

BACKGROUND

The interview process can be very challenging for both the employer and applicant. This is also true for academic institutions who interview potential students. Most interviews are conducted either one-on-one or in a panel format, both of which have pros and cons. A major drawback with either of the interviewing formats is there is only one chance to make a first impression. Sometimes a student stumbles or makes a mistake which can affect the rest of the interview.

The interview process attempts to understand the non-cognitive qualities of an individual for fit into the program. Health care professionals need the ability to work with other professionals and patients. This may include decision making, ethical judgment, and interprofessional skills. A new method of interviewing applicants is becoming more prevalent in the health care field. The multiple mini interviews (MMI) involve a series of questions being asked in a circuit format to obtain a score of an applicant's non-cognitive skills. As well it provides an opportunity for many "first impressions".



Currently applicants are required to travel to a location to be interviewed, which may impose a financial barrier. With the development of web-based video conferencing, individuals can communicate "face-to-face" over long distances with minimal financial barrier. This may help to accommodate rural students as they apply to post secondary institutions.

Thus it was determined that an evaluation of MMI using a web-based conferencing system (Skype[®]) would be undertaken.

METHODS

Subjects: A group of 23 students from NAIT’s School of Health Sciences participated in the research study. Five males (average age of 23 years) and 18 females (average age of 26 years) participated. Of the males, 2 out of 5 had Skype experience where as 11 out of 18 females had Skype experience. None had previous MMI experience.

Design: Each participant was interviewed twice using the ProFitHR[®] MMI technique. In one condition the subject was interviewed in the standard face-to-face (F2F) format. In the second condition the subjects used video conferencing technology (Skype) to perform the MMI. A cross-over design was used, where half the subjects were interviewed in condition 1 first, then condition 2, and vice versa. Each condition utilized the same questions, in the same order, with the same interviewer. Participants were ranked from best to worst on a 10 point scale.

All of the interviews were performed in ideal “laboratory” conditions.

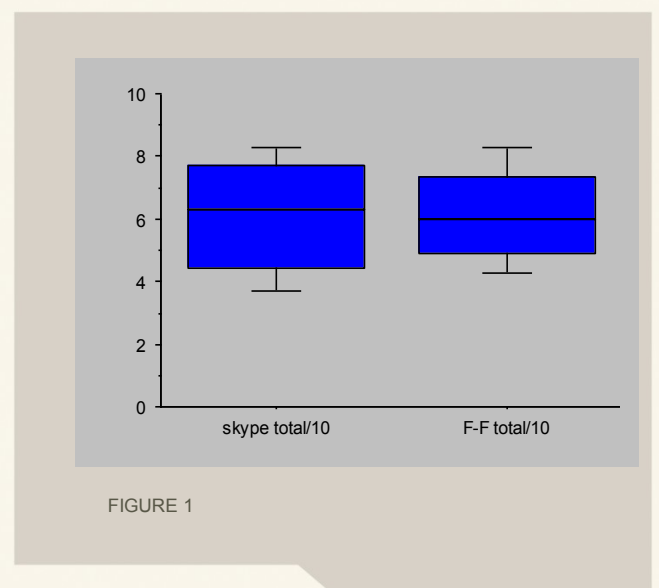
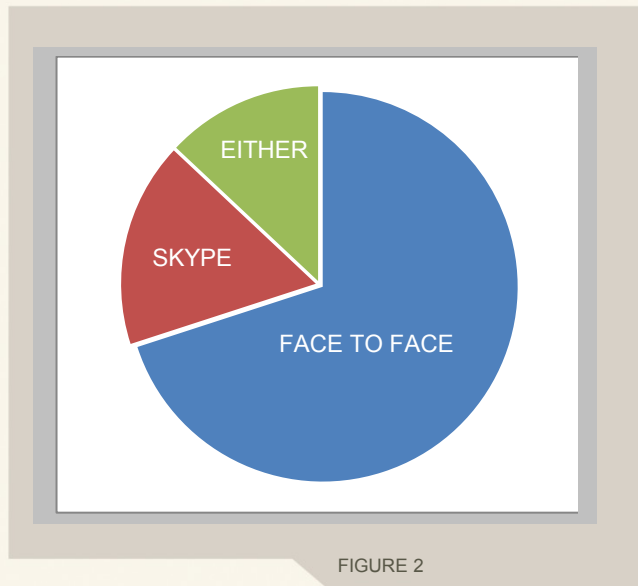


FIGURE 1

RESULTS



The primary research question was to determine if applicants received the same score using Skype as F2F. The average F2F score out of 10 was 6.2 with a standard deviation of 1.5. The average Skype score out of 10 was 6.1 with a standard deviation of 1.8.; there was no significant difference between the scores (Figure 1).

Further analysis showed that when applicants were ranked from top to bottom there were some individual differences between the two conditions. The difference in ranking between conditions ranged from 0 to 7 places with an average of 3 places. Compared to the F2F condition, two subjects had no change, 12 did better and 9 did worse on Skype, this suggests no systematic difference.

A secondary question was to determine if there was a day to day or learning effect. The scores for day 1 were 5.9 out of 10 and day 2 was 5.8 out of 10, no significant difference.

Both applicants and interviewers were asked which method of MMI delivery they preferred. Seventy percent of the applicants preferred the F2F method while 17% preferred Skype and 13% liked either method equally (Figure 2). The interviewers also preferred the F2F method (70%) with 30% choosing either. When asked about performing the MMI in the future 52% of applicants would prefer F2F, 13% Skype and 35% would use either. Interviewers' responses were 30% F2F, 10% Skype and 60% either.

CONCLUSIONS

- No systematic difference in applicant scores between conditions.
- No difference between applicant scores on day 1 and 2.
- F2F is the preferred method; however, both applicants and interviewers were open to using Skype.

RECOMENDATIONS

- Replicate the study with a large and more diverse sample.
- Replicate this study in a "non-laboratory" setting.

VALIDITY OF COMPUTER BASED MULTIPLE MINI INTERVIEWS (MMI)

RESEARCH REPORT



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RESEARCH TEAM

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR

**Randy W. Dreger, PhD, Instructor,
Personal Fitness Trainer Program
780.491.3098
rdreger@nait.ca**

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School of Health Sciences (SHS) co-investigators

- Heather Gray, BSc, Chair-Diagnostic Laboratory & Medical Transcription
- Joy Lutz, CLXT, Instructor-Combined Laboratory & X-Ray Technology.
- Denise MacIver, M.Ed., Associate Dean-SHS
- Ellen Hughes, M.Ed., Dean-SHS
- Scott Paradis, CPT, Research Assistant-SHS

Technical Support

- Troy Gregoire, School of Information Communications and Engineering