HR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AS MOBILE LEARNERS

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INTRODUCTION

- While more and more organizations are taking the step toward digitalized training programs for employees (gamification, mobile learning, MicroLearning, etc.), little is known about how the future HRD scholars and practitioners are being prepared to face HR dynamics transformation.
- There is a need to introduce digitally enabled pedagogy in Higher Education (Anderson, 2020) to allow undergraduate HR students to expand their knowledge and develop their digital skills using the learning-by-doing approach (Bedenlier et al., 2020). Additionally, the recent literature shows a positive relation between mobile learning and student behavioral engagement in Higher Education (Elbabour & Head, 2020), as well as in terms of high-quality education and learning process (Sung et al., 2016).
- In this study we present the analysis of a pilot experience in which we quantitatively evaluated a digital learning experience in the distance higher education. Thus, we applied mobile learning through Telegram in two HR undergraduate courses and evaluated academic engagement, satisfaction with training, personal transfer of training and knowledge acquired. The two courses were Staff Recruiting and Development, and Human Resource Audit.
- The main objective of the study is to better understand the area of HRD teaching and learning processes in Higher Education through the use of digital methodology. We proposed four research questions (RQ): Do we have indications that mobile learning produces an increase in (RQ1) academic engagement, (RQ2) satisfaction with training, (RQ3) personal transfer of training, and (RQ4) the knowledge acquired by the students?

METHODS

- Pre and post-measurements were taken for academic engagement, satisfaction with training, personal transfer of training and the students' knowledge of the taught subjects. As a pilot experience design, we don't use a control group.

VARIABLES	MEASUREMENTS	
Academic engagement (AE)	PRE	POST
Satisfaction with training (ST)	PRE	POST
Personal transfer of training (PTF)	PRE	POST
Students' knowledge of the taught subjects (KWS)	PRE	POST

METHODS

- Treatment consisted of two MicroLearning (Taylor & Hung, 2022) activities applied through mobile learning via Telegram for smartphones. Through this application, a teacher briefly explained theoretical concepts in a voice message no longer than 10 minutes following the pedagogical criteria of MicroLearning. Thus, each activity was focused on a topic (e.g., personnel recruiting) and fragmented into nine small units.
- A voice message was sent by the teacher every Monday, Wednesday and Friday during three consecutive weeks The students had to respond to the teacher's comments through audio and written messages. They were encouraged to discuss and comment on personal experiences from their professional experience. In the end, the students compiled the teacher's voice messages and their own through out the duration of the activity and sent them in writing through the corresponding delivery mailbox of the virtual classroom.
- We applied the Spanish version of the academic engagement questionnaire (Schaufeli et al., 2002), which was validated in Spain by Belando et al. (2012). Regarding satisfaction with training, we used the satisfaction dimension from the Factors Predicting Transfer questionnaire (FPT) (González-Ortiz-de-Zárate et al., 2020). It measures the degree of satisfaction with the training and the trainer and the degree of perceived learning. The personal transfer of training was measured through a recently created instrument based on the latest theoretical developments in the multidimensional measurement of transference (Ford et al., 2019; Stewart et al., 2020). Finally, we used a knowledge test composed of five short questions or concepts to be described (e.g., recruitment strategy). The same questions have been asked as pre and post measurement.
- Non-parametric tests will be used to analyze the data. Yuen's robust test is considered, for its capacity of detecting significant differences between related groups. These analyses are the most appropriate because of the reduced size of the participant group.

EXPECTED RESULTS

This study will yield preliminary results for evaluating the application of mobile phones in distance university education. It is expected to get to helpful insights regarding the overall perception of applying digital methodology in this context. Mobile phone is perceived as a indispensable accessory for most of the students nowadays and its use out of the educational context is extensive.

Findings of the present study might suggest if mobile learning could be used to enhance learning processes in terms of academic engagement and satisfaction with training. The findings may be used by teachers in educational institutions, particularly in the knowledge area of HRD, to design learning activities and also take a step forward in learning by doing methodology.

It is recommended to increase the sample in different contexts and use experimental designs that allow for establishing causal relationships.

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