

Chapter 44

Implementation of Web– Based Distance Education in Nursing Education in Turkey: A Sample Lesson in Patient Education

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ABSTRACT

The research was carried out in 2005-2006 as a descriptive and methodological study. It aimed to obtain students' feedback and to serve as a source for future relevant studies. The setting of the study was İstanbul University Florence Nightingale Nursing College and at İstanbul University Bakırköy Health College. The sample of the study included 167 students who voluntarily consented to participate in the study. The sample was taken from the population of all students continuing their education at the two study universities. Data were collected utilizing the "Information Form 1" and the "Information Form 2". The students' general mean and standard deviation values on Information Form 2 were (117.02 ± 8.04), and when the arithmetic mean and standard deviation values relating to the sections were examined, the results were as follows: Views about the Design of the patient education course (65.19 ± 3.33), Views about the patient education course (24.71 ± 2.57), Views about web-based distance learning after education (27.19 ± 3.86). These were considered to be satisfactory findings indicating that the students had positive views about the web-based patient education course in general. The opinion of the students about the "Patient Education" lesson was generally positive. There was a significant difference with respect to the scores on the questionnaire between the students with, and students without, the ability of learning by themselves, the scores being higher in the former ($p < 0.05$).

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INTRODUCTION

Education research emphasizes that efficient and effective utilization of modern information and communication technologies is possible through “distance education.” Distance education provides a solution for inequalities of opportunity, supports life-long education, and is based on taking advantage of learning technologies and individual learning (İşman, 2005; Kaya, 2002). Since the end of the 1990s, distance education has become Internet/web-based as computer networks have started to be utilized in education. Web-based distance education, which has become popular with the advancement of web-based technologies, has allowed students to communicate with others easily, learn on their own, take responsibility for their learning, and manage their time (Atack & Rankin, 2002; Blakeley & Smith, 1998; Christianson, Teine & Luft, 2002; Harrison, 2006; Hawatson, 2004; Merisotis & Phipps, 1999; Rovai & Barnum, 2003).

Distance education practices, which are limited but rapidly increasing, have become a requirement in educational activities relating to professions which face problems due to a lack of economic, political and physical resources, and inadequate numbers of instructors. Nursing is one of these professions. National and international nursing organizations point out that distance education is essential for nurses in terms of their life-long individual and professional development, and for continuing their education while working in the field (Farrel, Cubit, Bobrowski & Salmon, 2007; Hawatson, 2004; Heidari & Galvin, 2002). Starting from the 1990s, completing undergraduate degrees, graduate and post graduate studies, and certificate programs has been enabled through distance education in countries such as the United States of America (USA), England, Germany and many other developed countries (Adams & Timmis, 2006; Atack & Rankin, 2002; Carr & Farley, 2003; Yu & Yang, 2006).

In Turkey, the first distance education practices in nursing started in 1982 when the “Associate Degree Department for Health Administration and Health Personnel” was founded within the Open Education Faculty upon the recommendation of the General Directorate of Healthcare Education. The aim of this program was to “communicate the medical and paramedical developments to the assistant healthcare professionals working at healthcare institutions, and raising professionals meeting the standards of the European Community by improving the knowledge and skills of the intermediary workforce in the healthcare industry” The program was created by decisions no: 90, 30, 1074, dated 21.08.1990 of the Higher Education Institution. In parallel with this, upon Statutory Decree No: 496, dated 18.08.1993, an agreement was made with the Ministry of Health and the “Nursing Associate Degree Program” was started within the Open Education Faculty to allow working nurses who had graduated from vocational health high schools to complete the associate degree program. Within one year, the program was enlarged to include midwives and healthcare technicians. Including the 2006-2007 academic year 39,913 nurses and 16,916 midwives graduated from this program which aimed to “relieve the pressure on higher education, and to provide advanced knowledge to professionals by increasing their educational level, and giving them the opportunity to get a higher education diploma in their field” (<http://ogrsayi.anadolu.edu.tr/pdetay.htm>).

Today, Article 1 of the “Nursing Law” states that the title of nurse shall be given to those who have graduated from faculty and schools providing undergraduate degrees in nursing at Turkish universities and whose diplomas are registered at the Ministry of Health, and those who have graduated from a foreign nursing school recognized by the State and whose diplomas are approved to be equivalent and registered at the Ministry of Health” as published in the Official Gazette no: 26510, dated 02.05.2007 upon Statutory Decree no: 5634, dated 25.04.2007. The changes and developments in today’s world

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