How Ready are the Public Nursing Colleges to Implement Online Teaching and Learning? A Feasibility Study

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Abstract

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to develop a conceptual teaching and learning model that will integrate nursing theory and practice by using social media platforms.

Setting

The research setting was the three public nursing colleges that offer a basic nursing programme in the Gauteng province of South Africa. Two of the colleges were situated in the Johannesburg region and one in the Tshwane region.

Methodology

We used a qualitative, phenomenological and descriptive approach to obtain the participants’ in-depth thoughts and opinions regarding the feasibility of implementing social media platforms for student nurses’ teaching and learning.

We used the non-probability purposive sampling technique in this study. The sample consisted of 14 lecturers who were teaching nursing courses and 20 student nurses at the three public nursing colleges. The participants were able to provide extensive information about the use of different teaching and learning strategies in their nursing colleges. The sample size was finally guided by data saturation.

We collected data after obtaining ethical clearance by the Research and Ethics Committee of the Department of Health Studies at the University of South Africa (HSHDC/884/2018) on 7 November 2018. The participants signed informed consent forms. Direct observation in the form of in-depth focus group interviews were conducted. An interview guide and audio digital recorder were used to collect the data. Furthermore, field notes were taken. The data were collected in two phases. The data for phase 1 were collected from the student nurses on 12 September 2019, 20 November 2019 and 4 October 2019. The data for phase 2 were collected from the lecturers on 20 September 2019, 4 October 2019 and 7 October 2019. Data collection...
from the student nurses took between 25 minutes, 20 seconds and 45 minutes, 47 seconds and a minimum of 36 minutes, 23 seconds to a maximum of 58 minutes from the lecturers until data saturation was reached.

Data analysis and interpretation were done by the researcher with the assistance from the statistician and a co-coder. The researchers used content analysis to identify and understand the perceptions of the student nurses and lecturers regarding the implementation of social media platforms in teaching and learning. The researcher listened to the recorded data from the recorder, transcribed the information and referred to the field notes to ensure accuracy.

A sentiment analysis system (SAS) is a smart service for data analysis and visualisation to discover patterns and meaning in collected data (SAS 2013, 1). The SAS software program was used by the statistician to implement a coding process. Themes and categories were developed and major qualitative findings were summarised. Recommendations were made based on these findings.

**Findings**

We presented the findings as an overview of the emergent themes in phases to illustrate the relationship between the major themes and their respective thematic subcategories. The participants supported the use of social media, with consideration of access to resources, availability of training workshops, interaction between lecturers and students, numerous teaching strategies and rules, and regulations and policies to govern the system. Preferred social media platforms were WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook and Skype, which could be accessed easily by all students and lecturers.

Table 1 provides an overview of the students’ perceptions of the major themes, subthemes and categories that emerged from the data analysis of phase 1. The lecturers’ perceptions are indicated in Table 2.

**Table 1: Themes, subthemes and categories from phase 1: Students’ perceptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Existing knowledge related to social media platforms for socialisation</td>
<td>Existing sources of communication</td>
<td>Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Information centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Perceptions related to the use of social media platforms in teaching and learning</td>
<td>A description of costs related to the use of social media platforms</td>
<td>Control measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Readiness to implement social media platforms</td>
<td>An outline of material and human resources</td>
<td>Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Proficiency</td>
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</table>
The participants explained the concept of social media within the context of daily living in their own words. Currently, most people communicate with one another using some form of social media platform. People are inclined to use the platform that is the most user-friendly and accessible to them. This study’s findings align with a study conducted on the use of social media platforms as a support tool that found the most used social media platforms are Facebook, WhatsApp, Snap Chat, Twitter and Google+ (Mngwengwe and Dlamini 2020, 3).

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

We developed a conceptual teaching and learning model using social media platforms, which will integrate nursing theory and practice. We made recommendations to promote
training workshops on the use of numerous teaching strategies and the development of policies, rules and regulations. This model will guide the interactions of student nurses and lecturers when using social media platforms in teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** student nurses; lecturers; social media platforms; teaching and learning

**References**
