



Book Review: Toolbox for Assessment of Clinical Competence

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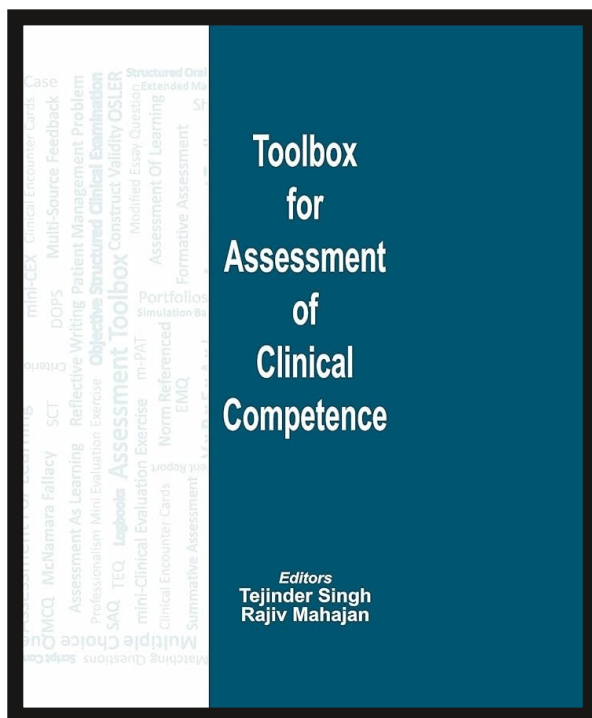
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Toolbox for assessment of Clinical Competence

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Clinical competence is a sufficiently complex concept that it requires multiple tools for its assessment. Its assessment goes beyond just evaluating clinical skills and knowledge, and requires delving into areas like communication skills, professionalism, teamwork, and ethical considerations.

The manual "Toolbox for assessment of

clinical Competence', co-authored by seven eminent Health Professions Educationists from India, provides a comprehensive and contemporary approach to assessment of clinical competence. The editors and authors have worked extensively in the field of assessment and the book reflects their expertise. The book explores various domains of clinical competence

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assessment, covering both traditional and modern approaches and can be considered as a ready reckoner for the same.

The seven strengths of this book that a reader would appreciate are:

1. User-Friendly Design: The reading experience is enhanced by use of clear, well-spaced typefaces, ample margins, and minimalistic design.

2. Ease of navigation: The book begins with instructions for the reader on how to use the manual which offers insights on how to navigate and effectively utilize the contents of the book. This is followed by a review of general principles of assessment, highlighting the importance of blueprinting and standard setting to assess clinical competence.

3. Organisation and structuring: The book is divided into sections structured to focus on tools to assess each level of clinical competence, as per the Miller's pyramid. Each section offers a comprehensive overview of a wide range of assessment methods, strategies, and tools.

4. Consistency and clarity: The readers will find the content presented in a clear and concise style, designed to convey information in a direct manner, which would be easy to comprehend by even the new entrants in the field of Health Professions Education. Each tool is summarised in 2-3 pages followed by important references for the reader to pursue as per their learning needs. This helps bring clarity and lays emphasis on the essential features of the assessment tool.

5. Empowers the reader to take informed decisions: Each section discusses the pluses and minuses of the use of the tool, relevant to the Indian context, enabling the reader to select the

tool with the best utility in their own setting.

6. Insightful: The description of tools for assessment of 'Knows and Knows how' like extended matching questions, key feature questions, and patient management problems provide insights into ways of assessment beyond testing basic knowledge. These tools gauge clinical decision-making, approach to patient management, and critical thinking skills. The Toolbox also provides valuable insights into the integration of technology in assessment. The discussions on simulation-based assessments and electronic portfolios offer educators innovative strategies to enhance their assessment practices.

7. Inclusion of Innovations: The assessment of interprofessional team working skills using Team Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) and the use of Group OSCE for formative assessment are interesting adaptations and very feasible tools to use for assessment of undergraduate students.

Given the complexity of the subject matter, certain topics especially the section on the 'Assessment for DOES' could do with the inclusion of practical scenarios and standardised rating scales for each tool, to enhance the book's applicability in the actual assessment setting. Practical advice including tips on creating rubrics, standard setting, and addressing potential biases in the Indian context would be particularly helpful for educators looking to improve their assessment practices.

In a nutshell, the authors have succeeded in presenting a diverse array of assessment tools and methods. From essay questions and OSCEs, to workplace-based assessments, readers can gain insights into multiple approaches in the evolving landscape of assessment in health professions education.

I'll end with a verse:

*Inside this assessment toolbox's core, lie vital essentials, a treasure to explore,
A guiding star for your earnest mind's flight, a beacon of wisdom, guiding you right.
It readies you for glitches that may unfurl, unveiling secrets, a valuable pearl.
With swiftness akin to lightning's streak, a delight for educators, the knowledge they seek.*
