Challenges associated with ICT usage among nursing faculty members in the context of Lebanon

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Abstract

Statement of the problem: Information, communication and technology form essential means of literacy in the 21st century. ICT has become an essential aspect of higher education recently, ICT has also become an essential aspect of medical institutions, that require graduating nurses to use it in their daily work. However, a major challenge for use of ICT in nursing education, is to find the means to encourage teachers to use it. Teachers' ICT knowledge and beliefs paly and essential role in classroom practices, however lots of challenges and barriers prevent the structured use of ICT.

Methodology and theoretical orientation: a qualitative research approach was used. Using an interview protocol, face to face interviews were conducted with eighteen nursing faculty members, from four private universities in Lebanon.

Findings: ICT usage is varied among nursing faculty members, while some consider it essential for teaching and learning; some other faculty feel it is an extra burden to their busy schedules. Further to that, this study highlighted the challenges faced by nursing faculty members that prevent them from using ICT, and these range from the community/country's level: like electricity shut down, and slow internet; to institutional level: absence of clear ICT policies and extra costs associated with ICT, to the personal level: like the lack of relevant ICT trainings and knowledge.

Conclusion and significance: ICT is important for the nursing profession. Faculty members are proficient in ICT use, however there should be standardization and structure in the way ICT is used in nursing teaching and learning practices. Lots of challenges and barriers were identified and revealed by faculty members that hinder the use of ICT, working towards eliminating these challenges is essential towards improving the use of ICT.
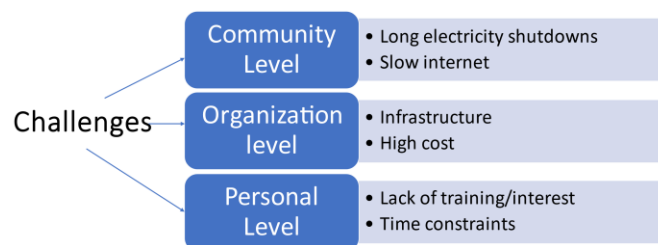
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Figure 1: Challenges associated with ICT use

Biography

The researcher started her career as a Registered Nurse, at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), at the American University of Beirut- Medical Center (AUBMC). Pursuing further degrees, the author then shifted to work in research and academia for the past nine years, in two institutions of higher education in Beirut, Lebanon. The challenges faced in the context of Lebanon towards the use of ICT and e-learning in teaching and learning in general, and in nursing more specifically were essential triggers to investigate and highlight the matter further. Hence this research investigates current usage of ICT in nursing teaching and learning practices, and highlights the different challenges faced by faculty members on personal, institutional and country levels.

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