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Do traditional practical examination needs to be replaced by objective structured practical examination: A study

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We all have been assessing students through various kinds of exams. A single method of evaluation does not fulfill all the purpose of exams. Objective structured practical examination (OSPE) is gradually replacing traditional methods of practical examination. Present study was done to evaluate how reliable these OSPE are in assessing various practical skills. This study was conducted at Department of Physiology, AIIMS Patna. Sixty eight students participated in the study. During the second terminal Physiology practical examination all students were made to rotate through four OSPE stations. Two were skill stations where students performed the experiment in front of an observer, who used a checklist to give scores. Immediately following the skill station next was knowledge station where students have to answer questions related to skill performed at previous station. Uniform time of five minutes was allotted to each station. At the end of the objective structured practical examination, the students filled a feedback-form having ten questions. Performance of students in OSPE was compared with traditional practical examination (TPE) scores by using "Bland- Altman technique". Performance of seventy two percent student's scores obtained in OSPE and TPE were within range of acceptable anticipated difference in scores of 8. Twenty one percent scored much below that while 7% got marks much above the anticipated difference in scores. Feedback obtained from students indicated that students like OSPE over TPE and found it to be reliable, effective, useful and challenging. If properly planned OSPE gives equal opportunity to all students and results in better skill development in students.

Biography

Yogesh Kumar has completed his MBBS in 2003 and MD in 2007 from LLRM Medical College, India. He is currently working as Assistant Professor at Department of Physiology, AIIMS Patna. His area of interest is Neurophysiology and is currently working on projects involving recognition of emotions through EEG and to develop non-pharmacological interventions to treat various epileptic disorders. He is actively involved in teaching medical graduates and has published many papers in various reputed journals.

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