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Measuring Attitudes toward Blended Learning Environment among Undergraduate Students in Palestine

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate and measure undergraduate students' attitudes toward blended learning environment, the researcher applies blended learning attitude scale (BLAS) which consisted of (15) positive indicators and (5) negative indicators toward blended learning environment, the scale was applied among (30) undergraduate female students, that they were registered for "teaching skills" course 2nd semester 2015/2016, blended learning environment consisted of active trading for teaching at the class mixing with captured lectures on the web, study result discovered that students positive attitude toward was (71.5%) but students negative attitude toward was only (17.2), finally the study recommended to use blended learning environment among undergraduate students.

Keywords: Blended Learning, Attitude, Undergraduate Students, Palestine.

Introduction

Blended learning appeared to support practice based learning, thus teacher can use web or real teaching according to activity need, the education system needs to reflect the changes in all the sub-systems of the society in its structure as fast as possible and thus, it is in the struggle of using the technologies based on computers and the internet widely and effectively (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004).

Social media and IT developing introduced much contributions for educational purposes, also design blended learning environment become very simple by using google site for example or Facebook, according to Jones et al (2010) "Social media sites are flexible and user-friendly. Therefore, compared to other learning management systems, they are used more easily. A number of educators and researchers can generate a community with simple steps, can share many things between each other and can communicate with each other. All these aspects provide facilities for the users. Social media sites can enrich education by providing blended

learning experiences and they can provide benefits for educational institutions supporting the teaching and assessment processes.

“In blended learning, instructors typically use computer technology with Internet access. The blended learning environment may be as simple as providing administrative information, reading materials, and resources for the students” (Cheung & Hew, 2011).

blended learning advantages many of researches list advantages of blended learning, these advantages in general were (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003; Şentürk, 2010; Orhan, 2007):

- i) providing flexibility and convenience in the learning environment
- ii) increase in the learning level and achievement.
- iii) increase in the permanence of knowledge
- iv) increase in the interest in learning,
- v) increase in the motivation in the course,
- vi) interaction and cost efficiency.

blended learning environment build to meet students need, and available equipment in the classroom, we didn't need to use high cost software or special devices for that, video mode application may be excellent for blended learning environment, Stein and Graham (2014) talked about Designing blended courses in three steps:

- i. Rethinking Course Design.
- ii. A Strategy of Iterative Development.
- iii. Summary and Standards.

The researcher considered the previous steps in this study, blended learning environment began with rethinking and redesign, a strategy for developing was already exist, also there were standard for blended learning environment.

many studies applied among Palestinian undergraduate students showed that blended learning environment is much better traditional environment, Matter (2015) showed blended learning success to increase students thinking, that Abo resh (2013) used blended learning in Arabic grammar teaching and it motivated students towards Arabic, Alhelo (2016) used blended learning for practice learning when he measure the impact of blended learning on developing database skills, also blended learning succeed to improve students skills.

according to the work of the researcher as a teacher for teaching skills course, at faculty of education, this course divided into theory and practice information, and students faced cut of electricity problem, so there is need for new learning environment to solve this problem, so the researcher decided to study the attitudes of students toward blended learning.

Research Questions

This study tried to answered about these question:

What is the blended learning environment?

What are students' attitudes toward blended learning environment?

Samples

Research sample consisted of (30) female students, from faculty of education, they distributed into three levels:

Table 1: sample distribution

Level	No.	ratio
2	7	23.3%
3	18	60%
4	5	16.6%
Total	30	100%

Instruments

The researcher design attitude scale towards blended learning attitude scale, it was suitable for scale the attitude among undergraduate students, the researcher distributed the scale for validation from specialists in curriculum, methodology and instructional technology, also the researcher measured the consistency of the scale.

Blended learning Attitudes Scale (BLAS)

The scale consisted of (20) indicators, (15) positive indicator and (5) negative indicators appendix (A).

Correlation

correlation of the scale was measured by the correlation between every indicator and the sum of all indicators as below:

Table 2: correlation

	r	sig		r	sig
1	.679**	.000	11	.698**	.000
2	.635**	.000	12	.745**	.000
3	.378*	.039	13	.620**	.000
4	.740**	.000	14	.768**	.000
5	.392*	.032	15	.432*	.017
6	-.348*	.059	16	.530**	.003
7	.494**	.005	17	.862**	.000
8	.735**	.000	18	.257	.171
9	.750**	.000	19	.556**	.001
10	.074	.074	20	.366*	.047

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

According to the previous table, all the indicators of the scale are high correlate.

Consistency

For this purpose, the researcher used Cronbach's alpha, and the value of Cronbach's alpha was (0.877) which mean the consistency of the scale was high, and it is ready to apply.

Methodology and Procedures

The researcher recorded all “teaching skills” course and upload them on video lectures server <http://lectures.iugaza.edu.ps/3698-w-lnoJGAn7pol.htm>

Fig 1: video lectures



Lectures' teaching divided into real teaching and web based teaching according to skill, after (3) months of using blended learning environment, the scale was applied on the students.

For communications purses, the researches create a group on the face book to collect students at any time, this group allowed students to ad their posts as question.

Results

To answer the second question of the research which was “*What are students’ attitudes toward blended learning environment?*”, the researcher used two methods:

Results by the Mean

Table 3: Results by the mean

Attitudes	No.	sum	mean
Positive attitudes	15	2147	71.5%
Negative attitudes	5	517	17.5%

From the previous table (3), we note that students attitude was favor for positive attitudes.

Results by T-test

The researchers tried to know if students' attitudes increased above (80%) or not, so one sample t-test was used.

Table 4:one sample t-test at 80% mean

N	df	mean	t	sig
30	29	71.5	3.4	0.02

From table (4), α was less than 0.05, that mean there is significant differences between students' average attitude and the level (80%), which mean students' average attitude is larger than 80%.

Discussion

According to the result, this study investigates that using blended learning environment was accepted by undergraduate students, and students preferred to study by blended learning more than the traditional way.

That may because of the ability of repeating video at time of need, also electricity problem was very boring, so they preferred to show videos at suitable time.

Also, students' attention at the class may be affected by many variables, but when they at home they may be full attention and more concentrated.

Conclusion

The researchers recommend to use blended learning environment instead of traditional teaching way, thus we let students to choose the suitable way for learning, also students' attention become more concentrated by using video and social media tools.

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