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Charting the use of mini-clinical evaluation exercise (mini-CEX) in nursing and dental education: a bibliometric analysis from the Web of Science database

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Abstract

Background: Workplace-based assessments, such as the mini-clinical evaluation exercise (mini-CEX), are increasingly used to evaluate clinical competence in authentic healthcare settings. This study aimed to map and evaluate the global research landscape of miniCEX in nursing and dental education through bibliometric analysis. Methods: A literature search was conducted in the Web of Science Core Collection on July 1, 2025, using the terms “mini-CEX,” “mini clinical evaluation exercise,” “nursing,” “nurse,” “dental,” and “dentistry.” Eligible articles were studies published in English that involved learners or educators in nursing or dental education. Data such as publication metrics, authorship, affiliations, keyword co-occurrence, journal impact, and Sustainable

Development Goal (SDG) alignment were extracted and analyzed. Results: Thirty-seven articles were included. They received 229 citations, with an h-index of nine and an average of 6.19 citations per article. Most were indexed in the Science Citation Index Expanded or the Social Sciences Citation Index (67.6%), and 42.9% were published in Quartile 1 journals. The majority aligned with SDG 04 (Quality Education). Nursing-focused studies outnumbered dental studies. Authorship networks were fragmented, with limited cross-institutional collaboration. BMC Medical Education was the leading journal, and 2022 saw the highest number of publications. From 2020 onwards, both publication and citation counts increased significantly ($p<0.01$). Iran and China contributed the most articles. Keyword analysis revealed five clusters: “skills,” “mini-CEX,” “clinical competence,” “competence,” and “impact.” Conclusion: Research on mini-CEX in nursing and dental education is expanding, yet enhanced interprofessional collaboration is needed to maximize its global scholarly and practical impact. © 2025 Yeungnam University College of Medicine, Yeungnam University Institute of Medical Science.

Author keywords

Assessment tool; Clinical competence; Dental education; Educational measurement; Health professions; Nursing education

Indexed keywords

EMTREE medical terms

article; benchmarking; bibliometrics; clinical competence; clinical evaluation; dental education; education; exercise; human; Iran; medical education; medical profession; nurse; nursing education; special situation for pharmacovigilance; sustainable development goal; systematic review; Web of Science; workplace

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