

The use of Critical Incident Technique as a tool to identify students' perceived issues in osteopathic clinical training.

Background

Critical incident technique (CIT) is a methodology adapt to transform anecdotal experiences into useful data (FitzGerald et Al. 2008). It aims to explore what helps or hinders in providing good quality service or care.

Developed in an industrial and technical context has been successfully applied in the educational field. In Medical and health profession education, CIT has been used to conduct qualitative and quantitative research on several aspects of students' learning and training experience (Embrey and Taggart 2020) and their development as professionals (Branch et Al. 1993).

Critical incidents' analysis provides field information that can allow educators to implement teaching and training strategies (Steven et Al. 2020) as well as foster transformative learning as the foundation stone in becoming professional (Branch 2005).

In the osteopathic educational field critical incidents reflective analyses are used in some institutions as evaluative tools, but to the author's knowledge, an in depth analysis of perceived clinical training criticalities has not been disseminated.

Context, material and methods

At ISO, final year students are required to produce, as a summative assessment, a reflective analysis essay of a critical incident that happened during their clinical training using Gibbs reflective cycle.

240 critical incident essays, from academic year 16/17 to 21/22 have been quantitatively analyzed with the aim of identifying the most frequent perceived issues that students encounter in their clinical training, to assess students' emotional and coping needs and to inform the development of specific instructional and situated learning strategies. Feasibility of qualitative analysis is under evaluation.

Results

The main themes and sub-themes will be critically presented as well as possible strategies for their management. The main emerging themes, after preliminary data analysis are: a) management of complex or uncommon patients' conditions, b) students' relationship with patients, supervisors and caregivers, c) professional ethics and boundaries.

Each of these themes includes several sub themes that provide factual knowledge upon which build specific and tailored learning experience.

Moreover the feelings and critical reflections expressed by students highlight specific needs for an effective coping of clinical training correlated stress.

The hope is that sharing the criticalities of ISO clinical teachings and learning experience will foster debate and development in the Osean community of practice and allow constructive comparison of the osteopathic educational contexts with other osteopathic educational communities of practice.

References

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