



ONLINE TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR NURSING STUDENTS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital transformation of global education, with nursing education being one of the most profoundly affected disciplines. Unlike other academic fields, nursing requires the integration of theoretical knowledge with clinical practice, making the shift to online learning both an opportunity and a challenge. This transition revealed significant strengths of digital education but also exposed critical limitations that directly affect nursing students' professional development.

Objective

The purpose of this paper is to examine the challenges and opportunities associated with online teaching in nursing education. Specifically, the study aims to: (1) assess the perceived benefits of online education in nursing, (2) identify the major barriers affecting learning outcomes, and (3) propose evidence-based recommendations for integrating online teaching into sustainable blended learning models.

Methodology

This paper is based on a mixed-methods literature review of peer-reviewed literature published between 2020 and 2025. Databases including PubMed, Scopus, CINAHL, and Web of Science were searched using keywords such as nursing education, online teaching, e-learning, blended learning, and COVID-19. The search terms were conducted following the 2020 Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA). The synthesis and integration of findings across diverse study designs were conducted following the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Convergent Integrated Approach.

Results

The review identified consistent benefits, including accessibility, flexibility, and innovation. Additionally, the use of digital tools such as virtual simulations and case-based learning. These innovations were reported to enhance theoretical understanding and support clinical reasoning skills. However, there are also significant challenges, such as reduced opportunities for face-to-face clinical practice, digital inequality among students, limited interaction with lecturers,



Romanian International Conference for Education & Research

pedagogical dependence on online instructors, and physical stress from prolonged screen time. Ultimately, the importance of blended learning models, which combine online instruction with supervised clinical practice, has been reinforced.

Conclusion

The study concludes that online learning is an effective tool for ensuring continuity in nursing education but cannot substitute for direct patient care experiences. A blended learning model emerges as the most sustainable approach for the post-pandemic era. To strengthen this model, recommendations include investments in digital infrastructure, the integration of high-quality virtual simulations, and systematic faculty training in digital pedagogy. Ultimately, online education should be considered a complementary, not replacement, strategy that enriches nursing education while preparing students for the realities of digital healthcare.

Keywords: online teaching, nursing education, virtual simulation, blended learning, clinical skills.