



The Building of a Touchstone Scale Based on the Cognitive Constructive Theory for Measuring the Effective Instructional Practices of Teaching Staff Members at Distance Electronic Learning

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Abstract

The use of distance e-learning at the institutions of higher education requires effective instructional practices by teaching faculty, especially when the world countries have totally depended on distance e-learning because of corona epidemic. The study aims at building up a touchstone scale based on the cognitive constructive theory for measuring the effective instructional practices of teaching faculty at distance e-learning. The researcher used the descriptive analytical method for building the scale by (176) experts in educational sciences. The arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated in addition to the factor analysis and Toky Test. The results showed (6) cores as follows: (adaptation, preparation, commitment, hypothetical lecture management, teaching methods, assessment methods). The scale cores included (43) practices characterized by a very high degree of appropriateness for measuring the effective instructional practices of teaching faculty in the case of the use of distance e-learning.

Keywords: *Touchstone Scale; Cognitive Constructive Theory; Instructional Practices; Teaching Faculty; Distance E-Learning Introduction*

Introduction

Peoples and nations are distinguished from others by the quality of their educational systems that seek to provide people with thinking and creativity skills. To achieve this goal, human resources must be invested in developing, improving, and enhancing their ability to research and learn (Al-Hadid, 2011 and Hamadna, 2013). The engineering of the educational system necessarily has requirements and perceptions. Like pre-planning and design, a set of factors and foundations are taken into account that make it able to keep pace with the present without compromising its originality (Al-Ghamdi 2007 and Al-Zoubi 2011)

Teaching faculty at universities represent the basic pillar for achieving the output of academic programs. In accordance with the cognitive constructive theory, teaching faculty guides and direct students as they are the core of the learning process. The instructional practices of teaching faculty differ according to the pattern of learning used whether it is conventional (within the educational institution) or distance learning (the place where the student resides or works). The instructional practices of teaching faculty are the most important educational outcomes which help universities achieve their visions, missions and aims as they are the medium to convey the different competencies of academic programs which contribute to make students acquire knowledge, skills and values in a way that makes them productive and efficient individuals.

Murad and Mahasneh (2020) defined instructional practices as a group of behaviors practiced by teaching faculty according to educational theories as they represent the basic pillar for achieving goodness in the teaching process through the performance of teaching faculty of their effective and important rules such as adaptation, planning, implementation, and assessment of the instructional process.

Abu Al-Hija, (2007) defined the instructional practices as the behaviors manifested and observed by teaching faculty. These skills may be outside the classroom such as the skills of separation of lectures, production of teaching aids, use of the computer and teaching techniques and the preparation of instructional activities and assessment tools) and skills within the class lecture such as the skills of (introducing the lesson, attracting students' attention, the use of teaching methods and techniques, implementing the lesson, managing the classroom, distributing the activities to class time, attracting students' attention, reinforcing, varying gestures and verbal expressions and the skills of implementing assessment).

Aquino (2007) identified ten practices of highly competent teaching faculty as follows (presenting feedback repeatedly and at the proper time. The concentration should be on the different types of assessment and the need to provide a mean of communication between teaching faculty, families, and students to support and reinforce the learning process. Taking into account that creativities and strategies occur at any time, rest time should be avoided for learners, but they should be listened to and should be given additional opportunities and they should be rehabilitated for the future with no concentration on the past, thinking outside the box by selecting activities and methods through the way of recycling for achieving aims and accomplishment; making learning active through the implementation of different trainings and activities away from dictated methods. The teacher should be defending himself and his students and even the capabilities and other training. He should follow up lifetime learning, help students to get ready for the ever-changing world, encourage discussion, dialogue, creativity, develop thinking, preserve a positive idea, and not care about objection as this can cause harm to the environment of learning.

With the spread of corona epidemic and reliance on distance learning, it has become necessary to develop the instructional practices of teaching faculty. Malik (2015) pointed out a group of principles and basics for the success of distance learning (The necessity for universities to develop the courses and content which will be presented through distance learning, for committees, for reviewing curricula of experts who are qualified in the field of instructional curricula to review the curricula of self-learning with the changing requirements of knowledge and skills required by market and society. The curricula of self-learning should be designed based on individual teaching and reinforcement of the stimulation of distance learners. Learning experiences should be connected with their real-life situations, the design of the activities and projects of distance-learning cycle in a way that enables the reinforcement of their special learning aims besides being relating to their life experiments, presenting content in an enjoyable and meaningful way and development of distance learning curricula in order to fulfill the skills and knowledge which have been planned. Distance teaching curricula should concentrate on life skills such as communication skills, personal and internal skills, decision making skills, technical skills, awareness of the environment, encouragement to take challenges and initiative, leadership skills, problem solving skills

and the use of information technology and communications) The Agency for Quality Verification in Higher Education in Britain confirmed a group of controls and standards for distance learning at universities which emphasized (Mulla, 2016).

The design of an integrated distance teaching system whiluded the need for university, which presents distance teaching, to develop programs in a way that conforms with the basis of higher education, taking into account the peculiarity of distance learning, The harmony of distance teaching programs whith a clear strategy in order to achieve the announced aims of the institution, The experimentation of the instruction systems of the programs to be accredited and the provision of budget for distance learning.

The commitment for achieving goodness in academic standards during the design of the programs, their authorization and revision through making sure formity between distance teaching programs and the teaching programs within the teaching institution in regard to the strategies of institution, scientific content, assessment methods, providing fair opportunities for students and the necessity for continuous assessment of distance instructional process.

The commitment of achieving goodness in the management of distance teaching programs through the commitment of achieving standards and continuous observation of distance instructional process.

The development and support of students through the creation of self-learning opportunities.

Checking up the efficiency of the information presented to students.

The commitment of the institution of the academic standards through the assessment of students and the revision of the assessment methods periodically. Mujtaba (2010) stated a group of recommendations to the teaching faculty who will present the distance teaching programs as follows:

Teaching faculty who wishes to instruct through the Internet should become students through the Internet first and should learn the basics of instruction.

Learning and understanding the mechanisms of how the environment of teaching through the Internet works.

Collection of the best practices and advice for teaching faculty to start through the Internet in order to be effective in their beginning on the Internet.

The discovery of the best distance instruction strategies; understanding and learning the material of the courses.

Identifying the best way of involving students and keeping them interested and on the correct track to achieve the products of the instructional syllabus.

Identifying how to manage time in a better way to show the appropriate existence in the discussion chart.

Discovering the best way to manage the chains of discussions with large amounts of comments.

Benefiting from the experiences of other people in distance learning.

Corona epidemic has forced countries do use distance learning in the presentation of the programs of higher education. The study tried to build up a touchstone scale according to the cognitive constructive theory for measuring the effective instructional practices of the teaching faculty at distance e-learning.

Literature

After reviewing the theoretical literature and previous studies by the researcher, they did not find studies about a touchstone scale according to the cognitive constructive theory for measuring the effective instructional practices of the teaching faculty for distance e-learning. They found out studies relating to the topic of the study. Mujtaba (2010) conducted a study titled the training and development of teaching faculty about distance learning in order to achieve high performance through the exceptional instruction. The study concluded the necessity for the concentration of concerned people on effective development and training and keeping qualified teachers to teach in different ways of distance learning (via the Internet) by using serene technology space with emphasis on the achievement of learning results in an effective way, in addition to the development of teaching faculty by collecting personal experiences and the best practices from different universities (business programs using the most recent techniques).

Mahasneh and Murad (2020) conducted a study which aimed at the evaluation of instructional practices of university teaching faculty as perceived by students. The researcher used the descriptive survey method through the questionnaire instrument which consisted of (44) items distributed to six domains (planning, commitment, teaching methods, classroom management, assessment methods, scientific content, general behaviors). The study sample consisted of (360) male and female students. The results of the study showed that the students' estimate level of the instructional practices came with a medium degree, besides the non-existence of statistically significant difference between the mean of the students' estimates that could be attributed to the variables of the study (social type, academic year, accumulative average)

Al-Shammari (2019) conducted a study which aimed at the identification of the instructional practices of the teaching faculty at the Faculty of Education at Ha'il university. The researcher used the descriptive survey method. The study sample consisted of (477) teaching faculty. The results of the study showed that the total mean of the domains of instructional practices of the teaching faculty at Ha'il University, as they perceived, came with a high degree (instruction planing, instruction implementation, instruction evaluation, feedback, contact and communication with students).

Landstorm (1995) conducted a study titled conceptions and needs of teaching faculty in the courses of distance learning at the conventional university. The researcher used the descriptive method via the questionnaire instrument and interview. The study developed the conception of traditional teaching faculty about distance instruction situation and changes in their views as time passed and the suggestion of strategies and the preparation of courses and the management of training courses in order to deal with teachers' apprehensions in order to be more comfortable and efficient in the distance teaching of courses.

Through the previous studies, it was revealed that some studies emphasized the training and development of teaching faculty about distance teaching practices such as the study of Mujtaba (2010) and others emphasized the evaluation of the goodness of instructional practices at traditional instruction such as the study of Mahasneh and Murad (2020).

Other studies emphasized the need for revealing the conceptions and needs of teaching faculty and distance teaching courses such as the study of Landstorm (1995). The researcher did not find a study relating to the topic of the study. The present study is considered as one of the rare studies which investigated the building up of a touchstone scale according to the cognitive constructive theory for measuring the effective instructional practices of the teaching faculty at distance e-learning.

The Problem and Questions of the Study

The theoretical literature and previous studies concentrated on the practices of teaching faculty of normal instruction (within the teaching institution) In view of what corona epidemic has imposed in regard to the sudden change of university using distance-learning it has become necessary to create a scale for measuring the effective instructional practices of the teaching faculty at distance e-learning. Mahasneh & elt (2020). Studies and research also indicated several side effects of distance learning, including self-learning management. Al-Sawalha (2020), the acquisition of verbal and non-verbal communication skills. Ayasrah (2022), developing thinking skills. Ayasrah (2016), increasing students' experience in using smart applications in the learning process and optimizing them. Achieving sustainable development in the educational process. Al Qasimi (2021) and enriching the knowledge side of students. Ease of accessing and searching for student information; The perseverance of students to excel in the study and obtain high rates. Aqel (2012); Students follow up on lectures on an ongoing basis. reliability in self-learning; Optimal use of time and effort. Al-Mahasnah et al. (2022).The study sought to answer the following two questions:

The First Question: what are the indicators which signify the validity and reliability of the cores and effective instructional practices of the teaching faculty at distance learning?

The Other Question: what are the cores and effective instructional practices of teaching faculty at distance e-learning?

Study Aims and Significance

The aims and significance of the study stem from the fact that it provides decision makers with a scale for measuring the effective instructional practices at distance e-learning for checking up the achievement of goodness in the teaching-learning process.

Study Limits and Limitations

The study was restricted to a group of experts in the field of educational sciences during the second semester of the academic year 2020/2021.

The study results are determined by the extent of the validity and reliability of the used instrument of the study.

Methodology

The study used the descriptive analytical method through the instrument of collecting the used data and information.

Study Sample

The Sample of the study consisted of (176) experts of curricula, instruction, educational psychology, and educational technology.

Study Instruments

The researcher used the questionnaire instrument after constructing, depending on theoretical literature, previous studies and expert's confirmations.

Validity of the Study Instrument

After the preparation of the instrument in its primary form, it was shown to eight judges to present their views about the appropriateness of the scale for measuring the effective instructional practices of teaching faculty during distance e-learning in regard to (appropriateness of practices to the core for which it was put, their suggestions about the additions of other practices and checking the correct formation of the practices). The observations of all judges were taken. The study instrument, in its final form, consisted of (43) practices distributed to six cores graded according to Lickert 5-scale (appropriate with a very high degree, appropriate with a high degree, appropriate with a medium degree, appropriate with a low degree, appropriate with a very low degree).

Instrument Reliability

The total reliability co-efficient was calculated by using cornbatch alpha through the program of statistical analysis SPSS. The total reliability coefficient of the instrument was (0.895). This shows that the instrument reliability was high.

Statistical Processing

Arithmetic means and standard deviations for each practice were calculated in addition to the factor analysis, correlation coefficient between the cores of practices and the test checking the goodness of the scale through the program of statistical analysis SPSS. For judging the condition of practices, the following criterion was used. If the means were (4.5 - 5), the practices represented appropriate with a very high degree; (3.5-4.5) was appropriate with a high degree; (2.5-3.5) as appropriate with a medium degree; (1.5-2.5) was appropriate with a low degree and (less than 1.5) was low with a very low degree.

Results and Discussion

The results relating to the first question and discussion:

For answering the first question which states: what are the indicators which signify the validity and reliability of the cores and the effective instructional practices of teaching faculty at distance e-learning? The following analyses were calculated. First the factor analysis of standards (latent root, ratio of explained variance) as shown by Table (1)

Table (1) Latent root and the percentage of explained variance.

No	Cores	Latent root	Percentage of explained variance	Accumulative percentage of Variance
1	Adaptation	2.321	20.632	42.326
2	Preparation	1.325	9.321	65.652
3	Commitment	2.854	24.542	78.652
4	Hypothetical management of lectures	2.427	21.324	83.562
5	Teaching methods	1.362	9.417	89.326
6	Evaluation methods	1.875	11.253	85.365

Table (1) shows that the results of factor analysis classified six cores and the value of latent root higher than (1) explained a total of (100%) of the total variance. The value of latent root of all factors ranged between 2.854 and 1.325.

Second: The test of checking the test of measure goodness (KMO Kaiser Meryer Olkin) was calculated as Table (2) shows.

Table (2): The test of checking measure goodness KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling Adequacy	Barlett's Test of	0.856.
Sphericity	Approx.chi	2.254E3.
square.	df.	177.
	Sig.	0.000

Table (2) shows that the value of KMO test is higher than the lowest limit of the measure goodness (0.60) and this means the measure goodness is excellent as the significance level is (0.000).

Third: classification of correlation coefficients: To checkup the goodness of the course practices matrix of correlation between the domains of standards (factors) with each other were found out as shown in Table (3)

Table (3): correlation matrix between the domains of standards.

Cores	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
Adaptation	1						
Preparation	0.85	1					
Commitment	0.85	0.79	1				
Hypothetical management of class	0.82	0.87	0.87	1			
Teaching methods	0.78	0.86	0.74	0.84	1		
Evaluation methods	0.80	0.78	0.77	0.74	0.79	1	

Table (3) shows that the correlation coefficient of the degrees of the instrument cores with each other between 0.74 and 0.87 and they are high.

The results relating to the other question and their discussion: For answering the other question which states what are the effective cores and instructional practices of the teaching faculty at distance e-learning? Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the instrument cores in their final form were calculated as shown in Tables (4-9)

Table (4): a summary of the instructional cores

Rank	No	Cores	Adaptation	Arith.means	Number of practices
7	1	Adaptation		4.92	5
6	2	Preparation		4.93	5
5	3	Commitment		4.92	7
1	4	Hypothetical management of lecture		4.92	7
5	5	Teaching methods		4.85	11
2	6	Evaluation methods		4.91	8

Table (4) shows that the core of preparation got the highest arithmetic mean of the cores of effective instructional practices of the teaching faculty at distance e-learning. The arithmetic mean reached 4.93 which signifies the importance of good preparation of the teaching faculty for the use of the forms and methods of distance e-learning.

The researcher confirmed that all the cores of practices are connected with each other as they are close together in arithmetic means. This signifies the integrative connective relationship between the cores of practices as all instructional practices are connected with each other.

Tables (4-9) show the arithmetic means and standard deviation of instructional practices according to cores.

Table (4): Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and states of practices of the core of adaptation

No	Core of adaptation	arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Case of practices
1	Ability to use the systems of e-learning such as Moodle and the applications used in e-learning such as Teams or Zoom or Meet and other applications	4.96	0.054	Appropriate with a very high degree
2	Familiarity with the educational principles of teaching design	4.94	0.086	Appropriate with a very high degree
3	Ability to use the programs of preparing multi-media such as Camtasia	4.93	0.154	Appropriate with a very high degree
4	Ability to design instructional lectures through evaluation presentations and files of PDF and Doc	4.89	0.147	Appropriate with a very high degree
5	Providing distance e-learning requirements such as smart devices, and Internet and other technical requirements	4.89	0.165	Appropriate with a very high degree
Total		4.92		Appropriate with a very high degree

Table (4) shows that the arithmetic means of the practices The core of adaptation is (4.92) which means that it is appropriate with a very high degree. The researcher confirmed that the ability of teaching faculty to use the system of managing e-learning and publications of hypothetical lectures is a necessary requirement for effective instructional practices. This practice conforms with pieces of the advice presented by Mujtaba (2010) to the teaching faculty who will present distance learning programs, distance learning controls and standards accredited by the Agency for Quality Verification in Higher Education in Britain (Mulla, 2016).

Table (5): Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and practices cases of the preparation core

Second core: preparation	Arith.mean	Stand. dev	Paract. Cases
1. Electronic preparation and production of the course plan	4.91	0.144	Appropriate with a very high degree
2. Electronic preparation and production of the teaching material in different files	4.93	0.158	Appropriate with a very high degree
3. Production of self learning lessons	4.93	0.181	Appropriate with a very high degree
4. Distribution of activities to the outputs of the course in a way that guarantees the achievement of the outputs and academic programs	4.96		Appropriate with a very high degree
5. Preparation of assessment instruments	4.94	0.192	Appropriate with a very high degree
Total	4.93		Appropriate with a very high degree

Table (5) shows that the arithmetic mean of the practices of the preparation core was (4.93) with the appropriateness of practices with a very high degree. The researcher confirmed that the effective instructional practices through the use of distance e-learning require a good preparation of teaching faculty. These practices are in harmony with the pieces of advice presented by Mujtaba (2020) to teaching faculty who will present distance teaching programs and the controls and standards of distance teaching accredited by the Agency for Quality Verification in Higher Education in Britain (mulla, 2016).

Table (6): Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and cases of practices of the core of commitment

Third core: Commitment	Arit. mean	Stand. dev	Cases of practices
1. Facilitating the student's addition of the applications used in the distance e-learning	4.93	0.135	appropriate with a very high degree
2. Downloading the files relating to the course plan and scientific material of students on the used e-systems of teaching	4.92	0.123	appropriate with a very high degree
3. Discussion of the course plan and assignments required from students during the academic semester	4.94	0.145	appropriate with a very high degree
4. Asking students to prepare homework and reports about course topics	4.94	0.178	appropriate with a very high degree
5. Compliance with the announced times of lectures	4.90	0.025	appropriate with a very high degree
6. Compliance with announced office hours	4.92	0.135	appropriate with a very high degree
7. Compliance with the accredited university calendar	4.91	0.163	appropriate with a very high degree
Total	4.92		appropriate with a very high degree

Table (6) shows that the arithmetic means of the practices of the core of commitment is (4.92) with a very high degree of appropriateness of practices. The researcher confirmed that teaching faculty should abide by the important academic instructional protocols, specially providing students with the Plan, compliance with university calendar and other technical things. These practices are in harmony with the pieces of advice presented by Mujtaba, 2010. to the teaching faculty who will present the distance teaching programs, controls and standards accredited by the Agency for Quality Verification in Higher Education in Britain (mulla,2016).

Table (7): Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and the cases of the practices of the core of hypothetical lectures

Fourth core: management of hypothetical lectures	Arith.mean	Std. dev	Cases of practices
1. Programming the icons specialized for attend and absentees through the systems of managing e-learning	4.92	0.145	Appropriate with a very high degree
2. Pre-agreement with students about the manner of participation and interaction through hypothetical lectures	4.89	0.056	Appropriate with a very high degree
3. Allowing students to interact in the lecture	4.88	0.054	Appropriate with a very high degree

4. Making it possible for students to record hypothetical lectures	4.96	0.086	Appropriate with a very high degree
5. Commitment of appearing before students (voice and picture)	4.94	0.095	Appropriate with a very high degree
6. Making sure that students attend hypothetical lectures	4.92	0.093	Appropriate with a very high degree
7. Students' participation with the files relating to scientific material	4.91	0.165	Appropriate with a very high degree
Total	4.92		Appropriate with a very high degree

Table (7) shows that the Arithmetic mean of the practices of the core of managing hypothetical lectures is (4.92) with a very high appropriate core. The researcher confirm that the management of the hypothetical lecture is important for achieving the outputs and aims of the courses.

Table (8): Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and cases of a practices of the core of teaching methods

Fifth core: Teaching methods	Arith.mean	Std. dev	Cases of practices
1. The course content is presented in more than one method	4.96	0.223	Appropriate with a very high degree
2. Students are allowed to participate in the topics of the course	4.95	0.125	Appropriate with a very high degree
3. The topic is presented in a way that stimulates students' motivation towards learning	4.93	0.275	Appropriate with a very high degree
4. Clarify the learning tasks of each topic	4.92	0.236	Appropriate with a very high degree
5. Care about connecting the cognitive structures with each other	4.91	0.254	Appropriate with a very high degree
6. Avoid the dictation of topics	4.93	0.232	Appropriate with a very high degree.
7. Use instruction methods that encourage students to be interested in self-learning	4.90	0.056	Appropriate with a very high degree
8. Engage students in the management of learning	4.82	0.254	Appropriate with a very high degree
9. Care about the use of technological instruments which help in the presentation of topics	4.88	0.363	Appropriate with a very high degree
10. Care about asking students to prepare and discuss reports and researches	4.89	0.245	Appropriate with a very high degree
11. Care about linking learning to life affairs	4.35	0.264	Appropriate with a very high degree
Total	4.85		Appreciate with a very high degree

Table (8) shows the Arithmetic mean of the practices of the core of teaching methods (4.85) which indicates that the practices are very appropriate. The researcher emphasizes the necessity for teaching faculty to have teaching methods based on the thoughts of modern educational theories.

Table (9): Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and cases of practices of the core of evaluation methods

Sixth core: evaluation methods	Arith.mean	Std. dev	Cases of practices
1. Preparation of pre, formative and final tests of the course	4.99	0.023	Appropriate with a very high degree
2. Preparation of the items of questions according to the table of specifications and with different levels	4.96	0.172	Appropriate with a very high degree
3. Variation in the strategies of evaluation, pen and paper, communication based on performance and observation	4.95	0.227	Appropriate with a very high degree
4. making it possible for students to have marks for assignments, reports and quizzes	4.94	0.452	Appropriate with a very high degree
5. Stimulating students to produce accomplishment files	4.93	0.145	Appropriate with a very high degree
6. Reinforcing students with words of praise and encouragement	4.62	0.145	Appropriate with a very high degree
7. Increase of questions that urge research and exploration	4.94	0.136	Appropriate with a very high degree
8. Employing the results of the tests and improving instruction	4.97	0.147	Appropriate with a very high degree
Total	4.91		Appropriate with a very high degree

Table (9) shows that the arithmetic mean of the practices of the core of evaluation is (4.91). This means that the cores are appropriate with a very high degree. The researcher emphasizes the necessity for teaching faculty to have evaluation methods based on the thoughts of educational methods.

Conclusions

The study concluded the following (6) cores for measuring the effective instructional practices (adaptation, preparation, commitment, management of hypothetical lecture, teaching methods, evaluation methods). The scale cores include (43) practices characterized by a very high appropriateness for measuring the effective instructional practices of teaching faculty in the case of distance e-learning. The researcher hope that the people specialized and concerned will benefit from the results of this research in order to improve the instructional practices of teaching faculty during distance e-education.

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