Evaluation of PDA Acceptance in Nursing Education

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Introduction:
Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), have emerged as useful and indispensable tools for healthcare providers. PDAs are causing significant improvements in the efficiency of nursing practice in transforming the manner in which healthcare is delivered.

There is an extensive amount of studies that support the use of PDAs by nursing students as a valuable tool in the learning experience. Handheld technology provides instant information on patient data, treatment options and drug therapy. Point-of-care access to these types of information can improve the quality of care, save valuable time and potentially reduce medical errors [4]. Studies also found that PDA use has a great advantage to nursing in that it is capable of storing large databases, running custom-built applications, and storing reference materials [2]. Areas of particular value in the use of PDAs were tracking documentation, tracking of medication administration, as well as care planning and research [3].

Study Objective:
In Saudi Arabia there have been no studies assessing the effects of handheld technology in improving nursing education. And thus, this study was conducted to measure the acceptance level of PDA use among nursing students as a tool of education. Incorporating such technology is considered a major investment, and assessing the acceptance level can confidently guide an implementation strategy for infusing such devices in nursing education.

Methodology:
The study applied the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in order to predict and explain the extent to which PDA technology is accepted among nursing students. Eighty-nine nursing students participated by completing a questionnaire reflecting the different variables of TAM. Two dimensions were explored and evaluated; (1) the applicability of the TAM model in assessing this technology was initially performed through four hypotheses using simple and multiple regression; (2) the overall percentage of positive students directions on the different aspects of TAM was conducted through a special numbering model.

Results:
For the first dimension, significant positive influence between all the casual elements in TAM have confirmed the applicability of the TAM model in this study, with the largest influence of 32.2% on intentional behavior caused by the attitudes toward using the technology. The second dimension resulted in a total of 94.9% students whom can ultimately be considered as future users of PDA’s in their nursing education. Further results are illustrated in figure 1.

Conclusions:
Nursing Students believed in the usefulness of PDA’s in their education. The results of the study confirm the positive attitude in utilizing such technology and thus the significant impact it will have in both their classroom and clinical experience.

References:

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