curriculum of the Nursing course, for it enlarges the students’ competences and skills. In addition, other studies report that this tool enhances the problematization, which helps increase the knowledge. 3,4

In Figure 2, it was observed that the professors had never used this tool before the idea of including it in the respective discipline, although some of them had already joined other experiences as classes and simulations in laboratories.

These experiences favor the performance of this tool in the discipline, despite the difficulties when preparing the OSCE, for the lack of material and human resources, and the lack of time. There is a study about the OSCE evaluation that mentions the waiting time and the established time for each station as disadvantages, due to the high number of students, low number of professors and available space. 10-11

Other studies enhanced the professor’s training and qualification as an important factor to improve the teaching. Using OSCE as a tool requires this qualification, in order to make the professor prepared for a high fidelity evaluation, and to clarify the student about the situation. Therefore, the systematization of the performed actions is necessary, with thorough scenarios and a checklist, enabling the responsible for the evaluation to observe the performance of all students based on the pre-established activities. 2,3

It is important to mention that, according to Sanino, when the professor joins the classes in laboratories, it enlarges the capacity of interacting with the other and the flexibility in teaching, and enables the professor to a self-evaluation as educator. 1

Facing the statements in Figure 3, it is possible to see that the professors believe that the students' participation in this type of assessment, despite being nervous, become more prepared to work in the hospital as they will have experienced situations before practicing and also handled the insecurity of performing the procedure for the first time. An activity prior to OSCE helps to reduce the anxiety of academics and is still considered as essential by students for the clinical practice. This confirms the importance of the classes, the continuous pursuit of theoretical knowledge and the training in laboratories with real cases simulations before evaluation. 4

---

**DISCUSSION**

**Table 1: Categories and Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, because it associates the theoretical knowledge to the practice with clinical case</td>
<td>“Of course, because the student will link the theoretical knowledge to the practice, and use the critical reasoning required by the clinical case, making the student develop both of them” (Professor 1). “Yes, of course it helps, since the stations don’t intend only to perform the procedure; there’s a whole clinical case, a previous fundament on which they’re based, where the student has to use the nursing process, where…let’s say, he’s urged to reason within this process, to think of the best priority nursing diagnosis, the best attitude, not only the procedure itself” (Professor 2). “In the way it’s done in the discipline, I believe so. Every time the student faces real situations of clinical cases, he won’t just put the practical knowledge into practice, not only the technical one, he’ll need to put the clinical judgement into practice, he’ll have to think of why and why he’s doing that, analyze the exams’ results.” (Professor 5).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, because a scenario is prepared in laboratories</td>
<td>“Well, it should, right? The mainly objective of OSCE is to favor the clinical judgement, that’s why the professors involved are so important. We have to worry not only about the technical skills, but also about the scenarios that facilitate the clinical judgement” (Professor 3). “Yes, it certainly helps, because a whole environment is prepared in the laboratory, where there’s a mannequin, the simulation of the used drugs, the blood components, drains, and, at this laboratory, there’s also a clinical case handed on to the student, and this case is developed precisely for the student to develop this judgement” (Professor 6).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, because it exercises the metal functions</td>
<td>“OSCE certainly favors because it exercises, not only the mental functions, but also the apprenticeship” (Professor 4).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Categories of the professors’ responses regarding the question: Does the OSCE assist the students in developing the clinical judgement? If so, why? Natal/RN, 2014. N= 6
The laboratory is a strategic and valuable scenario, and the simulation avoids the patient to be unnecessarily exposed to iatrogenic errors. However, not all skills can be put into practice in the laboratory; therefore, only the least possible activities to execute in the laboratory may be left to happen in the hospital practicing, such as complex physiological reactions, the communication and the humanized treatment. On the other hand, despite OSCE being performed in the laboratory, it makes these skills possible, once it is compound by stations with clinical cases and actors representing situations similar to the real ones; thereby, the communication and humanized treatment become possible to be evaluated.14

Furthermore, other study reports that the problems simulated during OSCE are the most common to happen at health institutions.9

According to Figure 4, when the simulation is correctly integrated, it may be used as an intensifier tool of apprenticeship, developing, in addition to security and agility, clinical judgement. The stations established in OSCE bring clinical cases that can only be solved with a clinical judgement. The case is exposed, and mental functions are exercised in order to solve it and make the apprenticeship easier.3 Still, other authors argued, in their studies, that the use of the OSCE allows the improvement of a large area of knowledge and skills, and helps identifying the gaps that need improvement in the apprenticeship.15-6

According to some studies, investing in active and problematizing tools is important in Graduate Courses in Nursing, so that the students are able to experience reality.7-9 Hence the importance of using OSCE in clinical nursing, because this evaluation enables the student to understand the reality and prepare him/her for the clinical practice. Other study10 states that, nowadays, the knowledge must be formed through an interactive way, and in the various professional scenarios, in order to train the reflexive and problematizing capacity.

CONCLUSION

There is a need for other approaches for the innovation of nursing education in order to facilitate the apprenticeship and to graduate qualified professionals. The OSCE is an assessment that makes the student more confident and secure to work in clinical practice, because the student gets closer to the reality and it offers opportunities to answer the questions and correct mistakes, without putting the patient at risk.

The professors, in order to prepare the assessment, assemble the theoretical issues with the clinical practice, and allocate them in stations with actors simulating actual cases. Therefore, these professionals need to be prepared to act in the assessment in a standardized way and not to confuse the student during the examination.

One highlights as difficulties to conduct this method, the spent time, the number of available professors and the high number of students. Once these problems are solved, it becomes a fantastic tool for teaching and learning. The OSCE can be easily used in other educational institutions, although complementary studies are necessary for its development and implementation.

The professors see the OSCE as an evaluation method that influences the teaching-learning process, which must be used during the nursing graduation to contribute to the training, since it allows the students to look for theoretical knowledge, clinical judgement and the opportunity to improve the skills and attitudes.

REFERENCES


5. Sandoval GE, Valenzuela PM, Monge MM, Toso PA, Triviño XC, WrightAC et al. Análise de um sistema de avaliação de aprendizagem...


Professors' assessment of the objective...