Enhancing the Clinical Judgment of the Student Nurse

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Introduction

Clinical Judgment (CJ)

- Essential component of professional nursing practice
- Has a direct impact on patient outcomes

(Benner, Sutphen, Leonard, & Day, 2010; Kavanaugh & Szweda, 2017)

Critical Thinking
- Nurse acts on what he/she knows
- Applies knowledge at the bedside

+ Clinical Reasoning
- need deep understanding of pathophysiology
- filter data, determine priority problem
- ability to reason as situation changes

= Clinical Judgment
- ***Outcome*** of critical thinking and Clinical reasoning
- Data is analyzed, decision made to respond or not with an action

Background

Nursing Education is challenged to effectively prepare students for clinical practice and develop teaching strategies that promote CJ

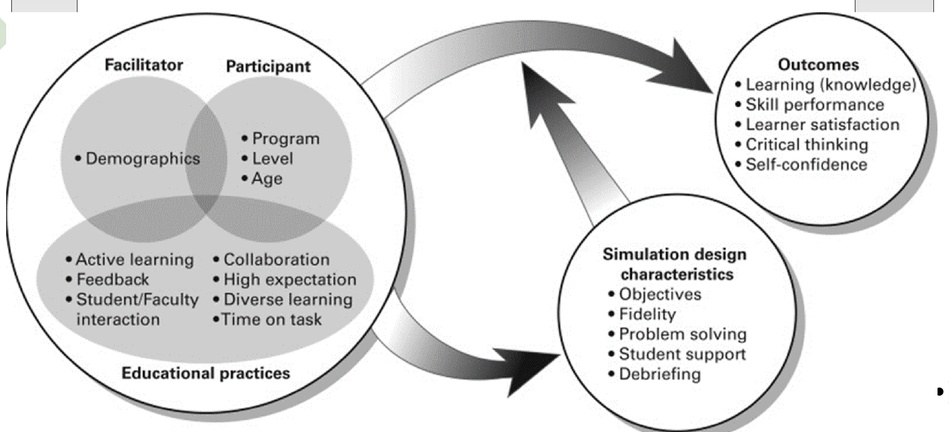
- In the face of current healthcare, there is limited clinical time available to encounter experiences needed to develop essential skills to make reliable clinical judgments
- Students need more opportunity to cultivate decision-making skills to aid their transition to the role of a nurse
- Simulation has been integrated in nursing curricula to replicate clinical experiences and *connect theory to practice*
- It is important to explore the most effective methods of educating future nurses' to produce competent and safe graduates to improve patient outcomes.

Significance

- New graduate nurses are not prepared to transition to role of professional nurse
- *Only 23%* of new nurses meet entry-level expectations (Kavanagh and Szweda, 2017)
- 65% of errors could be prevented if nurses had the skills to make appropriate decisions
- "Failure to Rescue", is directly related with a new nurse's lack of knowledge or inexperience (Garvey, 2015).

Methods

- The study is designed as a Mixed Method Comparison Quality Improvement Project
- Implementation of simulation according to INASCL Standards of Best Practice: Simulation[SM]
- Guided by the NLN/Jeffries Simulation Framework
- Measurement of knowledge obtained through a pre/post-test design
- Incorporation of Tanner's CJ Model (2006)
- Lasatar CJ rubric to assess critical decision-making points



NLN/Jeffries Simulation Framework

Tanner's CJ Model

Notice
- Recognize relevant data
- Potential Complications

Interpret
- Understanding pathophysiology is the foundation
- What is the meaning of data, patterns
- WHY is this happening?

Respond
- ACTION (correct interpretation of data)
- Plan of care; Priority interventions
- *This is where FTR occurs*

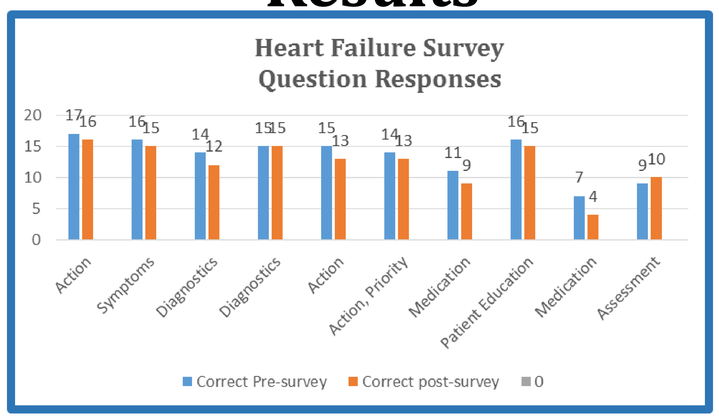
Reflect
- Evaluation of outcomes
- In action/On action

Purpose

Design a program to enhance the CJ ability of undergraduate nursing students

- This evidence-based practice project examined best practice recommendations for the incorporation of simulation activities into the nursing curriculum, to enhance the clinical judgement ability of the student nurse, in order to ultimately improve patient outcomes by preventing failure to rescue

Results



- Inconsistent with research, as variables did not reflect a positive difference between baseline and post-intervention scores
- Potential rationales for the lack of improvement in the post-simulation scores:
  - Processes (Sim design, instructors/facilitators, debriefing)
    - All involved need a clear understanding of simulation pedagogy
    - Consistent incorporation of best practice standards to minimize inconsistencies among educators
    - Students can leave sim experience confused, questioning knowledge
  - Student factors (less effort, did not count towards grade)

The results support that students are unprepared to apply their knowledge

- Reinforces need for pedagogical changes to focus on **application of knowledge**, as **successful test-taking does not determine competency**

Implications/Discussion

- This evidence-based project provided valuable insight on simulation implementation processes to cultivate desired outcomes.
- Identified need for a process change to incorporate a CJ model throughout nursing education curricula.

Implications: further incorporate teaching strategies into curricula that promote application of knowledge to enhance the CJ ability of student nurses.

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