

Saudi Electronic University a Role Model in Implementing Blended Learning; Exploring the Experience of Female Students in the Department of English Language and Translation

Noha Abdullah Alowedi

Department of English Language and Translation

Saudi Electronic University

Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

This study explores students' perceptions of blended learning in a Saudi higher education institution; namely, the Saudi Electronic University. SEU is the only university in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that offers undergraduate degree programs in complete mandatory Blended Learning mode of education in all courses. The study aims to describe the actual utilization of online learning represented by Blackboard as the official Learning Management System in SEU and to dictate students' satisfaction with the learning experience. The methodology used to achieve this goal was surveying students' opinions through sending out online questionnaires. The main purpose of this study is to consider the students' feedback, improve what needs improvements, and keep up the good work if it is considered 'good work'.

Keywords: Blackboard, SEU, students' perception, translation courses, blended learning, virtual classes, department of English Language and Translation

1. Introduction

Established by a royal decree in 2011, the SEU mission is to provide a combination of online and traditional education known as blended learning. At SEU, the teacher is a facilitator with physical and virtual availability through Blackboard, which is the official Learning Management System (LMS) in the university. A fact that provides students with sufficient opportunities to be in continuous contact with their teachers to discuss or to clear their doubts instantly. The English and translation department has been established in 2014, with students enrolled in 5 branches distributed in 5 cities of the kingdom; Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Tabouk, and Abha. To follow up how far the department has achieved the intended goal of the university, this study is conducted.

Blended learning utilizes technology to facilitate and personalize instruction, and enable students to learn at their own pace (Adam and Nel, 2009). Providing learning materials outside face-to-face contexts allows instructors to spend more time-via the LMS- with individuals and groups and to provide more constructive response (Alharbi and Drew, 2014). Moreover, blended approaches may reduce feelings of isolation, common to online instruction (Alharbi and Drew 2014); hence, it is considered middle ground between physical face-to face and virtual online modes. For these reasons and more, higher education institutions world-wide have embrace and encourage blended learning.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Saudi Arabia follows this international trend. There is a rising number of Saudi higher education institutions merging online approaches with face-to-face instruction (Kashghari and Asseel, 2014). A great advantage of using of blended learning is providing access to individuals who live in rural areas, in addition to increasing access to higher education for women. In some period of their lives, women need to spend more time at home taking care of their babies and toddlers, so this flexible mode of education really opens up new opportunities that help empowering Saudi women (Al-Hasan and Shukri, 2017). This method of instruction also supports Saudi women's pursuing careers as the country is currently planning to increase women's participation in the workforce from 22% to 30% over the next 15 years as one of its plans is to transform the economy and reduce its dependence on oil (Aldosaimani et al., 2018). However, while the Saudi Ministry of Education supports blended learning, it must be noted that the majority of universities implementing this method, do that electively in some courses under the willingness of the instructor. Therefore, because it is not obligatory, it is noticed that collectively few faculty members adopt this approach (Alebaikan and Troudi, 2010).

On October 8, 2011, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz issued a royal decree to establish the Saudi Electronic University. Since its establishment, this university has been designed to use blended learning methods to offer both graduate and undergraduate degrees. SEU has international academic partners ho help building the curricula collaboratively. These partners are University of Phoenix, Walden University, Capella University, Ohio University, and Franklin University. The number of colleges in SEU are four including College of Administrative & Financial Sciences, College of Computing and Informatics, College of Health Sciences, and College of Science and theoretical studies.

SEU educational goal is to develop critical thinkers, self-learners, and equip them with the skills needed to become life-long learners. To fulfil this goal, the SEU teaching strategies rely on unlimited sources of information (Textbooks, videos, and access to the Saudi Digital Library ‘SDL’) which are combined and structured for each course in the student’s self-learning space utilizing the Blackboard as the official Learning Management System (LMS). The adopted blended learning model in the SEU is divided into 33% face-to-face physical classroom, 33% virtual live classroom and 33% self-learning activities utilizing the vast resources of knowledge databases and structured educational content of the Blackboard. Summative assessments of students’ learning outcomes are achieved by different assessment methods with fixed grading scheme with 25 marks for assignments, 25 marks for midterm, and 50 marks for final.

Although this relatively new mode of education may sound appealing, students may resist it; especially high-school graduates who just came from traditional schools. Some solutions to overcome students’ resistance include but not restrict the following. First, explain to students the new method and its benefits; second, allow them to participate and experience this new method; and finally encourage students to express their perceptions about this different model, discuss potential problems, and suggest modifications (Powell et al., 2015).

1.1 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study emerges from the uniqueness of education culture in SEU. The education situation is totally different in the Saudi Electronic University (SEU); being the only public (governmental) university in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia offering undergraduate degree programs in complete mandatory Blended Learning mode of education in all courses. Thus, students and instructors are obliged to follow this new method as they accepted to study and work in this university by their own will.

2. Literature Review

Blended learning combines the benefits of both face-to-face and online instruction. It is cost-effective in terms of infrastructure, classroom maintenance, and space (Alebaikan and Troudi 2010; Owston et al. 2013). It adds flexibility to instructors’ schedules so they can manage their schedules and activities. It reduces classroom teaching time and offers instructors extended time for planning, grading, and supporting out-of-class activities (Alharbi and Drew, 2014; Powell et al., 2015). For students, it offers all-the-time access to course materials while preserving the advantages of face-to-face instruction. It also encourages social interaction and collaborative by extending the learning environment beyond traditional classroom settings (Li et al. 2014); students, naturally, build learning relations and engage in creating virtual groups on WhatsApp or Telegram, a new learning trend came to be known as micro-learning (Aldosemani, T., 2019). According to Marsh (2012), blended learning supports learners’ individualism, collaboration, independence, and engagement. It allows for flexible and less-stressful skills practice because learners can learn at their own pace, take charge of their learning, and track their achievements (Adam and Nel,

2009). Blended learning may also increase participation time for instructors and students as they leverage activities both in and outside of traditional class meetings (Margolis et al., 2017).

However, blended learning has several challenges as instructors have to design both face-to-face and online activities. Blended learning requires careful planning to determine objectives and what content should be developed and presented in online and face-to-face settings (Alghamdi 2016; Bousbahi and Alrazgan 2015). Instructors must select resources, plan course activities, and develop assessments without duplication of face-to-face or online delivery components (Aleckson and Ralston-Berg 2011; Reilly et al. 2012).

Blackboard is the most common and therefore most dominant learning management system (LMS) in Saudi higher education (Alebaikan and Troudi 2010; Bradford et al. 2007). Nevertheless, some research found that instructors struggle with posting and producing instructional materials, recording lectures, and uploading multimedia presentations (Alghamdi 2016; Bousbahi and Alrazgan 2015; Zaki and El Zawaidy 2014). Many faculty members view the system as complex and unreliable. Thus, they choose not to use the LMS for the distribution of instructional material; instead, they use it for administrative tasks (e.g., e-mail, announcements) (Aldosaimani et al. 2018). It is worth mentioning that this case is possible in traditional universities that added LMS optionally; However, the Saudi Electronic University utilizes Blackboard obligatory in all courses; instructors are obliged to give virtual classes and activate the discussion board with students.

Al-Drees et al. (2015) points out that faculty and students need intensive training both prior to and during implementation to manage blended learning. As instructors gain knowledge and training regarding blended learning, they are more likely to adopt it. Basic Blackboard training in SEU is provided at the beginning of each academic year for new staff and freshmen students. Advance training is provided midyear for all levels of educators.

While some studies have discussed blended learning in Saudi contexts (Alghamdi 2016; Almalki 2011; Bousbahi and Alrazgan 2015; Mohsen and Shafeeq 2014), some of these discussions lack empirical data (Alebaikan and Troudi 2010). Empirical research and in-depth examination of challenges and barriers impeding blended learning in Saudi contexts are needed (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010; Almalki 2011). A gap in the literature exists regarding students' perceptions of blended learning and specifically the usage of Blackboard features. And that is the contribution of this study.

3. Research Questions

This study explores students' perceptions of blended learning in a Saudi higher education institution; namely the Saudi Electronic University, investigates problems students encounter, and identifies potential solutions. More specifically, the study aims to describe the actual utilization of online learning represented by Blackboard as the official Learning Management System in SEU and to dictate students' satisfaction with the learning experience. Therefore, it attempts to answer the following research questions:

- What is the students' self-concept about technology and specially Blackboard?
- To what extent do students utilize the supplementary materials on Blackboard?
- To what extent are students satisfied with their blended learning experience?

4. Research Method

The study adopted a mixed-method research design and employed quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.

4.1 Participants

The present study surveyed students who are enrolled in the English language and translation program in the Saudi Electronic University (SEU). It traces the implementation of blended learning mode through surveying 5th level students of the English and Translation department. Randomly, two sections have been chosen, specifically in two courses: Lexicography ENG310 (21 response from students in Dammam) and Comparative Constructions ENG320 (42 response from students in Riyadh).

A total of 63 students responded to survey items on three main components: their self-concept about using technology, Blackboard online learning activities and resources, and their satisfaction of virtual online synchronic classes.

4.2 Instrument and Data Collection

Google forms were used to create the online questionnaires. Consequently, a link was created for the questionnaires and was posted on the announcement tab on Blackboard. The majority of questions were designed in a psychometric scale, i.e., Likert scale. When responding to a Likert item, participants specify their level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric agree-disagree scale for a series of statements. Thus, the range captures the intensity of their feelings for a given item, where 1 is lowest and 5 highest.

The second type of questions were yes or no questions. And the third type is multiple select questions allowing students to choose one or more of the phrases. The last question was an open question asking the students to 'write' their suggestions.

4.3 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using excel calculations and charts. Qualitative data from open-ended questions were analyzed using NVivo 12. Responses to open-ended questions were uploaded to NVivo 12. Results were initially organized according to open-ended questions. Open-coding techniques were then used to identify participant defined ideas. Word frequency were analyzed, and word cloud were utilized to highlight the terms that students used most to express their feelings.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 *Self-concepts about Using Technology*

Self-concept is a general term used to refer to how someone thinks about, evaluates or perceives themselves. To be aware of oneself is to have a concept of oneself. Baumeister (1999) defines self-concept as the following: "the individual's belief about himself or herself, including the person's attributes and who and what the self is".

Self-concept and academic achievement is also a positive feedback loop. In a longitudinal study, Marsh (1990) found that students with more positive academic self-concept achieved greater academic success the following year. Later studies confirmed the relationship between the two but indicated that achievement affects self-concept more than self-concept inherently influences achievement success (Muijs, 2011).

Many of the successes and failures that students experience are closely related to the ways that they have learned to view themselves and their relationships with others and with instruments. It is also becoming clear that self-concept has at least three major qualities of interest to education: (1) it is learned, (2) it is organized, and (3) it is dynamic.

Self-concept is learned: We in SEU help students develop their positive self-concept, by providing students with the opportunity to teach themselves new educational technologies, and encouraging them to learn through experience.

Self-concept is organized: Each person maintains countless perceptions regarding one's personal existence, and each perception is orchestrated with all the others. It is this generally stable and organized quality of self-concept that gives consistency to the personality. Because it is organized and almost fixed, it tends to resist change. And this fact triggered the main question of this research, what is the students' perception to this unusual teaching/learning method. Would they resist it as psychologist predict, would they happily accept, or would they reluctantly agree.

Self-concept is dynamic: To understand the active nature of self-concept, we need to acknowledge that self-concept development is a continuous process. In the healthy personality there is constant assimilation of new ideas and expulsion of old ideas throughout life. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct a follow up study to test the development of students' self-concepts.

Self-concept develops throughout the lifespan and during any career. According to researcher Donald Super, there are five life and career development stages:

Growth (Ages 0 to 14)

Exploration (Ages 15 to 24)

Establishment (Age 25 to 44)

Maintenance (Age 45 to 64)

Decline (Age 65+)

The majority of SEU Students fall within the range of stage 2 and 3. In the second stage, able

individuals experiment and try out new classes, experiences, and jobs. Stage 3 sees individuals establishing their career and building their skills, likely starting in an entry-level position (Betz, 1994).

The first part of the questionnaire focused on exploring students' self-concept about technology. The questions were as shown in the table1 below:

Table 1. Questions Related to Students' Self Concept about Technology

	Question	Possible answers
1	I feel confident in using technology	1,2,3,4,5
2	IT department in SEU is very helpful	1,2,3,4,5
3	When I need advice from my teacher, I can easily get in contact with her/him via e-mail, chat window, discussion forums, etc.	1,2,3,4,5
4	I have studying groups with my friends on Apps and use it for collaboration	a. WhatsApp b. Telegram c. Email
5	I learned how to use Blackboard easily	1,2,3,4,5

The results of the questionnaire came as the following. For the first question regarding students feeling confident about technology in general, 52.4% of students choose number 5 on Likert scale and 38 percent chose 4. So, it shows that most of the students feel confident about technology.

Regarding the second question about how the students feel about the IT support, 38% of the students chose number 3 on Likert scale, 28.6% chose 4 and 23.8% chose 5. The majority of students choosing the middle number indicates that they are reluctant as regards to the IT support.

The third question 'When I need advice from my teacher, I can easily get in contact with her/him via e-mail, chat window, discussion forums, etc', 81% of the students chose number 5 which indicates high satisfaction.

The fourth question regarding the concept of microlearning and the students utilizing social media applications shows that 81% of the students use WhatsApp to form studying groups and engage in collaborate learning techniques.

A striking respond came as the majority of students with a percentage of 38% chose number one on Likert scale, indicating less likely they feel that learning how to use Blackboard is easily. This result really needs great attention from the university as well as Blackboard developers. The university needs to conduct more training and tutorials for students and the developers need to make the interface more user friendly. This is a real concern as Blackboard is main means of interaction between students and instructors.

The overall result of the students' self-concept about technology can be considered positive. This is a good indication that students would be socio-psychologically ready to accept blended learning strategies.

5.2 Blackboard Online Learning Activities and Resources

Blackboard is a platform that carries the educational material. It is more of a house that accommodates people who need furniture; people are the students, faculty, and administrator; furniture is the educational material designed by university partners and SEU faculty, and presented by educators. These educational materials vary according to each course curriculum and each university. In SEU we follow a certain curriculum design that is unified 'as much as possible in all subjects in the same department. In the following section I will introduce the main structure for courses in the English Language and Translation department.

The interface that is introduced to the students in ENG 320 comparative construction course is projected in figure 1 below.

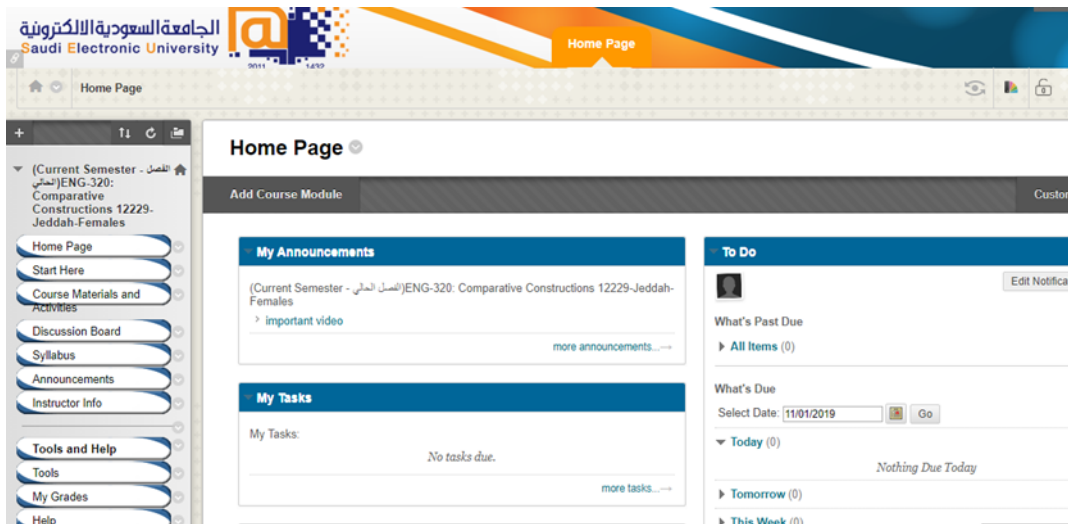


Figure 1. Course Homepage

On the left margin, there is a number of tabs. The course instructor has the option to change the arrangement of the tabs; however, the content within is already set in advance by academic experts with supervision of department administration.

Under the 'start here' tab, students will find instructions to help them prepare for the course and help them become familiar with the tools they will be using in the SEU website and in Blackboard. Some of these instructions are

Technical Requirements

- Personal computer: laptop, notebook, or desktop (iPad or tablet device optional)
- Headset with microphone and webcam
- Internet browser: Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Safari

- Internet connection speed: 2 megabytes per second or greater

The following tab is ‘Course Material and Activities’, which is the heart of the course for students. In this tab, students will find week by week materials including PowerPoint presentations, textbook sections required reading, weekly activities, rubrics, a number of quizzes and exam preparation games, and more. The following figures are screenshots of some the pages inside this tab.

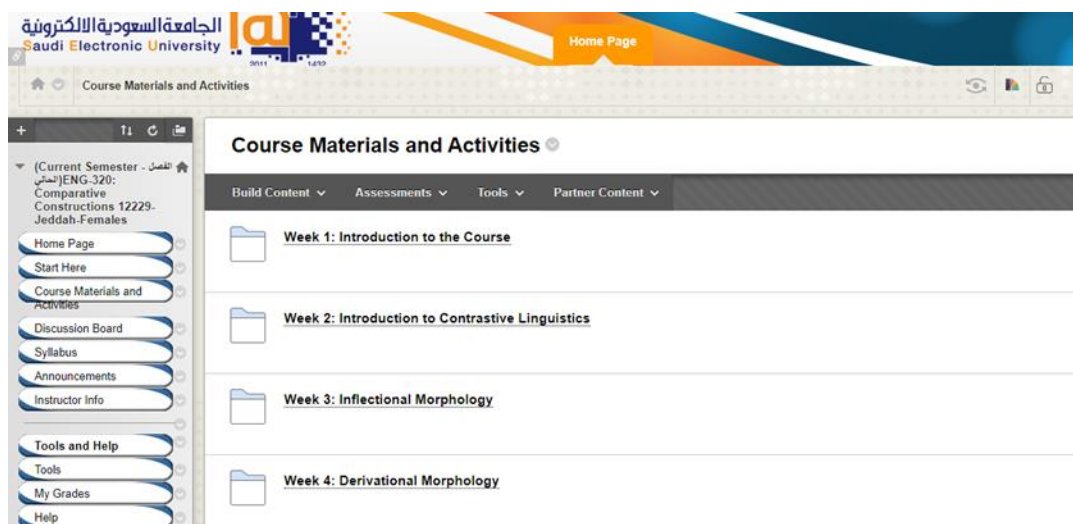


Figure 1. Course materials and activities main page

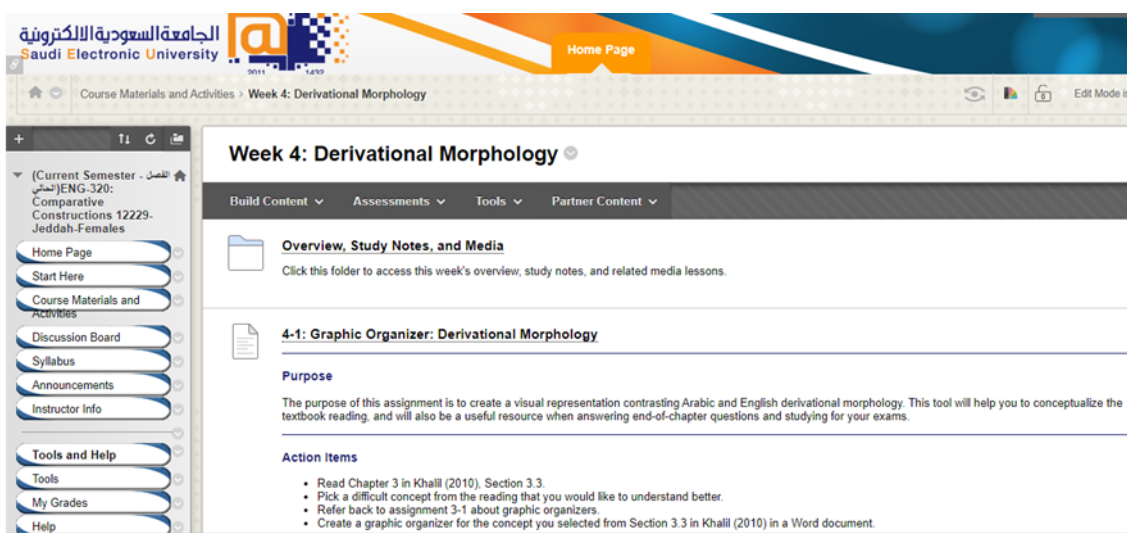


Figure 3. Sample of weekly content page

Figure 3 shows a sample of one of the weekly materials. Each weeks discusses a certain topic and the students can see on the weekly page the following: specific learning outcomes, assigned textbook reading, course video, other resources, new assignments, grading criteria, online quiz, and weekly PowerPoint presentation.

Other important tabs include the ‘syllabus’, ‘discussion board’, ‘my grades’, etc. the interactive tab is the ‘tool’ tab. Here, the instructor creates the online session to prevent the

virtual class, and the students have access to enter the same session. There are so many options in this area, one of the significant options is the recordings of virtual classes. The figure below shows the Blackboard Collaborate interface.

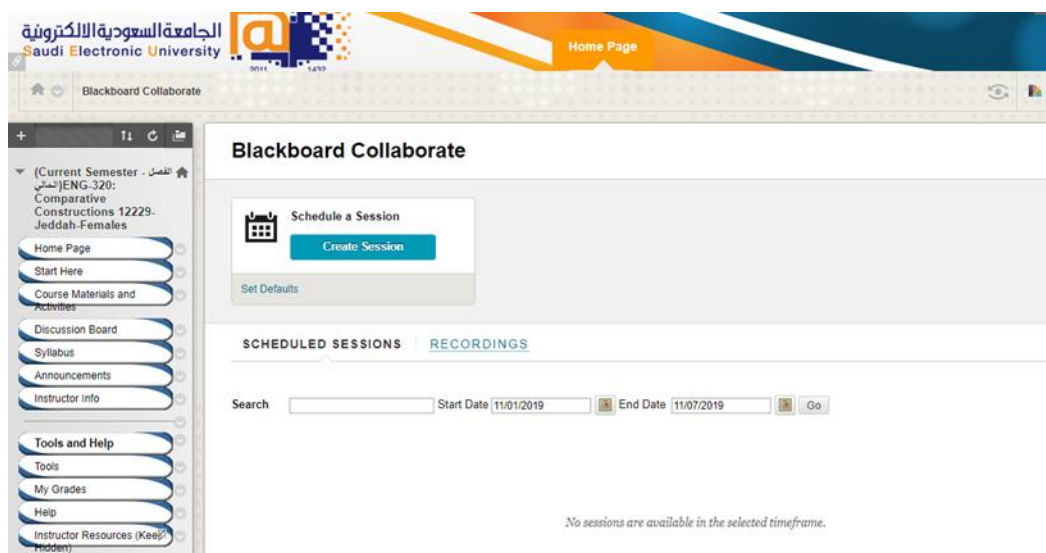


Figure 4 Blackboard Collaborate page

The demonstration above includes, but is not limited to, the basic features that SEU students use on blackboard. The second part of the questionnaire explores the students' usability of Blackboard features. Table 2 below includes the questions as presented in the questionnaire:

Table 2. Questions Related to Using Blackboard Learning Activities and Resources

#	Question	Possible answers
1	I use the following interaction educational activities on Blackboard platform	(Yes, No).
	a. Receive teacher announcements	(Yes, No).
	b. Participate in discussion board	(Yes, No).
	c. Upload assignments	(Yes, No).
	d. Engage in midterm and final exam preparation games	(Yes, No).
	e. Watch educational videos; there are about 20 videos in each course	(Yes, No).

The results of the questionnaire came as the following. 95 percent of the students stated that they receive announcements from their instructors. Quite a reasonable percentage and satisfactory. 47.5 stated that they participate in discussion board; whereas, the number of students who upload assignments is 95 percent. More than halve of the participants don't use

the discussion board triggers a big question mark. This fact needs to be treated by instructors possibly by encouraging students and motivating them. On the contrary, we see almost all the students upload their assignments on Blackboard as opposed to sending them by email. It is assumed that students can be reluctant to participate on discussion board when they know it is not graded.

The question about midterm and final exam preparation games came back with an interesting result. 70% of the students stated that they engage in the preparatory online games. When we asked some the 30% of the students who did not benefit from the preparatory games, the answers varied between we did know about the games, or we do not like to play online games. About the course videos, 66.7% watched only 2 videos of total of 20 videos. Hence, multimedia resources need attention from course instructors and designers.

To sum up, Blackboard materials and activities designed to fulfill the course objectives and outcomes, and it is expected that students would benefit from these interaction and multimedia resources. When we detect that there is a percentage of students do not utilize these opportunities, we need to rethink possible approaches to encourage students to optimize these tools.

5.3 Satisfaction with Virtual Online Synchronous Classes

Pena and Yeung (2010) research showed that learners' sense of competence in using the computer and their interest in using technology for learning are both associated with their satisfaction with online delivery of curriculum content. The more their self-concept of technology mastery is, the more their satisfaction with online classes. That is, for those students who feel competent in using the computer and for those who are interested in using the technology to learn a language, they would be more satisfied with the online mode of delivery.

For those who are not so competent in using the computer and do not feel comfortable or interested in using it, the level of satisfaction is likely to be lower when the online mode is concerned. In the same study, the correlation between the learners' satisfaction with face-to-face and online delivery modes was negative ($r = -.30$). Although the correlation was not statistically significant, apparently due to the small sample size, this negative correlation implies that some students who favored face-to-face learning may dislike online delivery, whereas some other students who favored online delivery may not like the face-to-face mode (Pena and Yeung, 2010).

Pena and Yeung (2010) concluded their study with a recommendation that curriculum designers need to consider a balance between the face-to-face and online delivery modes to satisfy the needs of different students. This is the norm in SEU as the ratio of face-to-face classes and virtual classes is one to one per week for each course. Yet, we need to look at the survey results at this study to explore SEU student's perception as they themselves expressed their feelings.

The following table shows the final part of the survey, including questions that tests the satisfaction of virtual online synchronous classes.

Table 3. Questions related to Satisfaction with Virtual Synchronous Classes

	Question	Possible answers
1	I like using blackboard for studying	1,2,3,4,5
2	I find the online virtual classes useful	1,2,3,4,5
3	Presentation and the teacher voice are sufficient for delivering information	Yes, No
4	I find the online virtual class motivating. a. The teacher keeps us alert with asking questions, open discussions, giving random examples b. Online chat feature we can all discuss with students and with the teacher can easily and fast exchange knowledge with other course participants via e-mail, chat, newsgroups etc. c. Learning in groups and cooperation with other learners are fostered in the course (e.g., by group activities, discussions etc.).	A B C
5	I prefer the online virtual class a. I control my personal situation with v class b. I can record, rewind the lecture any time	A B
6	I prefer evening virtual classes because I have a job in the morning	Yes, No
7	Any suggestions to improve your blended learning experience	Open answer

Results of the final part of the questionnaire came as the following. 23.8% of the students chose number 4 on Likert scale and 38% of the students chose 5. Consequently, we can state that more than half the students, 60%, do like using Blackboard for studying. A result that opens query regarding why would some 40% of the students not like using Blackboard for studying. We need to investigate further in the reasons that cause these feeling.

The second question was addressed toward the students feeling regarding the online virtual classes and whether they feel it useful or not. 44% chose number 5 on Likert scale. 32% chose number 4 on the scale. Considering a big number, having 76% of the students, give us an indication that students' feeling are quite positive towards online virtual classes.

The following question investigated the sufficiency of the online presentation with only the instructor's voice without his/her picture. Students responded with 95% approval of this situation and they feel satisfied with viewing the slides and hearing the instructor's voice describing and commenting on the subject material.

The fourth question regarding students' feeling they are motivated to attend virtual classes.

The survey provided three options and allowed multiple selection.

- a. The teacher keeps us alert with asking questions, open discussions, giving random examples. (79%)
- b. Online chat feature we can all discuss with students and with the teacher can easily and fast exchange knowledge with other course participants via e-mail, chat, newsgroups etc. (74%)
- c. Learning in groups and cooperation with other learners are fostered in the course (e.g., by group activities, discussions etc.). (34%)

The fifth question asked the students to provide reason for preferring online virtual class

- a. I control my personal situation with v class. (70%)
- b. I can record, rewind the lecture any time. (81%)

The sixth question regarding the time preference of the students. Asking the students whether evening virtual classes are preferable because they have a job in the morning. 67% of the students answered yes they do have morning jobs.

5.3.1 Nvivo 12 Results

The final question is the open one. ‘Any suggestions to improve your blended learning experience’ allowed the students to write their opinion freely. The answers were analyzed by Nvivo 12 qualitative analysis tool. After inserting the students answer to the analysis tool, and requesting the word frequency result, the word ‘Nothing’ came back as the most frequent word.

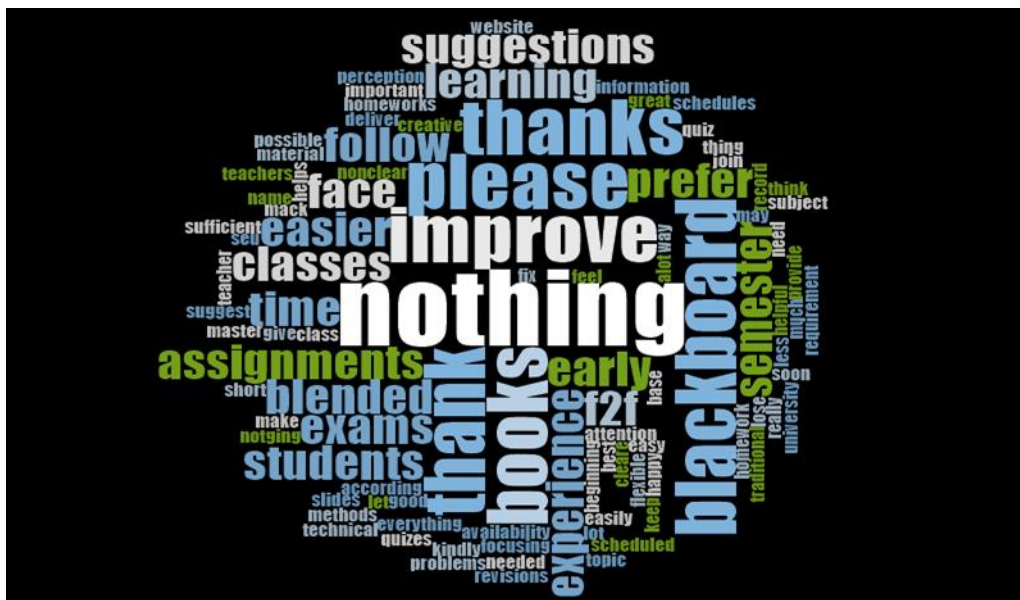


Figure 5. word cloud created by Nvivo 12

Going back to the students answers text, the following texts were spotted ‘I think nothing is needed to improve it’, ‘Nothing, experience is sufficient.’, ‘No’, ‘No , not really’, and so

many lack respond to ‘do you have a suggestion to improve your blended learning experience’.

6. Conclusion

The main objective of this study is to explore students’ perceptions of blended learning in a Saudi higher education institution; namely the Saudi Electronic University, noting that in SEU blended learning is the culture of teaching and learning and it is the only option for both educators and students.

This study investigated problems students encountered and identified positive opportunities. More specifically, the study aimed to describe the actual utilization of online learning represented by Blackboard as the official Learning Management System in SEU and to dictate students’ satisfaction with the blended learning experience.

The overall result of the students’ self-concept about technology can be considered positive. More than 70% classified themselves as confident in using technology; more than 60% expressed their approval of the IT support; 80% felt satisfied with their teachers correspondence; more that 80% stated that they already use applications such as WhatsApp and Telegram for learning groups; more than 50% felt it was easy. These results give us a good indication that students would be socio-psychologically ready to accept blended learning strategies.

Comparing this positive outcome of student’s self-concept regarding technology with students’ satisfaction regarding online learning, we find a correlation. The more the students have high self-concept about technology the more satisfied they are with online classes. Evidence of this conclusion comes from the final part of the survey. 60% of the students indicated that they like using Blackboard for studying; 76% percent of the students expressed their positive feelings towards online virtual classes; 95% felt satisfied with viewing the slides and hearing the instructor’s voice describing and commenting on the subject material.

Students also expressed their motivation to attend virtual classes for several reasons such as “the teacher keeps us alert with asking questions, open discussions, giving random examples; using online chat feature we can all discuss with students and with the teacher can easily and fast can exchange knowledge with other course participants via e-mail, chat, discussion groups; learning in groups and cooperation with other learners are fostered in the course.”

Moreover, students confirmed that they prefer online virtual class by approving the following statements, “I control my personal situation with virtual classes” and “I can record, rewind the lecture any time.” Students also stated their preference to study at SEU as it provides the opportunity for evening classes. More than 67% of the students stated that they have a morning job. Finally, when students were asked to provide any suggestions to improve their blended learning experience, the majority responded “nothing” indicating positive perception.

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Appendix

The content of the questionnaire

First, self-concept

1. I feel confident in using technology.
2. IT department in SEU is very helpful
3. When I need advice from my teacher, I can easily get in contact with her/him via e-mail, chat window, discussion forums, etc.
4. I have studying groups with my friends on Apps and use it for collaboration
 - a. WhatsApp
 - b. Telegram
 - c. Email
5. I learned how to use Blackboard easily

Second, Blackboard features

6. I use the following interaction educational activities on Blackboard platform
 - a. Receive teacher announcements
 - b. Participate in discussion board
 - c. upload assignments
 - d. engage in midterm and final exam preparation games
 - e. watch educational videos; there are about 20 videos in each course

Third, Satisfaction of virtual online synchronous classes

7. I like using blackboard for studying.
8. I find the online virtual classes useful

9. Presentation and the teacher voice are sufficient for delivering information

- a. Yes b. No

10. I find the online virtual class motivating.

- a. The teacher keeps us alert with asking questions, open discussions, giving random examples
- b. Online chat feature we can all discuss with students and with the teacher can easily and fast exchange knowledge with other course participants via e-mail, chat, newsgroups etc.
- c. Learning in groups and cooperation with other learners are fostered in the course (e.g., by group activities, discussions etc.).

11. I prefer the online virtual class

- a. I control my personal situation with v class
- b. I can record, rewind the lecture any time

12. I prefer evening virtual classes because I have a job in the morning

- a. Yes b. No

13. Any suggestions to improve your blended learning experience

.....open answer.....

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