

Background

Using high fidelity simulators (HFS) is getting common in nursing education as it brings about realism to most clinical education. However, its use remains limited in mental health nursing. (Kameg et al., 2010). Fairly new in the Asia region especially when used in mental health training (Fay-Hiller et al., 2012; Lin et al, 2013).

Aims

This study aimed to explore undergraduate nursing students' learning experiences with the use of SP for mental health nursing. Research questions for the study were:

1. Is there a significant change in nursing students' satisfaction level following participation in the SP session?
2. Is there a significant change in nursing students' confidence level following participation in the SP session?

Methods

Study Design: A pre-post test, single group quasi-experimental design. Standardised patients (SPs) are provided by the Centre of Health Simulation, NUS. A case vignette was provided to all SPs for the purpose of standardization during the teaching session.

Sampling

A convenience sample of all students were used. Participation was entirely voluntary which was done by a independent staff member who is not involved in this module.

Outcome measures

- (i) Section A: Demographic sheet— age, gender, ethnicity and any experience taking care or interacting with patient with mental illness.
- (ii) Section B: The NLN Student Satisfaction and Self-Confidence in Learning Scale—is a 13-item, five point Likert scale where higher scores indicates more satisfaction and confidence towards the learning journey respectively.
- (iii) Section C: Qualitative Feedback by students on their learning journey.

Results

Table 1: Characteristics of the Study Population

Characteristics	n (%)	Characteristics	n (%)
Gender		Ethnicity	
Female	82 (86.3)	Chinese	78 (82.1)
Male	13 (13.7)	Malay	13 (13.7)
		Indian	02 (2.1)
Citizenship		Others	02 (2.1)
Singaporean	90 (94.7)		
Others	05 (5.3)	Experience Interacting with the mentally ill	
		Yes	45 (47.4)
Experience Taking Care as a nurse		No	50 (52.6)
Yes	15 (15.8)		
No	79 (84.0)		

Table 2: Nursing Students' Satisfaction/ Confidence Level

Outcome	Pretest		Posttest		Mean of Differences	95% CI for Mean Difference	Eta squared	t
	M	SD	M	SD				
Satisfaction	17.07	2.47	22.70	2.24	5.09	4.43, 5.76	0.07	15.12*
Confidence	30.22	3.93	32.77	3.50	2.55	1.59, 3.50	0.23	5.29*

*p < .000

Table 3: Nursing Students' Prior experience on Satisfaction

	Satisfaction	95% CI for Mean Difference	p value	Partial Eta Squared
Experience interacting with Mentally ill	Yes	.66	-0.26, 1.58	.156
	No	Ref	-	-
Experience taking care of the mentally ill as a nurse	Yes	2.02	0.82, 3.21	.001**
	No	Ref	-	-

*p < .000

Qualitative Findings

Applicability: "Good exposure for us to relate how patients may react, S1"; "By using SP, far more real compared to reading the textbook, S36".

Confidence: "We can know what is it in real life and be more prepared for it, S10"; "It is more interactive and I get the opportunity to build my confidence, S19".

Knowledge Integration: "I really got a feel of how a patient with such condition will behave, it let me think of my own gaps, S15"; "I feel that my senses are all heightened and I am more aware of my non-verbal cues, S32".

Valuable session: "It was a really good experience. The scenarios was very real and good for us if we wish to apply and master the skills we have learnt in school, S83"

Discussion

- Using SPs in undergraduate mental health education had significantly improved both students' satisfaction and confidence level (Choi, 2012; Kameg et al., 2010; Lin et al., 2013).
- SPs encounters provided opportunities for patient encounters which is essential for gaining interpersonal competence before clinical practice (Robinson-Smith et al., 2009).
- Qualitative feedbacks supported the use of SPs where students reported an overall reduction in anxiety and improvement in terms of prepar-

References

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