Author's response to reviews

Title: Student evaluation of an OSCE in Paediatrics at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica

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PDF covering letter
Dear Editor:

RE: MS 1106980238338773 – Student evaluation of an OSCE in Paediatrics at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica

Please note the attached file of the revised manuscript entitled “Student evaluation of an OSCE in Paediatrics at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica”, by RB Pierre, AWierenga, MBarton, JMBranday and CDCChristie.

The authors have carefully considered the reviewers’ comments and point-by-point responses of changes to the original document are now presented.

Revisions

Abstract: No revisions

Background:

The following two paragraphs are added to the original document, and indicate the rationale for the study (inadvertently omitted from the first submission):

The Section of Child Health, Mona, Jamaica, implemented the OSCE examination as an end-of-clerkship assessment for students in their 5th year, during the 1999-2000 academic year. It was felt timely in order to (a) direct and motivate student learning in areas not previously assessed in the ‘traditional’ curriculum, (b) verify students’ competence in fundamental paediatric clinical skills, and (c) provide a forum for feedback to students on their strengths and weaknesses in clinical skills. It was thought that it would enhance faculty and student acceptance of this new
assessment tool and promote faculty training for the newly introduced final OSCE examination.

In the absence of any previous information from this institution, the study was designed to evaluate student overall perception of the end-of-clerkship OSCE, determine student acceptability of the process and provide feedback to enhance further development of the assessment.

Methods:

Paragraph 3 – the following was added to clarify how face and content validity of checklists were obtained:

Stations were first selected to represent the curricular goals and objectives and to reflect authentic clinical situations. Checklists were designed to include the features thought to be most important by the development committee. Through discussions, consensus was achieved on the checklist items and structure.

Paragraph 4 – the statement ‘sensitisation about the Departmental……of the exam’ was deleted and the paragraphs 4 & 5 were restructured into 1 paragraph and include clarification of statement as follows:

Student groups had at least two briefing sessions before the OSCE, and included an orientation about the examination process (both end-of-clerkship and final MB) and a review of commonly assessed competences. They were also apprised of the valuable contribution they could make towards improving the assessment and encouraged to participate in the evaluation.

Paragraph 5 – this is was para. 6 in original document, and ‘determine’ has been changed to: ‘give their opinion about’

Paragraph 6 – this was para. 7 in original document, and ‘non-responders’ has been changed to ‘those who declined involvement in the survey’

Paragraph 7 – this was para. 8 in original document, and the statement ‘Following completion of the questionnaire, an’ was added to the beginning

Paragraph 8 – the following was added to the last paragraph to clarify content analysis:

Two of the authors individually conducted this content analysis and identified themes and final grouping of responses were developed by consensus.
Results

Validity and Reliability changed to Perception of Validity and Reliability

Discussion

Paragraph 3

– the sentence ‘By reviewing the profile…..weakness and strength in their clinical competence’ has been deleted

– the following has been added:

In addition, as many medical schools have adopted a student-centred approach to medical education, greater student participation in quality assurance exercises must be encouraged. Students perceived the OSCE to be fairer than any other assessment format to which they were exposed. The findings were somewhat similar to the views of students at Newcastle medical school.\textsuperscript{16} Although student views on fairness may not be consistent with published literature, the impact and influence on acceptability of the instrument should be noted.

Paragraph 5 – the following has been included to the end of the original paragraph:

The responses may also have been affected by the timing of the inquiry (immediately after the examination); hence student stress and fatigue should be taken into consideration. Whereas the high response rate ensured that the views were reasonable representative of the students, differences in assessors could have influenced the interpretation of the results of open-ended responses.

Paragraph 6

– the statement ‘motivated changes in student learning, faculty teaching and curriculum focus’ has been deleted and changed to:

been challenging, however student participation in the evaluation and their overall acceptance of the instrument have been encouraging.

– The next two sentences are merged as follows ‘Feedback from students and faculty has been useful in effecting improvements to the process and greater emphasis has been….’ with deletion of ‘these changes’ and ‘curricular’

– Reference\textsuperscript{16} changed to \textsuperscript{17}

Authors’ contributions

The statement and analysis, was added to the second line as follows: ….completed initial data entry and analysis,…….
References

Additional reference included as follows:


Reference 16 in the original document now becomes reference 17

Tables

Table 1

- ‘by attribute’ deleted from title
- Attribute column deleted
- ‘No response’ changed to **No comment %**

Table 2

- ‘based on attribute’ deleted from title
- Attribute column deleted

Table 3

- ‘issues by attribute’ deleted from title and replaced by **Student perception of validity and reliability**
- Attribute column deleted

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