

Medical Student's Responses to Emotional Content in Doctor-Patient Communication: To Explore Differences in Communication Training of Medical Students and Its Impact on Doctor-Patient Communication

Authors : Stephanie Yun Yu Law

Abstract : Background: This study aims to investigate into communication between trainee doctors and patients, especially how doctor's reaction to patient's emotional issues expressed in the consultation affect patient's satisfaction. Objectives: Thus, there are three aims in this study, 1.) how do trainee doctors react to patients emotional cues in OSCE station? 2.) Any differences in the respond type to emotional cues between first year students and third year students? 3.) Is response type (reducing space) related to OSCE outcome (patient satisfaction and expert rating)? Methods: Fifteen OSCE stations was videotaped, in which 9 were stations with first-year students and 6 were with third-year students. OSCE outcomes were measured by Communication Assessment Tool and Examiners Checklist. Analyses: All patient's cues/concerns and student's reaction were coded by Verona Coding Definitions of Emotional Sequence. Descriptive data was gathered from Observer XT and logistic regression (two-level) was carried out to see if occurrence of reducing space response can be predicted by OSCE outcomes. Results: Reducing space responses from all students were slightly less than a half in total responses to patient's cues. The mean percentage of reducing space behaviours was lower among first year students when compared to third year students. Patient's satisfaction significantly ($p < 0.05$) and negatively predicted reducing space behaviours. Conclusions: Most of the medical students, to some extent, did not provide adequate responses for patient's emotional cues. But first year students did provide more space for patients to talk about their emotional issues when compared to third year students. Lastly, patients would feel less satisfied if trainee doctors use more reducing space responses in reaction to patient's expressed emotional cues/concerns. Practical implications: Firstly, medical training programme can be tailored on teaching students how to detect and respond appropriately to emotional cues in order to improve underperformed student's communication skills in healthcare setting. Furthermore, trainee doctor's relationship with patients in clinical practice can also be improved by reacting appropriately to patient's emotive cues in consultations (such as limit the use of reducing space behaviours).

Keywords : doctors-patients communication, applied clinical psychology, health psychology, healthcare professionals

Conference Title : ICSRD 2020 : International Conference on Scientific Research and Development

Conference Location : Chicago, United States

Conference Dates : December 12-13, 2020