

The Obstacles That Encounter Postgraduate Students in The Colleges of Physical Education Using Digital Learning Platforms During The COVID-19 Pandemic Quarantine

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ABSTRACT:

The study aims at investigating the obstacles that encounter the postgraduate students and their preference to take the exam via digital learning platforms at the colleges of Physical Education at Mustansiriyah University- Iraq; University of Anbar - Iraq; and University of Duhok- Kurdistan Rejoin- Iraq. The participants of the study were 30 male and female postgraduate students, the participants were chosen randomly, each university 10 students. The researchers set open questions to collect the data of the study. The research tries to answer the following questions: 1- Do you prefer to learn and interact via Digital Platforms? Why? 2- Do you prefer to take the exam via Digital Platforms? Why? Descriptive analysis was used to answer the questions of the study. The findings reveal that all participants do not like to learn via digital platform, but all participants prefer to take exam via digital platform. The results show that there are different obstacles, the most common are the weakness of the internet services, instructor is the center of the learning process, absence of interaction, students acquire quantitative information more than qualitative information, the feeling of nervous due to the slow broadcast of the lecture, and the lecture is Reading task oriented. The results also revealed that students prefer to take exam via digital learning platforms due to the facilities that such platforms provide.

Keywords: Postgraduate Students; Colleges of Physical Education; Digital Learning Platforms.



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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The researchers try to investigate the postgraduate students at the colleges of Physical Education online learning preferences. After analyzing students' replies, the researchers found that most of the answers were about the obstacles that they face during learning and examining via digital learning platforms. To this end, the researchers change the aim of the study in order to focus and shed the light in depth on the obstacles that encounter the postgraduate students and their preference to take exam via digital learning platforms at the colleges of Physical Education at Mustansiriyah University- Iraq; University of Anbar - Iraq; and University of Duhok- Kurdistan Rejoin- Iraq.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

From the researchers' experiences in teaching postgraduate students via digital social media and educational platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine, they notice that such new method has some disadvantage aspects. Moreover, the researchers, recently, all over the world focus on investigating the advantages and disadvantages of using social media applications, digital platforms, and live-video communication on education. From the researchers best knowledge, no research has conduct in this field in Iraq. To this end, the current study tries to investigate the obstacles that encounter the postgraduate students and their preferences to take exam via digital learning platforms at the colleges of Physical Education at Mustansiriyah University- Iraq; University of Anbar - Iraq; and University of Duhok- Kurdistan Rejoin- Iraq.

AIMS OF THE STUDY

The current study is aimed at investigating the obstacles that encounter the postgraduate students and their preferences to take exam via digital learning platforms at the colleges of Physical Education.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The outcomes of the study will shed the light on the obstacles that the postgraduate students at the College of Physical Education face in learning. This will help the instructors to overcome such obstacles to achieve the ultimate goal of postgraduate program.

QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

To achieve the aims of the study, the following questions are set:

1. Do you prefer to learn and interact via Digital Platforms? Why?
2. Do you prefer to take exam via Digital Platforms? Why?

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Postgraduate Students: The postgraduate students are the students who enrolled in higher study program.

College of Physical Education: It seeks to develop knowledge and experiences concerning physical and sports duties and activities and their applications by creating an educational environment. Its initial goal is to prepare sport education teachers.

Digital Learning Platform: It is a site that provides electronic information, resources, method of communication, and learning applications.

INTRODUCTION

We live in a digital world; we can get whatever we need with a simple click on a digital device. The most popular digital device is the Smartphone. The digital devices facilitates communication, acquire information, develop personal skills, and etc. at anywhere and at any time (Melani et al., 2015). The electronic education has become a popular norm all over the world.

Anca and Cosmina (2015: 1515) state that electronic learning passes through three phases from 1994 to present. Phase one begins in 1994 and long to the beginning of 1999, this phase is known as a "passive use of the Internet". During this period the traditional equipment were used to provide internet services. The phase two begins in 2000 and long to the beginning of 2003. This phase is known as "transition to higher band-widths". During this phase a good internet service is provided, widespread of media has emerged, rich scientific sources are available, the education starts to shift to distance learning environments which provide virtual communication, learning, exchanging experiences, and access to course materials. Phase three begins in 2004 to present, it is known as internet information explosion.

The researchers in the current study witness the raise of the virtual world. December 2019 is the beginning of the widespread of COVID-19 pandemic all over the world. This case forces all the sectors to practice their activities virtually. The Smartphone applications are the most used among the people, also we witness the increase of electronic platforms that provide social, educational, medical, media, and agricultural services.

RELATED STUDIES

Zaidatun et, al. (2011) investigate students' perceptions toward the e-learning system via social networking as a major platform of the e-learning in university. The participants were 234 undergraduate students at the Faculties in a Malaysian's university. To collect the data of the study, a questionnaire was used. The results show that the students have positive attitudes toward electronic education, and prefer social networking as an electronic learning platform.

Carter (2013) investigate students' perceptions toward the online delivery of the course. The participants were 26 postgraduate students at the James Cook University Singapore. Open-ended questions were used to collect the data of the study. The results show that the students encounter obstacles to navigating and using the e-learning platform.

METHODOLOGY

Population and Participants of the Study

The researchers use descriptive analysis. The population of the study is all postgraduate students at the colleges of Physical Education. The participants are from the college of Physical Education in the Mustansiriyah University; University of Anbar; and University of Duhok- Kurdistan Rejoin- Iraq. The total number is 30 male and female students, who are chosen randomly.

Instrument of the Study

To achieve the aims and to answer the questions of the study, the researchers set open questions. The participant's role is to answer the questions in details. The questions were sent to the participants via the Google Form.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

After receiving the answers, the researchers analyzed them and found that the students have faced obstacles in studying via electronic tools, digital learning platforms, and social media applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp, google classroom, hangouts meet, zoom, free conference call, meet, Edmodo, funzi, and skype. These obstacles have hindered the postgraduate students to acquire knowledge, information, and skills. The most common obstacles can be summarized as following:

- 1- A barrier to navigating and using the electronic learning platform.
- 2- The existing e-learning system is controlled by lecturer.
- 3- Unknown of some e-learning services.
- 4- E-learning only allows lecturer to control the content.
- 5- E-learning limits peer to peer interactivity.
- 6- The interaction is artificial.
- 7- The Educational atmosphere is absent.
- 8- Participation needs download and upload materials.
- 9- Suitability of the time of the lecture.
- 10- Depends on on-line immediate sources that may not be authentic.
- 11- Quantitative information more than qualitative information.
- 12- Practice is absent.
- 13- Lack of technology services.
- 14- Lack of authentic situation.
- 15- Feelings of boredom.
- 16- Reading task oriented.
- 17- The interference between learning and social life.
- 18- I feel nervous due to the slow broadcast of the lecture.
- 19- Participation and interaction during the lecture are not active as being done in the classroom.

In contrast, the result found that the students prefer to take exam via electronic tools, digital learning platforms, and social media applications due to the facilities, flexibility, calm atmosphere, time save, and the feeling of comfortable that one feel during the exam.

CONCLUSION

It can be inferred that postgraduate students encounter numbers of obstacles that can be a source to hinder their learning. Knowing such obstacles can help the instructors to overcome them and make learning process more flexible. The instructors and the students need to deal with e-learning as long as the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine is existed. When the e-learning experience is succeeding, the education process can be shifted from class orientated to blended learning oriented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the outcomes of the study, the researchers recommended the following:

- 1- The instructors have to take in consideration the obstacles of learning via e-learning.
- 2- The College of Physical Education has to provide facilities to overcome the mentioned obstacles.
- 3- Investigate the merit and demerit of E-learning.
- 4- Investigate College of Physical Education staff perspectives on e-learning.

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المعوقات التي تواجه طلبة الدراسات العليا في كليات التربية الرياضية باستخدام

منصات التعلم الرقمية خلال الحجر الصحي لجائحة كورونا-19

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الملخص:

تهدف الدراسة الى التحقق من المعوقات التي تواجه طلبة الدراسات العليا و ما يفضلون في اداء الاختبار بواسطة منصات التعلم الرقمية في كليات التربية الرياضية في الجامعة المستنصرية- العراق، و جامعة الانبار- العراق وجامعة دهوك - كردستان العراق. كان المشاركون في الدراسة 30 طالب وطالبة من طلبة الدراسات العليا، تم اختيار العينة عشوائياً، من كل كلية 10 طلبة. وضع الباحثون اسأله مفتوحة لجمع بيانات الدراسة. حاول الباحثون الإجابة عن الأسئلة التالية: 1- هل تفضل التعلم والتفاعل بواسطة المنصات الرقمية؟ ولماذا؟ 2- هل تفضل أداء الامتحان بواسطة المنصات الرقمية؟ ولماذا؟ تم استخدام الأسلوب الوصفي لإجابة أسئلة الدراسة. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن جميع الطلبة لا يفضلون التعلم بواسطة المنصات الرقمية، ولكن بالمقابل جميع الطلبة يفضلون أداء الاختبار بواسطة المنصات الرقمية. أظهرت النتائج وجود معوقات مختلفة، من أكثرها شيوعاً هي ضعف شبكة الانترنت، المدرس هو مركز عملية التعلم، غياب التفاعل، يكتسب الطلبة معلومات كمية أكثر من كونها نوعية، الشعور بالتوتر لبطء بث المحاضرة، والمحاضرة مبنية على القراءة. كذلك أظهرت نتائج الدراسة ان الطلبة يرغبون باداء الامتحان عبر المنصات الرقمية لما توفره من تسهيلات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: طلبة الدراسات العليا، كليات التربية الرياضية، منصات التعليم الرقمية.