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Perspectives of Pre-Service Physical Education Teachers at the University of Bahrain as of Distance Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as to examine how they are affected by the variables of study sample. To achieve the study purpose, the descriptive research design is adopted. Study data are collected using an electronically close-ended questionnaire. The study sample consisted of 440 (M=140, F=300) pre-service physical education teachers at the College of Health and Sport Sciences at University of Bahrain (UoB); chosen randomly. Collected data are analyzed using mean, standard deviation, t-test, and One-Way ANOVA.

The study results indicated that:

- Pre-service Physical education teachers' perspectives about distance education are at a medium degree.

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- There are statistically significant differences in pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives about distance education that can be attributed to gender, electronic device used and internet access efficiency.
- No statistically significant difference in pre-service physical education teachers about distance education due to college-year level.

The study recommends that the UoB has to develop preparation programs and in-service training sessions to promote e-learning and distance education.

Keywords: Physical education teachers' perspectives, Distance learning, e-learning.

Introduction

The COVID-19 outbreak, declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization, first appeared in Wuhan, China in November 2019. This epidemic started to spread rapidly within a short time of its emergence (WHO, 2020), affected the whole world in a short time. Due to the Covid-19 virus rapid spread (Yip & Chau, 2020), many health authorities reached a consensus that it is important to maintain physical distance between people to prevent the spread of the virus (Hellewell et al., 2020). Of course, educational institutions were the most affected by such precautions. In mid-March 2020, over 185 countries implemented school closures to prevent the spread of the pandemic for a period. Such procedures have impacted 1.57 billion (i.e. 73.8% of the student population worldwide) students enrolled in the education system in the world. School closures due to Covid-19 have led to some uncertainties about the way education is delivered (UNESCO, 2021). Immediately after, the first cases in Bahrain were suspended, face-to-face learning at all educational levels- from pre-schools to universities- ceased in March 2020. In order to prevent the spread of the epidemic due to the continuation of the pandemic. With the decision of the Ministry of Education and the Higher Education Council, it has been decided to continue education on line. Education application form in this process only took education to many countries face altered

in many countries, not only in Bahrain and has continued to distance learning (Kaya, 2021). In Bahrain, the Ministry of Education (Al-Mulla, 2020) supported a television channel and Education Information Network (EIN) have started to be maintained to cover students at all school levels out. In this way, the lessons conducted on EIN were provided through the internet, TV channel and internet-based distance education platforms were actively used. These lessons, proved to be very important for the physical cognitive, and mental development of children in face-to-face education, have been included in the distance education process and included in the process with exercise content that they can do at home and exercise hours created through the EIN.

Evidence to support the effectiveness of global school closures in controlling COVID-19 is sparse, but the harms related to prolonged school closure are well documented (Viner et al., 2021). Subsequently, many governments decided to reopen their schools and universities in different phases, introducing social distancing and testing regimes. Furthermore, instructional models became more flexible in search of quality of education, while guaranteeing adequate security measures. These models included online learning, that reached unprecedented levels, as well as blended learning, where students rotate between online and traditional content on fixed schedules, allowing that every student needs not to come into physical classrooms in face-to-face schools in the same space at the same time (Goad, Killian & Daum, 2021).

The advent of COVID-19 has caused many transformations in all educational subjects- especially in those subjects, such as physical education (PE) in secondary school, which have been traditionally considered a practical subject, where close proximity and physical contact are common. Besides previous concerns regarding the use of digital technologies in PE (Hill & Valdez-Garcia, 2020), PE teachers had to seek to manage an important tension between the experiential nature of PE as a subject, and the institutional and external constraints towards online and blended approaches (O'Brien et al., 2018). As (Daum & Buschner, 2018) indicated, PE is physical by nature, and remote instruction seems counterintuitive. Within this new framework, the huge changes in the delivery of PE have brought significant consequences for PE teachers, who have been involved in making adaptations to their tradition-

al teaching practices to deliver quality educational experiences—dealing with unique challenges such as the teaching and learning of motor and sport skills, dance or fitness. Furthermore, new responsibilities for PE teachers arose, considering the role that PE could have in responding to the immediate physical and mental health effects of the current health pandemic (UNESCO, 2021).

It is relevant to point out that the distance learning (DL) defined in the literature up to 2019 (Killian, Kinder & Woods, 2019), and the current distance learning experience due to the pandemic have some significant differences. Before the eruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, distance learning PE was a matter of choice for teachers and students fitting to their needs. During the pandemic setting, however, DL has become a necessary mode of instruction in schools, regardless of the preferences of teachers and students (Daum, Goad, Killian & Schoenfeld, 2021).

To focus on a specific level college, many studies (Al-Mawee, Kwayu & Gharaibeh, 2021) explored the university students' perceptions regarding distance learning using the analysis of an online survey. Their findings indicated that the role of the teacher, the contact between students and with the teacher, as well as feedback and assessment were identified as being essential to the satisfaction of the students. Other difficulties found included technical support for learners connected to campus services, and the need for differing educational design and implementation to promote the ability of students to study. Students, on the other hand, were highly pleased with the consistency and organization of teaching using the right tools. However, the implementation of e-learning is not always smooth and effective. During the COVID-19 outbreak, schools and universities have rapidly implemented e-learning. Therefore, schools that have limited or no experience with e-learning and schools that have not prepared e-learning resources experience difficulties, especially, when teachers do not understand how to use online applications (Zaharah & Kirilova, 2020). At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Bahrain, University of Bahrain (UoB) was shut down with little notice and university teachers were expected to move their curriculum online. We anticipated that university teachers at pre-service PE program were not different from other subject area university teachers, as many were struggling to not only figure

out how they were going to disseminate information in an online format, but also to determine what segments of their current curriculum could “transfer” to an online environment (Marshall, Shannon & Love, 2020).

Challenges that have been raised in the previous studies about distance learning include variation in the quality of educational instructions, students’ unequal access to the essential technologies for distance learning, and technology readiness of students (Ratliff, 2009). For example, one study found that 20% of students reported having issues in accessing essential technology for distance learning such as laptops and high-speed internet (Gonzales, Calarco & Lynch, 2018). Also, it has been found that students who were already suffering academically in face-to-face instruction are more likely to obtain lower grade points in distance learning (Almanthari, Maulina & Bruce, 2020). In COVID-19 times, most research about blended learning PE have been performed within higher education, e.g., analyzing the impact of blended learning in PE teacher education programs (Fidalgo, Thormann, Kulyk & Lencastre, 2020). Nevertheless, several studies have analyzed the way that elementary and high school PE teachers dealt with the fully online learning PE experience during the quarantine caused by COVID-19 in 2020; these studies described the changes in teaching interventions and included recommendations and specific proposals to teach PE when facing closed schools and distance learning (Ersin, Atay & Mede, 2020).

Likewise, few studies focused on the perceptions of pre-service teachers on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, it is important to understand how distance learning occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic and although it is situation-specific, we need to document it and use this information to inform the future of distance learning. Thus, the current study intends to explore the perceptions of pre-service physical education teachers (PSPET) on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as to examine how it is affected by the variables provided in the study.

Problem of the Study

The current pandemic has forced many universities to embark on an online journey, with distance learning or hybrid instruction imminent for most

of the 2021–2022 university year in Kingdom of Bahrain. It seems extremely likely that some form of remote instruction in university will remain even after the pandemic passes. An important first step in identifying effective remote university instruction methodologies and modalities is speaking with pre-service teachers, who were forced to “learn on the go” during the pandemic. Although the pandemic presents a unique situation, understanding the initial experiences of pre-service PE teachers in moving to a remote learning environment and identifying the challenges and facilitators to successful remote instruction is needed to help pre-service teachers and other university professionals design effective learning experiences in the future.

Therefore, the problem of this study is to explore the perceptions of pre-service physical education teachers (PSPET) at the College of Health and Sport Sciences (CHSS) at the University of Bahrain (UoB) of implementing distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as to examine how it’s affected by the variables of study sample. To the best of our knowledge, no studies have analyzed the perceptions of PSPET towards implementing distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bahrain. The understanding of educators’ experience during the pandemic might help blended learning be carried out better in the future, taking advantage of the experience to improve PE in usual scenarios other than the pandemic emergency.

Related Studies

Several research studies have investigated the teachers’ and students’ perceptions at schools and universities level of distance learning. In one of the recent studies, Çamlıbel-Acara and Eveyik-Aydınb, (2022) conducted a study to investigate the perspectives of English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher trainers and pre-service teachers on continued mandatory distance education during the pandemic. Data were collected through questionnaires composed of open- and closed-ended items. The questionnaires were distributed to 123 university students enrolled in the English Language Teaching (henceforth ELT) program to become EFL teachers and 15 teacher trainers in the same department. The results indicated that prospective teachers and teacher trainers in the ELT department continued their studies and seemed to appreciate

online education during the pandemic. However, analyses of their experiences showed that only some of them were actually content. Half of PSTs had negative feelings about DE and preferred face-to-face instruction, few even conveying feelings of inadequacy as future teachers.

In a study conducted in China, Lo (2021) investigated Chinese pre-service kindergarten teachers' beliefs and behaviors inherent to a public health perspective in the time of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Forty-five participants were recruited from an early childhood teacher education program, with the majority (n = 41) reporting that they lived through the strict restrictions in different regions of China during the initial COVID-19 outbreak. Data were collected via a reflective writing task from an online course. The results indicated an increasing awareness of public health among the participants due to the COVID-19 crisis. Their personal hygiene behaviors included personal protection, cleaning, disinfection, physical distancing, avoidance, and ventilation. The pandemic also changed pre-service teachers' beliefs about the importance of public health education. Although the participants seemed to have positive attitudes toward public health education, evidence of their limitations of knowledge and skills was further exposed in their ideas for teaching health-related topics. Al-Mawee et al. (2021) investigated students' perspectives and preferences on distance learning due to the dramatic change that happened in the education process. The participants in this study were 420 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in different distance learning - education courses at Western Michigan University (WMU). Participants completed an online survey that investigated two measures: distance learning and instructional methods with a set of scales associated with each. Students reported negative experiences of distance learning such as lack of social interaction and positive experiences such as time and location flexibility. These findings may help WMU and higher educational institutions to improve distance learning. Kulal, and Nayak (2020) introduced a comprehensive and large-scale survey study to investigate the perception of teachers and students about online classes. The work tries to explore the opinions of students as regards the impact of online courses, their comfortability in its usage, and the support received from teachers in online classes along with teachers' opinions on efficacy, teaching practice followed and training received for an online

class. The study reveals that students are comfortable with online classes and are getting enough support from teachers but they do not believe that online classes will replace traditional classroom teaching. It also finds that teachers are facing difficulties in conducting online classes due to a lack of proper training and development for doing online classes. Technical issues are the major problem for the effectiveness of the online classes. Alana, Biçerb and Canc (2020) conducted a study to identify the perceptions of Turkish pre-service teachers regarding distance education conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic process. For this purpose, quantitative and qualitative data were collected from pre-service teachers and a research was conducted according to mixed research design. The sample of the study consisted of 699 Turkish pre-service teachers studying in 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades at 13 state universities in Turkey, in the 2019-2020 academic year. In the qualitative part of the study, opinions of the 25 pre-service teachers selected from the sample were analyzed. According to the quantitative results of the study, Turkish pre-service teachers have a more positive attitude towards distance education, compared to the female candidates. According to the qualitative results of the study, distance education has advantages such as developing independent learning skills, requiring taking responsibility, and keeping interest alive.

The early COVID-19 publications on physical education were also concerned with online practicum implementations or alternative strategies that left a “practicum vacuum” for teacher education students during the mandatory distance learning. López-Fernández, Burgueño & Gil-Espinosa (2021) conducted a study to explore high school physical education teachers’ perceptions of the potential, advantages, and disadvantages of the blended learning model of instruction. An online survey was used to register the views of 174 Spanish high school physical education teachers (120 men and 54 women). The main findings revealed that physical education teachers considered that blended learning, compared with full face-to-face learning, implied a work overload, worsened social relationships, and did not help to increase students’ motivation. Likewise, most teachers considered the physical activity performed by students during the blended learning period as being lower than usual. Furthermore, teachers reported that the students from lower-income families were the ones that experienced a lack of technological means the most. These

results may guide both present and future policies and procedures for blended physical education. More research is needed to analyze the usefulness of blended learning in high school physical education.

Kaya (2021) carried out a study in order to examine the opinions of physical education teachers about the remote (online) education of schools due to the Covid-19 epidemic in our country and in the world in recent years, and the remote teaching of physical education lessons in this process. The study was designed using a qualitative research method, and the study group was determined using the stratified sampling method. The researcher collected study data by interview method. The analysis of the data was carried out using the content analysis method. The results showed that the majority of participants define distance education as virtual education. Results, also, revealed that the majority of participants see that it is important and necessary to teach physical education lessons in distance education. The biggest advantage in the process of teaching the lessons is the lack of time and space limit, and the disadvantage is that distance education cannot provide the same equality of opportunity for every student. At the end of the study, suggestions were given to make physical education lessons more efficient in the distance education process.

D'Agostino et al. (2021) conducted a study to examine US P-12 physical education teachers' perceived significance of different design features for an online teaching tool to promote PA equity during school closures. Participants in this study included 60 current P-12 physical education teachers representing all regions of the US. Results revealed that between-group differences were found in teacher ratings of design features related to the usability, accessibility, equitability, and formal assessment capabilities of an online physical education tool. Differences were based on teacher gender, school level, and geographic location. The study concluded that future research to promote physical activity equity among preschool-12th grade youth should examine tailored virtual physical education learning tools that address what teachers perceive to be the most significant design features to support equitable physical education among diverse student groups.

Through reviewing the cited studies and literature, the benefits that students as well as teachers receive from distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic have been identified; however, research in this area has been limited, and issues with teacher training, student accountability, and the lack of a comprehensive focus have been presented (Çamlıbel-Acara & Eveyik-Aydın, 2022). The researcher benefited by reviewing previous studies in aspects that enhance the conduct of his study and in developing a general conception of the study and precise identification of its problem and objectives. Furthermore, reviewing the literature has contributed at the procedural level in defining the study's curriculum, selecting its sample, and formulating its questions, as well as the method of designing the data collection tool. Methods of analysis and discussion.

Purposes of the Study

The study intended to achieve the following purposes:

- 1 - To investigate the CHSS pre-service PE teachers' perspectives at the UoB on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2 - To determine the difference in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic due to participants' gender.
- 3 - To determine the difference in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to electronic device used.
- 4 - To determine the difference in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to internet access efficiency.
- 5 - To explore differences in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic due to college-year level.

Questions of the Study

The study pursued to address the following explicit research questions:

- 1 - What are the CHSS pre-service PE teachers' perceptions at the UoB on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- 2 - Is there a statistically significant difference at the level $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to participants' gender?
- 3 - Is there a statistically significant difference at the level $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to electronic device used?
- 4 - Is there a statistically significant difference at the level $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to internet access efficiency?
- 5 - Is there a statistically significant difference at the level $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to college-year level?

Significance of the Study

It is anticipated that the results of this study would:

- 1 - Offer clarifications for the CHSS at the UoB to facilitate changes more effectively on distance learning for the benefit of faculty members and students.
- 2 - Inform university officials, policy makers, service providers, and PE educators themselves in UoB about pre-service PE teachers' perceptions on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic
- 3 - Help the UoB and CHSS to develop faculty members' preparation program and in-service training programs to energized and sustain faculty members' level of use in distance learning.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are operationally defined:

Distance Learning: It is a planned learning activity done by individuals in different places, who communicate and interact with each other by using technological tools (Moore & Kearsley, 2012).

COVID-19: A highly contagious respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. SARS-CoV-2 is thought to spread from person to person through droplets released when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.

Perception: A belief or opinion often held by many people and based on how things seem (Çamlıbel-Acara & Eveyik-Aydınb 2022).

Blended Learning: It is an approach to education that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place-based classroom methods (Alipour, 2020).

Limitations of the Study

- 1 - This study was limited to students of pre-service physical education teachers at the University of Bahrain during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2 - This study was conducted the first semester of the academic year 2021/2022.
- 3 - The results of the study were determined in the light of the degree of validity and reliability of the study instrument used.

Methodology and Procedures

Research Design

This study is quantitative in nature, and is conducted using the descriptive survey research approach.

Participants

The participants of this research consisted of 440 pre-service physical education teachers at the College of Health and Sport Sciences at University of Bahrain, and they were chosen randomly. They are including 104 in the first year, 116 in the second year, 120 in the third year, and 100 in the fourth year, in the 2021-2022 academic year. The simple random sampling method was used in the sample selection process. The sample included 300 female and 140 male pre-service PE teachers. Information about the distributions of the sample based on academic year and gender are shown in Table 1.

Table 1*Distribution of the Sample Based on Academic Year and Gender*

Variables		f	%
Gender	M	140	31.8
	F	300	68.2
	Total	440	100
Academic Year	1st	104	23.6
	2nd	116	26.4
	3rd	120	27.3
	4th	100	22.7
	Total	440	100

Data Collection Instrument

Data in this study were collected through the use of online questionnaires. Questionnaires consisted of four domains; 1-Teachers' methods of online learning; 2-Students' convenience in online learning; 3-Motivation to learn online; 4-The advantages and disadvantages distance learning. In initial stage the questionnaires included 30 items on a five-point Likert scale, from 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-slightly agree, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree.

The domains and questionnaire items were presented to a group of 6 arbitrators and experts in the distance learning in order to ensure the appropriateness of the items and domains. They were asked for formulation, deletion, modification of the items or adding some items as they see fit. Then the questionnaire was reformulated in its final form, which included 24 questionnaire items distributed on four domains. Based on that review, the questionnaire was designed in its final form, which included information about the study, assurance of privacy, a consent letter, and two parts. Part I comprised questions on demographic information, such as age, and year of study. Part II included specific questions about participants' of PSPET on distance learning during

the COVID-19 pandemic comprised of four domains or section. The questionnaire items were mostly in the form of close-ended questions.

Validity of the Instrument: To ensure the validity of the study questionnaire, the initial version of it, which consisted of 30 paragraphs, was presented to a group of arbitrators, which included 6 faculty members at University of Bahrain. A number of questionnaire items 5 were completely deleted and modified according to the remakes made by 50% and more than the arbitrators on the same item modify. The number of the questionnaire items in its final form became 24, including 5 teachers' methods of distance learning; 6 students' convenience in distance learning; 6 motivations to learn online; 7 advantages and disadvantages distance learning.

Reliability of the Instrument: The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated by means of a T-retest, where the questionnaire was applied to 15 students from outside the study sample during the first week of May 2021. Then the questionnaire was re-applied to the same group after 10 days and it was calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient (Pearson r) between the first and second applications, where the overall stability coefficient of the resolution was 0.82, which is a good correlation coefficient indicating high stability of the resolution. Table 2 illustrates this analysis.

Table 2

Reliability Coefficients (r) for each Domain of the Questionnaire and the Overall

Domain	Item	P
Teacher's methods in distance learning	5	0.80
Students' convenience in distance learning	6	0.86
Learning Motivation in distance learning	6	0.82
Advantages and disadvantages distance learning	7	0.81
Over all	24	0.82

Procedure of the Study

A link of a survey composed of the online questionnaires and a section

of demographic data (age, gender, categories, and marital status) was e-mailed to the participants after the validity and reliability were determined. The survey was e-mailed to participants during the COVID-19 lockdown on June 2021. The first page of the survey contained a consent form requesting the agreement of participants before responding to the questionnaire. The objectives of the study and instructions on how the questionnaires would be responded to were clearly explained at the beginning of each questionnaire. They were informed of the voluntary nature of participation and the confidentiality policy. They were also informed that the data provided would only be used for research purposes and that their private information will never be revealed. Furthermore, they were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any stage.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Science (IBM SPSS version 26.0) is used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize participants' characteristics and responses, and categorical variables were presented using frequencies and percentages. Where applicable, t-tests and ANOVA were administered to examine group differences where $p < 0.05$ was deemed statistically significant.

In order to interpret the results, the Likert scale criterion score that expresses the following arithmetic mean value was adopted: 4.20-5.00 strongly agree (excellent), 3.40-4.19 agree (above average), 2.60-3.39 slightly agree (average), 1.80-2.59 disagree (below average), and 1.00-1.79 strongly disagree (very poor).

Results of the Study

The results of the study are presented according to the order of the study questions as following:

Results of 1st Question

To answer this question, frequencies and percentages are calculated for each sub-question of this question. Table 3 shows this analysis.

Table 3

Arithmetic average and standard deviation values of the PSPET scores for their perception of distance education

No	Domain	Mean	SD	%	Rating
1	Students' convenience in online learning	3.40	1.54	68.0	Average
2	Teacher's methods in online learning	3.39	1.38	67.8	Average
3	Learning Motivation in online learning	3.36	1.32	67.2	Average
4	Advantages and disadvantages distance learning	3.12	1.29	66.0	Average
	Overall	3.32	1.38	67.2	Average

According to the results obtained through the data collection tool used in the quantitative dimension of the study, distribution of the pre-service physical education teachers' scores regarding their perception of distance education is given in Table 2. The students' confidence in distance learning (mean= 3.40; SD= 1.54; percentage= 68.0; rating= average), teacher's method in distance learning (mean= 3.39; SD= 1.38; percentage= 67.8; rating= average), learning motivation in distance learning (mean= 3.36; SD= 1.32; percentage= 67.2; rating= average), advantages and disadvantages distance learning (mean= 3.12; SD= 1.29; percentage= 66.0; rating= average). After being calculated, the overall average mean score is 3.36, which is equivalent to 67.2%, and a standard deviation is equal to 1.38. Based on the data analysis, the PSPET perceptions towards distance learning in remote areas are average and less effective than face-to-face learning. The shortcomings are related to Teachers' methods of online learning; Students' convenience in online learning; Motivation to learn online; the effectiveness of distance learning. The four indicators must be improved so that students' motivation, performance, and achievement in education can increase optimally. Accordingly, it can be said that the perceptions of pre-service physical education teachers about distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic are not positive.

Results of 2nd Question

To answer this question, t-test (t) is calculated for overall questionnaire. Table 4 shows that.

Table 4

T-Test Results of PSPET Perceptions Regarding Distance Learning, based on Gender Variability

Gender	N	\bar{x}	sd	t	p
Male	140	2.89	0.78	3.046	0.02
Female	400	3.67	0.95		

According to Table 4, the t value $t=3.046$ $p<0.05$ of the difference between the scores of the pre-service physical education teachers' perception on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic was found to be significant. Such finding shows that the female pre-service physical education teachers have a more positive attitude towards distance education, compared to the male candidates. The calculated value of "t" equals 3.046, and found to be statistically significant at the level $\alpha \leq 0.05$.

Results of 3rd Question

To answer this question, t-test (t) is Calculated for overall questionnaire. Table 5 shows that.

Table 5

T-Test Results of PSPET Perceptions Regarding Distance Learning, based on Electronic Device used Variability

Gender	N	\bar{x}	sd	t	p
Laptop	280	3.79	1.02	3.425	0.01
IPhone	160	3.02	1.21		

According to Table 5, the t value $t=3.425$ $p>0.01$ of the difference between the scores of the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic due to electronic device used was found to be significant. These results show that the perceptions of pre-service teachers, who used computer laptop device in distance learning

exhibit a more positive perception regarding, compared to pre-service teachers who used iPhone device in distance learning.

Results of 4th Question

To answer this question, t-test (t) is calculated for overall questionnaire. Table 6 shows that.

Table 6

T-Test Results of PSPET Perceptions Regarding Distance Learning, based on Electronic Device used Variability

Gender	N	\bar{x}	sd	t	p
Good internet access	325	3.45	0.94	3.792	0.01
Week internet access	115	2.56	1.38		

According to Table 6, the t value $t=3.792$ $p>0.01$ of the difference between the scores of the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic due to internet access efficiency was found to be significant. According to these results, pre-service teacher who do not week internet access in their residential addresses exhibit a more negative perception regarding distance education, compared to pre-service teachers with good internet access.

Results of 5th Question

To analyze the results of this question, one-way ANOVA is conducted, and the value of "P" was calculated and its significance to determine the differences between the arithmetic averages of the estimates of the sample members. Table 7 shows that.

Table 7

One-Way ANOVA of PSPET Perceptions Regarding Distance Education, based on College year Level Variability

Variable	Sources	SS	df	MS	F	p
	Between Group	8.235	3	2.985		
College year Level	Within Group	121.235	436	0.567	3.025	0.158
	Total	128.470	439			

According to Table 7, no statistically significant difference is found as a result of one-way variance analysis $F=3.025$ $p>0.05$. These results show that there was no difference in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic due their College year levels.

Discussion

The main aim of the research is to explore the perceptions of pre-service physical education teachers (PSPET) on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as to examine how it's affected by the variables of study sample. Within the scope of this study, the results were examined and a discussion was made with the literature in this section.

The first question of the study tries to identify the pre-service PE teachers' perceptions at the UoB on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results indicated that the PSPET perception of distance learning in remote areas is that it is average and less effective. When we look at the arithmetic averages of the pre-service teachers' perceptions on distance education, they are found to be below the middle level. Accordingly, it can be said that pre-service teachers do not consider distance education positively. This finding is consistent with recent studies, where students feel that the technique used by the teacher is very monotonous (D'Agostino et al., 2021; Çamlıbel-Acara et al., 2022).

The resulting score needs to be improved for the achievement of learning objectives. To enable teaching activities to be carried out at an adequate level, the teacher teaching methods in distance learning should be improved. In general, teachers only use the assignment method. The assignment method is a one-way learning pattern; students require no teaching and learning interaction. Tedious learning methods are considered less effective because they make learning passive. The use of effective learning methods or strategies can improve student academic achievement (Jeong & So, 2020).

The results of this study show that pre-service students are less comfortable with distance learning. The feeling of inconvenience represents dissatisfaction. For example, unstable networks often hamper communicating with teachers, and abilities in using the technology are still limited resulting in delays in university classes. Another regrettable thing is that most pre-service teachers do not understand the barriers that prevent the start of online learning or that affect it while it is ongoing. This may affect the effectiveness of distance learning. Flack et al. (2020) stated in their study that the lack of self-confidence of teachers in using technology in the distance education process causes problems, while another study argues that teachers are unprepared for the transition to distance education (Chiemeke & Imafidor, 2020). In another study examining teachers readiness for distance education, they evaluated teachers' readiness and self-confidence as a medium level (Almanthari et al., 2020).

Within the scope of this study, when pre-service teachers were suddenly faced with distance education due to the pandemic without being prepared and without training, supported by the studies carried out, it may have caused them to feel inadequate due to lack of readiness and low self-confidence. These findings support those of Ersin et al. (2020), and (Harefa & Sihombing, 2022) indicating that although teachers have positive attitudes towards technology, they feel themselves inadequate to use it, and they need professional development related to technology. However, in another study, it was observed that Norwegian and American teachers were willing to use and learn technology (online environments), they managed the process well, even though they did not have distance education experience before the pandemic, thus overcoming

the problems (Gudmundsdottir & Hathaway, 2020). When we examine the theme of positive perception as another outcome of this study, teachers evaluated this process as an opportunity to learn to use technology in lessons and revealed that they strive to overcome the problems.

When the perceptions of PSPET about learning motivation in distance learning, it is seen that the majority of the participants stated that distance learning is less able to motivate them to learn. This is evidenced by perceptions answers to the survey questions provided by the researchers. Students are not enthusiastic about distance learning; they do not do assignments and do not submit assignments within the time that has been determined; they do not do study groups without the assistance of their teacher. This could be due to inadequate facilities, exhausted Internet packages or even students who cannot afford packages, and bad internet network infrastructure. All these can cause a lack of motivation to learn in students. In summary, situations like this have a major impact on the way students learn and can lead to disappointing performance. This finding is consistent with recent studies, showing that student engagement in virtual teaching is often of a lower quality than face-to-face teaching (Harefa & Sihombing, 2022). This should get the teacher's attention. Teachers, as key holders in learning, can do various creative ways to make learning more interesting so that students are motivated to learn. In this case, it can be done, either through the use of various media, methods or learning models. All of them are important factors in making learning effective. This study contributes to the understanding that learning motivation is influenced by the extent to which learning is carried out effectively.

Within the scope of this study, the opinions of preservice physical education teachers about the advantages and disadvantages of distance education process are examined. Results revealed that distance education, enabling the sharing of information during pandemic periods is a great advantage in meeting the necessary education need at the university level. According to preservice teachers, distance education has advantages such as developing independent learning skills, requiring taking responsibility, technological skill improvement, and keeping interest alive. Such results are consistent with many previous studies. Fidalgo et al. (2020) in their study demonstrat-

ed that distance education, which enables the sharing of information during pandemic periods, is of great advantage in meeting the necessary education need. In another study conducted on university students, Andoh et al. (2020) revealed that the most intense view of students about distance education is to use technological facilities more effectively. Distance education plays an essential role in developing a meaningful educational experience for students. If well-designed materials and learning are implemented to the right technology and curriculum, it will produce satisfying learning goals (Xiang, Zhang & Kuwahara, 2020). The positive impact of distance education on student satisfaction lies in its functionality, reliability, ease of use, data quality, flexibility, portability, and integration.

However, in using technology, it is also necessary to consider students' perceptions about the disadvantages of distance education. The results indicate that students meet several obstacles during online learning. The transformation of face-to-face into distance learning affects the students' learning process badly, for instance, the limitation of social interaction. In this case, the teacher is encouraged to think seriously about creative solutions to this problem to achieve the teaching goals. In addition, learners' reluctance to participate, lack of feedback from learners, technical problems are considered to be another disadvantage. Kara et al. (2019) in their study ascertained that individuals face challenges caused by their own individual characteristics or the lack of some skills that they need to deal with such challenges in distance education. In a study conducted by Kaden (2020), he found that the biggest advantage of learning support during the COVID-19 pandemic is seen as distance education.

As for the second study question, results indicated that statistically significant differences do exist in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic due to gender. This finding shows that the female pre-service physical education teachers have a more positive attitude towards distance education, compared to the male pre-service teachers. As a result of the analyses performed based on the variable of gender, gender was found to create a significant difference. According to the data obtained, female pre-service teachers have more posi-

tive perceptions on distance education, compared to male pre-service teachers. There are studies in the literature, which support or do not support this. López-Fernández et al. (2021) observed in that female students had more negative opinions on distance education than male students, in their responses; and Alana et al. (2020) observed in his study that male pre-service teachers have higher perceptions on distance education than female pre-service teachers. However, in the studies conducted by Goad et al. (2021) it was ascertained that students' attitudes towards distance education did not differ significantly based on gender. When the pre-service teachers' perceptions on distance education are compared based on the grade levels, it has been ascertained that the pre-service teachers' perceptions on distance education do not have a significant difference. According to these data, grade levels also do not affect the pre-service teachers' perceptions on distance education. Similarly, as a result of the study conducted by Kaya (2021), it revealed that perceptions on distance education do not differ significantly based on grade levels. Harefa & Sihombing, (2022) found that women's motivation to learn online exceeds that of men.

Regarding the third study question, the results specified that there was a significant difference in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic due to technological device used. These results show that the perceptions of pre-service teachers, who used computer laptop device, display a more positive perception regarding distance learning, compared to pre-service teachers who used iPhone device. These results can prompt us to comment that the students who get connected to lessons by using the computer laptop device have a more positive perception compared to the students who get connected using only or iPhone. This finding is consistent with recent studies, where Alana et al. (2020), and (Harefa & Sihombing, 2022) found that the perceptions of students, who had used computer laptop device in distance education and those who used iPhone device, are differ in favorite on those using laptop.

With regard to the fourth question, the results specified that there was no significant difference in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic due to internet

access efficiency was found to be significant. According to these results, students who do not have internet access in their residential addresses exhibit a more negative perception regarding distance education, compared to pre-service teachers with good internet access. These findings support those of Alan et al. (2020), and (Harefa & Sihombing, 2022) indicating that pre service students who have Internet access have more positive attitudes than those who do not have. Significant difference was found in Alan et al. (2020) study, between the Turkish pre-service teachers' perceptions on distance education, based on the variable of the Internet opportunities they have. These results can prompt us to comment that students having internet access where they live have more negative perceptions on distance education than students who have no internet access. In the study conducted by (Harefa & Sihombing, 2022), those who had uninterrupted access to the internet were found to display more positive attitudes than those who have no internet access.

As for the fifth study question, the results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in the pre-service physical education teachers' perspectives on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic due college year level. This finding shows that the perceptions of students, who are in different year levels towards distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, are similar. This finding is consistent with recent studies, where Alana et al. (2020) found that there was no difference in the preservice teachers' perceptions regarding distance education, depending on their grade levels. In addition, Harefa, and Sihombing (2022) conducted a study to determine the perceived significance value between school grade levels. They did not find significance value of school students' perceptions, meaning that their perceptions about distance learning are not significantly different.

Conclusion

The present study investigated the perspectives of pre-service physical education teachers (PSPET) on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as to examine how it's affected by the variables of study sample. Their opinions about distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic from their perspective were outlined, and their recommendations for future distance learning processes were presented.

The findings of the study were analyzed, and revealed that the perceptions of pre-service physical education teachers about distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic were about the average. The findings of the study indicated that there was significant difference in the perceptions of pre-service physical education teachers about distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic due to gender of the participants, electronic device used, and internet access efficiency. However, the results indicated that there was no significant difference in the perceptions of pre-service physical education teachers about distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic due to college-year level.

In conclusion, despite some problems regarding the management of the process, the perspectives of pre-service physical education teachers on DL during the COVID-19 pandemic was mostly positive. The study also proved that DL has a more significant role to play in the future, but it cannot be a replacement to traditional face-to-face classroom learning. A complete transition to DL is quite tricky. However, we cannot ignore the benefits derived from DL. As such, there is a need to understand the obstacles that come in the way of accepting online learning and take corrective measures to overcome it.

Recommendations

Within the scope of this study, the following recommendations can be made for PE distance education:

- 1 - Holding training programs for university faculty members as well as students of mechanisms for effectively employing distance learning platforms.
- 2 - Providing Internet services with free and sufficient packages for students and distributing laptop or portable computers to all students.
- 3 - Opinions on the disadvantages of distance education should be taken into account, and high efficiency should be achieved by eliminating the deficiencies mentioned here.
- 4 - University lecturers should use different methods to make lessons efficient in distance learning.

- 5 - Develop a schedule for distributing lessons and teaching remotely in a flexible manner so as to take into account a number of variables (student time, number of students, members in the family).
- 6 - Focus on asynchronous and recorded lessons that students can refer to at times that suit their circumstances.
- 7 - Future studies should be encouraged to carry out studies to examine the perspective of university lecturers and faculty members on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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وجهات نظر معلمي التربية البدنية قبل الخدمة بجامعة البحرين حول التعليم عن بُعد خلال جائحة كوفيد - 19

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الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على وجهات نظر معلمي التربية البدنية قبل الخدمة بجامعة البحرين حول التعليم عن بُعد خلال جائحة كوفيد-19، وتبيان علاقتها بمتغيرات الدراسة. لتحقيق هدف الدراسة أستخدم المنهج الوصفي، ولجمع البيانات تم استخدام الاستبانة المقيدة إلكترونياً، وتكونت عينة الدراسة من 440 فرداً، (ذكور = 140، إناث = 300) من معلمي التربية البدنية قبل الخدمة بكلية العلوم الصحية والرياضية بجامعة البحرين. وتحليل بيانات الدراسة والإجابة عن تساؤلاتها تم استخدام الأساليب الإحصائية المناسبة كالمتوسطات الحسابية، والانحرافات المعيارية، التوزيعات التكرارية، والنسب المئوية، واختبار «ت» و«ANOVA».

أظهرت نتائج الدراسة ما يلي:

- أن وجهات نظر معلمي التربية البدنية قبل الخدمة بجامعة البحرين حول التعليم عن بُعد خلال جائحة كوفيد - 19، جاء ضمن الفئة المتوسطة.
- وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في وجهات نظر معلمي التربية البدنية قبل الخدمة حول التعليم عن بُعد تعزى إلى متغيرات: الجنس، والجهاز الإلكتروني المستخدم، ومدى توافر شبكة الانترنت.
- عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في وجهات نظر معلمي التربية البدنية قبل الخدمة حول التعليم عن بُعد يمكن عزوها إلى متغير السنة الجامعية.
- وأوصت الدراسة بضرورة قيام جامعة البحرين بتطوير برامج الإعداد والتدريب أثناء الخدمة لرفع كفاءة التعليم عن بُعد.
- الكلمات المفتاحية: وجهة نظر معلمي ما قبل الخدمة، إعداد معلم التربية البدنية، التعليم عن بُعد.

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