An Interpretive Phenomenological Study of How RN Students Experience a Poverty Simulation

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Abstract:

Health equity is a major concern when providing nursing care for patients from diverse populations as they have been found to be more likely to experience health disparities (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2016). Nursing schools have incorporated varied teaching strategies to increase student nurse awareness of the health disparities experienced by people living in poverty. One such strategy, called 'Welcome to the State of Poverty' uses creative simulation techniques to produce a unique, live action learning event (MACA, 2010). Quantitative research has established that participant do show an increase in knowledge regarding poverty issues after the activity, however, findings related to empathy levels are inconsistent and suggest the possibility that the activity might increase negative stereotypes (Drevdahl, 2013; Reid & Evanson, 2016).

This research employed the use of interpretive phenomenology to explore the lived experience of nursing students as they participated in, and reflected upon, a poverty simulation. Eight registered nurses enrolled in a bachelor's degree completion program were interviewed about their experiences. Thematic analysis of transcribed interviews revealed three essential themes, and three subthemes.

Biography:

Carrie J. McNamer is currently an Assistant Professor of Nursing at Winona State University in Winona, Minnesota. Her focus on Public Health Nursing is fueled by over twenty years of practice in rural, community settings. As a Licensed School Nurse and Certified Public Health Nurse she initiated programming that increased health services for school-age children through a rural community health grant and created a quality assurance program for the provision of care for special needs students. She currently serves as an executive board member for the Coulee Recovery Center in LaCrosse, Wisconsin which provides affordable programming for individuals and families impacted by substance use disorder. She coordinates community-based clinical experiences for senior nursing students and teaches courses on leadership, research, and public health for the college of Nursing and Health Sciences at WSU. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Nursing from Winona State University, a Master's degree in Nursing Education from Viterbo University in LaCrosse, Wisconsin and a Doctorate in Higher Education Administration from St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

Publication of speakers:

1. enhancing nursing students' understanding of poverty through simulation, 2013.

2. Using simulation to teach about poverty in nursing education: A review of available tools, 2016

3. Nursing students with physical disabilities: Dispelling myths and correcting misconceptions, 2016.