Access to, interest in and attitude toward e-learning for continuous education among Malaysian nurses

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:

Continuous nursing education (CNE) courses delivered through e-learning is believed to be an effective mode of learning for nurses. Implementation of e-learning modules requires pre-assessment of infrastructure and learners' characteristics. Understanding the learners' needs and their perspectives would facilitate effective e-learning delivery by addressing the underlying issues and providing necessary support to learners.

OBJECTIVE:

The aim of this study was to examine access to computer and Internet facilities, interest in and preferences regarding e-learning, and attitudes toward e-learning among nurses in Peninsular Malaysia.

DESIGN:

The study utilized a cross-sectional descriptive survey.

SETTING:

Government hospitals and community clinics in four main regions of Peninsular Malaysia.

PARTICIPANTS:

A total of 300 registered nurses.

METHOD:

Data were collected using questionnaires, which consisted of demographic and background items and questions on access to computer and Internet facilities, interest and preferences in e-learning, and attitudes toward e-learning. Descriptive analysis and a chi-squared test were used to identify associations between variables.

RESULTS:

Most Malaysian nurses had access to a personal or home computer (85.3%, n=256) and computer access at work (85.3%, n=256). The majority had Internet access at home (84%, n=252) and at work (71.8%, n=215); however, average hours of weekly computer use were low. Most nurses (83%, n=249) did not have an e-learning experience but were interested in e-learning activities. Most nurses displayed positive attitudes toward e-learning. Average weekly computer use and interest in e-learning were positively associated with attitudes toward e-learning.

CONCLUSION:

Study findings suggest that organizational support is needed to promote accessibility of information and communications technology (ICT) facilities for Malaysian nurses to motivate their involvement in e-learning.