

SUMMARY

Title: Universities E-Portals: An Evaluative Comparative Study of a Sample of Arab and Foreign Universities to Set standard specifications that would facilitate Benefitting from Beni- Suef University Portal

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(Summary)

This study evaluates a number of E-portals for Arab and foreign universities, comparing them in the light of some criteria related to designing, developing and formatting E-portals and websites. The criteria are collected by the researcher from those found in the literature, the standards issued by the International Organization for Standardization and Measurement (ISO) for the specialization, and the standards issued by academic institutions. Ten Arab E-portals are evaluated, as well as ten foreign ones that are ranked top ten by (Webometrics CSIC), which evaluates universities websites according to the following criteria: size, files, citation of research done by the given university's researchers and the general impact and contribution.

The study consists of five chapters preceded by an introduction that deals with the research methodology, and followed by a conclusion and recommendations. It has two appendices. Following is an overview of the chapter:

Chapter One, "E-Portals: A Theoretical Approach" , provides a general theoretical background on E-portals. It explains some important concepts related to the topic of the study, such as the concepts of 'website' and 'university website'. E-portals are also defined and distinguished from

ordinary websites. Their origin, components, characteristics and qualities are also treated.

Chapter Two, "Evaluation Criteria and Universal Classifications of Universities", which is divided into three sub-sections:

1- Criteria for evaluating E-portals: The topics treated in this sub-section are the importance of using certain criteria for evaluating E-portals, methods of evaluating them, standards issued by the International Organization for Standardization as well as standards issued by professional associations and organizations that specialize in evaluating E-portals, standards issued by academic libraries and institutions and evaluation criteria found in the literature. This is done with a view to create a list of evaluation criteria to be used in chapter three.

2- Criteria for evaluating universities E-portals: represented by the Shanghai classification, QS Times classification, Webometrics Spanish classification, classification of the Times, professional classification of universities, classification of competence for research and international scientific articles for universities, the international classification of the website of universities and colleges on the network ICUs4)

3- A brief overview of the E-portals of the universities treated in the study.

Chapter Three, "Universities E-portals: An Evaluative Study of the Structure and the Content", evaluates and compares the top ten Arab universities E-portals and their foreign counterparts, in terms of design, structure and content, according to Webometrics (January 2016).

Chapter Four, "Universities E-portals: An Evaluation of the Use and Services", evaluates and compares the top ten Arab universities E-portals and their foreign counterparts, in terms of use and services, according to Webometrics (January 2016), with the aim of gaining insights into the status quo and performance of these portals, which would help E-portals rank first according to the aforementioned universal classifications.

Chapter Five, "The extent of benefiting from the portal of the University of Beni Suef" How Beneficial Beni-Suef University E-Portal is, provides information about the history and ranking of Beni-Suef University according to Webometrics. It evaluates the E-portal according to the list of criteria prepared by the researcher. The list consists of four entries: Design and Structure, Content, Use and Navigation and Services. It sheds light on the degree to which users benefit from the E-portal, and refers to the standards that must characterize the E-portal to maximize the benefit, in the light of the exploration of the E-portals treated in the study.

Following are the results and recommendations of the study:

1- There is no agreement among the different organizations and institutions on the evaluation criteria.

2- The researcher has come up with a list of criteria for evaluating universities E-portals that fall into four categories: structure and design, content, use and navigation and services. The sum total of the criteria is 132.

3- The E-portals of the foreign universities are better than their Arab counterparts in structure and design, use and navigation and services, while Arab universities are better when it comes to content. Generally speaking, the discrepancy is (7%) for the foreign universities, which is not representative of the real gap between the Arab and foreign universities.

4- (92.7%) of the E-portal of Beni- Suef University users that it needs more development.

5- The researcher has defined a number of standards and criteria that can be benefited from in developing the E-portal of Beni- Suef University. They have to do with the content, the structure, the design, the use, the navigation and the services.

The study also recommends the following:

1- There must be an Arab evaluation for universities that takes into consideration the environment of the Arab universities and the nature of study in these universities.

2- There must be a list of evaluation criteria to be consulted when creating and evaluating E-portals. The list created by the researcher may be useful in this respect.

3- The recommendations of the study need to be put into effect to meet the needs of the users of the E-portal of Beni- Suef University, be they students, personnel, staff members or citizens from outside the university community.