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Featured Article

Nursing Students' Perspectives on Manikins of Color in Simulation Laboratories

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KEYWORDS

simulation;
manikins of color;
nursing laboratory;
cultural competency;
diversity awareness;
clinical experience;
nursing skills;
nursing education;
undergraduate nursing students

Abstract

Background: Simulation manikins are widely used in undergraduate nursing education programs. However, most of the studies describing simulation have focused on the type of manikins and its impact on learning and not on the color of the manikins.

Method: This pilot study used a qualitative approach to recruit thirty-eight BSN nursing students who participated in focus groups, responding to questions regarding the use of manikins of color in the simulation labs.

Results: Major findings revealed four themes: 1) color of manikins makes no difference in skill development, 2) use of manikins of color does not necessarily complement clinical experiences, 3) manikins help to learn/practice skills and build confidence and 4) manikin features are not realistic.

Conclusions: A major conclusion revealed that manikins of color did not prompt students to think about their care to patients of color while practicing basic skills or engaging in patient care. Merely using manikins of color did not heighten students' sense of cultural diversity or cultural competency in the simulation labs.

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Background

The use of simulation as an effective learning strategy in nursing education has been well documented (Halabi Najjar, Lyman, & Miehl, 2015; Dunn, Osborne, & Link, 2014; Howard, Englert, Kameg, & Perozzi, 2011; McCaughey & Traynor, 2010; Ozkara, 2015). Simulation

manikins have been used to demonstrate critical thinking skills, dissemination of information, skill proficiency in a secure atmosphere, and enhancement of student learning by improving their appreciation for different cultures (Foisys-Doll, 2013; Garrido, Dlugasch, & Graber, 2014; Jeffreys & Dogan, 2012; Lewis & Ciak, 2011; Ozkara, 2015; Swenty & Eggleston, 2011).

Most studies describing simulation have focused on type of manikins and their impact on learning and not on the color of the manikins. According to Haas, Seckman, and

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Rea (2010), using visual cues such as educational materials in different languages helps signal the student that they are caring for someone of a different culture, which can enhance cultural competency. The main purpose of this pilot study was to determine the perceptions of nursing students on whether manikins of color used in the simulation laboratory would have any effect on their cultural awareness and caring for patients of color.

Key Points

- Manikins of color did not prompt students to think about diversity in giving care to patients of color.
- Merely using manikins of color did not heighten students' sense of culture and diversity awareness.
- African American students felt a sense of inclusiveness when seeing manikins of color in the simulation labs.

the study protocol. Focus groups, consisting of eight to ten study participants in each group, were used to capture students' perceptions of the effects of simulation manikins of color on their cultural awareness and caring for patients of color.

An interview guide consisting of 12 questions (Appendix A) developed by the study team was used to guide the discussion. Discussion guidelines (Appendix B) also were provided as rules to follow when conducting focus groups. All focus groups were audiotaped, and the moderators made field notes. Focus group data were transcribed verbatim, and the recordings were compared with the transcription to ensure accuracy. Participants also received copies of their transcripts to review for accuracy. On reviewing the transcripts, participants were given the opportunity to meet again with the research team to clarify any concerns. The three-member research team with input from one outside expert verified the themes that emerged from the focus group data. The research team also kept an audit trail to include audiotapes, transcripts of the texts, field notes, and team decisions regarding study findings. Participants received an incentive of a Starbucks Gift Card valued at \$5 for completion of the 1-hour focus group.

Sample and Setting

A large urban research university in the Southeastern United States was the setting for the study. The sample included 36 females and 2 males, 20 Caucasians, 12

African Americans, 2 Hispanic, 2 Asian, and 2 multiracial students. Ages ranged from 20 to 42 years with a median age of 21 years. Students had taken an average of two academic classes dealing with diversity and had at least two experiences in working with manikins of color in the nursing laboratory. Criteria for inclusion included enrollment in the BSN program and willingness to participate. Students were recruited voluntarily via their didactic classes with permission from their instructors. Once participants were determined, informed consents were signed, and focus groups were assigned with no more than ten students per class cohort.

Data Collection

The questions posed in the focus groups were intended to prompt discussion about students' perceptions of whether manikins of color used in the simulation laboratory would have any effect on their cultural awareness and caring for patients of color. Specifically, the researchers wanted to know students were exposed to manikins of color, would color as a visual cue prompt them to be more aware of the concept of culture in providing care to diverse clients. Students' responses to focus group questions were recorded. A transcriptionist associated with an independent agency transcribed all focus group recordings.

Data Analysis

The Krueger method was used to analyze the data from the focus group discussions (Krueger, 1998). This method consists of examining the raw data, moving to descriptive statements, and concludes with interpretation. Data analysis consisted of the study team examining the transcribed data independently and collectively for themes. For example, all authors independently reviewed the transcripts for identifiable themes. A second review of transcripts allowed the authors collectively to confirm the themes with individual quotes by participants. A third and final review of the preliminary themes by the authors collectively with confirmation by one external expert yielded a consensus on four themes: (a) color of manikins makes no difference in skill development, (b) use of manikins of color does not necessarily complement clinical experiences, (c) manikins help to learn/practice skills and build confidence and (d) manikin features are not realistic.

Results

Findings from the study are presented and organized around the four themes that emerged from the focus group data analysis. These themes emerged from the questions that guided the focus groups.

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