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Abstract Title: Evaluating trends of students' performance and quality of an OSCE: Three years of experience in Tehran University of Medical Sciences

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Abstract:

Background
 Until 2009 all medical students in Tehran University of Medical Sciences had to take a comprehensive written examination before internship. An OSCE was added in 2009 to fill the gap of clinical skills assessment at this stage. We aimed at evaluating the educational impact of these OSCEs by checking if students' scores have improved over these years.

Summary of work
 To compare students' score over the years, 6 station categories were defined. The candidates' scores in each category were calculated and trends over years were evaluated.

Summary of results
 Six OSCEs each comprising 11 to 14 stations have been held for a total number of 945 candidates. The range of mean scores were 49.11 (± 7.92) to 67.48 (± 7.82) with a pass rate of 48.1% to 98.4%. The Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.52 to 0.71. During these years, range of mean scores in categories of history taking, physical examination, communication skills, performing procedures, diagnosis, and patient management were 50.27 to 64.37, 49.10 to 73.86, 31.29 to 66.56, 25.86 to 70.67, 33.18 to 65.80, and 41.45 to 61.45, respectively.

Conclusions
 As illustrated in scores and pass rates, students' performances in most categories have improved during this period of time. This may be attributed to the fact that establishment of this exam drew the attention of students towards the importance of clinical skills, a desirable educational impact.

Take-home message

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