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Measuring Unprofessional Behavior During An 8-Station OSCE

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Purpose:

Standardized patients (SPs) are widely used in medical education but their use to assess professionalism is limited. This study investigated the utility of SPs assessing unprofessional behavior during an annual end of third year Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).

Method:

- 99 third year medical students completed an 8-station OSCE in 2005
- Professionalism form completed by SP after each student encounter (99 x 8 stations=792)
- SPs were trained to rate and record objective behaviors in 7 different categories
- Quantitative and qualitative analyses
 - Descriptive statistics
 - Content analysis used to develop themes within each category

OSCE Content Area

Family Medicine

Geriatrics

Internal Medicine

Psychiatry

Surgery

Ob-Gyn

Pediatrics

Physical Exam Station

{4 of 8 stations had physical exam}

Method:

- 3-point Likert scale used
{1=no concern, 2=concern, 3=significant concern}
- Concern - describe objective behavior
- Significant concern – specified objective behavior significantly detracted from that aspect of encounter

Categories:

1. Introduction
2. Respect for Patient
3. Verbal Behavior
4. Non-Verbal Behavior
5. Physical Exam
6. Overall Conduct
7. Post-OSCE SP/Student Debriefing

Quantitative Results:

Category	Number of Unprofessional Ratings	Percent
Introduction	25	10
Respect for Patient	28	11
Verbal Behavior	71	28
Non-Verbal Behavior	40	16
Physical Exam	50	20
Overall Conduct	26	10
Post-OSCE SP/Student Debriefing	17	7
Total	257	100

Qualitative Results from Content Analysis:

Category*	Major Theme	Percent
Verbal Behavior	Use of medical jargon	39 (28/71)
Non-Verbal Behavior	Awkward Body Movement	45 (18/40)
Physical Exam	Inappropriate PE	50 (25/50)

*categories with highest percentages

Qualitative Results from Content Analysis:

Category	Major Theme	Percent
Introduction	Did not give full name	48 (12/25)
Respect for Patient	Not empathetic	54 (15/28)
Overall Conduct	Not empathetic	46 (12/26)
Post-OSCE SP/Student Debriefing	Defensive	65 (11/17)

Quantitative Results:

# of Students	# of Unprofessional Ratings
62	3 or fewer
18	4-6
5	7-9
1	11

Quantitative Results:

# of SPs	# of Students
1	31
2	33
3	12
4	6
5	3
6	1

Discussion

- Many unprofessional concerns were related to interpersonal communication skills
- SP had very individualized concerns
- Informal faculty feedback differed from SPs
- Similar concern (such as: not empathetic) placed in different categories

Conclusion

The study's outcomes advanced our understanding of how professional behavior is perceived and assessed by SPs. Further research is in process.

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