A study to assess the effectiveness of Objective Structured Practical Examination (OSPE) over Traditional Practical Examination (TPE) in psychiatric nursing on the performance and satisfaction of nursing students in a selected nursing college, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

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ABSTRACT

Background and Objective

Evaluation plays a major role in the process of nursing education, in the lives of nursing students and in society by certifying competent practitioners who can take care of the people. Evaluation of students has a direct impact on nursing practice. Objective Structured Clinical / Practical Examination (OSCE / OSPE) is considered as a gold standard and benchmark in clinical evaluation in the field of health profession including nursing as it fulfills all the criteria of evaluation. OSPE is a valuable strategy to assess 'fitness to practice' at the students' expected level of clinical practice within a nursing context where the importance of accurate patient assessment is paramount.

The purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of Objective Structured Practical Examination (OSPE) over Traditional Practical Examination (TPE) in Psychiatric Nursing on performance and satisfaction of nursing students in selected nursing College, Chennai.

Methods

The research design used for the study was a randomized cross over research design with two groups. Conceptual framework of this current research was based upon the Decision Making Model developed by Simon.
The study was conducted among 84, III year B.Sc. Nursing students studying in Apollo College of Nursing, Chennai. The College was selected conveniently and students were selected through consecutive sampling technique and selected samples were randomly assigned to Group I and Group II (42+ 42). OSPE and TPE were conducted in a private psychiatric hospital, Chennai.

The instruments used for the study consisted of proforma to assess baseline characteristics of students, checklists to evaluate students’ performance in OSPE stations and TPE evaluation format to evaluate students’ performance in TPE, standardized and modified De Lisle’s feedback questionnaire to assess satisfaction of students towards OSPE and TPE. Data on performance of the students in OSPE and TPE was rated by the examiners by observing the competencies of the students. Data on baseline characteristics and satisfaction of the students towards OSPE and TPE were collected by self-administration method.

**Results**

There was a significant difference between OSPE and TPE (p < .001) in Group I and Group II on the overall performance scores and the performance in all the clinical competencies assessed. Mean scores of overall performance obtained by both groups was higher in OSPE (Group I = 78.10 & Group II = 78.29) than TPE (Group I = 70.17 & Group II = 70.81). The study also revealed that there was a significant difference between OSPE (M = 77.95) and TPE (M = 70.49) in the average (Mean) scores of Group I and Group II (p < .001).

There was also a significant difference (p < .001) in nursing students’ performance scores between OSPE scores of Group I (M = 77.95) and TPE scores of Group II (M = 70.49). Similarly, there was also a significant difference in nursing students’ performance scores between TPE scores of Group I (M= 70.81) and OSPE scores of Group II (M = 78.10). Mean scores of overall performance obtained by both groups was higher in OSPE than TPE.
With regard to the level of performance of students in clinical competencies in OSPE, 69% of the students’ performance was very good (scores 75-100%), whereas in TPE, only 29% of students’ performance was very good.

There was a significant difference between OSPE and TPE (p < .001) in Group I and Group II on the overall satisfaction scores and in all the components assessed. Mean scores of overall satisfaction obtained by both groups were higher in OSPE (Group I = 98.10 & Group II = 98.43) than TPE (Group I = 90.10 & Group II = 89.55). Further there was also a significant difference between OSPE (M = 98.26) and TPE (M = 89.82) in the average (Mean) scores of Group I and Group II (p < .001).

There was also a significant difference (p < .001) in nursing students’ satisfaction scores between OSPE scores of Group I (M = 98.10) and TPE scores of Group II (M = 89.55). Similarly, there was also a significant difference in nursing students’ satisfaction scores between TPE scores of Group I (M = 90.09) and OSPE scores of Group II (M = 98.43). Mean scores of overall satisfaction obtained by both groups was higher in OSPE than TPE.

A majority of the students were highly satisfied towards OSPE in Group I (83.3%) and Group II (90.5%), whereas in TPE, 61.9% and 50% of the students in Group I and Group II respectively were highly satisfied.

**Conclusion**

OSPE is an effective method of evaluation when compared to TPE. This is reflected through a better performance of the students in selected clinical competencies in psychiatric nursing in OSPE than TPE. OSPE has been well accepted by a majority of the nursing students as a good evaluation tool for assessing their clinical competency when compared to TPE. The study findings are supported by the studies conducted across the world in nursing and other health disciplines. Literature supports that OSPE has many advantages over the traditional practical examination and satisfies the important criteria of evaluation such as reliability, validity, objectivity.
**Key Words:**  Objective Structured Practical Examination (OSPE), Traditional Practical Examination (TPE), Nursing students, Performance in selected clinical competencies, Satisfaction, Psychiatric Nursing.