A Mixed Methods Study: Evaluation of Experiential Learning Techniques throughout a Nursing Curriculum to Promote Empathy

Authors : Joan Esper Kuhnly, Jess Holden, Lynn Shelley, Nicole Kuhnly

Abstract : Empathy serves as a foundational nursing principle inherent in the nurse's ability to form those relationships from which to care for patients. Evidence supports, including empathy in nursing and healthcare education, but there is limited data on what methods are effective to do so. Building evidence supports experiential and interactive learning methods to be effective for students to gain insight and perspective from a personalized experience. The purpose of this project is to evaluate learning activities designed to promote the attainment of empathic behaviors across 5 levels of the nursing curriculum. Quantitative analysis will be conducted on data from pre and post-learning activities using the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire. The main hypothesis, that simulation learning activities will increase empathy, will be examined using a repeated measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on Pre and Post Toronto Empathy Questionnaire scores for three simulation activities (Stroke, Poverty, Dementia). Pearson product-moment correlations will be conducted to examine the relationships between continuous demographic variables, such as age, credits earned, and years practicing, with the dependent variable of interest, Post Test Toronto Empathy Scores. Krippendorff's method of content analysis will be conducted to identify the quantitative incidence of empathic responses. The researchers will use Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological method to describe the students' simulation experience and understand its impact on caring and empathy behaviors employing bracketing to maintain objectivity. The results will be presented, answering multiple research questions. The discussion will be relevant to results and educational pedagogy in the nursing curriculum as they relate to the attainment of empathic behaviors.
Keywords : curriculum, empathy, nursing, simulation

Conference Title : ICE 2021 : International Conference on Empathy
Conference Location : Athens, Greece
Conference Dates : April 08-09, 2021