Undergraduate Nursing Students’ Perspectives about a Community Poverty Simulation Workshop: A Longitudinal Cohort Study

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Disclosures

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Poverty: A Global Issue

- Affects 1.2 billion people worldwide
  - 43 million in the USA  
    (World Health Organization, 2017)

- Impact on health and general well being  
  (Basch, 2014)

- Impact on the most vulnerable
  - Children and the elderly
    (Engle & Black, 2008; Estes & Wallace, 2006)
Changes in Nursing Education

- Relationship between poverty and health  
  (Basch, 2014)

- Greater focus of determinants of health in nursing curricula

- Students’ attitudes towards individuals living in poverty  
  (Clarke, Sedlacek & Watson, 2016; Patterson & Hulton, 2012)
Simulation Education

- Potential to improve students’ attitudes towards poverty
  (Clarke, Sedlacek & Watson, 2016; Patterson & Hulton, 2012)

- National guidelines recommend simulation experiences to supplement clinical learning
  (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2008)

- Contribute to an increased awareness and engagement with social justice
  (Kirkham, Van Hofwegern & Harwood, 2005)
Objectives

- To evaluate the effectiveness of a poverty simulation workshop on students’ knowledge and attitudes towards poverty
- To describe students’ perspectives of the simulation session
- Identify areas for improvement
Mixed methods design

Two cohorts of undergraduate nursing students

Missouri’s Community Action Poverty Simulation Program was used

Pre and post tests measuring poverty knowledge and the *Attitudes Towards Poverty* short form were used
Poverty Simulation Workshop Day

- No prior information about simulation
- Simulates 1-month living with inadequate resources
- Each week = 15 minutes of simulated time
- Students are divided into “families”
- Volunteers take on various roles in the community
Results

- **132** students agreed to participate
  - **68** in first cohort and **64** in the second cohort
  - No significant differences between cohorts
- **94%** reported this will change the way they interact with patients affected by poverty
- **86%** found simulation to be personally worthwhile
13% reported nursing students should not have to participate

49% reported they would not have attended if it was not mandatory

Vast majority perceived the experience as beneficial and positive in narrative comments
97% reported learning something new

Items about the healthcare system most missed or not known by sample

- “The social service system in America only has a positive impact on those it serves”
- “The private sector has no role in improving the situation of people with low income”
Results: Poverty Attitudes

- No significant differences between pre and post scores or between cohorts

- Items marked neutral (as having no opinion either way) included:
  - "People are poor due to circumstances beyond their control"
  - "Society has the responsibility to help poor people"
Student Perspectives

- **Frustration**
  - “It was frustrating to go from place to place and not get any help”

- **Understanding**
  - “I will be more understanding”

- **Non-judgmental**
  - “I will recognize people’s struggles before passing judgments”
Implications

- Avoiding misconceptions and stereotypes
- Younger students = life experience
- Poverty understanding is an essential component for providing compassionate quality healthcare
- Shared responsibility to the patients, families and communities we serve
Limitations

- Homogeneous sample from one University setting
- Contamination and maturation issues threaten the validity of studies focusing on the scholarship of teaching and learning
- Longitudinal effects not known
Impact

- Annual event part of our curriculum
- Impact extends into community
  - Identification of a local agency in need
  - Guest speaker concludes workshop day
  - Students’ facilitate collection and delivery of donations

Goal = further than local = GLOBAL


