



Featured Article

Experiences of Male Nursing Students in Simulation Training for Maternal and Child Nursing Care

Gisoo Shin, PhD, Sunghee Kim, PhD*, Yoon Kyoung Lee, PhD

Red Cross College of Nursing, Chung-Ang University, Seoul, South Korea

KEYWORDS

patient simulation;
qualitative research;
male nursing students;
maternal and child
nursing

Abstract

Background: The purpose of this study was to explore experiences of simulation for maternal and child nursing in male nursing students in Korea.

Method: Two human patient simulators, a pregnant woman underwent emergency childbirth and a premature newborn infant, were developed. After 14 male students completed simulation, data were collected through interviews and analyzed by Colaizzi's phenomenological analysis.

Results: Educational, professional, and personal dimensions emerged from 5 theme clusters under which 11 themes were classified. Five theme clusters included vicarious role-training experiences, machine-human interaction, gender segregation at work, life-stage challenge to fatherhood, and development of future roles.

Conclusion: Simulation for maternal and child nursing provided male nursing students with a viable alternative to clinical practicum.

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Background

With more than 5,000 years of history, South Korea has long been known as a male-dominated patriarchal society in East Asia, stemming from time-honored Confucian traditions. Male dominance in South Korea has also been reflected in the medical system in which nursing roles have been reserved primarily for women as caring, helping, and loving characters, whereas men have largely been excluded.

This has made it difficult for male nurses to assimilate into nursing mainstream in South Korea. The number of male nursing students has steadily increased in South Korea, with the recent increase in the awareness of occupational stability in nursing profession and the decrease in gender discrimination in the profession.

Although clinical training for maternal and child nursing is required for all nursing students, male students are excluded from delivery rooms and newborn units because female patients are reluctant to receive nursing care from male students, and as a result, nursing directors would not assign

* Corresponding author: sung1024@cau.ac.kr (S. Kim).

male students to the female-dominated area of care (Jung & Park, 2011). Therefore, clinical practicum for maternal and child nursing in Korea does not provide equal opportunities for both male and female nursing students. This has led to the male students experiencing a sense of deprivation and difficulties in developing good rapport or interpersonal relationships with pregnant women and their babies and emotional tension in gender-role identity as well as role confusion at work (Kim & Song, 2012; Lee & Oh, 2011). As Dyck, Oliffe, Phinney, and Garrett (2009) emphasized that nursing educators should practice teaching gender equality in nursing education, excluding parody against masculinities, nursing educators should find a way of maximizing the equal opportunity for clinical practicum for male nursing students (Kim, Won, Shin, Go, & Choi, 2016; McLaughlin, Muldoon, & Moutray, 2010).

Key Points

- Educational dimension included two theme clusters of vicarious experience in role-playing and machine–human interaction.
- Professional dimension included one theme cluster of gender segregation at work.
- Personal dimension included two theme clusters of life-stage challenge to fatherhood and development of future role.

Clinical training using a human patient simulator has been considered a viable alternative to traditional clinical practicum for nursing students in order to ensure patient safety and human rights (Chae, 2015; Chun & Noh, 2016). Clinical training using a human patient simulator is an interactive learning process that allows nursing students to perform direct care to the simulated patient in conditions similar to a real-life clinical setting. Nursing process with appropriate nursing intervention can be applied, implemented, and evaluated during simulation-based practicum (Park, Park, & Park, 2015). In addition, simulation training for maternal and child nursing care proceeds in a gender neutral environment that guarantees equal opportunities for both male and female nursing students (Fraser & Hugher, 2009).

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of maternal and child nursing care in Korean male nursing students using human patient simulators, in order to collect information for the future development of simulation-based training programs tailored toward the specific needs of male students in a gender neutral environment.

Methods

Study Plan

Simulation for maternal and child care consisted of two parts: presimulation and simulation activities. The presimulation activities included role-playing, for the purpose of exploring male students' vicarious experience of being a pregnant woman at full term. The male students were instructed to wear a maternity gown designed with the heavy, distended abdomen, and follow a prenatal checkup lying on the examination table.

For the second simulation phase, two human patient simulators were programmed into one for a pregnant woman and the other for a newborn infant. For the scenario of maternity nursing practicum, the human patient simulator was programmed as a 29-year-old nulliparous woman at 39 weeks of gestation, who was hospitalized after amniotic membranes were ruptured. Soon after admission, the simulator showed greenish vaginal discharge, indicating the presence of chorioamnionitis, resulted in emergency delivery. SimBaby, the other simulator for neonate nursing practicum, was programmed as a premature baby girl to whom a woman at 31 weeks of gestation gave birth through normal spontaneous vaginal delivery. At birth, SimBaby's body weight was 1.75 kg (3.85 lb) and heart rate was 110 bpm, showing neither respirations nor responses to stimulation. SimBaby was transferred to a neonate intensive care unit where the male students were supposed to work. Given the scenarios, the male students were required to apply appropriate nursing intervention based on the nursing process both for normal and emergency maternal and child care.

Research Participants

Participants in this study were selected by a purposive sampling method, which included 14 male sophomores at a nursing college located in Seoul, Korea, who fulfilled the selection criteria of never having experienced clinical training in delivery rooms and neonatal units before simulation for maternal and neonatal care was initiated. Full explanation of the study's purpose, interview procedures, and confidentiality principles was given to the participants, which included the fact that the interview was going to be recorded, transcribed with anonymity, and validated by the participants. They were also informed that they could withdraw themselves from the study at any time without any academic disadvantages. After full explanation was given, consent forms were distributed to the participants and collected.

Research Team and Ethical Consideration

This qualitative study was conducted by three researchers, who are nursing faculty members at the college. The first

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