

High Fidelity Simulation in Undergraduate Medical Curricula: Experience of Fourth Year Medical Students at a Sri Lankan Medical Faculty

K.G. Kodikara, W.C.D. Karunaratne, M.N. Chandratilake

Department of Medical Education, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Application of theoretical knowledge to management of critically ill patients is a challenging task faced by medical undergraduates where opportunities to learn clinical skills with regard to management of emergencies are few. High fidelity simulation (HFS) is widely used globally as an adjunct to clinical practice enabling students to learn clinical skills in a safe environment. However, research in the use of HFS in Sri Lanka is minimal. The purpose of this study was to explore the response of medical undergraduates to a high-fidelity simulator (HFS) in the context of management of emergencies. A pilot group of 30 fourth year medical students underwent a high-fidelity simulator session. They completed a self-administered evaluation, which included both open and close ended questions and participated in a focus group discussion post-simulation. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the responses to close-ended questions and the responses of the focus group discussion and open-ended questions were analyzed for recurring themes. All participating students responded to the evaluation. Students rated the simulation-based learning experience with high positivity. The self-competency of 29 (96.6%) students had increased following the sessions. The session provided a safe learning environment to all students. 19 (63.3%) students felt it helped put theory into practice while 21 (70.7%) students identified it as good practice for internship. 25 (83.3%) students wished to participate in more sessions. 17 (56.6%) students commented on the realistic nature of the experience. This study confirmed findings of previous studies conducted using HFS among medical undergraduates, confirming that the students highly valued high-fidelity simulation and find the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to practice in a safe environment. A high-fidelity simulator is a valuable learning tool in undergraduate medical education.

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¹ Corresponding author. Tel.: +94-71-6846317

E-mail address: k.kodikara@kln.ac.lk