

Role Playing Method Decreases Communication Anxiety of Medical Students

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Abstract. As a professional in public health services, a physician should be acquainted with communication skills when interacting with all kinds of human character. An effective communication could be implemented to collect information as a prerequisite to make an accurate diagnosis and satisfy the patient as well. Anxiety haunting inexperienced students in facing real patients could block one's real communication potential. The aim of this study was to assess whether the role playing method could decrease the anxiety scale of the subjects. Subjects ($N = 70$) were first semester medical students. The Communication Anxiety Scale were delivered before and after they conduct the role play. Data were analysed with *t test*. Results show a significant decline in anxiety scale ($p < 0.001$). The role playing method is able to decrease communication anxiety through simulation (training in a near-real situation, stimulating imagination and verbal potentials).

Key words: role playing, anxiety, medical student

Abstrak. Sebagai profesional dalam bidang layanan kesehatan masyarakat, seorang dokter dituntut memiliki keterampilan komunikasi saat berhadapan dengan karakter manusia yang beragam. Komunikasi efektif dapat digunakan untuk menggali informasi demi tertegakkannya diagnosis yang akurat dan juga memuaskan pasien. Kecemasan yang timbul pada para mahasiswa yang belum berpengalaman dapat menghambat kemampuan komunikasi yang sesungguhnya. Tujuan studi ini adalah menilai apakah metode bermain peran dapat menurunkan tingkat kecemasan para subjek. Subjek ($N = 70$) adalah mahasiswa semester 1 fakultas kedokteran. Skala Kecemasan Komunikasi disajikan sebelum dan setelah subjek melakukan permainan peran. Data dianalisis dengan *t test*. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa tingkat kecemasan menurun secara signifikan ($p < 0.001$). Metode bermain peran telah berhasil menurunkan tingkat kecemasan komunikasi karena memberikan kesempatan berlatih dalam situasi yang mendekati kenyataan, merangsang imajinasi dan kemampuan verbal

Kata-kata kunci: bermain peran, kecemasan, mahasiswa kedokteran

Mastery of basic communication skills enables a person to communicate with other persons effectively. If a person is able to communicate effectively, it also means that he/she will be able to interact with others well (Wardani, 2001).

Recently many schools of medicine have realized the importance of providing a course of communication in their medical educational programs. The

ability to communicate effectively is not only needed after the students have graduated and become doctors, but it is also important in many activities during their studies such as when doing a survey, social work, community education or campaign etc. A doctor must master and apply the skill of making effective communication with his/her patient and this skill cannot be delegated to any other person to do it. By building effective communication with a patient, a doctor can obtain sufficient information from a patient necessary for establishing a correct diagnosis of the patient's problem, besides giving satisfaction to both the doctor and patient.

It is common that a person tends to become somewhat stressful when doing a new assignment for the first time, including communicating with

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