PAPER

Reluctance of Students to Utilize Virtual Educational Environments in Public Schools: Real World Experiences

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the perspectives of public-school students who were hesitant to use the Darsak Educational Platform (DEP) during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to understand their real-life experiences. To achieve the aim of the study, the researchers employed a qualitative approach in its phenomenological form. The study sample consisted of 12 male and female students from various public schools in Jordan. The participants were chosen using an intentional method. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. The study's findings revealed a variety of causes that contributed to students' resistance to using DEP. These causes include the students' lack of readiness to learn through DEP, the DEP's failure to comply with international design standards, the inadequate physical and technical teaching environment, and the limited digital competencies of teachers needed in the virtual learning environment. Given the findings of this research, the researchers advise that additional consideration should be given to the design of DEP. They also advise providing students with appropriate guidance in the usage of educational platforms.

KEYWORDS

students' reluctance, Darsak Educational Platform (DEP), public-school, real-world experiences, qualitative study

1 INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The global educational community responded to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by implementing policies and procedures to ensure the safety of students and secure the future of the teaching and learning process. This is done by replacing the traditional methods of teaching and learning with innovative approaches that utilize technology tools, applications, and devices [35], [36], [37], [38]. This has helped e-learning be adopted by educational institutions worldwide to facilitate effective learning and teaching.

E-learning is defined as an educational environment that enables teachers and students to interact simultaneously and asynchronously through the use of

communication and information technology, with the goal of enhancing students' cognitive achievement [4]. Tayeh [25] explains that e-learning is more than just the use of technological tools, devices, and applications as an educational medium in both face-to-face and virtual learning environments. The educational process is focused on facilitating interaction and communication between teachers and students using digital platforms such as the internet. This communication can be either synchronous or asynchronous [32].

E-learning includes three types of learning and teaching methods [1]. These types are synchronous e-learning, asynchronous e-learning, and blended learning. Qandil [24] explains that synchronous e-learning is a form of learning that involves real-time and direct interaction between the teacher and students, as well as among the students themselves. This interaction takes place simultaneously in either face-to-face or virtual learning environments, following a predetermined schedule. However, asynchronous digital learning is a type of learning that enables teachers to design educational resources and activities and upload them to a digital educational platform [18]. The last type is blended learning, which combines the benefits of traditional classroom learning with the advantages of e-learning in a virtual learning environment that utilizes internet technology, multimedia, and digital devices [14].

Learning management systems (LMS) are considered an essential pillar in the sustainability of e-learning and one of its tools that provide integrated educational environments. They include services related to: 1) admission and registration of courses; 2) monitoring learning progress; 3) delivering and managing assignments and tests; and 4) managing synchronous and asynchronous communication tools [15], [29]. According to [8], [31], LMS provides the capabilities to manage courses and programs, facilitate communication between teachers and students, monitor the progress of student learning development, collect and analyze data, and present the results to teachers. LMS is a tool used for group learning. It can be either free or non-free and provides educational activities for students. LMS allows students to interact in the educational environment at any time and from anywhere through the Internet [28].

To maximize the benefits of LMS services and their potential to improve educational delivery, accessibility, and the sustainability of learning and teaching in response to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Jordan has developed several digital educational platforms. One of the most well-known platforms is the Darsak Educational Platform (DEP), which was created as a community service to offer educational lessons to Jordanian students at all school levels. These lessons include video clips provided by a number of teachers to cover the academic content of the Jordanian curriculum [12]. MoE [21] stated that DEP possesses many characteristics that enable it to implement synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning strategies. Among these characteristics are: 1) covering all educational units for all educational levels; 2) integrating educational activities with an interactive practical dimension; and 3) providing tracking features for knowledge content, information panels, and archiving.

Despite the advantages offered by LMSs in general and DEP in particular, there are several challenges that prevent students from making optimal use of these platforms. Several research studies [20], [33], [34], [30] explain the most prominent challenges in this area, including weak skills in using applications, a lack of smart devices, limited access to technical support services, and poor infrastructure and Internet services. Qandil [24] showed that the optimal use of digital educational platforms faces numerous challenges. These challenges include the inadequacy of technological skills to prepare digital educational content, learners' weak technological skills for active interaction, difficulty or inappropriateness of educational

content for virtual environments, poor maintenance of visual and physical contact with learners in the educational environment, weak technical support provided by school administration, and issues resulting from inadequate partnerships between teachers and parents of students.

In line with the aforementioned challenges that may be reasons for students' reluctance to use digital educational platforms, Tayeh [25] showed that the utilization of DEP by students in Jordanian public schools during the COVID-19 pandemic was moderate for several reasons. These reasons include students' limited experience with learning in virtual environments and insufficient training to effectively utilize the capabilities of this platform.

Various previous research studies have shed light on digital educational platforms and the challenges associated with their use. The studies are reviewed in chronological order, from most recent to oldest.

Tayeh [25] conducted a study aimed at revealing the actual situation of upper-basic-stage students in Al-Balqa Governorate using DEP during the COVID-19 pandemic from their perspectives. The study followed a descriptive-analytical approach. A questionnaire was developed and distributed to the study sample, which consisted of 782 male and female students. The results showed that the utilization of DEP by students in the upper basic stage was moderate.

[6] aimed to identify the challenges faced by students in Kuwait when using the "Microsoft Teams" platform for e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study consisted of two research samples: 273 learners before the experiment and 413 learners immediately after the start of the experiment. A questionnaire was developed to measure learners' opinions regarding the use of e-learning from home. The results showed that the majority of learners do not experience difficulties with e-learning as a teaching method. However, there are obstacles related to the scarcity of technology resources, slow internet speed within households, and inadequate prior training in using the tools of the Microsoft Teams platform.

[24] conducted a study aimed at revealing the challenges faced by teachers in the upper basic stage of distance learning in Amman Governorate from their perspective. The descriptive-analytical approach was used. A questionnaire was developed and distributed to the study sample, which consisted of 452 male and female teachers. The results of the study showed that teachers faced challenges to a moderate degree. The results also showed that there are many challenges related to learners, the curriculum, the educational learning environment, the characteristics of educational platforms, and problems related to school management.

[10] conducted a study aimed at revealing the obstacles teachers face amidst distance learning in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic. A questionnaire was developed and distributed to 353 teachers. In addition, interviews were conducted with six teachers to obtain in-depth information. The results showed that some teachers were unable to benefit from the various technological devices or online learning platforms due to several factors. These included poor technological skills, limited access to the internet for both teachers and students, and a lack of guidance on how to navigate virtual environments.

[9] conducted a study aimed at identifying the extent to which learners benefit from e-learning platforms in learning English, using Riwaq as a model. This study employed a descriptive-analytical approach. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 336 learners on the Rewaq educational platform. The results showed that the response rate of the study sample was high.

The study conducted by Al-Salman and Bawana [7] aimed to investigate the attitudes of students in Jordan towards distance learning at the basic and secondary

education levels. The study also examined the challenges faced by students and proposed potential solutions in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The descriptive analytical method was used. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 746 male and female students. The results showed that students' attitudes towards distance learning were moderate. Further, the challenges facing students fall into the weak category. Additionally, there are issues with inadequate availability of internet service, insufficient design of content, and a lack of consideration for individual differences in delivery methods.

Most of the previous studies were quantitative in nature. They had a large number of samples. However, the findings of those studies revealed the opinions of teachers and students regarding the challenges associated with distance learning in general. In contrast, this study went beyond revealing the students' prevailing viewpoints to identify the actual causes of their resistance to using DEP. This study is particularly noteworthy for only presenting the viewpoints of students who were reluctant to use the DEP rather than including those who actually used it. The purpose of selecting this group of students is to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of reluctance from the perspective of the actual resistant students, rather than relying on others to speak for them. The participants in the study sample were purposefully selected to represent various geographical areas in Jordan, including the northern, central, and southern governorates. These students were also chosen because they decided not to use this platform. To comprehend the significance of this phenomenon, the researchers employed a qualitative approach to delve into the participants' perspectives and gain insight into the underlying reasons for their hesitancy. Therefore, this study distinguished itself by following a qualitative approach, in contrast to most previous studies, which followed a quantitative approach.

1.1 Study problem and question

The study's problem originated from the fact that many students in public schools are not utilizing online educational platforms effectively. The MoE in Jordan developed the DEP to provide an opportunity for formal education to continue and compensate for the educational loss resulting from the closures due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the efforts made by the ministry to develop the tools of this platform to motivate students, enable communication and interaction, and increase motivation [2], a report issued by UNICEF Jordan [26] stated that 80% of DEP followers believed that it was not as effective as face-to-face learning. The report also indicated that only 53% of students use DEP on a daily basis, while 21% of them use it once every two days.

In the same context, MoE issued a report [5], which stated that out of a million and a half students, 1,327,500 male and female students have registered and continued their lessons on the DEP, accounting for a rate of up to 88.5% of the total students. It also revealed that 172,500 male and female students, or 11.5% of the students in Jordanian public schools, did not register for and receive their education through Darsak Educational Platform.

Concerns about the extent of educational loss among students who did not have the opportunity to experience learning through DEP are raised when examining the previous percentages of students who did not participate in the official education platform assigned by the Ministry of Education. This compels the researchers to investigate the reasons why those students chose not to use this platform in an effort to minimize their educational loss. The results of the previous reports and

the recommendations of the Qandil Study [24] indicate the need to carefully listen to the opinions of learners in virtual environments. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that cause Jordanian public-school students to resist using DEP, based on the results of a study conducted by MoE in Jordan [5]. Specifically, this study aims to answer the question: What are the reasons for the reluctance of public-school students in Jordan to use DEP during the COVID-19 pandemic, from their perspective?

1.2 Study objective and importance

This study aimed to investigate the reasons why public-school students from various geographical areas in Jordan (including the northern, central, and southern governorates) are hesitant to use DEP during the COVID-19 pandemic, based on their perspectives. The importance of this study lies in its discussion of the participants' actual reasons and motives behind their reluctance to use DEP. It is hoped that the results of this study will shed light on the underlying reasons for the reluctance of a specific group of students from various regions and governorates to use Darsak Educational Platform.

The results of this study can also encourage officials in the MoE to enhance the services provided through DEP, in accordance with the students' feedback, to encourage their utilization of it, and to strive for the improvement of the DEP framework based on the students' specific requirements. The results of this study can assist teachers and supervisors in creating computerized lessons on the platform, employing suitable teaching strategies in virtual environments (synchronous, asynchronous, or blended), following procedural steps to enhance their technological skills, and designing interactive educational activities that align with students' needs and developmental characteristics. This study is likely to pave the way for future research, particularly qualitative studies on online educational platforms in private schools and universities.

1.3 Procedural definitions of study terms

Darsak Educational Platform is a free Jordanian digital educational platform that offers distance learning for public school students. This platform provides learning through illustrated educational videos organized according to the Jordanian educational curriculum. These videos were provided by experienced teachers.

The reluctance of using DEP: The refusal of Jordanian public-school students to access DEP and use its curriculum during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Reasons for reluctance: These are a collection of ideas, opinions, and arguments presented by public school students in Jordan who chose not to use DEP during the COVID-19 pandemic. They provide an explanation and justification for their decision to not access the platform and utilize it for their learning needs.

1.4 Study limits and determinants

The purpose of this study is to analyze the reasons behind the reluctance of Jordanian public-school students to use DEP during the COVID-19 pandemic in the academic year 2020/2021. The study's sample was limited to students in grades three

through nine from various governorates in Jordan. The findings of this qualitative study are determined by the level of objectivity and experience of the researchers in collecting, interpreting, classifying, and coding data, which were obtained through semi-structured interviews.

2 METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

The researchers employed a "phenomenological qualitative approach" to uncover and comprehend the reasons behind the hesitancy of public-school students in Jordan to use DEP during the COVID-19 pandemic, as perceived from their standpoint. "Phenomenological qualitative research" seeks to understand and describe the meaning and essence of lived experiences and the subjective perspectives of participants. It allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' personal experiences and how those experiences are shaped by the larger social and cultural context [27].

2.1 Deliberate sampling

The participants in this research were deliberately chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the nature of this study and its main questions [23]. To gain valuable insights into the reluctance of public school students to use DEP during the COVID-19 pandemic, the researchers carefully selected 12 male and female participants who were knowledgeable about the subject matter [11]. One of the main criteria for choosing the participants was to ensure diversity among the public schools they attended. Therefore, in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, the participants selected for this study were students from various governorates of Jordan (including the northern, central, and southern regions) during the academic year 2020–2021. The researchers contacted public schools in each governorate, informed them about the research topic, and shared the consent form with them. The main criterion was that the selected participants were opposed to using the DEP. These participants had avoided using DEP. Further, the grade level of the participants was another criterion. The participants ranged in grade level from third to ninth grade. The age range of the participants was 8 to 14 years old. It was thought that the participants should represent the academic phases of grades 1–6 and 7–12. Furthermore, every participant was eager to share their personal experiences with the researchers in order to provide the in-depth analysis required for this qualitative study [23].

2.2 Study instrument

The researchers conducted self-developed, semi-structured interviews to gather data. Following a thorough examination of previous studies, the researchers discovered that the majority of those studies were quantitative in nature. Therefore, the researchers aimed to delve deeper into the subject matter by analyzing the primary themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews. These themes are crucial in investigating the topic and gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the respondents' opinions and experiences [19]. Fontana and Frey [16] demonstrate that semi-structured interviews provide the interviewer with the flexibility to

delve into topics in greater detail or alter the course of the interview based on the interviewee's responses.

After obtaining permission from both the parents and the students themselves, two interviews were conducted with each participant based on their preference, either at their home or via a phone call. Each interview lasted 30 to 45 minutes. The first interview included a discussion of the interviewee's personal experience with DEP. This provided an opportunity to explore the reasons behind their reluctance to use DEP, which included concerns about infrastructure and internet services, the design of the platform, and the educational content it offers. The second interview included a discussion of the reasons that contributed to the reluctance to use DEP, such as issues related to the teacher, the student, and the parents.

At the start of each interview, the researchers took care to establish a trusting relationship with the participants, particularly because they were children and young adults. Before starting the interview, the researchers explained to the participants their right to refuse to answer any question without having to provide a reason. Furthermore, the researchers were eager to obtain permission from the participants before recording the interviews. They also made sure to reassure the participants that the recordings would only be used for scientific research purposes and that non-researchers would not be allowed to access them. Furthermore, the participants were informed that the recording would be deleted after the data dumping process and that they had the option to withhold their real names during the interview. All of these procedures were implemented to create a comfortable environment that allows participants to speak freely and openly.

2.3 Data analysis

The interviews were transcribed using the Microsoft Word program in order to examine and analyze them based on the strategies of phenomenological analysis. This approach aims to capture the subjective experience of the interviewees and understand how they interpreted and understood that experience [17]. After transcribing the interviews, the following steps were taken [23]: First, data reduction was conducted. This step involved reading the data and identifying key phrases, sentences, or paragraphs that captured the essence of the participant's experience. Secondly, the identification of themes is crucial. This step involves identifying platforms patterns or that arise from the data and are relevant to the essence of the experiment. Third, description of the essence; this step involves describing the essence of the experience in a way that reflects the unique perspective of the participant. Fourthly, interpretation and validation are crucial steps in the process. This step involves interpreting the results and ensuring their validity and reliability through triangulation.

2.4 Reliability and validity

Triangulation is one of the most important pillars of qualitative research. It contributes to increasing confidence in and verifying results, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the research question, and helping to identify and correct researcher bias and errors [13]. Therefore, the researchers employed the investigator triangulation strategy to ensure the reliability of this study. Investigator triangulation is a method of triangulation where multiple researchers are involved

in the data collection and analysis process. This approach enhances the validity and reliability of the results by incorporating diverse perspectives on the same issue [22]. At least two researchers collected and analyzed data from the same participants, which helped to verify the consistency of the results and identify any biases that may have been present in one researcher's data collection. In addition, two researchers independently analyzed data from multiple participants, which enhanced the generalizability of the results and facilitated the identification of any patterns that may exist across the diverse participants. Ultimately, the researchers met and discussed their findings, comparing them in order to reach a consensus.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of reluctance to use DEP by uncovering the reasons behind this reluctance. The results of the data analysis indicated that the participants refrained from using DEP during the COVID-19 pandemic for the reasons discussed in the subsections.

3.1 Poor student readiness to learn through DEP

This study aimed to examine the current situation of the students involved in the research and to attentively listen to their perspectives on their psychological resistance towards embracing the shift in the teaching mode through DEP. From the participants' perspectives, it is widely believed that education only takes place within the confines of the classroom, with the teacher in front. As one of the students pointed out, "I had no idea that my educational experience would progress in the way it has."

The technological shock was significant, which contributed to some students' reluctance to open DEP since its launch. This was expressed by one of the participants, who said, "It is possible for weeks or months to pass without opening DEP, and some students have not entered DEP at all." Listening to the students' statements and expressions suggests the need for better preparation for this new style of learning. Despite the efforts that have been made in preparing DEP, there is a missing link in achieving a smooth transition from the traditional style to this new style in form and content. The process of transitioning to DEP required a preparatory step to boost students' confidence in their proficiency with the learning tools necessary for this new virtual learning environment.

The students' suffering was not limited to their inability to keep pace with the new learning style. Some of them attempted to overcome the challenge by seeking acceptance and preparation, and they tried to use DEP. However, they did not find in DEP the inspiration and motivation they needed to sustain their learning process. According to the participants, the causes behind this include some students' weaknesses in reading. One student expressed, "I do not know how to read, I do not know how to spell well, and I do not know how to pronounce words." The weakness of the students here is not due to DEP itself, but rather to the disparity in their academic levels. This confirms the need for a more comprehensive assessment of students' academic abilities, as well as an effort to meet them at their current level and support their learning until they become proficient.

Another reason the students discussed was their inability to use DEP due to their lack of computer skills. One of the participants expressed this point, saying, "I don't

know how to open DEP. I only know how to write my national number in the designated field. When I enter my national number, a message appears informing me that my entry was incorrect." I do not know where the error is. What the participants addressed is consistent with what was reported by Lever-Duffy and McDonald [20], as well as Qandil [24], that one of the biggest challenges on platforms that represent LMSs is a lack of proficiency in using applications, technological tools, and devices. The consistency of these findings supports the need for training and preparation for students, enabling them to use DEP without hesitation or significant distraction while studying.

Some participants also reported that the duration of the lessons, especially the video clips provided by expert teachers, on DEP was long, which made them impatient and caused them to not complete the full lessons on DEP. The participants revealed that they prefer to directly interact with the teachers who taught them before the pandemic. When these students were forced to use DEP as an alternative to face-to-face education, they did not experience the expected level of interaction with their unfamiliar teachers. One of the students commented, "In the video clip, the teacher asks questions that require an answer. However, he answers these questions himself, and as a student, I am unable to express my own answer to the teacher. Sometimes, I don't even know the answer, yet the teacher still says, "Well done." There is a lack of genuine interaction in the lesson."

On the other hand, the students participating in the study indicated that one of the reasons for their reluctance to continue studying at DEP is the lack of a suitable atmosphere for studying at home. As one student expressed, "There are many distractions, such as television, electronic games, or playmates." Another student expresses the parents' views regarding the futility of following the lessons on DEP. These parents seek to ignore the existence of DEP and instead focus on explaining the lesson themselves rather than relying on the teacher.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the success of any educational process is associated with understanding the learner's needs, expectations, and circumstances. It may be that these reasons together led to the student's reluctance to complete the learning process, and therefore, the students' needs must be respected. This is confirmed by Al-Nassar [6], who recommended the importance of listening to learners' opinions, understanding their needs and desires, and being aware of their preferences in learning methods.

3.2 Poor financial and technical situation

The participants discussed the obstacles related to financial and technical conditions. The lack of special devices for students to use through DEP contributed to their lack of interest in continuing their learning. The economic conditions of some students, as well as their limited access to suitable furniture in small homes, make it extremely challenging to focus on learning using DEP. One of the students describes the conditions, saying, "I do not have a private room to study in … My brothers and I study in the same room at the same time." There is a female student who mentioned that her home does not have a consistent study routine. She expressed this by saying, "I do not have a specific time for studying … I usually study at any time. I spend most of my time helping my mother with housework or playing with my cousin." These statements support Al-Hamidi's study [3], which suggests that parents' focus on their children's education without creating a conducive learning environment can hinder the effectiveness of digital educational platforms.

Such environmental conditions contribute to the distraction of students' concentration. In addition, there are technical challenges such as poor or unavailable Internet in certain student housing areas, as well as frequent technical failures when accessing the DEP or when submitting assignments and exams.

These circumstances are too overwhelming for the learner to overcome. Thus, these obstacles contribute to a deficiency in the students' learning process and impact its successful completion. These reasons are consistent with the findings of Al-Nassar's study [6], which highlighted that those students face significant obstacles in e-learning on the Microsoft platform. These obstacles include a lack of technology resources, insufficient internet speed at home, and a lack of prior training in the use of technological tools.

3.3 Limited Teachers' digital competencies needed in the virtual learning environment

Participants in the study indicated that most of the teachers in DEP do not employ learner-centered teaching methods. One of the students commented, "The teacher does not employ diverse strategies to capture our attention as students." Not only that, but when the teachers transitioned to teaching through this platform, they lacked the necessary digital competencies to effectively manage the virtual environments. Participants indicated that their teachers vary in their approach to following up on students who fail to complete assignments. Some teachers are proactive in using social networking sites to stay connected with their students. As one student mentioned, "Some teachers send us links to additional lessons on YouTube to ensure our understanding of the content and assign homework. However, some of them do not follow up at all." Therefore, a large number of students prefer to seek help from other teachers on social networking sites, especially YouTube.

The feedback from the participants clearly demonstrates the teachers' lack of teaching skills and their inability to effectively administer the virtual learning environment. Additionally, there is a constraint on their use of limited teaching methods in the DEP, and there is a lack of instructions to ensure the follow-up of students' development. The absence of these competencies played a significant role in students' unwillingness to complete the learning process. These results are consistent with the study [10], which indicated that one of the obstacles in virtual learning environments is the lack of guidance on how to work in them. The same results are also consistent with the recommendations made by Al-Nassar [6], who emphasized the importance of incorporating diverse learning methods.

3.4 Poor design of DEP

The participants mentioned that DEP needs further improvement to enhance its efficiency, citing difficulties in using it. As one of the students expressed, "The videos available and recorded on this platform are very boring." "I love pursuing my education, but I often feel bored when I log into the platform." Participants explained that DEP is not designed in an interactive way that captures their attention. One of the students stated, "There is nothing that motivates me to attend class. The videos on YouTube are better than the recorded videos on the DEP platform." Another student confirms, "I cannot interact with my teacher or ask any questions." The participants also expressed that DEP does not consider individual differences among students.

One of the students commented, "These videos are superficial. Why do I have to watch them?" From the foregoing, it appears that students differ in their academic levels. The academically advanced students perceive the educational activities and recorded videos presented on DEP as falling short of their expectations. On the other hand, academically weak students struggle to keep up with the teacher and complete the assignments at the required pace. Therefore, the participants suggest that learning through DEP should be more interactive. In addition, they would prefer to learn through DEP directly from their school teachers. Learners have the right to communicate with their teachers and ask for clarification on any information they do not understand during class. Therefore, one of the students expressed, "The teachers who provide the recorded videos on the platform are boring." "I mean, the learning that takes place in the school is better in the face-to-face class. I understand what the teachers are saying, and I can interact with them in a wonderful way." When the interaction on the platform is one-way, with only teachers presenting and no role for the learners, students may feel bored and become reluctant to continue using the platform for learning. These results support the findings of the Qandil study [24], which suggests that the characteristics of the platform and the tools it offers are important factors to consider in overcoming obstacles.

3.5 Educational content and assessment methods are not designed to be compatible with virtual learning environments' standards

The suffering of the students in DEP does not depend solely on the weak design of the platform or the inadequate readiness of the learners and their teachers. It also extends to the way in which the educational content is presented. Participants discussed the difficulty of the educational content available on the platform, as it was not presented in a simplified manner. This result is consistent with the study [24], which discussed the obstacles associated with educational content. This result is also consistent with the findings of the study [7]. Their study emphasized the importance of tailoring the design of educational content to align with the characteristics of virtual learning environments. This can be achieved by simplifying the educational content. This result may prompt the designers of DEP to evaluate the strengths of other educational platforms and enhance the design to ensure improved learning outcomes.

Participants also indicated that the educational content of other subjects, such as Arabic and English, is extensive, and completing assignments in these subjects requires significant effort. The difficulty of these subjects arises from the fact that they are not presented in a way that aligns with the diverse learning styles of students. As a result, students find it challenging to independently comprehend the educational content. Looking at the literature, there are several platforms that have successfully introduced English to students in an engaging manner. The study [9] highlighted the significant cognitive and skill advantages that learners gain from utilizing e-learning platforms, such as the "Rwaq Platform," for English language acquisition. This result indicates that it is possible to take advantage of these platforms to view their content, develop DEP, and improve students' learning opportunities. This is particularly beneficial for students who struggle with understanding the English language.

The difficulty is not limited to the momentum of the educational content in different subjects and the limited teaching strategies. The difficulty lies in evaluating student learning and determining the extent to which they benefit from the educational

content through the tests available on DEP. The students explained that the assignments were "not explained, very difficult, and incomprehensible." Even parents cannot help us complete them. To accomplish these assignments, we often resort to copying answers from educational websites and social networking sites without truly understanding the material.

Participants indicated that some of the test questions presented on DEP are difficult, do not align with the level of most students, and that there is insufficient time to complete them. One of the students expressed, "I find it difficult to understand the exam questions, in addition to the short amount of time allotted for answering." As a result, participants indicated that they do not rely solely on themselves to complete assignments or tests. Instead, they seek outside help or support from family members. Furthermore, participants indicated that the evaluation process was sometimes not taken seriously. One of the students said, "Some students never took the exams, yet they passed the academic year." When the students were asked about their final impressions, they voiced dissatisfaction because they waste most of their time scrolling and not understanding what DEP has to offer. One of them even stated, "I no longer remember which class I am in … I feel like I missed the entire school year." "I hope to learn face-to-face in school." Reflecting on the participants' feedback regarding their final impressions and their dissatisfaction with themselves, it can be concluded that these students were part of an interconnected system where neither party can be solely blamed.

4   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed to investigate the reasons behind the reluctance of a diverse group of students from various governorates in Jordan to use DEP on a regular basis. This study aimed to explore the real-life experiences of these students, which revealed a phenomenon of reluctance to use DEP as a virtual educational platform.

The participants in this study had a diverse range of experiences. However, the common points represented a set of fundamental reasons that posed obstacles to the successful continuation of using DEP. The students' lack of preparation and willingness to learn through DEP was the main factor in their refusal to use it. The students were not given a sufficient introduction before this platform was provided. The students were reluctant to use this platform due to the lack of clear instructions and inadequate prior preparation. Thus, in this new virtual learning environment, the MoE and other related institutions should conduct a thorough review of the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the educational learning process, including students, teachers, schools, and parents. Therefore, the researchers recommend that schools assign experts to instruct students on how to use the DEP platform and how to benefit from its features. This recommendation can enhance students' willingness to successfully enter the Darsak Educational Platform.

Another recommendation that arises from the findings of this research is related to teachers. They must receive training on how to work in this new virtual environment, where students with diverse needs and abilities form the learning community. This can only be achieved through enhanced professional training for teachers to become proficient in technology. These skills can help teachers provide students with educational resources that are appropriate for their development. This will result in a diversification of activities and worksheets, as well as how to gradually present them to the students. The aim is to ensure evaluation for the purpose of learning rather than just assessing learning while also considering the differences among learners.

Although the participants highlighted many reasons that prevented them from using the DEP, the efforts made in the DEP deserve appreciation, as it was the most successful alternative during periods when face-to-face education was not possible. Therefore, the researchers suggest that the MoE and other educational institutions conduct regular, periodic reviews to ensure continuous improvement. In addition, considering that the participants described their roles in DEP as passive and inactive recipients, this study emphasizes the need to evaluate the extent of active interaction achieved by DEP since its launch. This requires the platform's designers to enhance its digital features to promote greater engagement and productivity on the part of the learner. This is a practical suggestion to enhance the potential for more constructive utilization of DEP and other platforms globally. Also, one practical suggestion for the designers of such platforms is to improve the platform's appeal to its visitors and users in order to prevent boredom.

Finally, this study suggests that educational policy makers and officials from the MoE collaborate with specialized designers and experts in educational technology and multimedia to develop and improve the technical design of the DEP. This will ensure the platform's development and motivate more students to access it. As a future recommendation, the researchers encourage conducting more qualitative studies on virtual educational platforms in private schools. These studies should explore the experiences of students, teachers, and parents with these platforms, as well as ways to enhance them. This is because qualitative research always aims to understand the meaning and significance of its findings.

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