

EDITORIAL

Outcome measures in clinical education research

The Journal of Clinical Education in Physical Therapy (*JCEPT*) is an open-access journal that disseminates peer-reviewed quantitative and qualitative scholarship to increase the quality evidence available related to clinical education in physical therapy. Since 2021, the number of article downloads has increased by more than 10-fold, with annual increases exceeding 200%. Open-access allows *JCEPT* readers free access to both read online and download full-text articles. Last year, one article was viewed over 900 times while another was downloaded nearly 1,200 times. The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) began indexing *JCEPT* last year and now accounts for 14% of our referral sources. Next year, we expect to obtain indexing in PubMed Central (PMC), which will further increase the discoverability of *JCEPT* articles.

The nature of clinical education raises various challenges to research, with one being how to assess outcomes. Articles published this year in *JCEPT* reflect the thoughtful application of different approaches to outcome measures. Some questions were assessed with quantitative measures while others used qualitative research methods. Self-efficacy was measured in two different articles exploring the domains of cross-cultural psychological capital and clinical competence. Clinical reasoning was assessed using the physical therapy Clinical Performance Instrument in one article and script concordance tests in another. A more recently established outcome such as inter-professional socialization was assessed with a quantitative scale while emotional and educational adaptability themes were explored with qualitative methods. In past volumes, a SNAPPS model (summarize, narrow, analyse, probe, plan, select) of clinical mentoring was used to help students process initial evaluation findings and longitudinal narrative analyses were used to assess the development of resident clinical reasoning skills.

Outcome measures assessing the effectiveness of clinical education are essential.¹ Efforts may start with the thoughtful choice of psychometrically supported quantitative measures as well as rigorous description of qualitative measures.² However, recent *JCEPT* articles suggest many factors can influence the quality of a clinician,¹ including their educational curriculum, pre-clinical training, the clinical environment of their patient exposures, the individual characteristics and stresses of students and their clinical instructors, as well as environmental forces such as the COVID pandemic. Translating the effectiveness of clinical education to improved clinical care and patient outcomes remains a challenge for future researchers.

JCEPT publishes scholarly work affecting any aspect of clinical education in physical therapy addressing academic or clinical faculty, entry-level students or residents, curricula or teaching and learning methods. In addition to original research, systematic reviews, and innovative teaching methods, this year *JCEPT* published our first 'clinical education case report' describing remediation methods during clinical training and related outcomes. We look forward to publishing more papers and developing the evidence underpinning physical therapy clinical education.

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Editors in Chief

References

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2. Hammarberg K, Kirkman M, de Lacey S. Qualitative research methods: when to use them and how to judge them. *Hum Reprod* (2016) 31(3): 498–501.