

Educational uses of works of art Evaluation: Educational Effectiveness of its Use for "Understanding the Elderly"

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Abstract

In this study, we compared the effectiveness of the elderly simulation experience to a gerontology nursing program, Educational uses works of art, on "understanding the elderly." We conducted a survey questionnaire on 67, 3rd-year nursing college students. Qualitative analysis was performed, resulting in the following categories: 1) preoccupations and feelings of the elderly, 2) living environment and the elderly, 3) sense of existence of living into old age and quality of life, and 4) assistance needed by the elderly. The results showed that the educational uses of works of art was more effective at helping each student imagine and understand the lives of the elderly.

Introduction

Starting at 22% in 2008, the rate of aging within Japan's population is expected to exceed 25% by 2015. Thus, the insurance, welfare, and medical workplaces are faced with the need to understand the environment required for high-quality elderly assistance. This environment necessitates collaboration among professionals within the healthcare insurance system.

During the early stages of a gerontology nursing education program, an elderly simulation experience is commonly conducted in order to facilitate student understanding of elderly patients. This approach has been shown to have educational effectiveness as it makes students aware of the daily difficulties and inconveniences

that come with age. In addition, it facilitates visualization of the elderly, making it possible to grasp the mentality of old age (Norimatsu, 2006; Fujino et al., 2006; Takaoka, Chiba & Shibuya, 2008; Takeda, Kenemitsu & Futoyu, 2001; Takeuchi and Yokogawa, 2000; Takemura & Kozawa, 2009).

To graduate as a competent nurse in today's aging society, it is critical for nursing students to learn how to interact with and visualize the elderly - their future patients. In fact, many students lack the necessary interaction with the elderly due to an increase in the prevalence of nuclear families within Japan's society. For students, this is absolutely critical as it helps develop proper relationships. Therefore, it is important for students to deepen their understanding of the elderly, and to realize that they have amassed a variety of life experiences.

Previous studies on the elderly simulation experience, which places emphasis on patients with a disease, are common. However, there are few reports with alternate instructional materials that deepen human understanding. In addition, audio-visual education and research in this study, the combination of the elderly simulation experience and visual learning, is a classic way. The elderly simulation experience is the second position as Contrived Experiences, also, Educational uses of works of art is the eighth position as Motion Pictures based on Cone of Experience by E. Dale of audio-visual education

theory (Nishimoto, 1957). Following from a bottom to top of the cone, then many reasoning have been movement. And sophisticated reasoning we have been saying let us have Creative Imagination. To do this, the workings of the mind must be high, which leads to high inference from it. Therefore, the novelty of this research is the application of professional education to understanding the elderly in traditional educational methods of the two. Here, through a gerontology nursing class, we compare the elderly simulation experience to the educational uses of works of art (Kato, 2008; Minna no Keizai Shimbun Netto-waku, 2009).

Purpose

The aim of this gerontology nursing education program on "understanding the elderly" was to compare the educational effectiveness of the elderly simulation experience to the educational uses of works of art.

Methods

Design

A qualitative, inductive research analysis using the KJ method was conducted on the results of a survey questionnaire.

Subjects

Currently enrolled 3rd-year college nursing students: 12 males, 55 females, for a total of 67 subjects.

Periods

4/28/09, 5/12/09, and 5/19/09 (using 2 periods for a class on Daily Living Assistance in Old Age)

Method

A survey questionnaire was distributed to students after classes where the elderly person simulation experience and the educational uses of works of art were used. The following survey

questions were employed:

- A. Please write about what you learned from the elderly simulation experience.
 - i) What you learned from playing the role of the elderly person
 - ii) What you learned from playing the role of the observer and assistance provider
- B. Please comment on what you thought and felt about the feelings of the elderly when you watched the works of art, *Tsumiki no ie: La maison en petits cubes*.

Date Analysis

The KJ method was used on questionnaire content in order to group responses by affinity, followed by coding and sorting them into categories. In addition, the KJ method was conducted by five persons; first author, a researcher who works in cooperation with this study and three persons apart from this study who understood the method. Then, copying and cutting the context which would be student's awareness for the elderly as cards. And classified, illustrated by First Author. Meaning and the relevance were checked by them, sure to match each other point of view, and the story was extracted.

Ethical Considerations

Consent was obtained after providing both written documentation and verbal explanation on the nature of the study. Participation in the study was voluntary with the assurance that cooperation would have no bearing on grades, and that the privacy of the data would be made anonymous such that no individual could be determined.

Results

The results of the analysis are presented below. Here, we present categories in square brackets [], subcategories in angle brackets < >, and student

written statements in quotes “ ”.

Results on using the elderly simulation experience

After analyzing the results from A-i), the following categories were generated as lessons learned from playing the role of the elderly: [physical difficulty], [visual discomfort], [mentality of the elderly], [assistance for the elderly], and [environmental influences that affect the elderly].

After experiencing difficulty of movement, the students were able to imagine the feelings of the elderly, and understood [the mentality of the elderly], which included <not wanting to go outside>, <preferring to do things at one's own pace>, <how it feels to tire easily and rely on others>, and <the frustration of not being able to do things without help>. This kind of mentality led to [assistance for the elderly] and understanding of the [environmental influences that affect the elderly].

Analysis of the results from A-ii) showed the following categories as lessons learned from playing the role of the assistance provider: [changes in movement influenced by age], [assistance for the elderly], and [environmental influences that affect the elderly]. Pertaining to [changes in movement influenced by age], students cited detailed physical characteristics and difficulties, which included <the difficulty of going up and down stairs>, <shakiness while walking>, <dragging one's feet>, <slower walking and movement>, <easily fatigued>, <inconvenience of reduced vision>, <inconvenience in daily living activities due to limited joint movement>, and <dependence on a cane>.

For the category, [assistance for the elderly], they discovered safety guidance measures that related to fall prevention such as <assistance going up and down the stairs>, <what to do while walking>, <where to stand as an assistant>, <helping the elderly out with their steps>, <what

to do about fatigue>, <being careful when using an elevator>, <what to do when using a chair>, <the need for hazard anticipation>, and <avoiding falls by speaking up>.

Under the subcategory, <importance of keeping watch>, they learned how to assist by taking advantage of residual functions. Likewise, under the subcategory, <letting the elderly set the pace>, the students thought about how to avoid rushing and how to show respect. Under <finding pleasure in conversation>, they looked at how to have a meaningful interaction with the elderly. Lastly, under the category, [environmental influences that affect the elderly], they explored possible sources for difficulties within the campus environment.

Results on using the educational uses of works of art

Analysis of the results from B) showed the following categories for the general feelings students had towards the elderly: [preoccupations and feelings of the elderly], [living environment and the elderly], [sense of existence of living into old age and quality of life], and [assistance needed by the elderly]. In the categories, [preoccupations and feelings of the elderly] and [living environment and the elderly], the students came to understand that <the pipe is the old man's 'treasure box of memories'>, <the pipe is the old man's life>, <the pipe is all the old man has>, and how this pipe stood as proof of the life the protagonist had lived.

In regards to the house depicted in the film, the students felt that <the house is a 'treasure box of memories'>, <the house is a place connected with family>, and <the house is the old man's life>. Moreover, they were able to envision the world the protagonist lived in from his environment, making comments like, "by building a house in the same place, I felt he had a connection with the past and the family that was now gone."

With regards to <the strength to continue living in the house> the students thought about the

protagonist's willingness to continue living there, stating that "it seemed to me that the old man wanted to take good care of this house of bricks as long as he had his health," and "one can interpret from him piling bricks every day that the feelings of love towards his wife and children sustained him now that he was living all alone."

Under the category, [sense of existence of living into old age and quality of life], students explored negative aspects associated with age such as <loneliness felt during old age>, <flashbacks of old memories followed by thoughts of reality>, and <feelings of loss>. Isolation was defined as <the loneliness felt during old age>. This subcategory was reflected in statements such as, "living by yourself without a wife or children is so lonely," "the image of him eating by himself seemed lonely," and "I felt he was so isolated because he had to make the house all by himself." Furthermore, there were <flashbacks of old memories followed by thoughts of reality>. Some stated that "while looking for his pipe many memories came back, causing the protagonist to feel lonely." Students felt that having to confront reality increases one's loneliness.

On the other hand, under the subcategory, <finding reasons to live in a monotonous life>, some stated that "it was a really moving film," and "the way he toasted his wife at the end was not because he was lonely, but happy." For the subcategory, <the elderly have a life they have built>, students cited that "there are a lot of elderly people, each with a unique way of living their life." Lastly, under the category, [assistance needed by the elderly], they wrote about <feeling respect for the elderly>, and <the need for interacting with the elderly because of their pasts>, citing that "memories can take physical form even in the present", and "I want to develop communication with the elderly because I respect their memories."

Discussion

The new educational method used in the educational uses of works of art aimed at helping students imagine the environment that surrounds the elderly. We believe that this should not be a limited view that only sees the elderly as people with diseases, but one that sees them as people in the last stage of life who have had many experiences as individuals. The preoccupations of the elderly, depicted in the film as a longing for the pipe and house, along with the nostalgia of the past, include memories, personal belongings, and environment.

From the film, it can be seen that by reflecting on the past and discovering his individual social connections and role, the protagonist realizes how much he has gone through in life. Furthermore, by exploring the reasons why the protagonist continued to live there, we may come to understand the reasons that drive the elderly to keep living once they are alone. This understanding was one positive aspect identified from this analysis as it influences one's understanding of and respectful interactions with the elderly. The film also provides some insight into the diversity of life, as it portrays the life of protagonist in glimpses across an entire lifespan. From this analysis, we conclude that there is a limit as to what can be learned from the elderly simulated experience. We believe that through this educational uses of works of art, and when one interacts with the elderly and considers their temporal and family backgrounds, an opportunity arises that allows one to connect with them.

In addition, the educational uses of works of art allows us to learn new things in regards to the mentality of the elderly, the negative feelings of isolation and loneliness, and living positively. In regards to the students, the educational uses of works of art helped them see those negative feelings as the isolation of being left behind by the departure or loss of family members. It also helped them see

the loneliness that arises from having flashbacks of memories followed by thoughts on the reality of living alone. We believe that by reliving the experiences depicted in the film, the students gain a better understanding as to what triggers a sense of loneliness in the elderly. From a young student's point of view, the thought of being completely alone is frightening beyond imagination. Yet, we believe that the way each student deals with the situations and emotions of the elderly depends on their interpretation. Our findings suggest that students' understanding of the elderly deepens as they form their philosophical views.

In our analysis, we found some students to show a more positive view of the images depicted on the film. Some stated that "it was a really moving DVD," and "thought that he (the protagonist) was probably happy." These students probably realized that even though an elderly person is alone, that individual has the opportunity to reflect on his or her quality of life. This, in turn, allowed the students to realize that the elderly indeed live a long and rich life. In this study, the students perceived that the protagonist, through his reflections on past experiences, probably carried out an important role in society and had a meaningful life.

Students developed the perspectives necessary to build relationships with the elderly which included a feeling of respect and "the quality of life lived." We believe that the feeling of respect towards the elderly arose from realizing that the protagonist in the film had lived a life like no other. We suspect that by being able to visualize the memories of departed family members, the students were able to understand that these images formed only a small part of the protagonist's life, and that he had, in fact, lived through many more unknown experiences. By understanding this, the students probably inferred that such experiences were full of both happy and difficult moments, allowing them to adopt

feelings of respect towards the protagonist.

In contrast, the elderly simulation experience method resulted in an attitude that perceives physical characteristics and respectfully refrains from breaking the elderly person's pace. For example, "matching the pace of the elderly", "letting them do what they can", "helping only when necessary", and "being sensitive to their independence and self-respect." However, the biggest educational outcome from this DVD as an instructional tool was that students developed an approach that respected the individual lifestyles of the elderly. We interpret this to mean that students should be able to acknowledge the individual existences of the elderly, regardless of their disabilities.

Finally, in regards to "the quality of life lived" by the elderly, it has been our experience that when students interact with patients some hesitate to ask anything and generally adopt passive behavior. However, we believe that students should focus on being more active during such interactions, familiarizing themselves more with the individual's memories and backgrounds.

Conclusion

We compared the elderly simulation experience with the educational uses of works of during a gerontology nursing education program on "understanding the elderly." We then analyzed the educational effectiveness of the DVD using a survey questionnaire. The following categories were generated from this analysis: 1) preoccupations and feelings of the elderly, 2) living environment and the elderly, 3) sense of existence of living into old age and quality of life, and 4) assistance needed by the elderly. We showed that the educational uses of works of art was more effective at helping the students understand the lives of the elderly, allowing them to recognize the diverse feelings that develop with age.

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