Assessment of Under-Graduate Dental Students by Structured Oral Examination in Department of Prosthodontics

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Introduction: Assessment of learning has always been a difficult, yet an essential component of an educational program. Oral Examination takes the form of series of interrelated questions and helps to assess other competencies such as communication skills and professional attitudes. Traditional Oral Examination (TOE) is usually a subjective test; at times, it can be intimidating to the students. Often fails to assess properly the cognitive and problem solving skills which is mainly aimed at in oral exam. In TOE, the atmosphere of the exam is often threatening & at times, the dialogue takes the shape more of confrontation than cooperation. This innovative study was carried out to make students aware about structured oral examination, to increase their understanding, to improve their performance in the subject, to make the teaching staff aware of these type of examination.

Aim: Assessment of Under-Graduate Dental Students by Structured Oral Examination In Department of Prosthodontics

Materials & Method: Total 45 Final BDS undergraduates dental students learning the subject of Prosthodontics were evaluated after giving instructions. Evaluation was carried on the previously taught topic of Prosthodontics from syllabus. Initially oral examination was carried out by conventional method & same group was evaluated by SOE. Score list was evaluated by paired t-test to analyze two groups. For students & teacher’s Feedback Forms also paired t-test was applied. Before starting the SOE, Pre-prepared standardized question sets and answer keys were prepared. The criteria for questions setting was according to the “must know”, “Nice to know” and “Desirable to know” category. All questions were validated from peer reviewers of the Department. Arrangement of 2nd evaluator was also done. Separate Scoring system was formed for two different groups (TOE as well as SOE). Time allotted for the SOE was also scheduled. Lastly feedback forms from students as well as staff was collected.

Results: Mean TOE score and SE were 5.6 and 6.6 respectively and difference was statistically significant (p-value < 0.005). Paired t-Test was applied to analyze two groups for Means. There was a significant increase in the scores of the students from structured viva. At the same time, significant difference in scores in three categories of questions MK, NK, DK. Scores in TOE are significantly higher than SOE.

Conclusion: Hence SOE method seems to be better than TOE. By implementing this method, the students are habitual to appear for SOE during internal assessment oral examination in Prosthodontics subject, which will be more beneficial to them to understand the subject, the students are more confident and also to create a sense of honesty & fairness to both students as well as faculty as far as results of oral are concerned.

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