

Activity Theory Framework: A Basis for E-Health Readiness Assessment in Health Institutions

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ABSTRACT E-health readiness assessment has become the basis upon which ICT investments are deployed in health institutions. However different e-health readiness assessment models are applied to achieve different goal without any theoretical framework to support the choice of these models. This paper therefore investigated the different e-health readiness assessment models applied in health institutions of the north- west province of South Africa and mapped the outcome onto the constructs of activity theory framework to ascertain alignment between the two (e-health readiness assessment models and activity theory constructs) for possible adoption of Activity theory as a framework for e-health readiness assessment. A case study approach was used. Participants were selected from a population group of doctors and hospital administrators. Semi-structured, open-ended interview questions were used to gather evidence from the participants regarding the different e-health readiness assessment models applied in their hospital and how they evaluate the hospitals readiness to use e-health applications. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded. The findings revealed that “need-change readiness, engagement readiness, technological readiness and societal readiness “models are used for evaluation. The results from this study led to a direct mapping of the components of the e-health readiness assessment onto the constructs of activity theory. The mapping led to the proposal of Activity Theory being adopted as a framework which underpins e-health readiness assessment in hospitals and other healthcare institutions.