The Power of Digital Storytelling: Students' Perceptions about Its Utilization in Developing Practical Understanding in an Instructional Technology Context

Dependence on technological concepts and applications to improve learning outcomes and learners' performance has broad positive effects on deepening students' understanding, especially in higher education and postgraduate studies. Digital storytelling (DST) is a high-value-added tool for achieving many learning goals. This study aims to explore students' perceptions about the use of DST in strengthening the understanding of practical concepts among students on a master's program in instructional technology at the Arab Open University in Oman. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather the required data. A total of 67 students participated in the study through a questionnaire, and a semi-structured personal interview format was used to gather qualitative data from ten of these participants. The results indicated that the students used DST for the purpose of learning and deep understanding of some practical concepts in an effective, fun, useful and constructive way in order to achieve targeted learning. The students' most positive perception was of the technique when used in the following categories: information stability,

application of concepts in a variety of contexts, and problem-solving skill development (M = 4.186, SD = 0.7371; M = 4.051, SD = 0.7558; and M = 4.023, SD = 0.7531 respectively). At the same time, the students' perception was the least positive for DST in the analysis and discussion categories (M = 2.056, SD = 1.209). Most of the participants supported the idea that DST was a perfect and enjoyable tool for learning and deep understanding in their specialization. They also agreed that DST helped them to fix what they had learned and helped them to achieve broad interaction with the content and that it also contributed effectively to the application of the concepts in various learning contexts. DST developed students' ability to solve any instructional problems but mainly contributed to raising the motivation toward learning.