Acceptance and Effectiveness of Distance Learning in Public Education in Saudi Arabia During Covid19 Pandemic: Perspectives from Students, Teachers and Parents

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Abstract

The movement control order and shutting down educational institution in Saudi Arabia has jeopardized the teaching and learning process. Education was shifted to distance learning in order to avoid any academic loss. In the middle of the Covid-19 crisis, there is a need to assess the full image of e-learning in Saudi Arabia. To investigate student and teachers' perception and acceptance, parents' attitudes and believes about distance education are the main goals of the study. The mix-method research design was employed to collect data. Three surveys were distributed to 100 students and 50 teachers and 50 parents from different educational institutions in Saudi Arabia, while semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 parents. Random stratified and convenient sampling methods were adopted. Both descriptive and content analysis was conducted using SPSS25.0 and NVIVO software for quantitative and qualitative data accordingly. The findings showed that students are comfortable with remote education and are receiving enough support from schools and instructors but they think online education can't replace conventional face-to-face learning. Moreover, the results showed that teachers are having challenges in preparing online classes because of the development of conducting online classes and the lack of training. However, parents showed negative attitudes regarding the benefits and values of remote education and preferred conventional learning styles in elementary schools. Parents tended to reject and resist distance learning for several reasons: professional knowledge and lack of time to support their young kids in online classes, the shortcomings of e-learning, young children's inadequate self-regulation. Saudi parents are neither trained nor ready to use e-learning. The study provided suggestion and implications for teacher education and policymakers.

Keywords*; E-learning, acceptance, effectiveness, attitudes, students, teachers, parents, Covid19, Saudi Arabia*

1. INTRODUCTION

The urgent crisis due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus has affected all life aspects, including learning and teaching. Schools were closed in 2020 in so many countries around the globe including Saudi Arabia (Alqahtani & Rajkhan 2020). Corona Virus, otherwise known as Covid-19 which is an infectious disease that profoundly affected the worldwide economy. This pandemic not only affects the local educational sector but resonates across globally as the outbreak has forced many educational facilities such as schools and university to remain temporarily closed (Shenoy et al. 2020). Several academic and economic sectors are globally affected which leads to the dread of losing an entire education in the near future. Various universities and colleges have ceased the norm of the physical form of education(Dhawan 2020). According to the researchers, it is dubious to return to the norm at any point in the near future (Agnoletto & Queiroz 2020). As social distancing is one of the eminent factors in battling the pandemic, it also negatively affects teaching and learning. Educators and policymakers are fighting to discover alternative ways to deal with the urgent situation (Aliyyah et al. 2020). These conditions cause us to understand that scenario planning is an earnest requirement for schools, college and universities (Rieley, 2020). These circumstances require unity and humanity. There is a dire need to save and secure the country in general, students, personnel, societies, communities and scholarly staff (Jena 2020). Several arguments are related to distance education. long term learning, learning pedagogy, flexibility, affordability and policy accessibility are some of the disputations related to remote education. (Mishra et al. 2020), fast-paced advances in technology have helped to distance education easy. Terms like m-learning, blended learning, computer-mediated learning, online learning, web-based learning and open learning etc offer the possibility to learn and teach from anywhere at any time at your leisure (Pattanshetti & Pattanshetti 2020). These terms require the skills to use a computer accompanied to Wi-Fi as a learning tool (Ferdig et al. 2020). Online learning is coined as the tool to make the teaching-learning experience more flexible, innovative, and student-based. Online learning is also defined as learning in synchronous or asynchronous environment that utilizes different devices with internet access such as mobile phones, laptops etc. Carrillo & Flores (2020) believes that students can independently learn and communicate with other students and instructors

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anywhere using online learning in these environments (Allen et al. 2020; Alakrash et al., 2020).

New assessments evaluations and research are able to form new teaching methods and ways to navigate the unprecedented crisis from the perspectives of different actors namely teachers, students and parents (Sahi et al. 2020). Based on the design and aim of a questionnaire, various perspectives from different main actors of the situation under investigation as well as various types of data (i.e. quantitative and qualitative) could be gained. additionally, several strategies of analysis could be conducted to expand the base of the existing literature (Fauzi et al. 2020, Alakrash & Razak, 2020a).

As a result of the crisis, schools and universities globally have looked at alternative ways to provide education for their students (Goh & Sandars 2020). Many have embraced technology as a solution with universities and schools working around the clock to update the online learning experience, upgrade teachers' digital skills and develop new programs with many adopting flipped classrooms, blended learning, virtual collaboration and classroom in the cloud to support the teaching and learning process (Almanthari et al. 2020). Similarly, as schools and universities are temporarily closed to minimize the risk of Covid-19 to students and teachers, new approaches have to be implemented so that education will not be affected and learning may continue (Nuere & de Miguel 2020). Thus, in response to the crisis, most universities and educational institutions have shifted to remote learning. Remote learning and teaching, compared to traditional classes, offers a safer option for all to continue learning while staying at home (Lestiyanawati 2020; Kuhfeld et al. 2020; Alakrash et al, 2021). Moreover, such models of remote and distance learning offer plenty of potentials particularly if these approaches are utilized effectively for teaching and learning (Ali 2020). Thus, policymakers and stakeholders of both private and public educational institutions have designed, in a short time, alternative methods for remote education to be continued during the lockdown since attending physical classes is no longer possible (Khan & Jawaid 2020; Agnoletto & Queiroz 2020)

Lately, as a result of the fast-growing of technology gadgets (smartphones, iPads etc), studies showed that families have stated the uncertainty about the possibility of screen technologies regarding they benefit or harm to their young students and the best ways to adopt these technologies in teaching and learning (Almanthari et al. 2020; Alakrash & Razak, 2020b). The literature, as was reflected in the previous sections, have investigated parents' practices and perspectives of digital use among their children in general, neglecting their attitudes and beliefs about online learning unstudied which made a gap that needs to be studied in the literature, (Azorín, 2020). More specifically, the urgent shift to remote learning brought presented unexpected challenges and new opportunities to students and their families (Mukhtar et al. 2020). Therefore, there is a need to fill the gap in the literature examine students, teachers and parental perspectives, acceptance, attitudes and beliefs regarding e-learning acceptance and readiness to navigate the drastic shift (Alea et al. 2020). Moreover, the plethora of the existing literature may not reflect the views of the main actors from Saudi Arabia from the eastern contexts, with the difference in educational philosophies and the culture (Razak et al., 2018). Indeed, students and teachers' acceptance and perception and parental attitudes are shaped by cultural norms (Alakrash & Razak, 2019). Therefore, there is an eminence need to investigate Saudi parents' attitudes and beliefs about young students' online learning in the mid of Covid19 crisis as a exceptional research in terms of place and time.

The aims of the study

1. Investigate the readiness and perception of E-learning among Saudi teachers during the Covid19 pandemic.
2. Investigate the acceptance of E-learning among Saudi students during the Covid19 pandemic.
3. Explore the attitude and belief of students' parent towards the effectiveness of using E-learning in Saudi Arabia during the Covid19 pandemic.

2. Methodology

The study employed a mixed-method research design. Several reasons motivated the researcher to employ these research designs as it gives a completer and more holistic picture of the phenomenon when the conclusion is retrieved from multiple sources. The study took place in Saudi Arabia. Due to the lockdown, education has been shifted to remote education using E-learning for teaching and learning, In Saudi Arabia, the ministry of education has provided a special platform for K-12 students for elementary, secondary and high school students named "My School" or "*Madrasaty*". Three adapted instruments were used to collect data from students, teachers, and parents. Three questionnaires were piloted then distributed to 50 teachers and 100 students and 50 parents. On the other hand, a semi-structured interview with 10 parents was conducted using Microsoft Teams. The survey questionnaires were distributed online using Google Form. Teachers and students were selected randomly while parents were selected using a convenient sampling technique. After designing the survey, a pilot study was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire through Cronbach alpha. The variables showed .70 results which indicate a strong internal consistency in the scale. The questionnaire instrument of each respondent included questions regarding

demographic information for students, teachers and parents. Items for students about the perceptions of "Impact," "Comfortability" and "Support from the teacher" and for teachers about perceptions of "Teaching Practice," "efficacy" and "Training and Development" was available. The data were recorded and collected systematically, later analysed using "Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS)" version 25. The qualitative data were analysed using NVivo 12 software. The interview protocol included 2 questions are: "What areas would you allow your child/ren to continue to learn online after the pandemic?" and "What are your comments or opinions on young children's online learning?". The data coding process was iterative and cyclical.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Findings of Students' Perception

The teachers and students' demographic details were taken into account for this study to make sure their background histories, for example, their age, gender, their experience in conducting online and offline classes, and the course they are participating in. Table 1 below represents the background analysis of the participants. Based on the information's gathered, 56% of the teachers are females, and the rest are males. Most of the teachers who participated in this study are above 31 years old, which comprises 72% of the total participants. It is observed that the majority of the teachers had no experience with online teaching as 80% of them had never taught their classes through online mediums and have below one-year experience since education was shifted to remote learning in less than a year. They only had recently started to shift to online teaching since the Covid-19 pandemic pushed them to start giving classes online. For the students, all of them have had no experience taking part in online education before the pandemic the findings showed that 90% of them have never had online classes before the shift to remote learning. In this study, the students' level of expertise in e-learning knowledge was also taken into account as their ability to navigate through online classes and handle computers and software is highly needed, especially during this pandemic that all classes are shifted to online. The results indicated that 70% of them are at the elementary level, only 13% claimed that they are not very proficient with this technology and only 5% claimed to be very good in ICT and computer handling.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

Teachers		N (%)	**Students**		N (%)
Gender	Male	22 (44)	Gender	Male	47 (47)
	Female	28 (56)		Female	53 (53)
Age (Years)	Below 30	14 (28)	Education Stage	Lower Secondary	43 (43)
	31–50	36 (72)		Higher Secondary	57 (57)
Experienced conducting online classes	Yes	5 (10)	Experienced with online learning	Yes	10 (10%)
	No	45 (90)		No	90 (90%)
Number of years of experience with conducting online classes	<1	40 (80)	e-learning knowledge	Elementary	70 (70)
	1-4	10 (20)		Intermediate	25 (25)
	5>	0 (0)		Advanced	5 (5%)

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

Benefits of Online Learning

This study would investigate the benefits of online learning based on the students' perceptions. The questions were listed based on Table 2 and were asked for them to give their opinion and in which they were asked on five-point Likert Scale-based statements, varying from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree".

Table. 2. Benefits of Online Learning (N=100)

No	Variables	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Flexibility with time and space	7	9.2	25.5	40.1	18.2
2	Trouble-free in sharing of online classes materials	6.4	3.9	15.5	42.5	31.7
3	Better communication and interactions among students and teachers	8.8	29.4	26.8	22.3	12.7
4	Easy access to various education for all learners	8.5	18.8	26.0	27.8	18.9
5	Higher chance to work better with online learning tools	6.4	10.8	23.5	38	21.3
6	Fit in for all types of learning styles	4.8	10.7	30.1	43.2	11.2
7	Fast and easy feedbacks/comments on work	4.3	11.6	27.9	35.3	20.7
8	Extensive and varying in communication levels	5.7	13.5	26.0	38.6	16.2
9	Easy access to various academical resources	6.9	9.3	19.9	39.7	24.2
10	New and up-to-date educational materials	2.6	6.9	20.4	44.3	25.8

Based on Table 2 above, the highest perception of online education is its impact on the "trouble-free in the sharing of online classes materials". The majority of the participants shared their opinions that through online education, it is so much easier for each one of them to share any materials and resources among their peers, or sharing materials from teachers to students as the links or materials could be emailed or shared to everyone from just a click of the mouse, or the ease of their mobile phones. Teachers could share the pedagogical materials and instructions with everyone to make it easy for students to access the information needed. The second highest perception of online education is "new and up-to-date educational materials". Though also many of the participants agree that online education makes it easier for them to get ahold and gather new and updated classes materials, still there are some of the students disagree with this idea, by commenting that the updated class materials on the online-based educational platform do not support well in designing the new curriculum and educational strategies. Simultaneously, a small number of students said that they were unable to get and download all of the materials provided through online learning.

More than half of the total participants indicated that online education helps them in accessing various academical resources. Also, one thing to keep in mind here that in regards to the regulated international recognition for online-based education, the educational institutions and instructors have to make sure that they would provide the latest and efficient learning materials for their students to access online. For the "flexibility with time and space" variable, many participants also totally agree that the online platform makes it easier for students and teachers to conduct classes almost anytime and everywhere, with a lower chance of difficulty for students to attend as the class is very flexible. They could even attend class at night if everyone agrees to do so. The majority of them commented that e-learning had become a convenient way when it comes to flexibility and space. Flexible-learning can be derived as a learning mode in which the class's occurrence could be decided at any location, any time and for however amount of hours they want each lesson to last.

More than half of the students also regarded a "higher chance to work better with online learning tools" as one of the benefits of online learning. This is due to the ability of most of the mediums derived from online learning that are categorized as 'user-friendly' and that many students find it easy to navigate and utilize them all to their learning process. The practical learning management framework provides a range of resources to render the educational model appropriate and handy for online education. This suggests that not all online learning systems are open access because of restricted interconnected implementations and privacy concerns. The variable "fast and easy feedback/comments on work" has also received a significant amount of positive perception, especially after learning that most students would get more motivated to get their work done after getting feedback from teachers on their performance or the tasks given to them. This would henceforth maximize their learning process to the greatest extent. The next variable that is being perceived positively by participants is that online learning would "fit in for all types of learning styles". This is due to the ability of an online platform to make it flexible for some learners to learn better since some students suggested that they learn well from the live interaction with teacher and peers during class lessons. In contrast, some students would not understand well from it but would need to read multiple materials provided by the teacher to make them understand the lessons given to them thoroughly. This acknowledges past studies that deduced the importance of online

education in providing different learning contents for learners.

For the variable “extensive and varying in communication levels”, students agree that online platforms provide all learners and instructors many mediums to communicate and interact with one another, despite the inability to gather together in one place. All of them are aware of the idea that through online communication from online learning, they could get diverse information about other cultures from varying students from different cultural backgrounds. Online learning is a prominent means of admission to higher education and thereby providing students with further resources by removing the constraint of geographical location. Online learning encourages people to join and prepare in accordance with their jobs. Many of these admissions have been achieved through online education, and the educational level of the population has been raised.

Perceptions of online learning

The following table presents the findings of students’ perception of online learning

Table 3. students’ perception of online learning

No	Variables	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
	I. Perceived Functionality of Online Learning					
1	Online learning gives flexibility for students to choose to learn based on their availability	6.2	12.8	22.5	39.2	19.3
2	Online learning provides the ability to study at any locations without restrictions	5.5	8.1	14.1	36.8	35.5
3	Various tools that enable students to submit their work online and attend tests easily	3.2	6.7	17.3	44.7	28.1
4	Various tools that enable students and instructors to communicate and discuss through online interfaces without having to attend face-to-face meetings	4.8	7.3	21.1	44.5	41.3
	II. Perceived Self-Efficacy of Using Online Learning					
5	I feel optimistic while attending online classes	6.4	13.1	24.8	36.7	19.0
6	I feel optimistic while navigating the online-platform tools	5.5	12.3	22.4	39.2	20.6
7	I feel optimistic utilizing online educational materials	6.3	7.4	24.2	42.4	19.7
	III. Perceived Ease of Utilization of Online Learning					
8	I’m highly sure that online learning mediums are user-friendly	4.4	11.5	31.8	32.6	19.7
9	I find it easy to find any information I needed through online education platforms	5.1	9.2	19.0	45.2	30.5
10	I find the online education makes it easy to acquire knowledge of the class I enrolled	7.2	17.8	24.9	33.4	16.7
11	The establishment of the online learning platform is compatible with my learning styles	7.0	17.9	33.8	29.1	12.2
	IV. Behavioral Purpose of Using E-learning					
12	I utilize online learning to support my learning process	7.2	14.0	29.1	34.8	14.9
13	I utilize online learning to get the latest and updated knowledge regarding my course	6.7	7.9	26.0	37.3	22.1
14	I utilize online learning as an independent (free) learning platform	7.5	7.2	22.3	38.1	24.9

In this study, the researcher longed to find answers and examine the usefulness of online education resources. The major issues that are being highlighted are the functionality, self-efficacy, ease of utilization and the purpose of the use of online learning platforms. This study considers the students' opinion that it is important to plan, create and offer online courses that are mainly focusing on the students' perceived needs and requirements. The participants also demonstrated their impressions of the online learning program and their desire to utilize it. Based on the questionnaire for the first part, which is the perceived functionality of online learning,

the results show that 58.5% of the total respondents think that online learning gives them the flexibility to choose to learn based on their availability. In comparison, 22.5% of respondents claimed that it is no different regarding the flexibility variable. In the meantime, 72.3% of the total respondents agree that the medium of online learning provides the ability for them to study at any location without restrictions any restrictions. 72.8% believes that online learning provides various tools that enable students to submit their work online and attend tests easily. 85.8% of students think that online learning is able to provide various tools that enable students and instructors to communicate and discuss through online interfaces without having to attend face-to-face meetings.

The next part of the questionnaire is intended to analyze students' perception regarding their knowledge and experience with online learning platforms. Based on the feedback given back from the distribution of the questionnaires for the second category, which is the perceived self-efficacy of using online learning platforms, it is found that 55.7% of the participants feel optimistic while attending online classes. Additionally, a total of 59.8% of participants said that they are feeling optimistic and think it is not a hassle to navigate the online-platform tools. In comparison, 44.1% agrees that it is easy to utilize and obtain online educational materials for their courses. Hence, many students feel comfortable and optimistic while utilizing online tools for their online classes. 34.3% of students are highly sure that online learning mediums are user-friendly; 75.7% find it easy to get any information they needed through online education platforms; 50.1% find that online education makes it easy to acquire knowledge of the class; 41.3% finds that the establishment of the online learning platform is compatible with their learning styles. This study also aims to analyze the behavioural purpose of participating in online learning classes, in which the results show that 49.7% of respondents utilize the platform to support their learning experience; 59.4% of respondents utilize online learning to get the latest and updated knowledge regarding their course; 63.0% claimed that they find online learning makes it easy for them to acquire knowledge of the class they enrolled. This study's key results indicate that students' behavioural motivation for online education is motivating and constructive. It is predicted that the students' experience would positively influence their performance by immersive online learning.

3.2 Teachers' Perceptions of Online Learning

Based on the results of the statistical descriptions, it can be concluded that the majority of teachers are in agreement with the teaching techniques that they are being regulated to follow, with a mean score of 3.61, and that they commented that they are highly assured and optimistic with the effectiveness of the online education structures they are performing (M 3.41). Though, many of them have told that they are not completely satisfied with the training and support provided by their educational institutions. In conclusion, the respective teachers mentioned that they had not been provided with sufficient or enough training regarding online education, but yet they still feel satisfied with the lessons that they have delivered to the students although with the lack of proper training. The frequently teaching practice that is majorly adopted in their online teaching technique is found to be their engagement with students through regular interaction and communications with them (M3.82), along with the technique in which they provide explanations and connections for each content of the lessons with the students' everyday lives (M 3.64). As far as the effectiveness of the online teaching is concerned, the teachers had provided a set of guidelines for the students to utilize the online platforms appropriately, so that none of them would abuse the main purpose of those platforms (e.g., posting comments or media that are not related to their lessons). The teachers gave an average rating for the professional development for the organization and structuring of the online content (M 2.4) and professional development of online courses' management.

From the overall statements collected, it has been seen that the results for this section can be divided into positive perceptions and negative perceptions. The following table represents the results of the combination of both positive and negative perceptions. When it comes to teachers' overall opinions, it can be derived that they acquired mixed perceptions on the online teaching platforms. The pooled mean of the negative perceptions is more, which is 3.40 as compared to the mean of positive perceptions (3.28). Though it could be seen that the difference is not significant, but still, the teachers have their own opinions that they voiced out regarding how they think online education is still lacking in certain aspects.

Some teachers expressed their feelings and thoughts through the open-ended section of the questionnaires. They mentioned that online education would reduce the demands for teachers, hence increasing the percentage of unemployment, especially among educators and graduates who just finished their degree in education. Some commented that online classes would not be a great platform to connect teachers and students as there are barriers in communications. Some teachers really cared about the availability of educational facilities, which are hard to acquire while teaching from home, thus making it hard to explain since there is a lack of hands-on activities given to students (i.e., experimental tools for science classes). These results are in align with their previous comments, mentioning that there is a lack of proper training

and proper infrastructures provided to them for them to be able to deliver suitable classes to the students (e.g., unavailability of essential devices and internet connections).

Table 5 Statistical descriptions combined mean of positive and negative perceptions.

Category	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Positive perceptions	50	2.60	4.35	3.2767	0.38372
Negative perceptions	50	2.03	4.30	3.3953	0.34783

Table 6 Statistical descriptions for teachers' results

Descriptive Statistics	N	Mean	SD
Teaching practices	50	3.6085	0.33705
Efficacy	50	3.4093	0.78310
Proper training and supports	50	2.8605	0.72185

Reasons for not performing/preferring online education

Everyone should probably recognize how online education is an added-up value for the current educational system, which has a prominent future prospectus. Though still there are quite a high number of teachers and students that would not prefer online classes as compared to conventional face-to-face lessons. Hence, the survey for this study has asked for their feedback on this issue. Table 6 below shows the primary reasons why the majority of them do not prefer online education, mostly due to the various technical issues experienced prior to online lessons. All of them believed that the conventional way is the most effective way to teach lessons to students as through this way, it does not require an extensive number of technological devices that would impede the teaching process. Not only that, some of them added up by saying that they do not feel totally secured while using all the modern inventions and software, as they are worried about their privacy being invaded by any third-party sources (e.g., the use of video conferences such as Zoom and Google Meet). They also believed that online classes would hinder the ability of them to communicate and interact at the emotional level with their students. This aspect is one of the most important aspects that have to be acknowledged as students' participation is significant for the successful implementation of online education during this current situation.

Though, still, many students believe that online education brings positive attributes to the whole learning process, which would maximize their learning experiences and a good transformation for the education system itself. They prefer online learning due to its flexibility, in which everyone could attend classes anytime and, in many locations, and at the same time render the broad knowledge acquired from the vast educational information provided by the internet. Nevertheless, there are also students that are not in agreement with this point of view, in which they mentioned that online learning is not the best method for them to learn. Table 6 below would give a full explanation of why they think that online classes are not suitable for them, based on students' perspectives.

Table 6 Reasons for not believing in online education.

Reasons for not believing in online education (teachers' perspectives)	Percentage (%) of Agreement
I never thought online class is a major requirement	40
My institution does not make it compulsory to do online classes	45
I do not know how to deliver a proper online class (no training provided)	32
I believe the conventional class is better than online education	78
Many technical problems arising from the use of online platforms (e.g., network, power, devices, etc.)	67
It is almost impossible to conduct online lessons for my subject (i.e., need hands-on lessons and practical)	25
Reasons for not preferring online learning (students' perspectives)	Percentage (%) of Agreement
I do not feel that online learning is as effective as conventional classes	64
I do not feel confident utilizing online tools	55
I never need online classes	65
I think online learning systems are difficult to understand and navigate around	38
I do not have proper devices (e.g., no mobile phones, computers, printers, network, etc.)	12

Students voiced their opinion that online learning is not as effective as it seems to be. After they participated in online classes, they said they had problems understanding how the online systems operate. From the above table, it is also noted that both teachers and students found that the lack of proper technologies and the unavailability of devices for conducting and participating in an online class, as well as the internet connection problems, are the significant issues that make online learning insignificant to them.

3.3 Comparison between Teachers and Students perception and acceptance of E-learning

This section presents the comparison between students and teachers' findings of E-learning acceptance and perception. It can be noticed from the previous tables that both teachers and students have positive perception and posed high level of acceptance of e-learning. that was indicated by the high mean scores and high percentages of agreement on the survey items. Also, both teachers and students agreed on E-learning benefits such as flexibility with time and space, trouble-free in sharing of online classes materials, better communication and interactions among students and teachers, easy access to various education for all learners easy access to various education platforms for all learners higher chance to work better with online learning tools, fit in for all types of learning styles, fast and easy feedbacks/comments on work extensive and varying in communication levels, easy access to various academical resources, new and up-to-date educational materials. However, as students reported some reasons for not preferring online classes as follow: I do not feel that online learning is as effective as conventional classes, I do not feel confident utilizing online tools I never need online classes, I think online learning systems are difficult to understand and navigate around, I do not have proper devices (e.g., no mobile phones, computers, printers, network, etc. On the other hand, teachers reported similar reasons for not preferring online classes: never thought online class is a major requirement, the institution does not make it compulsory to do online classes, the institution does not make it compulsory to do online classes, I do not know how to deliver a proper online class (no training provided), I believe the conventional class is better than online education, I believe the conventional class is better than online education, many technical problems arising from the use of online platforms and It is almost impossible to conduct online lessons for my subject.

3.4 Findings of Parental Attitude and Perspectives towards Online Education

Young students' online learning experience during Covid-19 pandemic

In general, most parents mentioned that their kids (95%) attended online classes during this time, and many of them spend around one hour (75%) for each lesson. Primarily, the parents said that their kids would attend online classes at least once (40%) or more than one time in a day (20%) while the rest mentioned that their kids would only attend classes few times a week (by meaning not every day they would have class). Nearly one-third of the students spent less than 30 minutes for each session, while some of them spend an average of around 30 to 45 minutes. Many of the parents were utilizing online learning resources that are from free sources. Elementary teachers primarily delivered the kids' online learning classes and they were guided by external applications and websites, as shown in Table 7 below. The table shows the results of the analysis on the learning practices by the kids during this Covid-19 pandemic. It is found that the majority of the kids would access the online educational content provided to them at least once a day and that many of them would continuously watch them throughout the day. A small number of students watched the content a few times a week, and that only a few kids never open the links or content provided to them. This is due to parents' lack of guidance and observation that made them feel incompetent and had no interest and courage to keep up to date with the lessons. The online learning content is varied, in which instructors provided them with multiple learning resources (e.g., books, brain game exercises, science experiments, arts, etc.). Some parents mentioned that their kids were provided with physical exercises, activities and language learning.

Many children take part in online classes at least once a day, though there are a small number of children reported to only attend one up to a few lessons each week. These children were reported to utilize the online messaging platform (e.g., WhatsApp, Telegram), and many of them also utilized various online learning applications. The majority of the children attend lessons with the presence of their guardian or parents once (35%) or many times (31.5%) per day, some children were accompanied by their parents only once (15%) or more than two times (213%) for each week, a very low number of children (5.5%) never got accompanied by their parents. Also, many children communicated with their teachers or instructors online once or few times a day, some children did this at least once up to few times a week, and many of them (%) never interacted online. It is also found that there are some parents who allocated some time to communicated with the instructors online once (20%), or many times every day (2%), some of them interacted at least once (21%) up to few times a week (52%). In contrast, there are a small number of parents that

never did talk to their children's instructors (5%). The full statistical data are shown in Table 7 and 8 below.

Table.7 Children's online learning sessions, time spent, and learning mediums.

Children's online learning	Children's Participation	N (%)
Number of sessions of online learning	Never	5
	Once a week	10
	2–5 times per week	25
	Once a day	40
	Multiple times a day	20
Time spent on online learning	0-15 mins	0
	15-30 mins	9
	30-45 mins	12
	45-60 mins	4
	More than 1 hour	75
Instructors/Learning mediums	Preschool teachers	82
	Other kindergarten staff	5
	Online learning Applications	6
	Online learning websites	3
	Early education websites	3
	Others	1

Table 8 Children's online learning practices

Learning Practices	Never	Once every week	2–5 times every week	Once a day	Many times per day
Watching pre-recorded lessons	0	23	12	20	45
Watching live class	0	5	4	70	21
Using Microsoft Teams	3	42	55	0	0
Using learning applications	15	15	65	5	0
With parents' presence	5.5	15	13	35	31.5
Children's interaction with instructors	0	9	56	30	5
Parents interaction with instructors	5	21	52	20	2

3.3.2 Online learning lacks learning atmosphere

Based on the qualitative data examined, the results showed that the majority of parents had relatively lower positive perceptions of online education for their children. The subscale has been provided to show the statistical analysis of the parents' perceptions regarding the issue, in which the pros and cons of online education are contrasted with the conventional physical classrooms' lessons. The mean for the scale shown was 2.54, which a medium standard deviation of 0.61. Only a few numbers of participants strongly believed that online education could give rise to many good impacts: better learning experiences, better learning practices, better flexibility, better than conventional face-to-face lessons. Nearly half of parents do not have a firm stand on this issue, in which they do not think there are many pros and cons of online learning for their kids, making them possess a neutral opinion regarding this argument. Though, there are still a small number of parents that provided further suggestions and feedbacks, saying that online education gives good support for their children's phase for acquiring knowledge during this pandemic.

Many parents believed that better learning experience and outcomes could be achieved better through conventional learning settings, not from online platforms. Few parents also stated that online education would not provide a good learning atmosphere for the children. They clarified their pessimistic views regarding online education: children did not consider active education as a formative class since they missed social contact with their classmates. Hence, they could not give full concentration on the lessons provided by being alone at home attending the class. On top of that, parents argued that they found it challenging to handle their kids' educations at home without the presence of their teachers. If they attend school, it would be easier for teachers to have full control of their attitudes inside the classroom as compared to learning by themselves at home

since the students do not feel that they are actually learning in a real classroom. This makes them feel more obligated to do other things instead of focusing solely on their teachers' teaching in class. Also, there is no present of their classmates that could motivate them to study more and concentrate on the lessons, making it hard for them to digest information. Especially when it comes to younger students, they are very playful. They always need extra guidance as they tend to shift their focus away from what they are studying, thus making them getting distracted a lot by their mobile phones and television. Thus, it arises in the opinion that learning in an actual classroom setting is far more beneficial and provides a better learning atmosphere as compared to learning online.

3.3.3. Online learning requires time and educational knowledge from parents

The quantitative results from the subscale show a mean of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 0.57 for parents' perceptions and roles on the effect of online learning on parental and family education. About half of parents claim that online classes stopped their children from not doing anything at home (70%), or not just playing with their mobile phones during the pandemic. This condition also strengthened interactions between parents and children (48%) and enabled them to participate in different kinds of educational and practices (46%%) and allow them to see what kinds of activities and exercises their children are taking part in online classes. In general, parents viewed the effect of online classes on their family education much more favourably. In comparison, the qualitative data showed that some parents consider that online classes would make their children feel uncomfortable, demanding more time and utilizing more time than conventional classes. Some parents claim that online learning makes them utilize more time on their kids at home, rather than do their work. This adds up burden and responsibility to them and would give adverse effects on their professional life. This is due to the amount of control and that they have to continually keep an eye on their children to make sure they attend classes and give a reasonably good focus on what is being taught during class. Some parents also mentioned many barriers that make them incompetent to help with their children's online learning experience, including the lack of professional knowledge in assisting their children and lack of time to help them with their practices.

This is a much bigger problem to those who have more than one kid that needs to attend online classes, in which they have to provide a considerable amount of time to help each one of them, and that they have to juggle around to balance their role as parents and their job commitments. Some parents commented that they could not give each one of them a fair amount of time and that they had to choose only to focus and help the older sibling. Hence, younger sibling got less time spent with their parents, and thus the younger ones would experience significant problems without the help of older people to help them with their tasks (primarily due to reason that they are still in the elementary level, they supposedly need more guidance as kids at this level to tend to make mistakes and do not know how to find solutions themselves). Recently, many parents are not anymore working from home, and they have to go back to the office, making this issue again a significant problem for their children.

They have shared frustration about needless standards, such as online attendance, which created more obstacle to autonomous younger children and gave out an extra unnecessary task for parents to keep singing for their attendance every time they attend class. They found that they had to obey criteria and guidelines for educational programs that did not fit the desired purpose and versatility of online education. It's unique for every family. In a one-child household, attending online education may be more manageable. Parents need to struggle more and are more likely to get stressed if they have more than one kids, as each one of them needs proper devices and need guidance, especially if they are still young. Many children cannot concentrate on online education and resist attending one as they feel bored learning by themselves without any friends around. It is hard for them to concentrate for an extended period of a lesson.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

E-learning has been considered as a modern and easy way of learning not only for educational purposes but in all lie aspects. E-learning has had a positive influence on education in general and teachers and learners specifically. Utilizing e-learning in education has been proven to improve the quality of learning and teaching. Both students and teachers have a positive perception towards e-learning. Since technology-based learning and teaching still considered a new approach to teaching and learning methods, still there is much to be improved. A complete transition to online learning is quite tricky. As such, there is a need to understand the obstacles that come in the way of accepting online learning among students, teachers and parents and take corrective measures to overcome them. First, the students showed a positive perception towards the e-learning while the results of teachers' part showed that teachers have a positive perception towards the benefits and use of e-learning, they are confident with their performance but not satisfied with the training they received from the school and ministry. The findings showed that remote learning implementation during the

COVID-19 pandemic is challenging and problematic for Saudi families. Saudi Arabian parents reflected negative attitudes and beliefs regarding the benefits and values of remote learning and preferred conventional education at the elementary levels. This negativity could be justified by the fact that parents were neither ready nor trained to embrace e-learning. The hardships during the pandemic time make parents reject the benefit of e-learning at home.

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