

Original article ■

Comparing the Current and Desired Situation of Midwifery Students' Clinical Evaluation from Tutors' and Students' Viewpoints of Mashhad School of Nursing & Midwifery

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SUMMARY

Evaluation is the most important field of efficacy in clinical education. Since knowledge of the current situation is one of the most essential requirements for planning a desirable one and students' and tutors' viewpoints act as a facilitator in this regard, we conducted this study to compare the current and desirable situation of clinical evaluation from the students' and tutors' point of view at Mashhad Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery.

In this cross-sectional study, midwifery students and tutors of the Mashhad University of medical sciences were assessed. The researcher – designed questionnaires "current and desirable situation of criteria and methods in clinical evaluation" were approved by content validity and Cronbach's alpha. Descriptive and analytic statistics were used.

Total score means of current and desirable criteria in clinical evaluation were: 55.2 ± 18.0 and 68.4 ± 19.3 (of 100) from students' view, respectively; and: 47.0 ± 18.3 and 72.3 ± 20.4 (of 100) from tutors' view, respectively. Mean total scores of current and desirable methods in clinical evaluation from students' point of view were: 51.5 ± 17.9 and 56.5 ± 18.3 , respectively, and tutors': 55.6 ± 16.0 and 69.5 ± 14.4 (of 100), respectively.

The findings showed that the current situation of criteria and methods in midwifery clinical evaluation differs from the desirable situation, i.e. the current status score of criteria and methods is lower than the desirable ones. Therefore, we can improve the current situation with criteria and methods in clinical evaluation by using desirable situation.

Key words: clinical evaluation, current situation, desirable situation, students

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation has been considered as the most important area of effectiveness in clinical evaluation (1, 2). It aims to supervise and collect data for educational improvement. Students' clinical evaluation is crucial to keep clinical standards (2). Therefore, knowledge about the current situation of evaluation is the most basic need for desired planning (3). Medical education and evaluation in undergraduate and postgraduate programs are challenging (4). Hence, it is necessary to know the strengths and weaknesses of the current situation to enhance the quality of clinical evaluation (5). Naseri et al. (2009) studied evaluation methods of nursing students in Ardebil University; the majority of students (58%) reported it to be at the moderate level (49.48 ± 12.23) (6). Valizadeh et al. (2006) conducted a qualitative study in nursing and midwifery schools of Mashhad, Tabriz, Orumieh, Sabzevar. They reported dominancy of personal inclinations in clinical evaluation as one of challenges of nursing students (7). Hadizadeh Talasaz et al. (2005) reported moderate level of clinical evaluation (37.6 ± 27.7) in nursing School of Gonabad (8). Zahn et al. (2003) indicated the methods used for Gynecology and midwifery students' assessment and the weight assigned to these methods in determining a student grade (4). Desired situation is expected situation and performance (9). In order to achieve the desired educational situation, it is necessary to evaluate the current educational situation continuously and recognize its strengths and weaknesses. A very important way of recognizing the problems of clinical education and offering solutions from viewpoints of learners is to know the current problems of educational planning from students' viewpoints (10, 11). Although there are some studies about dissatisfaction with the current methods and errors in clinical evaluation of midwifery students (12, 13), no study has been found to assess the desired situation of clinical evaluation. Determining criteria and methods of current and desired clinical evaluation of midwifery students from students' and teachers' point of view is crucial to offer a compiled and proper evaluation program and prevent from using different personal inclination tools. Therefore, this study aimed to compare the current and desired situation of clinical evaluation midwifery students' clinical evaluation from tutors' & students' viewpoints of Mashhad school of Nursing & Midwifery.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted on 67 midwifery students and 9 of their tutors in Mashhad School of Nursing and Midwifery, Iran, in 2011. Participants entered the study by census sampling. This study was approved by the Vice Chancellery for Research and Ethics committee of MUMS (Mashhad University of Medical Sciences). Informed consents were obtained from all participants. Demographic data questionnaire

and questionnaires of current and desired clinical evaluation were completed by the participants, at their rest time, maximally 1 week after the determined training in School of Nursing and Midwifery.

The inclusion criteria were as follows: midwifery students being trained clinically at least one course and teachers with a past clinical history. Samples were excluded if the questionnaires were not completed. Research tools include: demographic data questionnaire (including personal data, educational data), researcher-made questionnaire for the assessment of the current and desired clinical evaluation methods (including two domains of characteristics and names of clinical evaluation methods) and researcher-made questionnaire for the assessment of the current and desired clinical evaluation criteria of midwifery students (including two domains of 'clinical skills' and 'professional performance' [26 statements in 9 sections]) in a 0-6 score scale (nothing =0 to very high=5) and 2 open-ended questions. The minimum and maximum scores of the questionnaire for the assessment of the current and desired methods were 0 and 130, and for the assessment of the current and desired criteria were 0 and 160. Total and domains scores of methods and criteria questionnaires were calculated using a 100-score scale to provide comparison and better understanding. Score of any section of criteria questionnaire were calculated on a 10-score scale. Mean score of criteria and methods questionnaires and their domains were classified into 3 classes: not desired =0-33, relatively desired=33.1-66, and desired=66.1-100. Research questionnaires were confirmed by content validity. The components of desired clinical evaluation were determined after reviewing the latest books and scientific journals, searching data banks and using clinical evaluation program of nursing and midwifery in University of Cincinnati (2007), and ranking scale and competency-based clinical evaluation of Rockhurst University (2002). Ten experts revised the final copy and the questionnaire were finalized and devised. Reliability of criteria and methods questionnaires was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha_{\text{criteria}}=0.97$ and $\alpha_{\text{methods}}=0.92$). Data were analyzed through descriptive (frequency, mean \pm SD) and analytical (independent t-test, paired t-test, Mann-whitney, ANOVA, Kraskalwalisand Wilcoxon, Tucky tests, Pearson and Kendal tests) statistics by SPSS-11.5, $P < 0.05$ was considered significant.

RESULTS

Sixty-seven students and 9 teachers inclined to participate in the study out of 75 students and 12 teachers. Six students' questionnaires were not filled completely (more than 20% of questions related to the current and desired situation were not answered); so, they were also excluded. All 9 teachers' questionnaires were filled completely. Students' admission in MUMS included: initial admission in MUMS (88.5%), transfer from other universities to MUMS (8.2%), and the status of a

guest student (3.3%). They aged 21.3 ± 1.4 and GPA (graduate-point average) of their last term was 16.92 ± 0.95 . All the students were studying in BSc section. Most of them were in the 5th and 7th educational term (34.4%) and the rest were in the 8th term (3.3%). They passed their clinical courses in the following wards: pediatrics, emergency clinics, maternity department, neonatal cardiology, oncology, prenatal, and health care centers. The largest and the smallest number of participants passed maternity department during the 7th term (16.4%), and the 5th term (3.3%) respectively. Teachers' field of study was midwifery (84.4%) and nursing. 39.3% of students were highly interested in midwifery and 1.6% of them showed low interest.

Mean score of the current and desired criteria from students' point of view were respectively 55.2 ± 18 and 68.4 ± 19.3 , and from teachers' point of view were respectively 47 ± 18.3 and 72.3 ± 20.4 (out of 100). Mean score of the current and desired methods from students' point of view were 51.5 ± 17.9 and 56.5 ± 18.3 , and from teachers' point of view were 55.6 ± 16.0 and 69.5 ± 14.4 , respectively. The majority of respondents believed that the current criteria were "relatively desirable" (59%) and the desired criteria of clinical evaluation should be "desirable" (59%). Most students believed that these clinical evaluation methods were "relatively desirable" (45.9%) in the current situation and should also be "relatively desirable" in desirable situation (37.7%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Frequency and mean scores of total methods and criteria and methods' domains in the current and desired situation of clinical evaluation

Desirability rate field	Group	Mean \pm SD (out of 100)	Desirability rate			Total
			Desired	Relatively desired	Undesired	
			N (percent)	N (percent)	N (percent)	
Current criteria	Students	55.0 \pm 18.1	17 (27.9)	36 (59.0)	8 (13.1)	61 (100.0)
	Tutors	47.0 \pm 18.3	1 (11.1)	6 (66.7)	2 (22.2)	9 (100.0)
Desired criteria	Students	68.4 \pm 19.3	35 (57.4)	21 (34.49)	4 (6.6)	60 (98.4)
	Tutors	72.3 \pm 20.4	7 (77.8)	1 (11.1)	1 (11.1)	9 (100.0)
Current methods	Students	52.8 \pm 17.7	5 (8.2)	28 (45.9)	5 (8.2)	38 (62.3)
	Tutors	55.6 \pm 16.0	1 (11.1)	3 (33.3)	1 (11.1)	5 (55.6)
Desired methods	Students	56.3 \pm 18.5	8 (13.1)	23 (37.7)	4 (6.6)	35 (57.4)
	Tutors	69.5 \pm 14.4	3 (33.3)	2 (22.2)	0 (0.0)	5 (55.6)
Name of current methods	Students	51.8 \pm 19.9	4 (6.6)	27 (44.3)	7 (11.5)	38 (62.3)
	Tutors	50.0 \pm 19.1	1 (11.1)	4 (44.4)	0 (0.0)	5 (55.6)
Name of desired methods	Students	53.1 \pm 21.6	7 (11.5)	23 (37.7)	5 (8.2)	35 (57.4)
	Tutors	65.9 \pm 17.2	3 (33.3)	2 (22.2)	0 (0.0)	5 (55.6)
Characteristics of current methods	Students	51.6 \pm 18.0	35 (57.4)	23 (37.7)	2 (3.3)	60 (98.4)
	Tutors	64.7 \pm 11.4	4 (44.4)	4 (44.4)	1 (11.1)	9 (100.0)
Characteristics of desired methods	Students	59.1 \pm 19.8	21 (34.4)	32 (52.5)	7 (11.5)	60 (98.4)
	Tutors	76.6 \pm 10.6	7 (77.8)	2 (22.2)	0 (0.0)	9 (100.0)

Table 2. Mean score of domains in the current and desired clinical evaluation criteria questionnaire from tutors' and students' viewpoints (out of 10)

Field of clinical evaluation criteria	Desired status of clinical evaluation		Current status of clinical evaluation		
	tutor	student	tutor	student	
Clinical skills	Student assessment skill	8.2 ± 1.9	6.8 ± 2.0	6.1 ± 1.3	6.4 ± 2.0
	Identifying the problem	7.8 ± 3.1	5.8 ± 2.7	3.8 ± 2.5	4.7 ± 2.7
	Planning and prioritization for performance	7.6 ± 3.1	6.0 ± 2.6	3.1 ± 1.9	4.5 ± 2.7
	Relationship and interpersonal skills	7.8 ± 3.0	6.9 ± 2.5	3.9 ± 2.3	5.6 ± 2.4
	Psychomotor skills	7.7 ± 3.0	6.9 ± 2.5	3.9 ± 2.3	5.6 ± 2.4
	Basic knowledge	7.5 ± 2.0	7.4 ± 1.7	6.0 ± 1.8	5.7 ± 1.9
	Case study	7.7 ± 2.1	7.3 ± 2.3	4.9 ± 1.8	5.3 ± 2.4
Safety of student performance	7.3 ± 3.3	7.2 ± 2.6	4.3 ± 2.4	5.8 ± 2.6	
Professional performance	Professional role	6.9 ± 3.9	7.3 ± 2.4	4.5 ± 3.9	5.3 ± 2.5

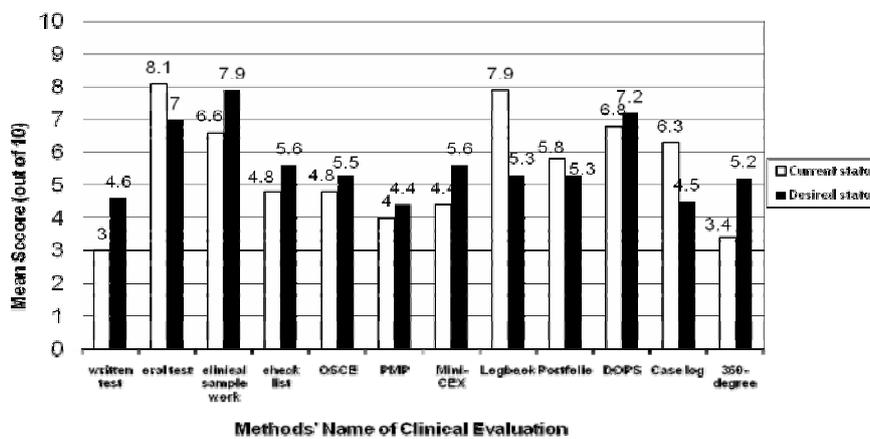


Figure 1. Mean score of applying clinical evaluation methods in the current and desirable situation from Students' viewpoints (out of 10)

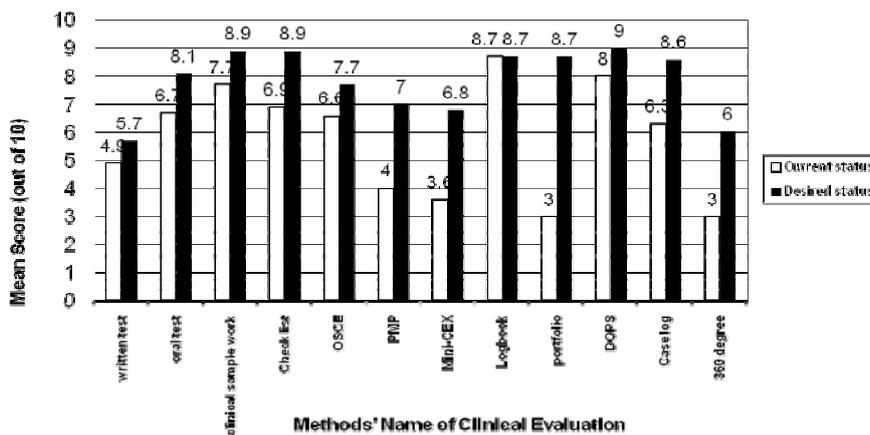


Figure 2. Mean score of applying clinical evaluation methods in the current and desirable situation from tutors' viewpoints (out of 10)

Table 3. Comparing mean of total and domains scores of current and desired situation of clinical evaluation from students' and tutors' viewpoints

Clinical evaluation	Group	Mean \pm SD		Comparison between current and desired status (Paired t-test/ Wilcoxon)		
		Desired	Current	t/ Z	df	P value*
Criteria	students	68.4 \pm 19.3	55.0 \pm 18.1	t=5.9	5 9	0.000
	tutors	72.3 \pm 20.4	47.0 \pm 18.3	Z= 2.7	-	0.007
Comparison between students and tutors' opinions (Independent t-test)		Z=0.8 P value= 0.438	t=1.3 df=68 P value= 0.208			
Characteristics of a method	students	59.1 \pm 19.8	51.6 \pm 18.0	t=4.1	5 8	0.000
	tutors	76.6 \pm 10.6	64.7 \pm 11.4	Z= 2.7	-	0.008
Comparison between students and tutors' opinions (Independent t-test)		t=2.5 df=67 P value= 0.013	Z=2.2 P value= 0.208			
Names of methods	students	53.1 \pm 21.6	51.8 \pm 19.9	t=0.3	3 3	0.759
	tutors	65.9 \pm 17.2	50.0 \pm 19.1	t=2.0	4	0.119
Comparison between students and tutors' opinions (Independent t-test)		t=1.3 df=38 P value= 0.199	t=0.0 df=41 P value= 0.985			
Total score of methods	students	56.3 \pm 18.5	52.8 \pm 17.7	t= 1.2	3 3	0.224
	tutors	69.5 \pm 14.4	55.6 \pm 16.0	t=2.5	4	0.069
Comparison between students and tutors' opinions (Independent t-test)		t=1.5 df=38 P value= 0.136	t=0.5 df=41 P value= 0.630			

*P<0.05 is significant

Mean score of "clinical skills" domain of the current and desired criteria were respectively 47.9 \pm 15.7 and 60.7 \pm 16.5 from students' point of view, and 37.5 \pm 24.3 and 51.1 \pm 33.2 from teachers' point of view. Mean score of "professional performance" domain of the current and desired criteria were respectively 67.5 \pm 23.5 and 75.6 \pm 24.3 from students' point of view, and 66.7 \pm 15.8 and 86.2 \pm 7.6 from teachers' point of view (Table 2).

In relation to clinical evaluation methods, the highest score was related to oral test (8.1) in the current

situation and clinical sample work (7.4) in the desired situation among students (Figure 1). There was a significant difference between the current and desired situation of clinical evaluation methods just in written tests (P=0.000), oral test (P=0.012), clinical sample work (P=0.048), and log book (P=0.000), from students' viewpoints.

However, the highest score was related to log book (8.7) in the current situation and DOPS (9.00) in the desired situation among tutors (Figure 2). There was a significant difference between the current and desired

situations just in Portfolio ($P=0.005$) and 360 degree evaluation ($P=0.045$), from tutors' viewpoints. Results showed a significant difference between the current with desired situation, just in total score of "criteria" and domain score of "methods' characteristics" from viewpoints of both students and teachers ($P<0.05$). However, comparison of the viewpoints of students with teachers showed a significant difference between domain score of "methods' characteristics" only in the desired situation ($P=0.013$) (Table 3).

Results showed that none of the demographic variables had a significant effect on the total score of methods and criteria except for educational term. Educational term had a significant effect just on domain score of methods' name in the current situation ($P=0.002$). Tucky test revealed that this significance was due to difference in means score of methods' name of 5th and 7th terms ($P=0.001$).

No significant relationship was found between students' age with none of variables except for methods' name in the current situation ($r=0.343$, $P=0.041$). No significant relationship was also found between students' GPA with none of the variables except for methods' name ($r=0.392$, $P=0.035$), and with total score of methods in the current situation ($r=0.372$, $P=0.047$).

DISCUSSION

According to the results, current and desired situation of clinical evaluation had a significant difference just in criteria, and characteristics of methods; however, all scores of desired situation were higher than the current situation. This may be due to the lack of knowledge about names of methods. Unfortunately, since no course is offered in this regard for undergraduate students, the participants had to mark alternatives of "not familiar" or "no use" in this section.

Since we found no study to assess desired situation of clinical evaluation in literature review, we compared the current clinical evaluation with other studies. In the present study, most students (45.9%) reported current method as "relatively good" (52.8 ± 17.7), which was in agreement with Naseri et al (2009) (6), but it was not similar to Hadizadeh et al (2005) (5). It could be related to the time of research, 6 years before conducting the present research. According to Zahn's study (2003), the vast majority of programs (92%) reported assessment of students' interpersonal skills with teachers and residents, as well as relationship with patients, as an important component of evaluation. In the present study, tutors scored 3.9 (out of 10) for applying these criteria. Zahn et al. applied written exam (29.1%), oral exam (1.9%), OSCE (16.9%), case log (6.5%) and checklist (10%) (4), which differs nearly from the present study. Log book got a high score which is confirmed by Hoseini et al. (2010) who introduced it as the current method of clinical evaluation in Mashhad university of Medical Sciences (14). Mc Carthy et al. stated

that teachers had a clear understanding from "giving feedback" and considered it as a useful characteristic for evaluation (15), which is in accordance with the present study; however, 10% of students reported to receive no feedback and just 33.8% of students confirmed the high level of receiving feedback. This inconsistency between tutors' and students' views may be due to giving informal and oral, not written, feedbacks by the tutors to the students. Therefore, the students do not consider tutors' comments as a feedback.

Educational terms showed a significant effect on the total score of the methods' names in the current situation, due to mean difference of total score of the methods' names in 5th and 7th term. It may be due to the fact that most students were studied in 5th and 7th term rather than the others. A direct significant relationship was found between age and score of methods' names in the current situation which is likely due to passing more specific clinical courses and application of different evaluation methods for them. Direct significant relationship was also found between students' GPA and score of methods' names and total score of methods. For describing several differences of studied fields in the current and desired situation from teachers' and students' viewpoints, it should be noted that clinical evaluation is complex and includes several aspects. Clinical evaluation needs preparedness such as prerequisites, acquiring social and professional skills etc. (16). Therefore, the tools which are applied should cover cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains and pay attention to cultural competencies and moral/ethical decisions (17). The increasingly growing midwifery system needs professional midwives who will be able to provide desired and moral care. It needs to train students who are capable not only in proper practical skills but also highly competent in moral/ethical reasoning and proper communication with patients. However, their evaluation still has not achieved their desirable level. One of new graduates' problems in clinical settings is disability of idea presentation and having anxiety in communications (18). Unfortunately, most studies confirmed that physicians and nurses lack communication skills (19). These kinds of evidence indicate a large gap between the current situations and desired one in terms of evaluation of communication skills, professional role, problem definition and psychomotor domain and the most evaluated domain is cognitive area.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings, the current situation of clinical evaluation of midwifery students in Mashhad School of Nursing and Midwifery from the viewpoints of students and teachers is lower than the desired situation. Having knowledge about the current situation and its distance from the desired situation can be a base for planning the desired situation. We recommend applying the desired criteria and methods for current clinical eva-

luation development in order to better control the resources and facilities and finally clinical competency development of midwifery graduates.

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POREĐENJE TRENUTNE I ŽELJENE SITUACIJE U POGLEDU KLINIČKE EVALUACIJE STUDENATA AKUŠERSTVA SA STANOVIŠTA ASISTENATA I SAMIH STUDENATA MAŠHAD FAKULTETA ZA OBRAZOVANJE AKUŠERSKIH I MEDICINSKIH SESTARA

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Sažetak

Evaluacija je najvažnije polje efikasnosti kliničke edukacije. Kako je poznavanje trenutne situacije jedan od najvažnijih zahteva za planiranje željene situacije i kako nam mišljenje asistenata i studenata pomaže u čitavom procesu, sproveli smo studiju da bi uporedili trenutnu i željenu situaciju sa stanovišta studenata i tutora na Mašhad Fakultetu za obrazovanje akušerskih i medicinskih sestara.

U ovoj unakrsnoj studiji, procenjivani su studenti akušerstva i asistenti. Upitnik u istraživačke svrhe sa temom "Trenutna i poželjna situacija kriterijuma i metoda u kliničkoj evaluaciji" bio je odobren zbog validnosti sadržaja i primene Kronbah alfa koeficijenta.

Ukupne srednje vrednosti trenutnih i poželjnih kriterijuma u kliničkoj evaluaciji iznosile su: 55.2 ± 18.0 i 68.4 ± 19.3 (od 100) sa stanovišta studenata, respektivno, i 47.0 ± 18.3 i 72.3 ± 20.4 (od 100) sa stanovišta asistenata, respektivno. Ukupne srednje vrednosti trenutnih i poželjnih metoda u kliničkoj evaluaciji sa stanovišta studenata bile su: 51.5 ± 17.9 i 56.5 ± 18.3 , respektivno, i sa stanovišta asistenata 55.6 ± 16.0 i 69.5 ± 14.4 (od 100), respektivno.

Rezultati studije su pokazali da se trenutna situacija kriterijuma i metoda u kliničkoj evaluaciji akušerstva razlikuje od poželjne situacije, odnosno, da je trenutni status skor kriterijuma i metoda niži od poželjnog. Zato, trenutnu situaciju kriterijuma i metoda možemo poboljšati primenom poželjne situacije.

***Ključne reči:* klinička evaluacija, trenutna situacija, poželjna situacija, studenti**