

Nursing Education Research Conference 2020
Multi-Site Study Comparing Attitudes and Comfort of Nursing Students
Interacting With Patients With a Disability

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Purpose: One billion people worldwide (World Bank, 2017) and 53 million adults in the U.S. live with disability (CDC, 2017). This high prevalence and evidence that nursing programs devote little attention to people with disability (PWD) (Smeltzer et al., 2010) was the motivation behind these simulation-based experiences (SBE) with standardized patients with disability (SPWD). The purpose of this study was to compare nursing students' attitudes towards and comfort with interacting with people with disability (PWD) for students who participated in a program of simulation with standardized PWD with students who did not participate in these simulation-based experiences. The hypothesis guiding this study was: there will be a difference in nursing students' attitudes towards and comfort with interacting with PWD for students who participated in a program of simulation with SPWD with students who did not participate in these simulation-based experiences (SBE). These SBEs with SPWD gave students an opportunity to interact with and care for people with disability with the goal of improving their attitudes towards and comfort with their interactions with this population.

Methods: The study design was a two group, posttest design. Senior level nursing students from two different colleges of nursing were the participants. The colleges were both private catholic universities, and the participants included students from traditional undergraduate 4-year programs and accelerated BSN programs. Students from one school received the intervention, which was a program of simulation that included simulation-based experiences across the curriculum using standardized patients with disabilities. Students from the intervention and the control groups completed the following posttest at the end of their program: The Attitudes Towards Disabled Persons (ATDP) Scale (Yuker, Block, & Young, 1966; 1970) and the Interactions with Disabled Persons (IDP) Survey (Gething, 1991) to measure attitudes and comfort with interactions with people with disability.

Results: Descriptive statistics were used to summarize demographics and mean scores on the surveys. Independent t-tests on the ATDP had a statistically significant positive difference for students who participated in the SBEs with SPWD than for those that did not, with a higher mean score for the intervention group; there was no statistically significant difference for the IDP. Reliabilities for both surveys were above .70. Responses to open-ended questions were coded into categories and reflected a positive experience for the students who participated in the simulations with patients with disability.

Conclusion: This study provides evidence that these simulation-based learning experiences with standardized patients with disabilities had positive outcomes for students who participated in the program of simulation across their curriculum. This study focused specifically on end of program evaluation of this intervention, future research could include a pretest-posttest design and identified patient outcomes for people with disability.

Title:

Multi-Site Study Comparing Attitudes and Comfort of Nursing Students Interacting With Patients With a Disability

Keywords:

disability, simulation and standardized patients

Abstract Summary:

This multi-site comparative study provides statistically significant evidence that simulation-based experiences with standardized patients with disability (SPWD) improved student attitudes towards people with disability (PWD). Analysis of open-ended questions found that students recommended these simulation experiences as a valuable way to learn about interacting with people with disability.

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Author Summary: Dr. Mariani is an associate professor of nursing at Villanova University. Her research and scholarship focuses on simulation development and outcomes, research instrument development/psychometrics, and debriefing. She has published and presented nationally and internationally on debriefing, simulation for patient safety, leadership development, instrument development/psychometrics, simulation with SPs with disability, and the outcomes of simulation on student learning. She has served as President of the International Nursing Association of Clinical Simulation and Learning.

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