

Perception of Geriatric Nursing Students regarding Blended Learning

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Abstract

Background: Blended learning is a teaching method that integrates both offline-learning and online-learning with the aim of producing a conducive learning environment so that students become more active and independent. **Aim of study:** Was to assess perception of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning. **Research design:** A descriptive research design was utilized to conduct this study. **Setting:** The study was conducted at Faculty of Nursing, Benha University. **Sample:** A systematic random sample of 25% of all Geriatric Nursing students in the previous mentioned setting which includes 134 students from 535 Geriatric Nursing students. **Tools:** Two tools were used to conduct this study. **Tool I:** A structured interviewing questionnaire format which included 3 parts: A) socio-demographic characteristics related to the students. B) learning needs assessment of the students. C) knowledge of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning. **Tool II:** Likert scale to assess attitude of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning. **Results:** 86.6% of Geriatric Nursing students preferred teaching methods that depend on the educator and the learner. 42.5% of the studied students had poor total knowledge level about blended learning. 59.7% of the studied students had negative attitude regarding blended learning. **Conclusion:** There were highly statistically significant relation between Geriatric Nursing students' total knowledge and their socio-demographic characteristics regarding mobile phone type $p > 0.001$. There were highly statistically significant relations between total students' knowledge level, and total attitude regarding blended learning. **Recommendation:** Designing workshops on how to use computers and internet for nursing educators and nursing students to increase the effectiveness and quality of blended learning.

Keywords: Blended learning, Geriatric Nursing Students, Perception.

Introduction

Blended Learning (BL), hybrid learning, integrated learning, multi-method learning, or mixed method learning are all references to the same strategy concept of learning. BL is an opportunity to integrate innovative and technological advances offered by online learning with interaction and in learning activities to integrate technology and tasks so that learning is maximized. BL elements are

mentioned by namely, face-to-face learning in class, and independent learning outside the classroom, utilizing online applications or platforms (Tumasis, 2021).

Coronavirus "COVID-19" pandemic crisis has made a fundamental change in all over the world. In particular, education has been disrupted temporarily which has impacted 94% of learners, representing nearly 1.6 billion

students, which resulted in the largest online movement in the history of education. With that sudden shift away from classrooms in many parts of the globe, educational institutions had to rapidly shift to virtual and digital strategies, therefore the reliance on BL has increased significantly and has become an irreplaceable strategic choice to face the repercussions of covid-19 crisis on the educational institutions sectors and to avoid interruption of education as well (**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2021**).

Blended learning strategies provides learners, educators, and course material designers with a comfortable non-threatening environment in which can acquire the set of skills and knowledge necessary to fully function in technology-enhanced learning contexts. The implementation of BL strives to achieve three strategic objectives. First of all, build institutional capacity to support the use of BL approaches. Second, develop staff capacity to integrate learning technologies into learning and teaching strategies. Third, enhance the quality and outcomes of the student learning experience (**Momchilova, 2021**).

Generally Blended learning represents an effective method in teaching Geriatric Nursing Course, and reflects positively on the student's performance in the specific subject. The importance of BL strategy comes from the student feeling towards that new learning method. Finally, using BL strategy as a teaching method, reflects on raising student achievement and improving the attitudes towards learning and develop student's skills including; communication skills, receiving information, and the interaction between the student and the educator (**Cho et al., 2021**).

Geriatric Nursing educators' role is a crucial and decisive factor for a good BL environment. Geriatric Nursing educators need to create a learning management plan, teaching materials, as well as measurement and evaluation methods that have modified the teaching and learning approach combined with the combination of technology and the diverse presentation methods that have changed according to the context of the Geriatric Nursing content and the nature of the learners. Additionally, Geriatric Nursing educators also need to be aware of multiple online pedagogies to foster academic success (**Kaewsrissai, 2022**).

Significance of the study

Faculties closure in response to the COVID-19 pandemic had a big impact on 25.3 million pre university students and 3.3 million university students, according to Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (ECAPMAS). Fortunately, Egypt's Ministry of Higher Education (MHE) seized the opportunity and decided to develop the education system to facilitate solutions to all stakeholders. The pandemic encouraged innovation within the educational system to promote delivering BL solutions that guarantee a quality education to the students (**Soliman, 2021**).

Before the start of COVID-19 pandemic, Egyptian universities were not used to having lectures and assignments online. Recently, many countries including Egypt have shifted to face- to -face and online education (BL). This sudden shift in the educational process has caused positive and negative attitudes towards this new teaching /learning approach from both students and instructors (**Abdel- Hafez, 2022**). So that, this study is important to assess

perception of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning.

Aim of the study

This study aimed to assess the perception of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning.

Research questions

1. What is the knowledge of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning?
2. What is the attitude of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning?
3. Is there a relation between Geriatric Nursing students' socio-demographic characteristics and their knowledge?
4. Is there a relation between Geriatric Nursing students' knowledge and their attitude?

Subjects and method

Research design

A descriptive research design was utilized to conduct this study.

Setting

This study was conducted at Faculty of Nursing, Benha University.

Sampling

A systematic random sample of 25% of all fourth year Geriatric Nursing undergraduate students enrolled at Geriatric Nursing Course first and second terms of academic year 2021-2022. The total sample included 134 students from 535 students.

Tools for Data Collection: Two tools were used for data collection.

Tool I: A structured interviewing questionnaire: It consisted of three parts:

Part I: Socio-demographic characteristics related to the students involved in the study. It included 9 closed ended questions.

Part II: Learning needs assessment of the studied students: It included of 7 closed ended questions.

Part III: Knowledge of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning. It included 19 closed ended questions.

Scoring system of students' knowledge

Scoring system is graded according to the items of questionnaire. The scoring system for Geriatric Nursing undergraduate students' knowledge was calculated as follows (2) score for correct and complete answer, (1) score for correct and incomplete answer, and (0) for don't know. For each area of knowledge, the score of the questions was summed-up and the total divided by the number of the questions, which converted into a percent score. The total knowledge scores were categorized into 3 levels as following:

Good→ if the total score of knowledge >75%.

Average→ if the total score equals 50-75%.

Poor→ if the total score was < 50%.

Tool II:- Attitude of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning:- Using likert scale adapted from (El-Zeftawy et al., 2017). The original scale was rated on five point likert-type but the researcher adapted it on three-point likert-type. It consisted of 40 items divided into 7 categories.

Scoring system of students' attitude

Scoring system for students' attitude was calculated as (2) scores for always, (1) scores for sometimes and (0) for never. For each area of attitude, the score of the questions was summed-up and the total divided by the number of the questions, which converted into a percent score. The total attitude scores were categorized into 2 levels as following:

Positive→ if the total score of attitude >60%.

Negative→ if the score of attitude ≤ 60%.

Tools validity

The tools validity was done by five members of Faculty's Staff Nursing-Benha

University Experts from Community Health Nursing Specialties who reviewed the tools for clarity, comprehensiveness, applicability and easiness for implementation and according to their opinion, minor modifications carried out.

Tools Reliability

The reliability was done by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient test that developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951 which revealed that each of two parts consisted of relatively homogeneous items as indicated by the moderate to high reliability of each tool. Internal consistency of knowledge was 0.931, and attitude was 0.943.

Ethical consideration

Oral and written permission has been obtained from each Geriatric Nursing students before conducting the interview and given a brief orientation to the purpose of the study. They were also reassured that all information gathered would be confidential and used only for the purpose of the study. No names were required on the forms to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. They were also informed about their right to withdraw at any time from the study without giving any reasons.

Pilot study

A pilot study was carried out in the mid of October 2021 to ascertain the clarity and applicability of the study tools representing 10% of total study subjects. 13 Geriatric Nursing students were included in the pilot study. It has also served in estimating the time needed for filling the questionnaires. It ranged between 15-20 minutes to assess perception of Geriatric Nursing students regarding blended learning. No modification was done, so the pilot study included in the study main subjects.

Field work

Data collection took about one month (two weeks at first term in November 2021, and two

weeks in second term in March 2022). The researcher prepared the questionnaire electronically via Google form design and took the permission from head of academic department and explained the aim and the nature of the study and the method of filling the electronic questionnaires to the students in the department and then the links were sent to Geriatric Nursing undergraduate students through the WhatsApp group. The researcher was contacted with the studied students through WhatsApp group to determine the appropriate time for both parties to fill out the questionnaire. On this basis, the researcher also opened the questionnaire link daily from 6-8 P.M and responded to the students' inquiries in the event of a problem while filling out the questionnaire through the WhatsApp group.

Statistical analysis

All data collected were organized, tabulated and analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 21), which was used frequencies and percentages for qualitative descriptive data, and chi-square coefficient χ^2 was used for relation tests, and mean and standard deviation was used for quantitative data. The observation difference and associations were considered as the following: (p-value):

- Highly statistically significant $P < 0.001^{**}$.
- Statistically significant $P < 0.05^*$.
- Not significant $P > 0.05$.

Results

Table (1): Shows that; 50% of the Geriatric Nursing students aged 21 years old with mean and standard deviation was $21.61 \pm .69$. 73.1% of them were females, 83.6% of them lived in rural areas, 55.2% of them lived in extended families, 88.1% of them were single, 74.6% of

them had enough family monthly income, and 70.9% of them had developed mobile phone.

Table (2): Shows that; 55.2% of the Geriatric Nursing students not experienced computer skills difficulties, 53.7% of them not experienced difficulties with internet skills, 86.6% of them preferred teaching methods that depend on the educator and the learner, 62.7% of them had taken the ICDL course, 70.9% of them had mobile phone device used to access the online course, 61.2% of them had advanced efficiency in the use of technology, and 51.5% of them had fairly easy internet accessible outside of the campus or Faculty.

Figure (1): Illustrates that; 42.5% of the Geriatric Nursing students had poor total knowledge level about blended learning and

Table (1): Frequency distribution of the Geriatric Nursing students regarding their socio-demographic characteristics (n=134)

Socio-demographic characteristics	No.	%
Age		
21 years.	67	50.0
22 years.	51	38.1
≥ 23 years.	16	11.9
Mean ±SD 21.61±.69		
Sex		
Male.	36	26.9
Female.	98	73.1
Residence		
Urban.	22	16.4
Rural.	112	83.6
Type of family		
Nuclear family.	60	44.8
Extended family.	74	55.2
Marital status		
Married.	16	11.9
Single.	118	88.1
Family monthly income		
Enough and save.	13	9.7
Enough.	100	74.6
Not enough.	21	15.7
Mobile phone type		
Developed.	95	70.9
Simple.	39	29.1

33.6% of them had average total knowledge level. While only 23.9% of them had good total knowledge level about blended learning.

Figure (2): Illustrates that; 59.7% of the Geriatric Nursing students had negative attitude regarding blended learning, and only 40.3% of them had positive attitude regarding blended learning.

Table (3): Reveals that; there were highly statistically significant relation between Geriatric Nursing students' total knowledge and their socio-demographic characteristics regarding mobile phone type $p < 0.001$.

Table (4): Reveals that; there were highly statistically significant relations between total students' knowledge level, and total attitude regarding blended learning.

Table (2): Frequency distribution of the Geriatric Nursing students regarding their learning needs assessment (n=134).

Learning needs assessment	No.	%
*Experiencing computer skills difficulties as:		
Writing and word processing.	8	6.0
Proficiency in programming languages.	36	26.9
Systems management.	27	20.1
Email management.	19	14.2
Don't have difficulties.	74	55.2
*Experiencing difficulties with internet skills as:		
Time management.	28	20.9
Effective communication.	14	10.4
Do a basic internet search.	9	6.7
Presentation skills.	31	23.1
Fill out an online form.	16	11.9
Don't have difficulties.	72	53.7
Prefer teaching methods that rely on:		
The educator.	11	8.2
The learner.	7	5.2
The educator and the learner.	116	86.6
*Have you attended any previous training courses on the use of computers as:		
A course in Microsoft programs.	23	17.2
A course in the use of advanced Excel programs.	18	13.4
Programming training course.	10	7.5
The ICDL course.	84	62.7
Not attended any courses.	25	18.7
The special device used to access the online course:		
The laptop.	16	11.9
A computer.	23	17.2
Mobile phone.	95	70.9
Efficiency in the use of technology:		
Beginner.	24	17.9
Advanced.	82	61.2
Expertise.	28	20.9
To what extent the internet is accessible outside of the campus or Faculty:		
Easy.	27	20.1
Fairly easy.	69	51.5
With difficult.	38	28.4

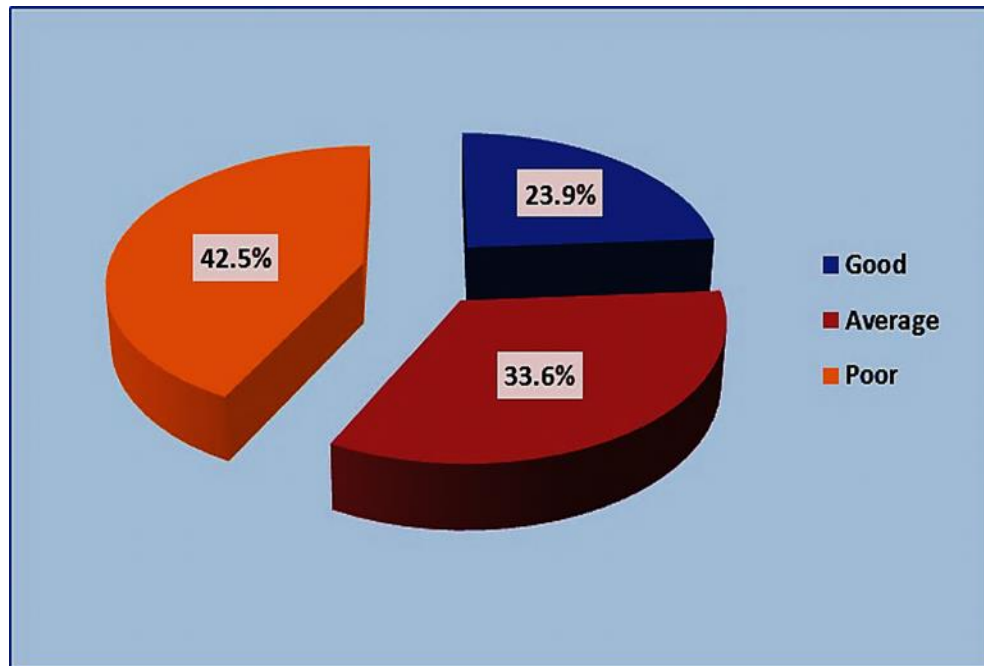


Figure (1): Percentage distribution of the Geriatric Nursing students regarding their total knowledge level about blended learning (n=134).

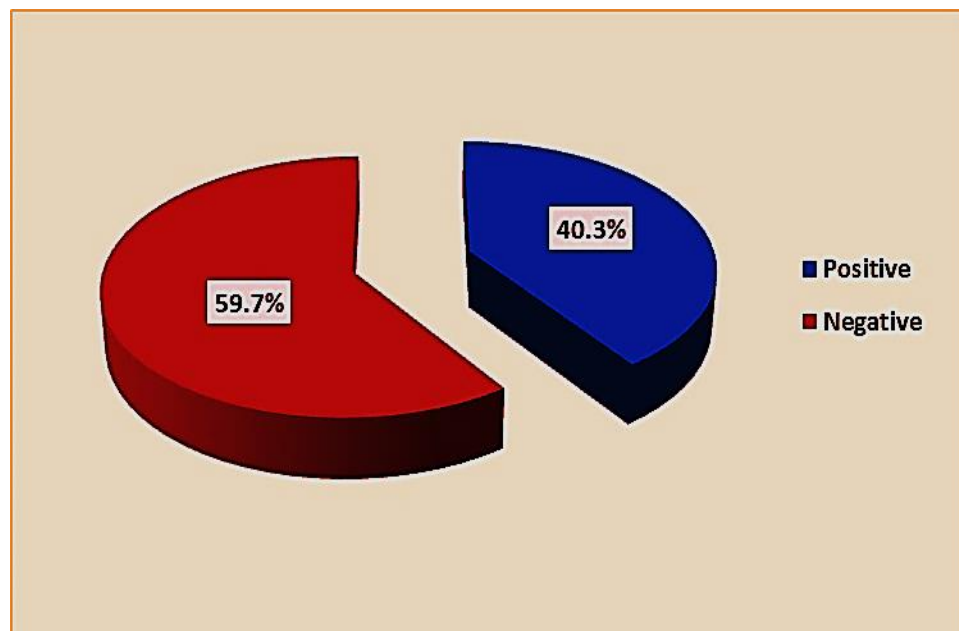


Figure (2): Percentage distribution of the Geriatric Nursing students regarding their total attitude level about blended learning (n=134).

Table (3): Relations between socio-demographic characteristics of Geriatric Nursing students and their total knowledge (n=134).

Socio-demographic characteristics	Total knowledge score							X ²	p-value
	Poor (n= 57)		Average (n= 45)		Good (n= 32)				
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%			
Age									
21 years.	26	45.6	28	62.2	13	40.6	5.294	.258	
22 years.	24	42.1	14	31.1	13	40.6			
≥ 23 years.	7	12.3	3	6.7	6	18.8			
Sex									
Male.	18	31.6	11	24.4	7	21.9	2.420	.298	
Female.	39	68.4	34	75.6	25	78.1			
Residence									
Urban.	12	21.1	6	13.3	4	12.5	1.562	.458	
Rural.	45	78.9	39	86.7	28	87.5			
Type of family									
Nuclear family.	28	49.1	15	33.3	17	53.1	3.720	.156	
Extended family.	29	50.9	30	66.7	15	46.9			
Marital status									
Married.	7	12.3	5	11.1	4	12.5	.045	.978	
Single.	50	87.7	40	88.9	28	87.5			
Family monthly income									
Enough and save.	6	10.5	4	8.9	3	9.4	3.001	.558	
Enough.	44	77.2	32	71.1	24	75.0			
Not enough.	7	12.3	9	20.0	5	15.6			
Mobile phone type									
Developed.	23	40.4	43	95.6	29	90.6	105.352	.000**	
Simple.	34	59.6	2	4.4	3	9.4			

Table (4): Relations between total knowledge of Geriatric Nursing students and their total attitude (n=134).

Total knowledge level	Total attitude level					
	Negative (n=80)		Positive (n=54)		X ²	p-value
	No.	%	No.	%		
	Poor.	32	40.0	25	46.3	20.331
Average.	38	47.5	7	13.0		
Good.	10	12.5	22	40.7		

Discussion

Blended learning traditionally refers to a combination of E-learning and face-to-face learning, merging the advantages of both online and face-to-face classroom activities by providing; prolonged exposure to learning for participants, flexibility that allows for learning anytime, a comprehensive range of educational resources, and enabling peer learning. BL has become a mainstream concept in the recent years due to the widespread use of technology based learning (**Acaroglu et al., 2021**).

Regarding the studied students' socio-demographic characteristics, the present study findings showed that; half of the studied students aged 21 years old with mean and standard deviation was $21.61 \pm .69$. This finding came inconsistent with the study performed by **Bamoallem & Altarteer, (2022)**, who studied "Remote emergency learning during COVID-19 and its impact on university students perception of blended learning in KSA, in Saudi Arabia", (n=115), and found that, majority of participants (87.4%) ranged in age from 18 to 26, with a mean age of 20.88.

Regarding to gender, and residence of the studied students, the present study showed that; slightly less than three quarters of students were females, and majority of them lived in rural areas. This findings disagreed with the study performed by **Iqbal et al., (2022)**, who studied "The impacts of emotional intelligence on students' study habits in blended learning environments: the mediating role of cognitive engagement during COVID-19, in China", (n=338), and found that; more than half of students (54.6%) were males, and slightly less than three fifths of them (59.3%) lived in urban.

Regarding students' type of family, this study showed that; more than half of studied

students lived in extended families. This finding came inconsistent with the study performed by **Topuzov et al., (2022)**, who studied "Individualized learning in the context of blended mode of the educational process in secondary school: challenges and expectations, in Ukraine", (n=370), and found that, majority of students (82%) came from nuclear families.

Regarding the studied students' experiencing computer skills difficulties, this study showed that; more than half of the studied students not experienced computer skills difficulties. This finding was in the same line with the study performed by **Rolé, (2021)**, who studied "The inhibitors and enablers affecting the online behaviours of online college students learning in a blended learning context, in Malta", (n=37), and found that; majority of the students (86%) have sufficient computers skills.

Regarding the studied students' experiencing difficulties with internet skills, this present study showed that; more than half of studied students not experienced difficulties with internet skills. This finding was in the same line with the study performed by **Guo et al., (2022)**, who studied "Blended learning model via small private online course improves active learning and academic performance of embryology, in China", (n=43), and found that; most of students (95.45%) had never been experiencing internet skills difficulties.

Regarding the studied students' preferred teaching methods, this study showed that; majority of studied students preferred teaching methods that depend on the educator and the learner. This finding was in the same line with the study performed by **Siddique & Hussain, (2022)**, who studied "Blended learning in ESL: perceptions about paradigm shift in English Language Institutions of Punjab, in Pakistan",

(n=282), and found that; more than three fifths of students (61.7%) preferred instructional methods that depend on both teacher and learner.

Regarding the students' special device used to access the online course, this present study showed that; more than two thirds of the studied students had mobile phone device used to access the online course. This finding was in the same line with the study performed by **Saad et al., (2021)**, who studied "Comparing undergraduate nursing student academic engagement and achievement in traditional versus blended learning models, in Pakistan", (n=162), and found that; slightly less than three fifths of students (56.3%) utilized smart phone device.

Regarding total knowledge level of the studied students, the current study clarified that; slightly more than two fifths of the students had poor total knowledge level about blended learning and slightly more than third of them had average total knowledge level. While only less than quarter of them had good total knowledge level about blended learning. This findings were in the same line with the study performed by **Adi & Fathoni, (2020)**, who studied "Blended learning analysis for sports schools in Indonesia", (n=290), and found that; less than half of the students (47.5%) had poor awareness regarding blended learning, while slightly less than half of them (49.1%) had average knowledge regarding blended learning.

Regarding to total attitude level of the studied students, the current study clarified that; slightly less than three fifths of the Geriatric Nursing students had negative attitude regarding blended learning, and only two fifths of them had positive attitude regarding blended learning. This findings were in the same line

with the study performed by **Kadirbayeva et al., (2022)**, who studied "Methodology of application of blended learning technology in mathematics education, in Kazakhstan", (n=80), and found that; less than fifth of students (16.25%) have positive attitudes regarding blended learning and majority of students (83.75%) developed negative attitude.

Regarding relations between the students' socio-demographic characteristics and their total knowledge level about blended learning, this current study showed that; there were highly statistically significant relation between studied students' total knowledge and their socio-demographic characteristics regarding mobile phone type $p < 0.001$. This might be due to the smart mobile phone had a positive effect on students' ability to acquire knowledge well.

Regarding relations between the students' total knowledge and their total attitude level about blended learning, this study showed that; there were highly statistically significant relations between total students' knowledge level, and total attitude regarding blended learning $p < 0.001$. This findings were in the same line with the study performed by **Fisher et al., (2021)**, who studied "The positive relationship between flipped and blended learning and student engagement, performance and satisfaction, in Australia", (n=714), and found that; there are significant and positive direct relationships between students' knowledge regarding BL and their attitude level.

Conclusion

Slightly more than two fifths of the Geriatric Nursing students had poor total knowledge level about blended learning and slightly more than third of them had average total knowledge level about blended learning. While only less

than quarter of them had good total knowledge level about blended learning. Slightly less than three fifths of the Geriatric Nursing students had negative attitude regarding blended learning, and only two fifths of them had positive attitude regarding BL. There was no statistically significant relation between Geriatric Nursing undergraduate students' total knowledge score and their socio-demographic characteristics except (mobile phone type). There were highly statistically significant relations between total students' knowledge score, and total attitude regarding blended learning.

Recommendation

I. For Faculty Administration

- Designing specialized workshops on how to use computers and internet for nursing educators and nursing students to increase the effectiveness and quality of blended learning.
- Faculty administration/management should take serious steps to facilitate the nursing educator's development skills of information technology.

II. For Geriatric Nursing Educators

- Empowering Geriatric Nursing educators to implement blended learning, and other teaching strategies in the teaching/learning process to reduce students' academic stress.
- Foster interaction between students and create a learning community.

III. For Students

- Encourage students to discuss the barriers for using blended learning.
- Encouraging students for more usage of internet websites to implement all courses activities.

IV. For Further Research

- Educational program ought to be actively established and developed in a blended learning

approach and applied to a wide range of courses indifferent places to ensure generalizability.

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