Impact of the Geriatric Medication Game® on Nursing Students Empathy and Attitudes toward Older Adults

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Upon completion of this presentation, the learner will be able to describe:

- Nursing students’ attitudes towards older adults after completing an aging simulation game.
- Changes in empathy after completing an aging simulation game.
Healthcare Providers

- Interact with older adults daily
- Difficulty empathizing as providers may not yet experience disability or disease

Aging Games $^{1,2}$

- Goal: to improve empathy and understanding of older adults experience in the healthcare system
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing
  - Emphasis on empathy and caring in curriculum $^{3}$
Objectives

To examine the impact of participation in an aging simulation game on nursing students:

- Empathy
- Attitudes
- Understanding of the healthcare system
Methodology

- Included nursing and pharmacy students
- Geriatric Medication Game® (GMG)- Aging simulation game
  - Given aging-related challenges
  - Navigated a simulated healthcare system
- Assessed:
  - Changes in empathy
  - Changes in attitudes toward older adults
  - Understanding of healthcare system
Geriatric Medication Game®

- Created by St. Louis College of Pharmacy
- Components of Simulation
  - Personal Characteristics
  - Financial Resources
  - Disabilities
  - Health Care System Station
  - “Fate”
- Activities Station
Disabilities

- Vision
- Hearing
- Dexterity
- Balance
- General Disability
- Mobility
Measures: Experience and Perceptions

- **Aging Simulation Experience Survey (ASES)**
  - Created from students’ written reflection assignments from previous years
  - 7 point Likert-type (1=SA, 7=SD)
- **Perceptions of Older Adult Sub-Scale (POAS)**
  - Pre/Post: 13 items to measure learning
  - Challenges faced, treatment by providers, health care system issues
  - 8 items post-test: emotions experienced, understanding of the health care system
Jefferson Scale of Empathy – Health Professional Student Version (JSE-HPS)
- Reliable in nursing students ($\alpha=0.78$)
- Fee associated
- Designed for health professional students
- Assesses empathic qualities and tendencies

Kiersma-Chen Empathy Scale (KCES)
- Reliable in pharmacy & nursing ($\alpha = 0.852$)
- No fee for use
- Designed for nursing and pharmacy students
- Assesses cognitive and affective empathy
Data Analysis

- IBM® SPSS v. 19.0 for Windows
- Report of 58 second year nursing students
- Descriptive statistics for items on each scale
- Comparisons of pre/post items: paired t-tests
Emotions Experienced

- Sad
- Embarrassment
- Confusion
- Upset
- Anger
- Helplessness
- Tired
- Impatience
- Frustration
- Annoyance
Ensure elderly know directions
Plan to assist elderly
Impatient when waiting
Plan to be patient with elderly
Upset when not treated well
Had frustration with tasks
Frustration with task loss
No change in attitude to elderly

Mean Level of Agreement (1=SA, 7=SD)
Statistically significant improvement (p<0.05):
- JSE-HPS: 5 of 20 items
- KCES: 3 of 15 items & total score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empathy Scale</th>
<th>Pre-Test Total Score Mean ± SD</th>
<th>Post-Test Total Score Mean ± SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P-value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KCES</td>
<td>31.2 ± 6.3</td>
<td>29.7 ± 7.6</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>0.037</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSE-HPS</td>
<td>115.38 ± 12.12</td>
<td>116.97 ± 10.40</td>
<td>-1.10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Perceptions of Older Adults and Healthcare Experience

- Statistically significant improvement (p<0.05) for 6 of 13 items:
  - Disabilities make it challenging
  - Aware of older adults challenges
  - Need to visit more than one health provider to resolve an issue
  - Youth take health for granted
  - Treatment differences based on health insurance
  - Time spent in the healthcare system
Aging simulation games provide an opportunity to develop:

- Empathy in nursing students
- Improve attitudes toward older adults
- Understanding of the healthcare system

The KSES and the ASES allow faculty to assess student changes in empathy and attitudes.
Future Directions

- Reinforce empathy and professional attitudes across the curriculum
- Measure longitudinal improvements in empathy, attitudes, and understanding of healthcare system
- Incorporate interprofessional experiences to promote these concepts across the healthcare team
References


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