

## **Perceived Knowledge Among Postgraduate Students at Wasit University**

Hadeel Abdul-Husain Hasoon<sup>1</sup>, Ali Abdul-Kadhum Aja Al-Shemmari<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

*This study aims to identify perceived knowledge, determine the current research population of postgraduate students at Wasit University for the academic year (2022-2023). A total of 548, with 276 students from scientific disciplines, and 272 male and female students from the humanities majors. The research sample included 200 postgraduate students at Wasit University. The study tool included the perceived knowledge scale prepared by the researcher, consisting of 25 items. The psychometric characteristics of honesty and reliability were extracted. The research sample was relied upon 200, and the data were analyzed statistically using Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS). The results showed that postgraduate students at Wasit University have a high level of perceived knowledge. The researcher developed a set of conclusions, recommendations and suggestions.*

**Keywords:** *Perceived knowledge, postgraduate students, Wasit University.*

### **Introduction**

Research problem:

The university is one of the institutions that is responsible for providing societies with graduates capable of serving society, there was a problem that exists among postgraduate students, which is excessive self-confidence and the misconception that they possess knowledge and information, as such a mixture may have a different effect on information processing than the impact of real knowledge, it may affect the real level of student achievement and performance. (Papadakaki, 2022: 2151).

The perceived knowledge of graduate students at universities is an area of concern that warrants attention and investigation, in the context of higher education, students' perceptions of their knowledge may not always coincide with their actual mastery of the subject in terms of identifying the phenomenon of overestimating or underestimating knowledge as an effect, suggesting that individuals with low levels of knowledge tend to overestimate their experiences, while those with higher levels of knowledge tend to underestimate it, whether or not this disruption of perceived knowledge can have significant implications for academic success (Adekayanti et al., 2022: 166).

Based on the aforementioned, the problem of the current research is clear in answering the following question: Do postgraduate students enjoy perceived knowledge?.

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<sup>1</sup> College of Education for Humanities, Wasit University, Iraq, hadeelabdulhusienhasson@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> College of Education for Humanities, Wasit University, Iraq, aliajjah@uowasit.edu.iq

#### Research importance:

University students represent the elite of society, and they are the foundation on which its awakening is based, they were the ones who are prepared and equipped to assume leadership positions in various fields and fields of work, with the aim of achieving the goals of development and development of society, ensuring the continuity of its progress forward, perceived knowledge imparts an important character to educational and academic contexts, especially among graduate students in universities, as the perceived knowledge of students is considered a weapon with an important impact through its impact on the efforts made by students in all areas of life, it was necessary to know and understand the perceived knowledge of the students, because the beliefs and knowledge that the student holds clearly affect the various situations that the student goes through. (Hogle, 2018: 36).

#### Research goal:

The current research aims to identify: the perceived knowledge of postgraduate students at Wasit University.

#### Research limits:

The research is determined by postgraduate students at Wasit University of both sexes (males and females) and academic specialization (scientific - humanities) for the academic year 2022-2023.

#### Define terms:

The researcher defined the terms mentioned in the research, which are:

#### Perceived Knowledge

##### Schäfer (2020):

A concept that refers to what individuals believe or imagine about the levels of knowledge they may possess (Schäfer, 2020: 3).

##### Papadakaki (2022):

He defines it as "the amount of information in an individual's memory system that influences the way he evaluates or interprets environmental stimuli and interacts with them, which can be in the form of stored representations of past visual experiences that may affect perception in different ways." (Papadakaki, 2022: 2151).

#### Theoretical definition:

The researcher adopted the definition (Papadakaki, 2022) of the perceived knowledge in the current study as a theoretical definition in the current research.

#### Operational definition:

The total score obtained by postgraduate students through their answers to the items of the perceived knowledge scale prepared specifically for this purpose.

## **Theoretical framework**

#### Concept of perceived knowledge:

The origin of perceived knowledge results from the ability of individuals to monitor their own knowledge, as the feeling or claim of knowledge does not necessarily refer to real, tangible knowledge, such a feeling or perception may be based on knowledge or knowledge in general about a specific topic. Perceived knowledge is simply the amount of what an individual believes he has or possesses some amount of knowledge or information about a particular subject (Park, 2001: 420).

The perceived knowledge is formed through the meanings associated with the event, phenomenon or situation to be interpreted, interaction with that event, phenomenon, or situation is considered an important factor for perceived knowledge. (van Mulukom, & Geertz, 2021: 10).

Theories that explain perceived knowledge

First: Theory of Flynn and Goldsmith (1999)

Lisa Flynn and Ronald Goldsmith showed in their research that they published in (1999) about finding a new measure of the concept of perceived knowledge. Perceived knowledge is nothing but what we believe or imagine we have information about a specific concept or topic. Perceived knowledge represents a subjective perception and reflects the individual's assessment of what he knows about that situation, event, or phenomenon and the extent of his knowledge of it.

Perceived knowledge is a partial result of the experience that individuals live. It has different effects on behaviour. In their theory of perceived knowledge, Flynn and Goldsmith point out that lower levels of perceived knowledge in individuals, may improve and increase their levels of motivation in order to improve and strengthen their learning, conversely, individuals' high levels of perceived knowledge may weaken their motivation to learn (Flynn & Goldsmith, 1999: 58).

Second: The Theory of Planned Behavior by Papadakaki 2022:

The theory of planned behavior implies that individuals' behavioral intentions and actual behavior, they were influenced not only by subjective attitudes and standards but also by their perceived ability to perform the behavior. Perceived behavioral control refers to an individual's beliefs about how much they control the performance of a behavior.

Perceived knowledge can influence perceived behavioral control by providing individuals with a sense of competence and understanding, thereby increasing their confidence in their ability to engage in the behavior, planned behavior theory emphasizes the role of subjective beliefs, attitudes, and social influences in shaping behavioral intentions and actual behaviors. Perceived knowledge, as a subject's subjective understanding, can contribute to the formation of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, individuals with higher levels of perceived knowledge may display more positive attitudes, stronger self-standards, and greater confidence in their ability to engage in relevant behavior (Papadakaki, 2022: 2152).

### **Previous studies:**

Andraka-Christou et al. (2020) study:

Title of the study: (University students' perceived knowledge about the use of drugs and stimulants):

The aim of this study was to find out the levels of perceived knowledge of a sample of university students about the use of drugs and stimulants. The study sample consisted of (1439) male and female students from different universities and from several majors in the United States of America, a questionnaire prepared for this study was sent via the Internet to the research sample. After conducting a statistical analysis of the research results, the following statistical methods were used: (Descriptive analysis and regression analysis) to analyze the findings of the research. The results showed that university students in the initial stages, who were young, have demonstrated high levels of perceived knowledge about the dangers of using drugs and steroids, this age group is more vulnerable to addiction and abuse of drugs and stimulants than other age groups in American universities (Andraka-Christou et al., 2020).

Smith et al. (2021) study:

Study title: (College of Medicine students' perceived knowledge about health disparities and public health):

The aim of this study was to find out the levels of perceived knowledge of university students about health differences and the general health of individuals. The research sample consisted of (401) male and female students from the Faculty of Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University in the United States of America. The study used a specially prepared scale based on the theory and scale of Flynn and Coldsmith (1999). The study used the following statistical methods: (frequency analysis, normal distribution, and homogeneity of variance), after analyzing the results using the SPSS statistical program, the study found that the research sample had different levels of perceived knowledge about health disparities and general health, measuring perceived knowledge Assessment of learners' knowledge can help shed light on areas for educational interventions (Smith et al., 2021).

### **Research methodology and procedures:**

Research Methodology:

The researcher adopted the descriptive correlative approach, which is based on monitoring what exists, this approach is appropriate to the nature and objectives of the current research, it was a form of systematic scientific analysis and interpretation to describe a specific phenomenon or problem. Photographing it quantitatively by collecting specific data on a phenomenon or problem, classifying it, analyzing it, and subjecting it to careful study (Abu Hweij, 2001: 82).

Research procedures:

1. The research community:

It means all the individuals for whom the researcher studies the phenomenon or event (Abu Huwaj, 88: 2001). The current research community is determined for postgraduate students of both types (male and female) for the academic year (2022-2023) their number was 548 male and female students, as the number of males was 226 and the number of females was 322, both majors (scientific and humanities).

2. Research sample:

It is a part taken from the original society for study, inspection and analysis, and it represents the characteristics of society in all its quantitative and qualitative components, (Hamdawi, 28: 2014), the statistical analysis sample consisted of 200 male and female students who were selected from 4 colleges. They were selected using a proportional random sample method, with 50 males and 50 females, 50 scientific and 50 human.

The apparent validity of the scale (the validity of the paragraphs):

Apparent validity is intended to identify the extent to which the scale represents the components of the property it measures, it was logical that the content of the scale should be virtual, a representative of the content of the behavior to be measured by this is called virtual validity (Rabee, 1994: 962).

In order to identify the validity of the paragraphs, the researcher presented the scale in its initial form of 25 items to 20 arbitrators of specialized professors with experience in the field of educational and psychological sciences, to express their opinions and observations about the scale in judging the suitability of the scale for the purpose for which it was developed. In the light of what the experts decided, the wording of some paragraphs was amended, the researcher relied on the chi-square value, which is equivalent to 80% or more of the opinions of the arbitrators, to indicate the apparent

validity of the scale. All paragraphs of the scale have been approved because the calculated chi-square value was greater than the tabulated chi-square value at the level of significance 0.05 and degree of freedom 1. The scale becomes consisting of 25 items to be applied to the sample of the statistical analysis of the items.

Statistical analysis of the items of the Perceived Knowledge Scale:

The researcher carried out the statistical analysis according to the following:

1. Statistical indicators for the measure of perceived knowledge:

The researcher used the statistical bag for social sciences SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) in extracting these statistical indicators.

Calculation of the psychometric characteristics of the paragraphs:

The researcher calculated the discriminatory power and internal consistency of the agencies.

A. Discrimination Power of Items:

The process of calculating the discriminatory power of the items of the scale is an important aspect in its statistical analysis, because through it we make sure of the ability and efficiency of the scale items to distinguish between individuals with the characteristic to be measured, it also indicates its ability to detect individual differences between individuals (Eija, 2017: 126).

The researcher applied the scale to the sample 200 male and female students and corrected the answer forms, to extract the discriminatory power of the items of the scale, the scores of the sample were arranged from the highest total score to the lowest total score. The two extreme groups were identified with a total score of 27% from each group. The number of individuals in each group was 54 male and female students in the upper group, and 54 male and female students in the lower group. The researcher used the t-test for two independent samples to calculate the significance of the differences between the two groups' averages in the scores of each item of the scale, on the basis that the calculated t-value represents the discriminatory power of the paragraph, by this procedure, it was found that all the paragraphs are distinguished because they are statistically significant, because the calculated t-value is greater than the tabular t-value of 1.98 with a degree of freedom 106 and at a level of significance 0.05.

B. Internal consistency (paragraph validity): The internal consistency was calculated as follows:

The relationship of the paragraph score with the total score:

The paragraph correlation method with the total score of the scale is one of the most used methods to calculate the internal consistency of the scale paragraphs (the validity of the paragraphs), as this method presents a homogeneous scale because it is concerned with knowing that each paragraph of the scale goes in the direction in which the scale goes in general (Abdul Salam, 176:2022).

In calculating the validity of the paragraph, the researcher relied on the "Person correlation" coefficient between the scores of each paragraph and the total score, because the degrees of the paragraph are continuous and progressive, note that the sample of the validity of the paragraphs consists of 200 male and female students in the current research. It was found that all correlation coefficients are statistically significant when compared to the critical value of the correlation coefficient of 0.139 at a significance level of 0.05 and a degree of freedom 198. This was an indication that the scale is valid for measuring the phenomenon it was designed to measure.

### Scales Reliability:

The validity of the scales depends on the stability and reliability of its results, Guilford asserts that the stability of a measure or test must be calculated to determine the true degree or true variance, because the stability coefficient shows the percentage of true variation in the score calculated on the test (Murphy, 1998: 63), for the purpose of finding the stability of the perceived knowledge scale, the researcher adopted two methods, namely:

#### A. Test-Retest method:

The basic idea of applying the scale depends on a representative sample, then re-application after a period of time has passed to be determined according to the nature of the sample and the measured characteristic, then the correlation coefficient between the two applications was calculated, which represents the stability coefficient over time.

For the purpose of extracting stability in this way, the scale was re-applied on a sample of stability, which consisted of 40 male and female students, with a time interval of 14 days from the first application, then the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the degrees of the first and second application, and the correlation coefficient was 0.91 for the scale, this value was a good indicator of the stability of the individuals' answers to the scale over time.

#### B. Alpha Cronbach's equation:

This method is based on calculating the correlation between the scores of the stability sample on all items of the scale, to clarify the consistency of an individual's performance from one paragraph to another, Alpha Cronbach's equation depends on the degree of each paragraph of the scale, given that each paragraph is a stand-alone scale (Al-Kubaisi, 2010: 297).

Reliability was extracted in this way from the scores of the basic sample questionnaires of 200 male and female students, using Cronbach's equation, the alpha coefficient reached 0.88, which was a good stability coefficient (Table 1).

Table (1) The value of the stability coefficient for the perceived knowledge scale according to the two test-retest methods and the Alpha Cronbach's method.

Variable	The stability coefficient values according to my method	
	Alpha Cronbach	test-retest
Perceived knowledge	0.88	0.91

Description of the scale in its final form:

The perceived knowledge scale in its final form consists of 25 items, chooses, in the light of its scrutiny, from five graded alternatives, ranging from 5 to 1 according to the alternative approaching or moving away from the measure of perceived knowledge, therefore, the highest score that the respondent can obtain in the scale was 125 and the lowest score was 25, while the hypothetical mean for the scale was 75.

### Presentation, interpretation and discussion of results

This chapter includes a presentation of the results reached based on the objectives, which were identified and interpreted and discussed these results according to the theoretical framework and previous studies and the characteristics of the community studied in the current research, then come up with a set of conclusions, recommendations and proposals, the results can be displayed as follows:

Identify the perceived knowledge of postgraduate students.

To achieve this goal, the researcher applied the perceived knowledge scale consisting of 25 items on the research sample consisting of 200 male and female students. The results

of the research showed that the arithmetic mean of the scores of this sample on the scale was 85.820 degrees, with a standard deviation of 14.806 degrees, when knowing the significance of the difference between the arithmetic mean and the hypothetical mean, which reached 75 degrees. The difference was found to be statistically significant at the level of significance 0.05. The calculated t-value was 10.335, which was greater than the tabular t-value of 1.96, with a degree of freedom 199. This means that the research sample has a good degree of perceived knowledge (Table 2).

Table (2) The arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and the t-value of the research self-efficacy scale.

Variable	Sample	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	T-Value		Sig.
					Cal.	Tab.	
Perceived knowledge	200	85.820	14.806	75.00	10.335	1.96	Sig.

### Conclusions:

Graduate students at Wasit University have a high level of perceived knowledge. Perceived knowledge helps postgraduate students to know themselves and to know other people through the process of predicting what other individuals will be like, and this falls within the scope of the perceptions that they form of them.

### Recommendations:

Benefit from the perceived knowledge scale to apply it to other samples (employees of government institutions, educational counselors, deans of colleges). The importance of researchers' interest in conducting more studies and research on the variable of perceived knowledge among individuals, not to focus on this type of research in Iraq. Holding educational sessions to raise awareness of the importance of perceived knowledge and its relationship to satisfying the needs of students at the university.

### Suggestions:

Conducting studies looking at the relationship between perceived knowledge and other variables such as (social intelligence, inferential thinking,). Carrying out similar studies on other samples, such as middle school and middle school students.

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