

The Development of Crisis Distance Education at Kuwait University During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract : The purpose of this qualitative study was to add to the existing literature and provide a more detailed understanding of the individual experiences and perceptions of 15 Deans at the University of Kuwait regarding their first year of planning, developing, and implementing crisis distance education (CDE) in response to the COVID-19 epidemic. An interpretative phenomenological approach was applied, using the thematic analysis of interview transcripts to describe the challenging journeys taken by each of the Deans from the first-person point of view. There was objective evidence, manifested by four primary themes ("Obstacles to the implementation of CDE"; "Planning for CDE"; "Training for CDE," and "Future Directions") to conclude that the faculty members, technical staff, administrative staff, and students generally helped each other to overcome the obstacles associated with planning and implementing CDE. The idea that CDE may turn homes into schools and parents into teachers was supported. The planning and implementation of CDE were inevitably associated with a certain amount of confusion, as well as disruptions in the daily routines of staff and students, as well as significant changes in their responsibilities. There were contradictory ideas about the future directions of distance education after the pandemic. Previous qualitative research on the implementation of CDE at higher education institutions in the Arab world has focused mainly on the experiences and perceptions of students; however, little is known about the experiences and perceptions of the students at the University of Kuwait during the COVID19 pandemic, providing a rationale and direction for future research.

Keywords : distance learning, qualitative research, COVID-19 epidemic, Kuwait university

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