Peer Evaluation of an audio-recorded simulated clinical interview in an online educational program

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Purpose

The purpose of the study was to examine:

- The feasibility of using student peer evaluations of a simulated clinical interview in an online educational program
- The acceptability of peer evaluations among students.
- The perceived value of peer evaluations by students to improve clinical interviewing skills.

Background and Significance

- Clinical interviewing is a skill that is refined through evaluation and honest feedback.
- Objective Standardized Clinical Evaluations (OSCEs) are an effective method of teaching clinical interviewing. After an OSCE, students receive valuable feedback from peers and faculty. Students who observe and evaluate the OSCE also benefit from the process.
- Unlike in a traditional classroom environment where feedback is given in person by peers and faculty, online programs must find novel ways to impart the art of clinical interviewing.
- OSCEs have been successfully introduced in the online environment. The interviews are audio recorded and feedback is given to the student by the standardized patient and course faculty. However, students do not receive feedback from their peers and do not have the opportunity to observe and evaluate their peers, so the online experience is limited.
- This project evaluated the feasibility of using student peer evaluation of an audio-recorded simulated clinical interview in an online educational program. The acceptability and perceived value of the experience for students was also examined.

Methods

Design
- One-time peer evaluation of an audio recording of a peer's simulated clinical phone interview with a standardized patient.
- The acceptability and perceived value of the experience was evaluated using an online survey containing fixed-choice and open ended questions

Sample and setting
- All FNP students enrolled in a chronic care of adults course during the winter and spring terms of 2012 were invited to participate. (N=149).
- Participation was voluntary.
- 69 students participated in the peer evaluations and 56 students completed the survey evaluation the experience.

Instruments
- 13 item survey
- 4 items addressed demographic information
- 9 items used Likert type scales and evaluated the experience of giving and receiving feedback. The items contained statements such as:
    "I found it difficult to critique another student"
    "I was afraid to hurt the feelings of another student."

Procedures
- Participants were paired by the course faculty
- Each student completed the interview with the standardized patient.
- The student interviews with the standardized patient were recorded on a secure phone line.
- The recorded interview was sent to the student's partner as a mp3 using the university email system
- Participants were asked to evaluate their peer's audio recording using the evaluation criteria provided by the course faculty.
- Evaluations were shared with course faculty and the student who performed the interview.
- After completing the peer evaluation, students were asked to evaluate the experience using an online survey. The survey was constructed using Survey Monkey and the link to the survey was sent using the university email system
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Analysis
- Frequencies and percentages were used to summarize the data.

Ethical Considerations
- Institutional review board approval was obtained through Frontier Nursing University.
- Participant consent was obtained prior to administration of the surveys.

Results

Participants
- 69 students participated in the peer evaluation with 56 completing the online evaluation.
- The participants' ages were between 21 and 49 years of age. 36% were between 30-39 years of age, and 33% between 40-49 years of age.
- 73% of the participants had at least 5 years of professional nursing experience, and 46% had over 10 years of experience.
- 50% of participants had previously participated in peer-evaluation at their place of employment.
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Survey Results

Variable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Difficult to critique another	14%	62%	5%	19%	
Afraid to hurt feelings	9%	43%	10%	36%	2%
Did not feel competent	12%	64%	19%	2%	3%
Would find own critique helpful		3%	9%	69%	19%
Completing critique gave me ideas on interviewing		3%	3%	41%	52%
Receiving the critique was beneficial		5%	12%	46%	37%
Peer was too positive		54%	19%	25%	2%
Critique was valid		4%	9%	65%	23%
Critique will benefit me		4%	11%	61%	25%
Peer critique augments faculty evaluation		9%	14%	61%	16%

Feasibility of online peer evaluations
- Arranging student peer evaluation of OSCEs in an online venue adds an additional layer of complexity to course planning.
- Varying time zones, personal schedules, and dependence on the partner's work quality and timeliness can be difficult for students in an online program.
- Faculty expectations for substantive evaluations must be very clear.
- A standardized instrument for evaluating the interviews should be provided to students.
- Students must be instructed in the components of an effective and professional peer review
- The time frame for completing the interview and critiques, and submitted the critiques must be clearly outlined.

Conclusion
- Peer evaluation of students' clinical interviews with standardized patients is feasible in an online program.
- The peer evaluations were perceived as helpful students.
- Students indicated that they learned from both giving and receiving feedback.

References

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