Clinical Simulation in Nursing (2018) 16, 33-39

Clinical Simulation in Nursing

www.elsevier.com/locate/ecsn

Featured Article

Intraprofessional Simulation's Impact on Advanced Practice and Baccalaureate Student Self-Efficacy

Amanda Kirkpatrick, MSN, RN-BC[a,*], Sarah Ball, MSN, RNC-OB, C-EFM[a], Susan Connelly, DNP, APRN[a], Maribeth Hercinger, PhD, RN[b], Jacquie Hanks, DNP, APRN[a], Meghan Potthoff, PhD, APRN[a], Sara Banzhaf, MSN, APRN[a], Kandis McCafferty, PhD, RNC-OB, C-EFM[a]

[a]*Assistant Professor, Creighton University, College of Nursing, Omaha, NE 68178, USA*
[b]*Associate Professor, Creighton University, College of Nursing, Omaha, NE 68178, USA*

KEYWORDS
simulation;
intraprofessional;
self-efficacy;
pediatrics;
peer learning;
interprofessional;
peer mentor;
near peer;
leadership;
mentorship;
collaboration;
communication;
nursing;
student

Abstract

Background: Benefits of peer learning activities among students have been well documented. According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy positively influences the delivery of quality nursing care. A pediatric simulation with peer learning and advanced practice nursing (APN) students was conducted to foster self-efficacy in baccalaureate in nursing (BSN) students.

Method: A pre—post quasi-experimental design was used to evaluate the simulations' effect on student self-efficacy in a convenience sample of BSN students at a Midwest Jesuit university.

Results: More than 90% of BSN students agreed that they benefited from the simulation in the areas of leadership, skill development, communication, and collaboration. In addition, a statistically significant increase ($p < .0001$) in BSN students' reported understanding of the roles and relationships between a physician, APN-, and a BSN-prepared nurse was revealed.

Conclusions: Intraprofessional nursing peer learning activities can enhance students' self-efficacy. Future studies should include objective measurements of student clinical performance and intraprofessional collaboration with correlational analysis of both BSN and APN student self-efficacy.

Cite this article:
Kirkpatrick, A., Ball, S., Connelly, S., Hercinger, M., Hanks, J., Potthoff, M., Banzhaf, S., & McCafferty, K. (2018, March). Intraprofessional simulation's impact on advanced practice and baccalaureate student self-efficacy. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing, 16*(C), 33-39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecns.2017.11.005.

Peer learning activities, often referenced in nursing education literature as near-peer teaching, peer mentoring, and student-led learning, have been studied as collaborative learning strategies in classroom, clinical, and laboratory settings (Chojecki et al., 2010; Kurtz, Lemley, & Alverson,

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

* Corresponding author: mandykirkpatrick@creighton.edu (A. Kirkpatrick).

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https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecns.2017.11.005

2010; Li, Wang, & Lin, 2010; Owen & Ward-Smith, 2014; Piscotty, Grobbel, & Tzeng, 2011; Stone, Cooper, & Cant, 2013). Stone et al. (2013) defines peer learning as "gaining, refining, or improving knowledge from interaction with a peer" (p. 2). This activity involves a mentor who supports and guides a peer with a comparable or lower level of knowledge and experience. The literature supports the benefits of peer learning activities, within and between upper-level and lower-level undergraduate nursing students, including stimulating leadership development, fostering confidence in clinical decision making, decreasing student stress levels, and increasing ability to perform technical nursing skills (Li et al., 2010; Owen & Ward-Smith, 2014). Peer learning is also a strategy that supports effective and efficient use of both faculty and student time (Chojecki et al., 2010).

Key Points

- This study evaluated the effects of an intraprofessional high-fidelity simulation on pediatric advanced practice nursing and baccalaureate in nursing students' self-efficacy.
- This simulation resulted in a positive impact on the baccalaureate in nursing students' intraprofessional communication, leadership skills, and understanding of the advanced practice nursing role and the importance of collaboration.
- Future studies should include objective measurement of students' intraprofessional collaboration with correlational analysis of student self-efficacy.

Although the literature supports peer learning among undergraduate nursing students, a gap exists in the evidence related to the use of mentoring strategies between graduate and undergraduate nursing students. To address this gap, an intraprofessional peer learning/mentoring simulation intervention was developed and conducted between advanced practice nursing (APN) students and baccalaureate in nursing (BSN) students to determine its effect on student self-efficacy in communication, leadership development, role identification, and collaboration.

Background

Stone et al. (2013) conducted a systematic review of peer learning in undergraduate nursing education and found that this collaborative learning approach was effective in decreasing student anxiety and increasing student competence and self-efficacy. A qualitative study of peer learning revealed that decreases in student anxiety were a result of the emotional and physical supports offered by peers and the opportunity to practice effective communication and shared decision making (Chojecki et al., 2010).

Self-Efficacy and Simulation

The social cognitive theory introduces the construct of self-efficacy as one's confidence in their own abilities (Bandura, 1986). Nursing students who have confidence in their abilities focus more effectively on meeting the needs of their patients (Leigh, 2008). Self-efficacy in APN and BSN students can be augmented by practicing the essential skills of their profession through simulated activity. High-fidelity simulation offers students the opportunity to build on professional knowledge gained in the classroom by applying the knowledge and skills within the context of a realistic clinical situation (Piscotty et al., 2011). Simulation also provides clinical experiences to students, which would otherwise be missed because of lack of opportunity or availability of clinical sites. Many nursing schools across the nation face competition for clinical sites and a shortage of pediatric faculty, which limits the availability of pediatric clinical experiences for BSN students (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2012; McDonald, 2016). Simulation provides a safe controlled environment that assists students in developing their skills and improving their self-efficacy (Leigh, 2008; Piscotty et al., 2011; Reese, Jefferies, & Engum, 2010).

Peer Learning and Simulation

Several studies found that student engagement in peer learning within simulations resulted in positive outcomes for both the mentors and their peers (Owen & Ward-Smith, 2014; Piscotty et al., 2011; Ramm, Thomson, & Jackson, 2015). Student-led simulation results in improved self-efficacy and knowledge in traditional and accelerated nursing students (Piscotty et al., 2011). Collaborative learning fosters leadership and responsibility in upper-level students and encourages teamwork, knowledge, and skills development (Owen & Ward-Smith, 2014; Ramm et al., 2015).

Intraprofessional Collaboration

According to the Institute of Medicine (2011), both APN and BSN-prepared registered nurses are an integral part of the future transformation of health care, and effective communication skills and mutual respect between these nursing professionals are necessary. Studies investigating peer learning/mentoring activities between graduate and undergraduate nursing students are limited, with no report of student outcomes, including the BSN student's understanding of the APN role. Collaborative learning through simulation provides an opportunity for mentorship between graduate and undergraduate nursing students and practice with intraprofessional communication.

Currently, there is strong evidence that supports that interprofessional learning activities in health care can