

A serious game for online-based objective structured clinical examination in nursing: A qualitative study

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Abstract

Background: The current pandemic has led to unprecedented scenarios worldwide. In this context, educational institutions had to move abruptly from in-person to online classes, having to be flexible and innovative, one of the main concerns being the semester-end examinations in practical modules. **Objective:** This study aimed to explore nursing students' perceptions of the use of a serious game-like model in their final online objective structured clinical examination (OSCE). **Design:** An exploratory phenomenological study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular during June 2020. **Settings:** This study took place at the University of Almeria with nursing students enrolled in a clinical placement module. **Participants:** Eighty-nine fourth-year nursing students took part in this study. **Methods:** Following the educational principles of the OSCE, a virtual OSCE was designed, using the Genially platform, an online platform for creating interactive content, to set up an assessment as a story-telling game-like model. A total of 5 focus groups (FGs) were conducted afterwards via the GoogleMeet platform. In addition, 30 semi-structured interviews were performed via the same platform. The data was analysed using a content analysis approach and supported by the ATLAS.ti 8.4 software. **Results:** Our finding revealed 2 main themes and 4 sub-themes. The two main themes were (i) generating emotions and feelings in times of virtuality; including emotions and feelings experienced by students during their online assessment process, and (ii) online assessment: a potential alternative to educational barriers; describing the variability of traditional modality, its implications for learning and the acquisition of competences. **Conclusions:** Serious game-like models, such as the story-telling game proposed, as part of their online OSCE assessment appear to be an appropriate alternative assessment method for face-to-face approaches. This paper adds new evidence on the use of innovative and state-of-art resources as part of nursing OSCE assessments in a new reality for most students and teachers. Serious game-like models in online OSCE may empower students and help them to remove perceived barriers in face-to-face assessments. © 2021 Elsevier Ltd

Author keywords

Gamification; Nursing; Nursing education research; OSCE; Qualitative research; Serious game