

Description

New Beginnings

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Ten years after graduating with a bachelors degree in economics I decided to pursue my interest in what had previously been my favourite subject area — midwifery. Please enjoy my account of how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting my midwifery studies here in Iran.

A difficult start

At first, it was very difficult for me to obtain a place on a midwifery course at an Iranian university: the entrance exams attract a very large number of applicants, so competition is fierce. I also knew that it would not be easy to return to full-time education whilst caring for my 6-year-old daughter, but I was well supported by my husband, and despite these challenges, I gave it my best shot and was accepted by a good university with an excellent academic world ranking and reputation.

New beginnings

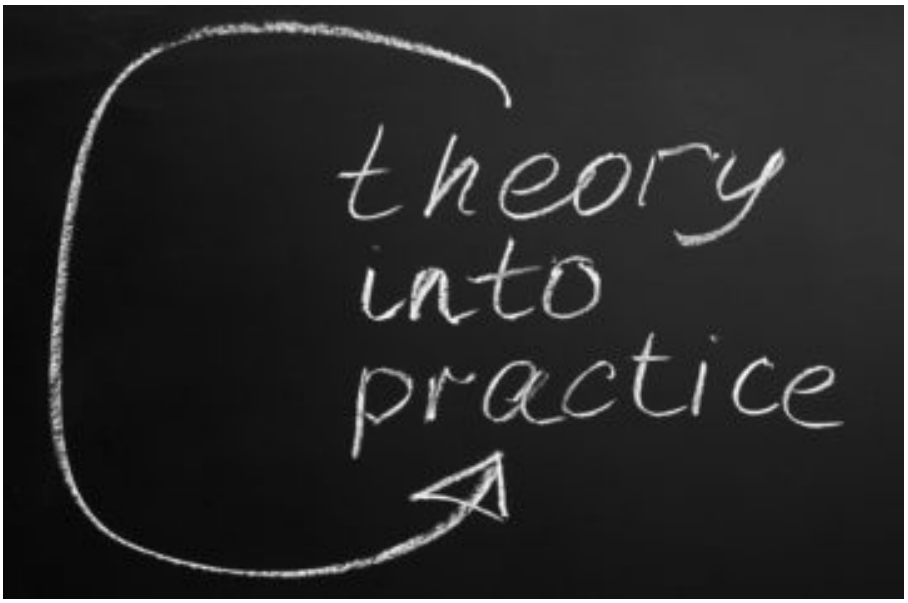


My family and I relocated to another city to be closer to my university and our new life began with excitement and lots of hope for the future! I started university life with passion and a hunger for knowledge. I spent most of my days at university and initially struggled to juggle the demands of full-time education with the demands of looking after my young daughter, who, like her mother, was also starting school too! I quickly realised that I needed to spend more time studying than I had anticipated in order to get all of my work done, I had never been so busy! After around a month of struggling, I finally managed to adjust and balance university life with my responsibilities as a mother.

A big change

Everything was going well until COVID-19 arrived. My university closed its doors and all of its students were required to confine themselves to their homes. At first, I was really happy to be able to stay at home with my daughter and rest, but I very quickly recognised that being at home all day with an energetic child was anything but restful! What is more, I had only spent one semester studying my dream subject and it was a real blow to have all clinical practice suspended, especially after waiting so long to pursue my dream career.

A new way of learning



My university has started online classes and we have been given a lot of resources to support us to learn midwifery theory, but if I am honest, I struggle a little with the online lessons. Midwifery courses are difficult and I miss the face-to-face interaction between professors and students. I attend to my daughter during my remote lectures and this means that I sometimes miss things until I watch the replay. My daughter has online classes too, and I sometimes support her with her online lessons whilst participating in my own. We do not know when we will be able to return to clinical placements in our host hospitals and I really miss clinical practice. Before the pandemic we had completed the majority of our practical teaching and assessments, in fact, we only have 3 practical sessions left in this academic year.

Achieve your dream



Despite missing face to face lectures and clinical practice, I ultimately understand that everyone in Iran is doing what is necessary to keep our loved ones safe, and I am happy to do my part. This is a global crisis and everyone across the world has found themselves in an unprecedented situation, so we have to try our hardest to patiently deal with the ongoing difficulties. I will try my hardest to get the best results possible, and I would like to finish my blog post with this message for my fellow student midwives: wherever you are, persevere throughout this crisis and keep sight of your goals because every hardship shapes your character. We will all get there in the end and achieve our dream to become midwives.

Category

1. News & Views
2. Student Midwife Blog

Tags

1. coronavirus
2. COVID-19
3. international

4. Iran
5. student midwife
6. support our students

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