**Background**

The passage rate of The National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) increases by “3.69 %” when simulation is used in the pre-licensure nursing programs (Terwilliger, 2013, p.1). New nurses, having underdeveloped critical thinking skills cause more errors and have fewer positive patient outcomes than more experienced nurses (Unver et al., 2012). Errors result in complications from increased hospital stays to significantly reduced patient and family satisfaction (Reeves, West, & Barron, 2013).

**Problem**

Novice nurses have lower critical thinking abilities which can lead to poor patient outcomes and errors

Despite a looming nursing shortage, the NCLEX pass rate nationally is only 87.11%.

**Implementation**

During the pharmacology course, student participated in simulations designed to expand their understanding of:

- Medication administration
- Pre and post medication assessments
- Medications side effects

Prior to the simulation, students took the Watson-Glaser II Critical Thinking Appraisal. At the end of the semester, the students repeated the appraisal and completed the NLN Student Satisfaction and Self-Confidence In Learning Survey.

**Outcomes**

**NLN Student Satisfaction and Self-Confidence in Learning**. Using Cronbach’s alpha: satisfaction = 0.94; self-confidence = 0.87

**Watson Glaser II Critical Thinking Appraisal**

A paired sample one-tailed t-test (SPSS) examining pre and post simulation test scores

\[ t = 1.79, \ SD = 4.65, \ n = 36(35) \]

One-tailed P = 0.04

Simulations potentially can improve nursing students’ critical thinking skills

**Conclusion**

This study shows the potential to improve nursing student’s critical thinking with simulation added to the didactic environment

**References**


