

Measuring Business Administration College students' ATTITUDES towards Blended Learning in KSA

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Abstract: The Arab Open University (AOU) (is) among the first universities in the region to offer blended learning with the partnership of Open University in the United Kingdom (UK). Blended learning (BL) was initially seen to offer means for potential students to engage in distance learning education were pursuing their study was difficult or impossible in the mainstream education system. The purpose of this research was to measure students' attitudes towards BL approach presented by AOU in Saudi Arabia. This research applied quantitative research design and a survey questionnaire was used to collect data from Business Administration College students in the academic year 2018-2019. Data were analyzed using (SPSS) where means, frequencies, standard deviation, t-test and one way ANOVA were applied and thus answered the research main questions. The study results revealed that the students' overall attitudes towards BL are positive. Results also showed that there was statistically significant difference at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the attitudes of students due to gender and profession. The study implications might be of interest to educationists in general and AOU in particular, for planning and implementing future BL strategies. Certain practical recommendations are provided with hoping to enhance the open education system through improved learning and teaching strategies.

Keywords: Blended Learning (BL); Students' Attitudes; Saudi Arabia.

قياس اتجاهات طلاب وطالبات كلية دراسات الأعمال تجاه التعليم المفتوح في الجامعة العربية المفتوحة بالمملكة العربية السعودية

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الملخص: الجامعة العربية المفتوحة (AOU) من أوائل الجامعات في المنطقة العربية التي تقدم التعليم المختلط مع شراكة الجامعة المفتوحة في المملكة المتحدة. كان يُنظر في البداية إلى التعلم المختلط كحل للتغلب على تحديين رئيسيين يواجه قطاع التعليم العالي في العالم العربي. الأول يتعلق بعدم قدرة الجامعات الحكومية على قبول عدد متزايد من خريجي المدارس الثانوية سنويًا ؛ والثاني هو مساعدة الطلاب على الحصول على فرصة في التعليم الجامعي حيث كانت متابعة دراستهم صعبة أو مستحيلة في العالم العربي نتيجة بعض القيود والقوانين الخاصة بالالتحاق بذلك النوع من التعليم. كان الغرض من هذا البحث هو قياس اتجاهات الطلاب والطالبات نحو منهم التعليم المختلط المقدم من الجامعة العربية المفتوحة في المملكة العربية السعودية. في هذا البحث، تم تطبيق استبيان كأداة بحثية رئيسية لجمع البيانات من طلاب وطالبات كلية إدارة الأعمال في العام الدراسي 2018-2019. تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام (SPSS) للإجابة على أسئلة الدراسة. تم استخدام الوسائل والتكرارات والانحراف المعياري واختبار t وطريقة واحدة ANOVA. كشفت النتائج أن مجموع ردود الطلاب والطالبات تجاه التعليم المختلط سجل مستوى إيجابي من المواقف. على عكس متغير العمر، أظهرت النتائج وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند ($\alpha = 0.05$) في اتجاهات الطلاب والطالبات بسبب الجنس والمهنة. قد تكون النتائج التي تم الإبلاغ عنها ذات أهمية بالنسبة إلى القائمين على التعليم بشكل عام والجامعة العربية المفتوحة بشكل خاص لتخطيط وتنفيذ

استراتيجيات التعليم المختلط المستقبلية. وبناء على ذلك تم تقديم نصائح منها ضرورة نشر ثقافة التعليم المدمج من قبل الجامعة العربية المفتوحة في المجتمع عبر الحملات التسويقية والمؤتمرات الأكاديمية، توفير الدعم الأكاديمي والعملية لأعضاء هيئة التدريس المبتدئين، بالإضافة إلى رصد ومتابعة اتجاهات الطلاب والطالبات تجاه التعليم المدمج بشكل دوري.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلم المختلط : مواقف الطلاب، المملكة العربية السعودية.

1- Introduction

Today, higher education faces many challenges and hardships which might hinder achieving its current and future goals. These challenges come as a result of changes such as globalization, technology development and information dissemination. In addition, there is a growing demand for education, quality requirements and the incapability of public universities to accept additional number of high-school graduate annually, geographical spread of many universities which exceed the geographical boundaries of one country. Therefore, many countries have considered multiple alternatives to offer a variety of solutions to adapt some of these challenges. Electronic learning and distance education created more space to meet these challenges to reach the goal of quality educational opportunities (Schrum, 2011).

The improvement of internet technology and communication has imposed new education mode provision (Rosenberg, 2001). Park (2009) pointed out that the internet can do educational functions as i) information storing, ii) create ways of communication without bounds iii) provide an interactive online learning, (iv) support electronic/online research, (v) innovation in the new world, (vi) help to improve interest in learning, (vii) education globalization, and (viii) platform for information catalogues. It is evident that the internet is a source of enormous information that anything can quickly and easily be reached. As the internet has many different functions, it is important to consider to what extent it is used by students in higher education for academic purposes. BL has emerged as a result of internet improvement which can be successful integrated in the education domain at all levels. This makes universities such as AOU to adopt this type of teaching mode for knowledge delivery (AOU, 2019).

1.1 Problem Statement

Whilst the empirical literature is developing regarding electronic learning, this study concerns the emergence of new delivery system in Saudi Arabia, that is, BL. In the meantime, the internet has become more competent in every aspect of individuals' life. For this reason, it is globally utilizing in different fields of education, which becomes potential and appropriate. (Schrum, 2011) asserted that technological advances have a positive impact on education. Similarly, Al-hunaiyyan et al. (2008) pointed out that internet technologies have become an integral part of the educational process of today which need to be examined empirically. The application of internet technologies in education milieu has gradually advanced in recent years in developed countries with the improved availability of internet connections and IT support (Alharbi and Drew, 2014)

Accordingly, developed countries have begun to utilize internet technologies in higher education. This stemmed from the growing demand for higher education and the incapability of public universities to accept additional number of high-school graduates annually. In addition to the geographical spread of many universities which exceed the geographical boundaries of one country. Therefore, many countries have considered multiple alternatives to offer a variety of solutions to adapt some of these challenges. BL created more space to meet these challenges to reach the goal of quality educational opportunities.

2.1 Research Questions

The current study aims to measure Business Administration College students' attitudes towards BL approach in AOU at Saudi Arabia. It expounds the main issues facing BL in AOU to offer better experience for its students. This will shed the light on the importance of open education as a strategic choice for higher education. Therefore, the main research questions are:

- What are the attitudes of Business Administration college students' towards BL approach?
- Are there any statistical significant differences between the students' attitudes due to gender, age and profession?

3.1 Research Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To measure Business Administration College students' attitudes in Saudi Arabia towards BL.
2. To explore Business Administration College students' attitudes according to the gender, age and profession.

4.1 Research Importance

Blended learning is being implemented to address one of the major challenges encountered in most of the Arab higher education which is to provide college education to the rapidly growing student population. With the limited capacity of universities, Arab Higher Education Ministries realized the need for integrating web based instruction with traditional instruction to tackle this problem. Several projects are seriously being considered to facilitate this strategy both effectively and efficiently.

AOU is one of early universities in the Arab World to merge internet technologies in higher education using BL system. In the Arab World, BL is in its early stages and this study is a contribution to research through identifying learners' attitudes that can influence BL as a means of delivering curricula in Saudi Arabia. The study emphasizes the perspectives of current learners in AOU and the variables which might influence on BL effectiveness application in Saudi higher education. This study contributes to the framework and guidelines for effective implementation of BL in the Arab universities.

This study is a contribution to research through identifying issues that can influence adopting BL as a means of delivering curricula in Saudi Arabia. This study is significance because it provides better

understanding for BL application in Arab higher education scope. In developed countries, research is required to update knowledge regarding learners' perspectives towards new technology-based education system. Understanding learners' attitudes towards BL can assist determine the extent to which learners utilize the e-learning system in campus and to direct online courses towards the aims of quality assurance in education. As research proved studying attitude has been identified as critical to the success of BL. Learners' attitudes and beliefs towards BL are regarded as success determinants of future e-learning initiatives.

5.1 Limitation of the Research

With all research, this study has a number of limitations. This study was conducted within a very specific context which is AOU in KSA. The scope of this study was limited to students of Business College and avoiding participants from other colleges with this university. This is impacted on research findings which were related to undertake a deeper inquiry of single students' college towards BL. The interpretation of the findings is therefore bounded to this particular context. Secondly, survey method was used which increase the probability of results generalization but do not conclude causality. Therefore, in future research, it is advisable to test variables using longitudinal study or experiment.

2- BL Concept

BL is described by various names in research literature such as 'hybrid learning' 'open education' and 'mixed-mode education' (Martyn, 2003). Although several researches have been carried out on BL, still there is no universal consensus on BL definition (Sharpe et al., 2006), but literature expounds BL as a combination of web-based technology utilization and traditional education methods. Graham (2006 p.5) defines BL as 'the convergence between traditional face-to-face learning environment and computer-mediated (or distributed) learning environment'. Traditional face-to-face instruction involves interactions between instructors and students who are in the same place, whereas technology-mediated utilizes information and communication technologies (ICT) to mediate the learning experience without requiring instructors and students to be located together. The definition used here, therefore, is that BL is a form of learning style which combines traditional face-to-face classroom with internet-based materials that maintain active learning environment and direct interaction with students.

Many academic institutions in higher education are using some forms of BL approach (Duhaney, 2012). Garrison and Vaughan (2008 p.28) asserted on the combination of face-to-face teaching and online communication as the fundamental belief of BL. This facilitates a blending of the strength of both modes into a unique learning experience congruent with the context and intended educational purpose. Vaughan (2007) found that the outcome of face-to-face and online combination can contribute highly to student learning. In BL education milieu, teachers must be more collaborative to facilitate a greater level of engagement by students in the teaching and learning process. Learners engage in online activities by

participating in threaded discussions, accessing electronic reading materials and submitting completed assignments by using some course management software or other internet resources (Graham, 2006).

3- Literature Review

To begin with, Ladyshewsky (2004) conducted a comparative study of students learning in nine graduate business degrees, all being taught in both online and face-to-face modes. The results showed that students learning online did better than those learning in face-to-face mode. The use of internet resources in higher education proved to have a positive effect on students' learning. Masrur (2010) examined the impact of web-based resources on learning outcome in open distance higher education. Findings showed that the integration of online resources in teaching-learning increased the understanding of subject related knowledge. Similarly, Orhan (2008) aimed to explore college students' perceptions of BL in Turkish university, findings presented the majority of the students preferred BL better than traditional face-to-face education system. However, improvements in methods of application and online study materials are needed.

The LMS is used by many academic institutions to support online and face-to-face learning. Wahlsted and Honkaranta (2007) pointed out that LMS is an advancement of traditional learning because they comprise instructional devices, learning content and evaluation devices. In this regards, Firat (2016) investigated the effect of undergraduate students' LMS learning achievements. Findings revealed that the students used LMSs as a support to face-to-face education more intensively on course days and that they activated the content elements the most. Almost all the students agreed that LMSs helped increase their academic achievement only when LMSs included such features as effectiveness, interaction, reinforcement, attractive design, social media support, and accessibility.

Similarly, Masalela (2009) investigated the potential advantages and difficulties of BL in higher education using a qualitative research design. Findings pointed out that BL advantages include improved pedagogy, engagement in learning and providing flexibility in teaching and learning experience. Regarding difficulties, instructors reported that students' lack readiness to use the course management system, cumbersome network, student lack computer devices and time. This view is supported by Dweikat and Amer (2016) study which aimed to investigate the effect of using BL on students' attitudes towards BL at Al-Quds Open University. The results showed that the total degree of students' responses towards BL scored a high level of attitudes. The results also revealed that there were no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) on the attitudes of learners due to age and place of residence and to the interaction between them as well.

Orhan (2008) examined students' perceptions of BL and traced the combination between online and face-to-face learning environment, using a mixed-methods design. The results showed that the overall perceptions of students were positive and satisfied in the BL environment. However, results indicated

improvement in methods of application and online study resources are required. In the same view, Al-Osheri (2016) conducted a study to assess students' attitudes to BL which is adopted by AOU in Bahrain; findings did not show any significant effectiveness of gender and the kind of the academic program in which the student is enrolled in on students' attitudes towards BL. Also, findings revealed that society does not recognize the open learning culture. Alseweed (2013) found similar results where BL is preferred by students since they both have more interactive learning environment between students and instructor, students themselves, and students and course content. Similar findings were reported by Adas and Abu Samais (2011) with students' attitudes toward e-learning were positive, which reflected students' interests and skills in internet and information technology, due to its availability and ease of access.

Building on research data, Jefferies and Hyde (2010) examined future of BL experience from different research findings. The aim was to assess students' perceptions about learning environment which form developing learning environment for the future higher education. Their findings proved that many students' in higher education level have get use of technology in everyday life. Technology has become a ubiquitous part of their lives, where they access regularly multiple personal technologies that are used for learning and entertainment, including computers and smart devices. This refers to the importance of technology utilization for students as enabler for better learning environment. Likewise, Tanveer (2011) found that both teachers and learners perceive that e-learning helps students take the ownership of their own learning, provides diversification of activities, fosters intrinsic impetus of learning, enables introvert students to interact better, permits acquiring valuable study and time management skills, allows teachers to have more student-centered form of learning.

4- Research Methodology

The current purpose of this study is to measure students' attitudes towards BL presented by AOU in Saudi Arabia. Determining students' attitudes towards BL represents an important stage in predicting the adoption of certain behavior. This study was conduct via a questionnaire developed through descriptive research design. After overseeing the literature review, the questionnaire was structured in two parts having as objectives: analyzing students' attitudes towards BL and demographic factors influence on their attitude towards BL. The researcher designed the questionnaire which contained twenty-eight statements to collect information about students' attitudes towards BL. Then, the questionnaire was given to two professional researchers at Education College in AOU for reviewing and evaluation.

The professionals commented on some of the questionnaire statements (e.g. some items to be re-written or eliminated or re-phrased). Accordingly, the researcher modified the questionnaire to be ready for the pilot study. After that, the researcher carried out a pilot study on a 20 students to determine whether the statements were comprehensible and can be interpreted by the students as they are intended

to measure. According to received respondents' comments, some statements were eliminated and some of them were modified in a way that is more suitable to improve questionnaire's content and wordings.

Then, the questionnaire contained twenty-two statements in the final version. Respondents were asked to rate questionnaire's statements using a likert-scale of five points (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree), was used in measuring the students' attitudes by ticking (√) the box they feel appropriate against each statement to indicate their attitudes towards BL. The questionnaire included a brief introduction to the respondents showing the purpose of the study and the required information to answer the statements by selecting one of the previous rating options.

The population of the study includes all students in the Business Administration College (male – female) at AOU in Saudi Arabia who were registered in the academic year 2018-2019. The participants were selected using the simple random sample of 269 (male 125 female 144) student in the undergraduate level. The researcher personally went across Business Administration College classes and students were randomly selected during lecture time. The questionnaire was administered at each class by the researcher during three weeks period. The researcher -accompanied by the course instructors- who read and explained each question to the participants to ensure that all questions were clearly understood. Participants at each class took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete the surveys.

A reliability analysis of Cronbach's Alpha was done for each statement's questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire has been determined using Cronbach's Alpha. The value of the current questionnaire using SPSS (version 20) was [.92], which indicates a valid level of internal consistency for the tested items. This value means that the tested items are suitable and reliable to achieve the objective of the study.

5- Results

The demographic data of the participants' were related to (gender, age group and profession) which expected to guide the respondents' perceptions and attitudes regarding BL for business courses and negative impressions. It is very crucial to constitute a broad picture about background of the participants. This section presents results of the study and later discusses their implications. Table 1 below highlights the demographic data of the respondents.

Table (1) Personal data of the participants.

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	125	46.5	46.5	46.5
	Female	144	53.5	53.5	100.0
	Total	269	100.0	100.0	

Age					
Valid	Under 18	2	.7	.7	.7
	18 – 24	185	68.8	68.8	69.5
	25 – 34	65	24.2	24.2	93.7
	35 – 44	16	5.9	5.9	99.6
	45 – 54	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	269	100.0	100.0	
Profession					
Valid	Employed	86	32.0	32.1	32.1
	Self-employed	12	4.5	4.5	36.6
	Full time student	167	62.1	62.3	98.9
	Other	4	.7	.7	99.6
	Total	269	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 shows the personal data with the frequencies and percentage. The table explains the number of the females' students which represent (53.5 %) of the participants, while the male students are (46.5 %) of them. The second variable is related to the age group which as table indicates, they are distributed among five age groups. The third personal data variable was related to the profession. The table shows that the majority of the participants were full time student (62.1 %) and those who are employed comprised (32 %). However, the results of this study can be explained in Table 2. Table 2 gives the results of extracted perceptions and attitudes of respondents towards BL. It shows the frequencies and the means of all items.

Table (2) Respondents' perceptions and attitudes of AOU blended learning (BL).

Items	Frequencies					Mean
	SA	A	N	D	SDA	
1. BL suits my education capabilities	60 (22.3)	125 (46.5)	71 (26.4)	8 (3.0)	5 (1.9)	2.16
2. BL helps me to have more freedom to organize my time.	60 (22.3)	127 (47.2)	60 (22.3)	16 (5.9)	6 (2.2)	2.19
3. BL helps me to achieve better education.	51 (19)	118 (43.9)	86 (32)	8 (3.0)	6 (2.2)	2.26
4. BL helps me to acquire new skills.	54 (20.1)	114 (42.4)	83 (30.9)	13 (4.8)	5 (1.9)	2.26
5. BL takes into consideration personal differences between students.	34 (12.6)	106 (39.4)	87 (32.3)	35 (13)	7 (2.6)	2.54
6. BL is my first choice when I want to study in a university.	42 (89)	89 (33.1)	85 (31.6)	46 (17.1)	6 (2.2)	2.57
7. BL helps me achieve well-education.	42 (15.6)	119 (44.2)	91 (33.8)	13 (4.8)	4 (1.5)	2.32

Items	Frequencies					Mean
	SA	A	N	D	SDA	
8. I believe society has a positive image of AOU BL.	40 (14.9)	105 (39)	87 (32.3)	26 (9.7)	11 (4.1)	2.49
9. AOU has a good reputation at the education sector in KSA.	37 (13.8)	89 (33.1)	100 (37.2)	32 (11.9)	9 (3.3)	2.58
10. AOU policies assure that all students are treated equally.	52 (19.3)	97 (36)	87 (32.3)	26 (9.7)	6 (2.2)	2.39
11. AOU policies assure that all students are treated fairly.	43 (16)	95 (35.3)	102 (37.9)	24 (8.9)	4 (1.5)	2.52
12. AOU certificate is well-recognized in KSA.	52 (19.3)	103 (38.3)	81 (30.1)	25 (9.3)	6 (2.2)	2.36
13. There is a sufficient academic guidance from administration staff during registration period.	39 (14.5)	96 (35.7)	94 (34.9)	30 (11.2)	9 (3.3)	2.53
14. AOU has a clear way for new students to the university system (regulations, laws, right and duties).	46 (17.1)	101 (37.5)	70 (26)	39 (14.5)	13 (4.8)	2.52
15. It easy to use LMS	75 (27.9)	112 (41.6)	54 (20.1)	23 (8.6)	5 (1.9)	2.15
16. LMS activities are presented logically.	56 (20.8)	118 (43.9)	73 (27.1)	14 (5.2)	7 (2.6)	2.25
17. LMS activities give me the chance to learn effectively.	55 (20.4)	105 (39)	80 (29.7)	22 (8.2)	7 (2.6)	2.33
18. LMS instructions are clear.	58 (21.6)	120 (44.6)	68 (25.3)	18 (6.7)	5 (1.9)	2.23
19. BL activities are interactive.	42 (15.6)	114 (42.4)	83 (30.9)	26 (9.7)	4 (1.5)	2.39
20. BL enhances the interaction between tutors and students.	45 (16.7)	101 (37.5)	88 (32.7)	29 (10.8)	6 (2.2)	2.44
21. BL gives me enough time to do my educational tasks.	56 (20.8)	106 (39.4)	78 (29)	23 (8.6)	5 (1.9)	2.31
22. BL is only option which suits my education situation.	47 (17.5)	106 (39.4)	75 (27.9)	29 (10.8)	12 (4.5)	2.45
Total						2.37

Note: figures in brackets indicate percentage.

Question 1: it is observed that 125 (46.5 %) out of 269 respondents agreed that AOU BL suits their education capabilities. And then some of them about 71 (26.4 %) were neutral. But, 60 (22.3 %) were strongly agree. While those who disagree that BL did not suits their education capabilities were merely 8 out of 269 respondents. The mean of this item was (2.16).

Question 2: about 127 (47.2 %) of the respondents agreed that BL helped them to have more freedom for time organization. This indicated that respondents can complete learning tasks and lessons on their own time. And some of them around 60 (22.3 %) were completely agree, while, 60 (22.3 %) were natural. But, 16 (5.9 %) were disagree to this item. The total mean of this item is (2.19). These findings further support the idea of BL advantages for flexibility and convenience which are associated with time management. The mean of this item was (2.19).

Question 3: 118 (43.9 %) out of the respondents agreed that BL provides them with better education. This outcome supports the idea that BL student develop better skills for well education. And 51 (19 %) were strongly agree with this item. Whereas, 6 (2.2 %) who were strong disagree with this item and 86 (32 %) were neutral. The mean of this item was (2.26).

Question 4: about 114 (42.4) of the respondents said (strong agree) that BL aided them to gain new skills. And some of them 83 (30.9 %) were neutral. And 13 (4.8 %) disagreed that BL aided them to gain new skills. But, 5 (1.9 %) of the respondents were strongly disagree. The mean of this item is (2.26). This is related to the fact that BL requires more scope for ICT. Students become more techno savvy and they gain enhanced digital fluency. The mean of this item was (2.26).

Question 5: as can be seen 106 (39.4 %) reported that agree that BL takes into consideration personal differences between students. Then, around 34 (12.6 %) of the respondents were strongly agree. While 87 (32.3 %) were neutral. But, 35 (13 %) of the respondents were disagree and merely 7 (2.6 %) were strongly disagreed. The mean of this item was (2.54).

Question 6: it showed that of 89 (33.1 %) agreed that BL is the first choice when they want to study in a university. Then, around 42 (89 %) of the respondents were strongly agree. While 46 (17.1 %) were disagree and those who won't consider BL first choice to study at a university were 6 (2.2 %) of the respondents. The mean of this item was (2.57).

Question 7: 119 (44.2 %) answered that BL assist them to achieve well-education, then, 42 (15.6 %) were agreed. But, 91 (33.8) of the respondents were neutral. While 13 (4.8 %) were disagree and only 4 (1.5 %) of the respondents were strongly disagree. Mean of the BL assistance for well-education was (2.32). In BL, students get face-to-face interaction as well they intact in virtual space. Students get ample of time to interact with other students pursuing same course. They can interact with them inside college campus and also in virtual space. Thus their group become very large and has much diversity so the student's knowledge becomes wide. They also develop a feeling of understanding and harmony with students from different cultural background.

Question 8: around 105 (39 %) of the respondents think that society has a positive image of AOU BL. Then, 40 (14.9 %) were strongly agree. While 87 (32.3 %) were neutral regarding the positive image of AOU BL in the society. But 26 (9.7 %) of the respondents were disagree and those who answered strongly disagree were 11 (4.1 %). The total mean of this item was (2.49).

Question 9: It represented that 100 (37.2 %) of the respondents was neutral regarding the reputation of AOU in KSA. Whereas 89 (33.1 %) of them were agreed and 37 (13.8 %) answered strongly agree. While 32 (11.9 %) were disagree. Only 9 (3.3 %) of the respondents were strongly disagree. The mean of the AOU good reputation at the education sector in KSA was (2.58).

Question 10: It revealed that 97 (36 %) answered that AOU policies assure that all students treated equally. And 52 (19.3 %) were strongly agree. While 87 (32.3 %) of the respondents were neutral to answer this question. Whereas 26 (9.7 %) of them were disagreed and 6 (2.2 %) were strongly disagree. The total mean of this item was (2.39).

Questions 11: 102 (37.9 %) of the respondents were neutral regarding AOU policies assure that all students are treated fairly. And then 95 (35.3 %) of them were agreed and 43 (16 %) were strongly agree. But 24 (8.9 %) were disagree and 4 (1.5 %) of the respondents were strongly disagree. The mean of this item was (2.52).

Question 12: as the finding presented, we can see that 103 (38.3 %) of respondents were agree that AOU certificate is well-recognized in KSA. Then, 81 (30.1 %) of them were neutral. But, 25 (9.3 %) of respondents were disagree and 6 (2.2 %) were strongly disagree. The mean of AOU certificate is well-recognized in KSA was (2.36).

Question 13: as the table indicate, 96 (35.7 %) of respondents were agree that there is a sufficient academic guidance from administration staff during registration period, and 39 (14.5 %) of them were strongly agree. But, 94 (34.9 %) were neutral. While 30 (11.2 %) of respondents were disagree and 9 (3.3 %) were strongly disagree. The total mean of this item was (2.53).

Question 14: almost 101 (37.5 %) of respondents agreed that AOU has a clear way for new students to the university system (regulations, laws, right and duties), and 46 (17.1 %) of them were strongly agree. On the other hand, 70 (14.5 %) of them were neutral. Whereas 39 (14.5 %) of respondents were disagree, and 13 (4.8 %) of them were strongly disagree. The mean of AOU has a clear way for a new student to the university system (regulations, laws, right and duties) was (2.52).

Question 15: 112 (41.6 %) of respondents agreed that LMS is easy to use, and 75 (27.9 %) of them were strongly agree. But 54 (20.1 %) were neutral. However, 23 (8.6 %) of respondents were disagree with LMS ease of use, and 5 (1.9 %) of them were strongly disagree. The mean of this item was (2.15).

Question 16: almost 118 (43.9 %) of respondents were agreed that LMS activities are presented logically and 56 (20.8 %) of them were strongly agree. But 73 (27.1 %) of them were neutral. While 14 (5.2

%) were disagree, and 7 (2.6 %) of them were strongly disagree. The mean of LMS activities are presented logically was (2.25).

Question 17: about 105 (39 %) of respondents were agreed that LMS activities give (me) the chance to learn effectively. And 55 (20.4 %) were strongly agree. But 80 (29.7 %) of them were neutral. Whereas 22 (8.2 %) of respondents were disagree, and 7 (2.6 %) of them were strongly disagree. The total mean of this item was (2.33).

Question 18: 120 (44.6 %) of respondents were agreed that LMS instructions are clear, and 58 (21.6 %) of them were strongly agree. But 68 (25.3 %) of them were neutral. However, 18 (6.7 %) of respondents were disagree, and 5 (1.9 %) of them were strongly disagree. The total mean of LMS instructions are clear was (2.23).

Question 19: findings showed that 114 (42.4 %) of respondents were agreed that BL activities are interactive. And 42 (15.6 %) were strongly agree. But 83 (30.9 %) of them were neutral. While 26 (9.7 %) answered disagree for this item, and 4 (1.5 %) of answered strongly disagree. The mean of this item was (2.39).

Question 20: as the table indicated, 101 (37.5 %) of respondents were agreed that BL enhances the interaction between tutors and students. And 45 (16.7 %) of them were strongly agree. But 88 (32.7 %) were neutral. However, 29 (10.8 %) of respondents answered disagree and those who were strongly disagree were 6 (2.2 %) of them. The mean of this item was (2.44).

Question 21: the findings showed that 106 (39.4 %) of respondents were agree that BL gives (me) enough time to do my educational tasks. And 56 (20.8 %) of them were strongly agree. But 78 (29 %) were neutral. While 23 (8.6 %) of respondents answered disagree. And 5 (1.9 %) of them were strongly disagree. The total mean of this item was (2.31).

Question 22: table showed that 106 (39.4 %) of respondents were agreed that BL is only option which suits my education situation and 47 (17.5 %) of them were strongly agree. But 75 (27.9 %) were neutral. Whilst 29 (10.8 %) of respondents answered disagree, and those who strongly disagree were 12 (4.5 %) of them. The total mean of this item was (2.45).

The one ANOVA and T-test were employed to identify the effects of demographic variables on the students' attitudes towards BL. Therefore, the significant differences between demographic factors of students and their attitudes towards BL were analysed and presented.

Results in Table 3 shows the mean of attitudes scores for male and female students is found to be 2.40 (SD= 0.71) for male and 2.33 (SD= 0.48) for female. This indicates that both male and female students have high attitudes towards AOU BL system although results indicate a difference between male and female students. Sig value is found to be (.33) which is less than .05 indicating a statistically significant difference. Results presented that there is statistically significant difference in attitude towards AOU BL system between students according to gender.

Table (3) Results of independent sample T-test of students' attitudes due to gender.

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	125	2.4095	0.71879	0.961	213.398	0.338
Female	144	2.3363	0.48782			

This study investigated age group of students as shown in Table 4. Results indicate there is no significant difference in attitudes towards BL among the different age groups of students ($f= 1.43$, $Sig= 0.23$). Table 4 shows the mean square of students between groups (0.53) and within groups (0.36). All the age group in terms of attitudes recorded high scores. This result presented that students regardless of their age believed in the potential of BL in the educational achievement.

Table (4) Results of the one-way ANOVA of students' attitudes due to Age.

Age groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.568	3	0.523	1.430	0.234
Within Groups	96.885	265	0.366		
Total	98.453	268			

Results in table 5 shows the mean of attitudes scores for students based on their profession which is found to be 2.40 ($SD= 0.52$) for students and 3.31 ($SD= 0.71$) for employees. This indicates that both full time students and employees have high attitudes towards AOU BL system although results indicate a difference between students and employees. Sig value is found to be (.24) which is less than .05 indicating a statistically significant difference. Results showed that there is statistically significant difference in attitude towards AOU BL system between students according to profession.

Table (5) Results of independent sample T-test of students' attitudes due to profession.

Student V Employee	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Student	167	2.4037	0.52607	1.158	267	0.248
Employee	102	2.3156	0.71768			

6- Discussion and Conclusion

The present study sought to determine Business Administration College students' attitudes towards BL. Data analysis indicated that students perceived BL as a better choice for undergraduate studies. This finding confirms the association with al-Osheri (2016) which proved that students of AOU showed positive attitudes towards BL. Also, Orhan (2008) study found that students' perceptions of BL showed that the overall perceptions of students were positive and satisfied. As table 2 shows that the mean score of the students' responses towards BL was (2.37) which suggest a high level of attitudes. This result agrees with Dweikat and Amer (2016) and Alseweed (2013) who found that students' performance

and attitudes concerning BL were statistically significant and BL was highly appreciated by the learners. In the same vein, Tanveer (2011) study found that the majority of students preferred BL and they believed that teachers who use e-learning in the classroom were favored versus those who do not use it. Similarly, Adas and Abu Shmais (2011) who examined students' perceptions at Palestinian university towards BL education environment and findings showed that learners expressed their positive attitudes towards BL but no significant differences in terms of gender even though the highest means were in favor of the female.

The current study outcomes showed that only (8.2 %) of respondents perceive that LMS activities had not enhanced their learning effectively in the educational process. LMS has a pivotal role in BL because the success of BL can be attributed to the availability of LMS. Wahlsted and Honkaranta (2007) asserted that LMS is an advancement of traditional learning because they comprise instructional devices, learning content and evaluation devices. In line with this purpose, Firat's findings (2016) showed that students' agreed that LMS helped to increase their academic achievements when it has features such as interaction and accessibility. In this regard, the findings of this study indicated that (39 %) of students perceived that LMS activities (e.g. course content) helped to learn effectively.

Achieving a meaningful tutor-student interaction requires proper implementation of teaching strategies. The current study findings proved that merely (10.8 %) of students had perceived that BL adopted by AOU has not enhanced tutor-student interaction. This finding is in agreement with Al-Zawaidi's (2014) study which indicated statistically significant differences and in favor of the trend towards learning through the LMS. The researcher explained the reason for this by the students' access to different websites, a fact that prompted them to use new educational skills to facilitate the interaction with their instructor as well as their peers.

According to Wahlstedt and Honkaranta (2007), LMS consists of pedagogical devices, human interactions, learning contents and assessment supporting and advancing traditional learning in higher education. LMS must satisfy the needs of the users: the students and the instructors. LMS was largely used as a useful content distribution system. Instructors can use the LMS for distributing courses and interact with students in distance. Almost of the respondents (37.5) perceived that they get effective tutor-student interaction via LMS. A possible explanation for this might be as pointed out by Bradford et al. (2007) that both academic staff and students get benefits from using LMS, this include increased availability, quick feedback, improved two-way interactions and building skills such as organization, time management and communication.

The current study has asserted that AOU BL has the potential to provide splendid learning experience for students. BL proves to offer additional solution in higher education in terms of education quality. Also, BL helps greatly the effectiveness of education by improving learning outcomes and matching learners' needs with education program. It is apparent from this study that there is positive

attitude to BL in terms of taking responsibility of the students for better self-education and building new skills. Therefore, with technology advancement, BL can be used as an additional approach in teaching and learning as a motivator for students. AOU has a rich experience in BL system which supports students to be less educated and more learned. AOU has invested directly in the scientific content curricula. Students are part of the educational process and active collaborative in achieving learning and not only knowledge receivers. BL combines skills development in education which includes direct interaction, discussion, team working and self-paced learning. AOU BL experience provides comprehensive learning environment powered by Open University curriculum in the UK. In addition, AOU is subject to periodical evaluation of curricula by external academic bodies in the line with the needs of the labour market. AOU believes in the importance of developing the talents of students, their abilities and their creativity, and keen on the participation of students and integration within the community with their peers in other universities, whether public or private.

7- Suggested Research

Research opportunities in BL and related matters will surely emerge from this point of time. In particular, the shortage of Arabic resources in BL emphasizes the need for continuous research in Arab contexts. Further research is recommended to examine the perceptions of lectures with different positions towards BL. Also, it is suggested that comparing students' attitudes from other colleges (e.g. English college) to find out BL effect on students' learning achievement. Furthermore, future research might explore the perceptions of decision makers and administrations at Ministry of Education towards the impact of BL on the future of education process at Saudi Arabia, as important elements of BL implementations.

8- Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made for decision makers and BL academic suppliers. There should be more concern from AOU to publish BL culture in the society via marketing campaigns and academic conferences. The importance is to provide academic and practical support for novice instructors of BL. This can be done through orientation workshops with the experienced in the AOU centers. There should be a monitoring and evaluation periodically of students' and instructors perceptions to sustain education process. Also, BL suppliers should develop robust ICT applications with a meticulous attention to the quality of online communication classrooms. Education service supplier should offer effective training workshops for students and instructors on how to use LMS and how to develop course content, online presentation and assignments. Students must learn to adapt to BL system which requires them to be acquainted with online technology. This can be done through educational leaflets and short videos.

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