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ABSTRACT

This study is aimed to assess the Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) dental student clinicians' communication skills in four domains; caring and respectful, sharing information, tending to comfort, and interaction with team members, from three complementary perspectives; dental student clinicians' self-assessment, patients' feedback, and clinical instructors' evaluation. **Objectives:** The objectives of the study were [1] to assess the dental student clinicians' performance in communication from the patient's view, self-rated and clinical instructor's view, [2] to assess dental student clinicians' performance in relation to patients' socio-demography factors [3] to assess the dental student clinicians' performances in relation to their socio-demography factors and [4] to find the correlation between the three perspectives; patients, dental student clinicians and clinical instructors. **Methodology:** The research was a cross-sectional study conducted using a modified-communication tool developed by the University of Manitoba; Patient Communication Assessment Instruments (PCAI), Student Communication Assessment Instruments (SCAI) and Clinical Communication Assessment Instruments (CCAI). A total of 432 questionnaires consisting of 176 patient assessment (PCAI), matching 176 students' self-assessment (SCAI) and 80 clinical instructor assessment (CCAI) were administered. The PCAI were randomly given using random sampling technique. Three calibrated clinical instructors used CCAI to assess the dental student clinicians. **Results:** The response rate was 100% with 432 questionnaires answered. In patients' socio-demography, there are no significant differences in gender, education, race and number of visits to dentist, except for the age factor in PCAI where significance difference ($p<0.05$) were found between youth, mid-aged and elderly and also income factor in PCAI where significance difference ($p<0.05$) were found between B40 and M40 groups. Further analysis in relation to dental student clinicians' clinical years found no significant differences ($P>0.05$) in PCAI, but significant differences ($P<0.05$) in D2: Sharing information ($P=0.027$) for SCAI and D1: Caring & respectful ($P<0.001$) and D2: Sharing information ($P=0.001$) for CCAI. An independent sample T-test was conducted to compare all communication domains in the Comprehensive Care Clinic (CC) and the Dental Health Education Clinic (DHE). No significant differences ($P>0.05$) was noted in SCAI. But there were significant differences ($P<0.05$) found in D4: Team interaction ($P=0.042$) for PCAI and in D1: Caring & respectful ($P<0.001$) and in D2: Sharing information ($P<0.001$) for CCAI. No significant differences in gender of dental student clinicians except for all domains in SCAI where significance difference ($p<0.05$) were found and also for D3: Comfort in PCAI. The associated probability value of D1: Caring & respectful ($P<0.001$), D2: Sharing information ($P<0.001$), D3: Comfort ($P<0.001$), and D4: Team interaction ($P<0.001$), when compared between SCAI, PCAI and CCAI using repeated measure ANOVA analysis had concluded that there was a statistically significant difference between each approach. **Conclusion:** The increasing mean scores pattern CCAI<SCAI<PCAI exhibited good performance (very good-excellent) of the dental student clinicians from the three perspectives; self-rated, patients and clinical instructors.

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