Nursing-2013
OMICS Group Conferences
Accelerating Scientific Discovery
International Conference on
Nursing & Emergency Medicine
December 2-4, 2013 Las Vegas, USA

Pilot study: The use of virtual tutoring in baccalaureate nursing education

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Abstract

In discussions of online educational instruction, one controversial issue has been the differences in outcomes encountered when comparing online education with traditional face to face methodologies. While studying electronic communications media, Moore (1993) identified the challenges presented concerning psychological and educational distance in online education. Alternatively, Blake (2000) contends that there are minimal, if any, differences in interaction with students when synchronous online methodologies are employed. A review of the literature found no investigation of the differences in educational outcomes for undergraduate nursing students when comparing and contrasting face-to-face versus synchronous online methodologies.

The author is conducting a pilot study where comparison shall be made between learning outcomes achieved through traditional face to face tutoring versus those obtained for participants in virtual tutoring sessions. The same peer tutor shall host both face to face and virtual sessions, and student participants have been randomly assigned to traditional face to face or virtual cohorts.

Upon conclusion of the study, statistical analysis shall be conducted, comparing and contrasting the written medical-surgical exam scores of student participants in the virtual tutoring with those of participants in the face to face tutoring experiences. Preliminary data from this pilot study will be presented that will shed light on the usefulness of synchronous online tutoring.

Validation of synchronous online tutoring as a useful and successful educational tool could offer the potential to affect student performance positively in pre-licensure nursing education curricula.

Biography

Dr. Scarbrough completed a Ph.D in Nursing in 2010 from New Mexico State University. His undergraduate work was conducted at the University of Southern MS, University of South AL, St Petersburg College, and the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He is an Assistant Professor in the New Mexico State University School of Nursing, where he leads courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Special interests include Education, Dizziness and Balance, and Wound Care.

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