Developing and Validating an Evaluation Tool for Evaluating Nursing Faculty Staff Assistants' Performance by the Students

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Abstract: **Nursing practice is an integral part of nursing education in which faculty staff assistants play an important role. The present study aimed to developing and validating an evaluation tool for faculty staff assistants by students at the faculty of nursing Ain Shams University. The design of this study was a methodological research, with stratified random probability sample were used to select the students sample. Three groups of sample were included, 30 experts, 35 faculty staff assistants and 468 students with response rate 94.3% for students. Findings indicated that the developed tool is valid and reliable through full acceptance by juries. The majority of faculty staff assistants agreed on the importance of evaluation tool items. The result of test retest reliability are strongly correlated (correlation= 0.944) and the reliability coefficient for the instrument was 0.973. It is recommended that the designed tool have to be used by the faculty of nursing, be revised periodically, be given sufficient time to complete the form and avoid conducting evaluations immediately before or after a final exam. The students and faculty staff assistants have to be oriented to the evaluation process. Also the designed tool could be generalized to other nursing faculties.**

Keywords: **Faculty staff assistants, designing tool, validating, evaluation, nursing students, performance.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Nursing education underwent revolutionary changes during the 20th century. Changes from apprentice training to faculty responsibility; from free labor work to educational accountability; and from the teacher's authority role to students claiming rights have all affected nursing education particularly the teachers' role *(Tang, 2015)*.

Clinical learning is the heart of the educational experience for nursing students and their teachers. Clinical evaluation processes are more than merely one aspect of clinical learning; they are the quintessence (*Mahara, 2018)*. Clinical teaching and learning have been recognized as one of the most important and necessary parts of any educational process in the different clinical nursing specialties *(Katzabassaki, et al. 2017)*.

Clinical practice is the core function of nursing in all nursing specialties. Clinical training provides the experience necessary for the learner to develop knowledge, skills, and values. And this is greatly facilitated by competent faculty staff assistants who can help, guide, and support the students during training in different settings *(El Sayed, 2009)*.

Evaluation is very important for the continued improvement of the education program. It is only through honest and

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objective critique (evaluation) that can help faculty staff assistants become better educators, which will, in turn, make a better student *(Mahara, 2018)*.

One of the major dimensions of educational evaluation is the graduates' perceptions. The students' perceptions are the core of any educational program. They represent the outcome products of the program *(Al-Hindi, 2012)*. It is highly crucial for any program to assess students' perception to determine their needs, meet their expectations and draw successful plans for future in order to attract desirable students. *(Abdul Aziz, 2016)*.

Student evaluations of faculty staff assistants are commonly used to provide the instructor with feedback about the quality of their training. The usefulness of the results from these evaluations is highly dependent on the content validity of the items written to operationalize the construct of teaching effectiveness. There is a need for student evaluation of clinical instruments that are specifically designed to provide instructors with valid feedback about the effectiveness of their clinical practices in all nursing branches *(Arthur, 2016)*. Clinical evaluations are often criticized for their tendency toward subjectivity and ambiguity; therefore, great efforts must be taken to overcome these problems *(Klein, 2016)*.

Quality teaching is defined as a specific educational act that meets the demonstrated educational needs of the clients. Quality of the faculty staff assistants is important to facilitate student learning of cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains fundamental to clinical practice in administration, medical-surgical, pediatric, obstetric and gynecologic, community and psychiatric nursing *(National Athletic Trainers' Association, 2017)*. The faculty staff assistants considered as the vital link in the teaching-learning process, they are involved in supporting, encouraging and motivation students in both theory and practice *(While, 2014)*.

2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Nursing is the core of health care services. Usually, nurses make up the largest portion of healthcare professional. The number of nurses in Cairo is 5,270 nurses forming 26.96% of the entire health employee *(MOH, 2015)*.

As a result, paying a lot of concern for improving in administration, medical-surgical, pediatric, and maternity, community and psychiatric nursing education and satisfying nursing graduates in order to improve the health status is expected. Evaluation of students' perception is an excellent opportunity to involve the students in the program evaluation *(WHO, 2010)*.

The students' evaluative perspective provides the nursing administrations with several issues: understanding students' expectations; designing services to meet their needs; empowering staff to meet students' needs; and communicating service and quality standards to the students. Analysis of students' feedback can map the strength and issues deemed important by students rather than program staff and administration *(Richardson, 2015)*.

The students' perception about the program can provide highly valued comments that can contribute to the improvement of nursing programs and provide nursing graduates the chance to express their perceptions and satisfaction toward the previously-mentioned programs *(Abdul Aziz, 2016)*.

The use of student evaluations for faculty promotion and tenure as they contribute to the personal and professional lives of instructors is of great concern. If these data are inaccurate, flawed, or punitive in nature, they have the potential to seriously damage not only the instructor but also the institution. Although the reliability and validity of student evaluations have yet to be conclusively proven, they remain an important part of our academic world *(Hessler & Humphreys 2018)*.

3. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Faculty staff assistants: Faculty staff assistant is defined as Clinical instructor or demonstrator and referred to the qualified nurses who have a bachelor or master degree in nursing, who are responsible for creating an environment in which students and instructors must develop a close working relationship.

The main research hypothesis: the educational program (EP) for burned children will have a positive effect on self-image and coping strategies during rehabilitation phase.

Research Design:

A methodological research design was used.

4. SUBJECTS AND METHODS

Setting:

Faculty of Nursing, Ain Shams University.

Subjects:

Three groups of the sample were included in the study:

1. The students group: A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the students group. The total number of students was 460 students

- Second level = 165 students (medical-surgical students)

- Third level =155 students (paediatric and maternal & new-born health nursing students)

- Fourth level = 140 students (administration students)

- Total population = 460 students

Sample Size: The sample size was calculated using the WHO sample size manual; the students sample size was equal to 268 subjects.

2. The Faculty staff assistants group: to determine the importance of evaluation tool items from faculty staff assistants' point of view. The sample included all the target population of the faculty staff assistants (35 faculty staff assistants):

- 5 Faculty staff assistants: have a master degree in nursing administration, community health and public health, medical surgical, paediatric and maternal & new-born health nursing.

- 30 Faculty staff assistants: have a bachelor degree in nursing.

3. The jury group: to assess the face and content validity of the evaluation tool. Their total number was 30 experts, from different fields as administration, maternal and newborn health nursing, medical-surgical, pediatric, community and psychiatric nursing, as well as experts in research, education and management.

Tools of data collection:

Three tools for data collection were used in this study. These were opinionnaire sheet for experts, questionnaire for faculty staff assistants and questionnaire for students.

Tool I. Opinionnaire sheet for experts to validate the proposed evaluation tool

The researcher developed the structure of the evaluation tool guided by the relevant literature review (*Krichbaum, 1994 and Essa & Adam, 1998*). This tool was intended for the group of experts. Its aim was to test both face and content validity of the proposed evaluation tool.

The opinionnaire consisted of three parts:

Part (1): it aims at determining face validity of the proposed evaluation tool. The opinionnaire contained groups of statement that were asked the experts to determine their opinion regarding the general form of the proposed tool.

Part (2): it aims at collecting identification data about students and faculty staff assistants such as faculty staff assistants name, academic year, student's level, clinical setting, clinical course, semester, students accumulative grade, and gender.

Part (3): aims at determining content validity of the proposed evaluation tool. It entails a list of 70 items based literature review to describe the actions expected from the faculty staff assistants. In addition to open ended question for any comments of suggestions. The opinions of the jury for each item was recorded on a dichotomous scale, whether agree, or disagree.

Scoring system: The response was considered agree if the percent score was 80% or more and not agree if less than 80%, the scoring system was chosen according to the normal distribution of the clinical nurse evaluation.

Tool II: Questionnaire for faculty staff assistants

▪ This tool was intended for the faculty staff assistants. Its aim was to determine the importance of included items of the proposed evaluation tool.

▪ Based on experts" opinions", the questionnaire contains the same items that present in the opinionnaire sheet for experts (Seventy items).

▪ The tool was rated into two points, important and not important. The faculty staff assistants were asked to determine the importance of each item included in the instrument.

Scoring system: The following criteria were used for maintaining or omitting items: If less than 80% of the faculty staff assistants rated an item important it has to be deleted, or if an item was rated important by greater than or equal to 80% of faculty staff assistants, it was maintained.

Tool III: Questionnaire for students:

▪ This questionnaire was aimed at testing reliability of the proposed tool. Based on faculty staff assistants' point of view, the questionnaire contains sixty three items in English language **.**The tool translated into Arabic Language and distributed to the study subjects to facilitate understanding and to ensure validity of data collection and credibility of answers. The Arabic tool was validated by experts to ensure conformance of English and Arabic languages in the proposed tool.

▪ The tool was rated at Likert scale with five options, (strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree, and strongly agree).

Scoring system: The score system for the proposed evaluation tool was rated to Likert scale with five options, (strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, uncertain = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5).

For each part, the scores of the items were summed up and the total divided by the number of the items, giving a mean score for the part. These scores were converted into a percent score, means and standard deviations were computed.

Administrative design:

To carry out the study in the selected setting, an approval was obtained from the dean of faculty of nursing, Ain Shams University after clear explanation about the aim of the study and its benefits.

Ethical consideration:

The agreement for participation of subjects was obtained after the explanation of the aim of the study. They were given opportunity to refuse to participate. They were notified that they could withdraw at any stage of the research. Also they were assured that information would be confidential and used for research purpose only.

Statistical design:

All collected data were organized, categorized, tabulated, entered, and analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences); a soft-ware program version 20, which was applied to frequency tables and statistical significance. Associations were assessed by using the arithmetic mean, standard deviation (SD), Z test, and ANOVA test to detect the relations between variables.

▪ Non- significant (NS) $p > 0.05$

▪ Significant (S) $p \leq 0.05$

5. RESULT

Figure 1 shows that about half (44.3%) of respondents were at the third level and trained for paediatrics, and obstetrics and those at the fourth level and trained for community, psychiatry and administration, represented (30.2%) of the study population, while (25.5%) subjects at the second level and had training for medical-surgical nursing.

Table 1 describes the agreement of jury group upon the general format of the proposed evaluation tool. As evident from the table, the great majority of jury group have agreed upon all items. Their percentages ranged from 93.3% to 100%.

Additionally, the agreement of jury group upon the classification of proposed evaluation tool into four major components is described in **table 1**. All items of this part, professional competency, interpersonal relationship, personality

characteristics and evaluation process, were approved by 100.0% of the jury group. The jury approved all the items. There was a unanimous (100.0%) agreement on all scales. The only exception was related to the scale of "uncertain", which was agreed upon by 93.3%

Agreement of jury group upon the content validity of proposed evaluation tool was presented in the attachments.

Agreement of jury groups upon proposed evaluation tool for faculty staff assistants by students is presented in the attachments. The agreement percentage ranged between 85.0% and 100.0%. Meanwhile, most items included in the proposed evaluation tool approved by 100.0% of the jury.

The total number of items remaining after the agreement of jury group upon content validity of proposed evaluation tool was 70 items.

Table 2 shows the stability of the proposed tool, test-retest reliability reveals significance statistical relationship (Correlation = 0.944) at level (0.01). This reflects that the test re-test are strongly correlated. In addition, the Wilcoxon test (Z = 1.696) shows that there is no statistical significant difference between the mean of two measurements. Therefore, the test re-test reliability indicates that the tool is highly stabilized.

Table 3 illustrated the seven omitted items from the proposed evaluation tool through faculty staff assistants opinions based on the predetermined criteria (if less than 80% of faculty staff assistants rated an item important, it was omitted). The percentages for omitted items were ranging from 60.0% to 74.3%.

Table 4 presents the results of internal consistency reliability analysis of the proposed evaluation tool. It indicates generally high Cronbach alpha coefficients of reliability that ranged between 0.906 and 0.919. The internal consistency of the proposed evaluation tool; Cranbach Alpha coefficient was used. The reliability coefficient for the study instrument as a whole was 0.973.

Table 5 shows the items omitted after factor analysis, the total items not rotated from the tool after factor analysis is 6 items, which include questions: (33, 30, 27, 38, 54, and 32).

The total number of items for the developed evaluation tool remaining after validity of the tool by experts and reliability of the tool by factor analysis was 57 items

The highest domain level was observed in relationship factor (3.487) while the lowest domain level (3.351) was observed at professional competency as shown at the **table 6**.

Table 7 presents evaluation of faculty staff assistants performance according to students" level, as shows in this table, there was a significant statistical difference between students' level and professional competency, relationship, personality characteristic and evaluation (P value 0.01, 0.01, 0.01 & 0.02 respectively). The students at a second level show higher positive level than other in the evaluation of faculty staff assistants.
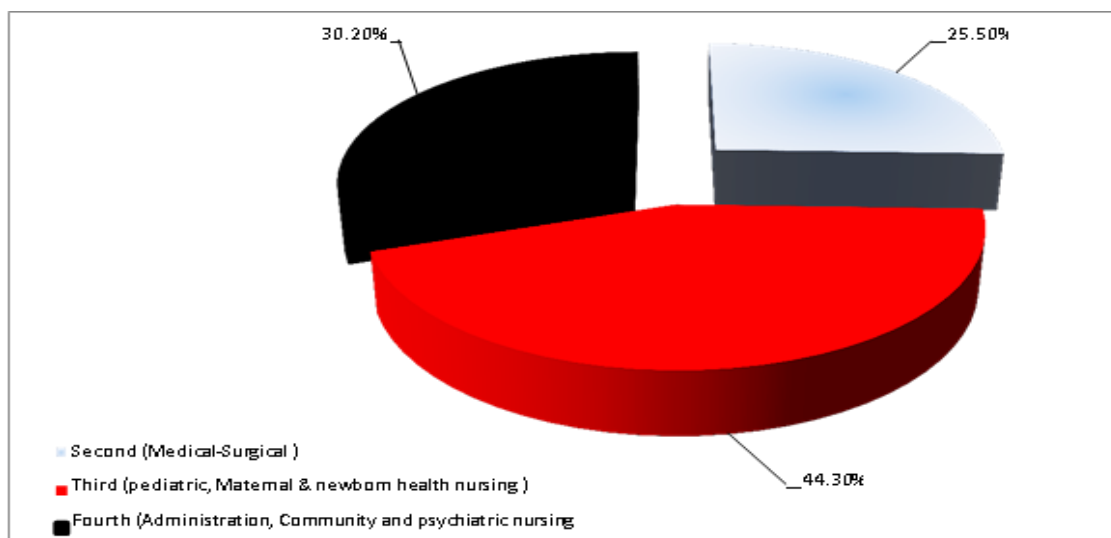

Figure (1): Distribution of student according to level and clinical course (n = 268)

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Table (1): Agreement of jury group upon face validity of the proposed evaluation tool (n = 30).

Face Validity		
1. Does the tool look like evaluation questionnaire for faculty staff assistants' performance by the students?	30	100.0
2. Is the demographic information enough?	28	93.3
3. Does the questionnaire title denote the intended work (To evaluate the faculty staff assistants' performance by the student)?	28	93.3
4. Does the questionnaire format include representative types of dimensions related to the evaluation of faculty staff assistants performance by students as:	28	100.0
A) Professional competency.	30	100.0
B) Interpersonal relationships.	28	100.0
C) Personality characteristics.	30	100.0
D) Evaluation Skills.	30	100.0
5. Does the questionnaire format include representative items under every dimension?	30	100.0
6. Is the number of items under every dimension suitable?	28	93.3
7. Is the proportion of items devoted to each dimension adequate in relation to all dimensions?	30	100.0
8. Are the items statements (wording): ▪ Clear. ▪ Comprehensive	30	100.0
9. The rating system with Likert Scale (five options) from A to F correlated with the criteria of the designed tool.		
A. Strongly Agree	30	100.0
B. Agree	30	100.0
C. Uncertain	28	93.3
D. Disagree	30	100.0
E. Strongly Disagree	30	100.0

Table (2): Mean, standard deviation, correlation & Z value to Measure Wilcoxon to test the stability of the proposed tool

	Mean	St. deviation	Correlation	Z
Test	255.666	31.324	0.944	1.696
Re- test	249.266	37.837		

Table (3): Omitted items based on instructors opinion (n = 35)

No.	Items	Agree Important	
		No	%
13.	Avoid over supervising student's work.	25	71.4
17.	Avoids authoritarian and dominating attitude.	22	62.9
25.	Has empathetic attitude in clinical teaching.	23	65.7
30.	Avoids subjectively student's judgment.	24	68.6
33.	Does not interrupt the nursing process when students are trying a new technique.	25	71.4
54.	Uses official forms of clinical practice to ensure quality performance.	26	74.3
62.	Provides comprehensive supervisory evaluation periodically	21	60.0

Table (4): Factor sub-scale reliability estimates. (n = 268)

Factor No.	Factor Name	No. of subjects	No. of items	Cranach's Alpha
1.	Professional competency	268	15	0.908
2.	Relationship	268	18	0.906
3.	Personality characteristics	268	16	0.908
4.	Evaluation	268	8	0.919
5.	Total	**268**	**63**	**0.973**

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Table (5): The items omitted after factor analysis.

No.	Items
33.	Provide appropriate use of professional terms
30.	Motivate and encourage students to train well
27.	Recognizes and praises students' progress
38.	Ensure availability of equipment and supplies at training area
54.	Provides useful feedback to students on clinical performance
32.	Utilize hospital resources effectively to improve student skills

Table (6): Factor labels, means, standard deviation, and Variance.

Factor name	No. of items	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance
Professional competency	15	3.351	0.9206	0.847
Relationship	18	3.487	0.8835	0.0781
Personality characteristics	16	3.471	0.8979	0.806
Evaluation	8	3.398	0.9520	0.906

Table (7): Evaluation of Faculty staff assistants Performance according to students level (n = 268).

# Dep. Var. Evaluation Tool	Descriptive			ANOVA					
	## Level	N	Mean	Indep. Variable	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	P. value
Professional competency	Second	67	4.025	Between Groups	24.388	2	12.194	17.620	0.001*
	Third	122	3.207	Within Groups	101.038	146	0.692		
	Fourth	79	2.993	**Total**	**125.426**	**148**			
	Total	**268**	**3.351**						
Relationship	Second	67	4.093	Between Groups	19.045	2	9.522	14.412	0.001*
	Third	122	3.323	Within Groups	96.470	146	0.661		
	Fourth	79	3.216	**Total**	**115.515**	**148**			
	Total	**268**	**3.487**						
Personality characteristics	Second	67	4.053	Between Groups	17.626	2	8.813	12.653	0.001*
	Third	122	3.322	Within Groups	101.690	146	0.697		
	Fourth	79	3.200	**Total**	**119.316**	**148**			
	Total	**268**	**3.471**						
Evaluation	Second	67	3.921	Between Groups	14.136	2	7.068	8.600	0.002*
	Third	122	3.250	Within Groups	119.991	146	0.822		
	Fourth	79	3.172	**Total**	**134.127**	**148**			
	Total	**268**	**3.398**						

* Statistically significance   # Dependent variable   ## Independent variable

6. DISCUSSION

Faculty staff assistants have a responsibility to their students as well as to their profession to develop valid and reliable instrument to measure effective clinical instruction in administration, medical-surgical, pediatric, maternity, community and psychiatric nursing *(Sullivan, 2015)*. The present study was conducted with the aim of designing an instrument that can be used by students to evaluate the faculty staff assistants' performance, and testing its validity and reliability.

According to the study findings, the jury group expressed the view that the proposed evaluation tool for faculty staff assistants' performance is a comprehensive tool covering the expected behaviour of the faculty staff assistants. Therefore, the tool has acceptable face validity. This result is consistent with *Fitzpatrick & Wallace (2016)*, who concluded that face validity is a way of saying the instrument looks as if it measures what it says it measures.

Students are the recipients of instructions; therefore, it is important that a valid and reliable instrument be available for them to evaluate their instructors *(Essa & Adam, 2008)*. The validity of the tool developed in the present study was examined by jury opinions regarding the general format of the proposed tool and its content, and then confirming the content validity by conducting factor analysis for construct validity.

The same was reported by *Hicks & Hennessy (2008)*, who have emphasized the importance of tool validation. Therefore, any tool for evaluating faculty staff assistants needs to be validated and tested for reliability before its use.

Regarding the importance and not importance of included items in the evaluation tool, by using the criteria of (80%) or more for maintaining the items, according to the faculty staff assistants opinion, only seven items were excluded. This might be related to the higher present of the cut-off point to maintaining the items. This is inconsistent with *Essa and Adam (2008)* who determined that if 50% or more of the faculty members rated an item as important if it was maintained.

Content validity is the degree to which the items of a tool adequately represent the universe of the content. This is the most important type of validity because it ensures a match between research target and data collection tool *(Burns and Grove, 2007).* This evidence is supporting the content validity of the proposed evaluation tool which based on literature review and on the judgment of the jury.

The reliability of the proposed tool was also ascertained by test-retest reliability method, in the present study, test-retest reliability reveals significance statistical relationship (correlation = 0.944). For most purposes, reliability coefficient higher than 0.70 are satisfactory, but coefficients in the range of 0.85 to 0.95 are more preferable *(Polit et al., 2001).* This provides further strength to the designed tool in the present study.

Factor analysis clearly demonstrates that a number of distinct and meaningful dimensions measured by these items. Without these dimensions, the researcher cannot identify the characteristics of effective faculty staff assistants' behaviours.

At the same line, *Essa and Adam (2008)* have conducted factor analysis to check the validity of the evaluation tool to determine the major elements of clinical teaching behaviour and identified the underlying teaching dimensions or factors on which faculty staff assistants vary.

At the same time, *Polit & Beck (2004)* emphasized that validating an instrument in terms of construct validity is a challenging task. Construct validation can be approached in several ways, but it always logical analysis and tests predicted by theoretical consideration*.*

7. CONCLUSIONS

A valid and a highly reliable tool for evaluating faculty staff assistants' performance by the students was developed by the researcher consisted of 57 of items underling four dimensions: professional competency, relationship, personality characteristics and evaluation.

Face and content validation of the tool were ascertained through full acceptance by juries. The majority of faculty staff assistants agreed on the importance of 63 items out of 70 items from the evaluation tool, only seven items agreed not important and were excluded. Reliability, as evaluated by test-retest was very high. Reliability was assessed through estimating internal consistency (Cronbach alpha coefficient), which proved to be high. The study finding provides accurate, dependable, helpful, practical and truthful instrument that can be used by students to evaluate the faculty staff assistants' performance.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the main study findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The designed evaluation tool to assess the faculty staff assistants' performance by students should be used at the faculty of nursing and must be revised periodically to keep it up-to-date with the current changes in nursing.

2. Provide students with sufficient time to complete the evaluation form.

3. Avoid conducting schedule evaluations immediately before or after a final exam.

4. Prior to distributing the evaluation tool; explain the evaluation form carefully for students to fill precisely the form.

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5. The faculty staff assistants must be orientated with all items of the evaluation tool.

6. The evaluation of faculty staff assistants by students should be coupled with faculty and training setting evaluation.

7. The evaluation must be online clinical evaluation with the current development technology and consistent with the computer system faculty.

8. The faculty must take necessary actions after the end of the student‟s evaluation for faculty staff assistants to ensure the development of the clinical nursing education and to avoid routine evaluation.

9. Generalize the designed tool to be used in other faculties of nursing.

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