

EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF VETERINARY STUDENTS' CONCEPTIONS OF AND APPROACHES TO CLINIC-BASED LEARNING IN THE TRANSITION TO PRACTICE

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Objective

The purpose of this research was to identify quantitative survey items that revealed the quality of veterinary students' conceptions of and approaches to clinic-based learning and relate these to student performance in clinics.

Study Design

This study used a cross-sectional survey design.

Methods

The participants in this study were final year veterinary students from the same cohort (N=100). Prior qualitative research into clinic-based learning (Matthew, Taylor and Ellis 2010) was used to create a Conceptions of Clinic-Based Learning Questionnaire. An Approaches to Clinic-Based Learning questionnaire was contextualized from the revised two-factor Study Process Questionnaire (Biggs, Kember and Leung 2001) that has been used in a range of education contexts. Student achievement in clinics was measured by results on Supervisor Report Forms submitted at the end of each rotation. Descriptive and exploratory statistics were used to identify items that established the quality of students' conceptions of and approaches to clinic-based learning and link these to achievement.

Results

A 93% response rate was obtained for the paired questionnaires used in this research. Eight items were identified that revealed the quality of students' conceptions of clinic-based learning. Ten items were identified that revealed the quality of students' approaches to clinic-based learning. Students who reported poorer-quality conceptions of and approaches to clinic-based learning (n=38) attained lower levels of achievement than those who reported better-quality conceptions of and approaches to CBL.

Conclusions

Educators can use the survey items identified in this research as part of comprehensive outcomes assessment of students' learning in clinics.