

Impact of Using Digital Learning Platforms in Enhancing Learner Engagement and Personalized Learning in a Hybrid Learning Course

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Abstract

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has transformed teaching and learning in Higher Education in many ways. One of which is the delivery from the traditional in-person to the Blended or Hybrid learning modalities to allow for learning continuity. Moreover, the sudden shift requires that teachers have to design digital course content and align their pedagogical practices to promote learner engagement. Learner engagement is essential in ensuring effective teaching and learning. Keeping students engaged makes them connected to learning and the teacher. Moreover, building this connection keeps students motivated to learn. However, keeping students engaged in the learning process is challenging. They need access to the relevant digital tools and know how to use them. Incorporating digital tools into class activities enhances learner engagement, promotes learning, and helps teachers track students' learning and behavior. This mixed method study focused on the adult learners' experiences on the use of Kahoot, Nearpod, and Padlet; how the digital learning tools enhanced their learning of the course, and their views on how the digital learning platforms promoted personalized learning. Results revealed that students were highly engaged and motivated in learning; have become independent learners; enhanced their critical thinking skills, and improved their digital skills. However, the learners experienced challenges in understanding content, dealing with technical issues, finding help from peers; communicating with teacher, and dealing with poor internet connection. Suggestions, conclusions, and implications were also discussed in details.

Key words: Hybrid learning, Digital Learning tools, Learner engagement, Personalized learning