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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to evaluate the e-courses within the professional online diploma offered at Bethlehem University. They were evaluated in terms of their educational design as well as implementation from students' and teachers' perspectives. The program titled "Project Management" consisted of eight Blended Learning Courses and recognized to be one of the first online professional diplomas accredited in Palestine.

In order to achieve the study objectives and to answer its questions, three instruments were designed. The first one consisted of a set of pedagogical standards for the design of online courses taken from Shanti study (2009). The second instrument was an online questionnaire used to evaluate the e-courses from a student perspective, where the third was a semi-structured interview conducted with the teachers. Content validity was checked for both the online questionnaire and the semi-structured interview questions by a pool of experts. The instruments were modified according to their feedback. Cronbach's coefficient for the online questionnaire was 83.9% which means that the instrument is reliable also.

Results showed that the educational design of the Blended Learning courses within the "Project Management Program" is compatible with pedagogical standards of good online courses design. It turns out that a change has occurred in the role of the teacher and the learner in these programs, the teacher's became more facilitators of learning than lectures and the learners became more active through their interaction with online learning materials and being responsible for their own learning.

Results confirmed the benefits and advantages of blended learning which was mentioned in the previous literature, the most important advantage was: overcoming time and space barriers between the teacher and learner, Blended Learning allowed

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students to access learning and to upgrade the work despite of their huge working conditions and responsibilities. However, and at the same time results showed that there were difficulties facing the blended learning model that were mostly technical, such as power cut ups, internet connections fall down during teaching and learning, and very slow download of video cases.

Since the study showed positive results regarding the change of the roles of the teachers and learners, it is recommended to use Blended Learning for the development of new courses at the university level. In addition, it is important to provide good technical infra-structure as well as training for both teachers and students before starting Blended Learning. Last but not least, it is recommended to conduct further studies on other programs and on different fields of study.