

VIRTUAL COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR NUCLEAR MEDICINE TRAINING: A PILOT STUDY

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Purpose: This article presents the validation of a virtual collaborative environment design for personnel training in nuclear medicine. **Method and Materials:** The development started with the identification of technological premises and organizational constraints in nuclear medicine services. The prototype was developed using Moodle platform. In order to improve Moodle basic configuration, a set of interaction functionalities to support the social constructivist methodological approach was developed. A pilot study was conducted with a sample of fifteen volunteers, all nuclear medicine professionals. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis obtained from a semi-structured questionnaire was conducted. **Results:** The collaborative environment was validated and considered relevant for personnel training by a community of professionals engaged in nuclear medicine. The database materials, available in the virtual environment can be increased continuously according to the virtual community professional interests. Suggestions for improvements and new features were proposed and will be included in further version. The prototype website is available online at <http://marfim.lad.pucrs.br:58080/moodle/>. **Conclusion:** The results showed that the virtual collaborative environment created into Moodle platform, based on social constructivist methodology, has pedagogical potential. We believe that the learning process improves when professionals interact and discuss about their experiences, using supporting materials and communication tools in a secure and access restricted environment. A training program to improve moderators actions is necessary, because the motivation skills needed in this kind of environment are different from those used on face-to-face classes in traditional teaching. More studies are needed in order to analyze the effectiveness of this environment in continuing education.

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