

60th World Nursing Education and Nursing Practice Congress

October 16-17, 2023 | Webinar

Volume : 08

Integrating the connectivism theory to facilitating critical thinking in on-line teaching and learning

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Critical thinking (CT) is an essential competency for all [nursing practitioners](#). It has become over the years a skill that all nurse educators have to develop and nurture in their students. A critical thinker is a person who can use interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation skills, to integrate new knowledge into their learning network. In the same vein CT dispositions presented in Delphi Report of Facione et al are “open-mindedness regarding divergent world views, flexibility in considering alternatives and opinions, fair-mindedness in appraising reasoning, honesty in facing one’s own biases, prejudices, stereotypes, egocentric or sociocentric tendencies, and willingness to reconsider and revise views where honest reflection suggests that change is necessary selfregulation, to integrate new knowledge into their learning network. The era of the fourth industrial revolution and the COVID-19 pandemic compelled universities and other [nursing education](#) institutions to rapidly move to online teaching and learning. This left one with the question of “how critical thinking can be facilitated in online learning. A literature review was undertaken to determine how the Connectivism theory can be used to facilitate critical thinking in online teaching. The research was conducted with focus on publications published between 2013 and 2023. Literature indexes in CINAHL, Medline, Proquest, Google Scholar and Pubmed were searched. Search terms that were used included “connectivism, critical thinking, online teaching. In a connectivist viewpoint, the new learning responsibilities shift from the teacher to the learner. Unlike traditional teaching methods and other theories like constructivism or cognitivism, the educator’s job is to guide students to become effective agents for their own learning and personal development. In other words, it’s up to the learner to create their own learning experience, engage in decision making, and enhance their learning networks. Meaning making and forming connections between specialized communities are important activities. Connectivism embraces knowledge as a network where the learner, with the help of digital technologies, develops mental connections between pieces of information during interaction with various information sources. Moreover, the students’ role is to extend mental, behavioural, or tool-based interconnections which presuppose an extension of understanding or remembering. The connections information that is described as “direct access to reliable information from millions of sources to duplicate, reproduce, and share within their social networks, and to delete, critique, and discard inaccurate, irrelevant, and unreliable information.

Biography

Prof Agnes Makhene is an associate professor in the Nursing Department University of Johannesburg South Africa. I have extensive clinical experience, having worked in different clinical disciplines. I have an extensive clinical knowledge covering pediatrics, community health, management, midwifery and surgical nursing. Having worked in different disciplines in the profession. I have 17 years of experience in teaching in higher education with knowledge in curriculum development and evaluation, study material development, assessment, and teaching. I have teaching experience in undergraduate and post graduate levels.

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Abstract received : June 27, 2023 | Abstract accepted :June 29, 2023 | Abstract published : October 30, 2023