

Effectiveness of Integrated Simulation and Clinical Experiences Compared to Traditional Clinical Experiences for Nursing Students

Curl, Eileen D.; Smith, Sheila; Chisholm, Le Ann; McGee, Leah Anne; Das, Kumar
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AIM The focus of this research study was the evaluation of the effectiveness of using high-fidelity simulations to replace 50 percent of traditional clinical experiences in obstetrics, pediatrics, critical care, and mental health nursing.

BACKGROUND Increasing student admissions to nursing programs require additional clinical learning opportunities to accommodate extra students.

METHOD Three schools with associate degree nursing programs partnered to identify, implement, and evaluate a creative solution to this dilemma. The resulting quasi-experimental study investigated if substituting half of the conventional clinical experiences with simulations was as effective as traditional clinical activities in obstetrics, pediatrics, mental health, and critical care. One hour of simulation counted for two hours of clinical time.

RESULTS Findings indicated combining simulations with conventional clinical experiences resulted in significantly higher scores on the pre-graduation exit exam than traditional clinical experiences alone.

CONCLUSIONS Findings have implications for articulation and basic students in associate degree nursing programs.