

## **E-Learning for English Language Teaching in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia during Covid-19 Pandemic**

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### **Abstract**

The study's main aim is to examine E-Learning for English Language Teaching in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The significance of the study is to investigate the level of adoption of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice, the impacts of the adoption of e-learning for English Language teaching and training, challenges associated with the adoption of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice, and the future of the use of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia. The study's central question is what are the impacts and challenges of E-Learning for English Language Teaching in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia during the Covid-19 Pandemic? The study used the semi-structured interview to obtain data from six English language lecturers in Saudi Arabia Universities selected using purposive and convenient sampling techniques. The data obtained were analyzed thematically. The study concluded that e-learning is the future of theoretical and practical courses such as English language teaching and practice in Higher Educational Institutions. This technology usage will benefit everyone involved; Higher Educational Institutions can save money and time while encouraging creativity. The study recommended that students and staff should be trained and re-trained on how to use digital technologies. Education institutions and government agencies should support students with computers and adequate software.

*Keywords:* covid-19, e-learning, English language, higher education institutions, practice, practicum courses

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## Introduction

The global spread of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) has resulted in profound shifts in people's daily lives. This virus has touched every facet of life, but education has been particularly hard hit. Academic and non-academic services and facilities were affected, as well as the quality of services offered to students. As a result of the dramatic shifts in student involvement and motivation that have occurred in recent years, traditional classroom teaching strategies and techniques have been supplanted by more creative ones. These circumstances have hampered students' academic progress (Surahman, 2020).

With the help of online facilities in Saudi Arabia, nearly all Higher Education Institutions have begun using online education platforms to launch e-learning classes. That allows students to complete learning, theoretical courses, and actual teaching of practicum courses in authentic school settings online. Since students and teachers could not perform their practicum or other real-world duties in classrooms, they faced numerous difficulties in their future careers. Using online education platforms, most students conducted micro-teaching for their classmates and supervisors the same way they would in an actual classroom setting during their teaching practicum. Each microteaching session ended with the students receiving thorough feedback from their classmates and supervisors (Castro & Tumibay, 2021).

Debates on the quality of online courses have focused on the interaction between students and instructors, availability of support for students and teachers, consistent course design, and inherent adaptability of online learning delivery (Castro & Tumibay, 2021). In terms of how and how Higher Education Institutions in developed nations can offer online courses that fulfill the expectations of students, high-quality technology and software in the home are highly pertinent (Castro & Tumibay, 2021). Khalil, Mansour, Fadda, Almisnid, Aldamegh, Al-Nafeesah & Al-Wutayd (2020) examined huge data on graduate students in traditional and online graduate classes in an American academic institution; it indicates that there is no quality difference between online and offline courses.

However, with constraints on face-to-face teaching, most Higher Education Institutions' courses are taught online (Aljedaani, Alomar., Mkaouer, Ludi & Khalaf, 2021). COVID-19 safe teaching environments necessitate a review of the current online teaching methods, related strategies, and available novel online teaching interfaces, as well as the implementation of appropriate communication paths between students and their instructors and, most importantly, for practicum courses. There have been several studies on the adoption and use of e-learning for theoretical classes in Higher Education Institutions in several countries. However, few studies domesticated or narrowed to e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions. Hence, this study will bridge this gap by examining the impacts and challenges of using e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia. In light of the above, the objectives of the study are:

- i. examine the level of adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia;
- ii. evaluate the impacts of the adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia;
- iii. examine the challenges associated with adopting E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia.

The research questions of the study include:

- i. What is the level of adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia?
- ii. What are the impacts of adopting E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia?
- iii. What challenges are associated with adopting E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia?

The paper is structured into seven sections: introduction, literature review, method, results, discussion, conclusion, and recommendations.

### Literature Review

Almaiah (2018) argued that any system's performance is directly related to user usage. As a result, student e-learning aid is critical to the e-learning system's performance. Some studies have looked at how e-learning is used in various countries worldwide. Almaiah and Man (2016) analyzed factors that influence Malaysian e-learning. They employed the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). They found that factors such as relative advantages, observability, education, availability, complexity, and a sense of pleasure must be considered when selecting pupils for the Malaysian e-learning program. Salloum, Al-Emran, Shaalan, and Tarhini (2019) found four elements (invention, training, trust, and shared knowledge) that can boost students' adoption of the e-framework. TAM graduates were studied by Al-Gahtani (2016) to see if e-learning had an impact. The study identified e-learning through technologies, social power expectancies, community norms, and future advantages as essential aspects of e-learning.

Almaiah and Almulhem (2018) stated that E-learning programs were not appropriately used in Saudi Arabia because of social influence, protests, and anticipated good fortune. Bellaaj et al. (2015) examined the factors influencing student use of e-learning services at Tabuk University in Saudi Arabia. The study found that e-learning adoption is strongly influenced by students' sense of accomplishment and creativity. Abdullah and Ward (2016) examined the various aspects of TAM e-learning adoption; it was argued that e-learning has a significant impact on students' self-determination and societal objectives, as well as their happiness, displeasure, and experiences with the use of machines. The study concluded that e-learning effectiveness at Saudi Arabian universities could be improved by increasing the capabilities of Saudi Arabian university staff in telecommunications, IT, and education.

According to Almaiah, Jalil, and Man (2016b), there seems to be no doubt that e-learning is a challenge for both students and teachers in developing countries. It may be more difficult for less developed countries to accept e-learning and use it effectively as a constructive literary instrument. As a result of cultural, social, and developmental differences, the challenges faced by people in different countries vastly differ. Kanwal and Rehman (2017) stated that in less industrialized countries, e-learning challenges stem from a lack of ICT understanding, a lack of network growth, a lack of material output, internet literacy, and computer productivity are significant issues.

According to Taurus, Gichoya, and Muumbo (2015), challenges surrounding the adoption of e-learning revolve around a lack of technological know-how, inadequate financial resources, and inadequate ICT capabilities. Other studies, such as Kisanga and Ireson (2015) and Mulhanga and Lima (2017), pointed out that insufficient technology resources and IT knowledge are the key obstacles to the efficient implementation of existing e-learning programs. In addition, social, political, and economic constraints were cited by Mulhanga and Lima (2017) as essential

considerations in developing Libya's e-learning framework. Interpersonal restrictions, technological complexity, and cultural considerations are all part of Chen and Tseng (2012)'s classification of learning challenges. The findings from the study of Arabi, Naz'ri, and Yusoff (2019) on the most critical problem influencing the performance criteria of e-learning systems indicated that 45% of overall failures, 40% of partial faults, and just 15% of successful implementations stem from technological problems.

The results of online courses and educational content distribution have been studied extensively. The students enrolled in foreign language courses have stated that they cannot progress as quickly as they had hoped due to their preference for offline teaching (Mahyoob, 2020). Similarly, Surahman (2020) asserted that undergraduates in many Indonesian regions indicated a moderate degree of satisfaction, hampered by internet issues and a lack of sufficient instructor direction. On the other hand, Hamdan (2014) argued that in a distinct environment, teaching staff said they favor online teaching over face-to-face or mixed teaching methods and claimed that e-learning enhances kids' ability to develop higher cognitive skills.

Alanazy (2018) study found that academic respondents had a positive attitude toward e-learning, computer self-efficiency, and previous experience with online teaching. However, Khalil et al. (2020) indicated that despite the rapid spread of online learning tools during the outbreak, Saudi Arabian medical students had expressed their happiness with online learning and preference for it for the forthcoming academic session. In the study of Aljedaani et al. (2021), deaf students in Saudi Arabia were interviewed about their experiences with e-learning. The study found that the content was inaccessible, and there was a lack of support. The study concluded that the quality of online educational resources should be evaluated using the perspectives of the users, management staff, and designers of such tools. This attribute can be measured using a model that incorporates the aspects of service and charisma.

In terms of the relevance of e-learning, Novikov (2020) argued that e-learning makes it possible for teachers to become familiar with various software and platforms through e-learning tools and applications. E-learning also allows professors to design new materials at their leisure and give students adaptable teaching platforms (Dhawan, 2020a). Mporananayo and Mbonnyuburyo (2020) also supported that online teaching enables teachers and students to communicate freely and engage in a partnership. Shin and Hickey (2020) found that when the COVID-19 epidemic began and expanded over the world, there was a potential for teachers and students to work together in online instruction. Since the emergence of COVID-19, online teaching opportunities have been viewed as the most crucial aspect of integrating technology-based education.

Adedoyin and Soykan (2020) described the advantages and prospects of e-learning as self-pacing, interactive, and the ability to customize the learning process. During the outbreak of COVID-19, Hashemi and Kew (2020) found that teachers' proficiency in online education had an enormous impact as training and competency in ICT-based instructional tools and a blended learning environment laid the foundation for a swift shift from face-to-face to online/distance learning. The lockdown in practically every country on the planet necessitated an immediate response to online teaching; the response of online education to the COVID-19 pandemic enhanced teachers and students to get more familiar with new technology tools and applications (Kalloo et al., 2020).

Dhawan (2020b) stated that re-weaving the procedure of innovative digitalization is possible because of the increased flexibility, convenience of use, and effectiveness of the teaching

and learning environment. It was further argued that online learning and teaching during the quarantine period imposed by COVID-19 allows for strengthening the skills of utilizing various technology tools and applications and improving analytical reasoning and problem-solving skills. As a result, higher education institutions worldwide are grappling with the benefits and drawbacks of online teaching at this crucial juncture. However, there has been a dearth of research on the impacts and challenges of E-Learning for English Language Teaching in Higher Education Institutions, especially in the context of Saudi Arabia during the Covid-19 Pandemic, which constitutes the research gap that this study aims to fill.

## Methods

This study is qualitative research. Qualitative research was considered the best method for the analysis because it enhances the collection of in-depth data giving respondents unrestricted avenues to air their views about the subject matter.

### *Research Instrument*

The study employed a semi-structured interview as the instrument for data collection. According to Armitage (2012), this data collection method is qualitative. The interviews gave the selected English Language lecturers in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia a free and open ground to make their views known regarding the stated objectives of the study without restriction. The interview was conducted with the selected English Language lecturers with physical contact. Furthermore, the qualitative data collected using a semi-structured interview method was analyzed thematically based on the themes derived from the study's objectives.

### *Participants*

The participants for the semi-structured interview were the selected English Language lecturers in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia who are conversant with the subject matter. The English Language lecturers in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia used for this study were selected using a convenient and purposive sampling technique. Each interview lasted about 10 minutes maximum, and the data were recorded. Using the sampling concept of Yamane (1967), six lecturers were selected for the study, meaning a total of 6 interviews were conducted. This approach is, however, considered as in-depth and practical as it enhances the investigation of the general area of research in detail (Petty, Bracken & Pask, 2017). The selection of the population was also based on inclusive criteria. These inclusive criteria describe individuals with practical knowledge of the subject matter (Singh, 2017).

## Results

The results and discussion are done thematically based on the themes derived from the study's objectives. A total of four themes were identified as follows:

- i. The level of adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia
- ii. Impacts of the adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia
- iii. Challenges associated with the adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia
- iv. The future of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia.

***Theme One: The level of adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia***

From the interviews, the respondents were asked about adopting E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia. In response to this, interviewee 1 stated:

*“I believe the level of adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in higher education was not as meant to be, and it did not meet the minimum requirements for such training. I strongly believe that this training course should be at schools to be most effective and have great results on students. Some course, such as writing, needs much time to teach students spelling and writing complete sentences, etc.”*

Similarly, interviewee 2 stated:

*“E-learning for English Language teaching and practice is not as good as face-to-face training. With all our efforts with students, I believe it is not enough. You can't reach the required training for real situations by distance. The level of E-learning compared to the efforts done is not satisfactory. Even the students are not very happy because, as some told me, they need to practice in real school situations.”*

Also, in response to this, interviewee 3 indicated that:

*“I have adopted E-learning for English Language teaching and practice this year. I have been able to train my students in different situations as real. I've created some situations they might face at schools. I believe it has been adopted in a very high professional way. I've asked them to record themselves in the video as they teach in a real situation. The level is satisfactory but needs more hard work. Face to face, the trainees practice English and get excellent feedback from their students or the English teacher at school. In E-learning, no one corrects their English except the lecturer, which is difficult.”*

On the other way round, interviewee 4 asserted that:

*“I'm satisfied with the level of adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice because the supervisor has many styles and models they can choose from. They can be creative in this course regarding adoption or follow up the training sessions such as virtual classes, video recording, etc.”*

Also, interviewee 5 responded that:

*“Based on my recent experience with E-Learning for English Language teaching and practice, I can say it was a successful try. However, achieving great learning outcomes or astonishing results is difficult. In some special cases, it can be used minimally.”*

Lastly, interviewee 6 stated that:

*“English Language teaching and practice field represents a link between what is presented in theory and what is hoped to be applied in practice. It represents the appropriate field through which the majority trend of the learners towards the teaching profession arises. Given the circumstances that occurred because of Corona, which called for the application of field education remotely, this has had a good effect because of the lack of employment of some practical aspects. Some skills in a way commensurate with the circumstances that happened, so we find that way of adoption was a perfect way of training at that time. That this impacted the application of education, training, and skills.”*

***Theme Two: Impacts of the adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia***

Furthermore, the interviewees were asked to comment on the Impacts of adopting e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia. In response to this, interviewee 1 stated:

*“Although I believe this course should not be online, it has some good advantages and positive outcomes for some students who feel embarrassed to stand up in front of an audience. This adoption allowed these students to deliver a lesson alone without the feeling of anyone around them. Also, they can explain, talk, move and do as many repetitions as they want. On the other side, one of the obvious disadvantages of this kind of adoption is that students wouldn’t get the proper training to face an audience as they are being trained to be teachers. I mean facing the audience; this skill is essential for every teacher. They are trained to be teachers, that is it.”*

Also, interviewee 2 indicated that:

*“it supports and develops the ongoing learning process and self-learning as students can learn by themselves. Also, this strategy has loosened the great pressure on schools and other educational institutions because many students were sent to these schools for training. Some schools can’t receive more than three students for training. By adopting E-learning for English Language teaching and practice, it is obvious that we can train an excellent number of students online without changing school timetables. E-learning for English Language teaching and practice adoption is very flexible and can be adopted at all time and place circumstances. Adopting e-learning for practicum courses such as the English language helps students gain and develop their computer skills in several software and applications.”*

Similarly, interviewee 3 responded that:

*“Some of my students created their own YouTube channels. They uploaded perfect English Lessons. I’m very proud of them. I encourage them to upload many of that lessons. Sometimes they get indirect comments on their English which is very good for them. School environments and real life are different, but we live in an era of virtual Learning. Teaching and learning are not limited to schools. We should encourage our students to be creative and can adapt to any situation. Most of the students were very happy and satisfied. Some wished to visit the school and meet some expert teachers to learn more about giving a model lesson. The impact of this adoption created self-esteem in students who can be very creative. They learn a lot about e-learning in general. They developed many software skills. They have a chance to record a video of themselves so they can develop their English skills, such as pronunciation and body language. Even their English letters or sentences intonation and voice have been developed. E-learning for practicum has many good impacts on students.”*

Furthermore, interviewee 4 made it known that:

*“the impacts of adopting e-learning for English Language teaching and practice depends on the lecturers themselves. That is to say, it depends on their ability to be creative. If the lecturer could create suitable styles that suit the e-learning environment, considering all students are distance learners, e-learning would be very positive. If they are not creative enough, e-learning will not be as good as required. In general, from my point of view, all lecturers in my department were creative enough and did a great job. They were very*

*creative regardless of the learning environment. Some of them asked students to practice English with members of their family in a way to create a real school classroom.”*

Also, interviewee 5 responded that:

*“the impacts of adopting E-learning for English Language teaching and practice shows very weak supervision on what is going on, very weak positive communication, and above all, it resulted in weak essential training skills.”*

Lastly, it was indicated by interviewee six that:

*“There are two sides to this application. Let me start with positive ones; as education represents the real field or the true life of the applicant of educational concepts, knowledge, principles, and theories, it seemed to be completely neglected because it was applied remotely. However, we could successfully reach a very good level of training. The Ministry of Education has set up many platforms. These platforms can be used in field education to acquire distance teaching skills, prepare well to practice and apply lessons on educational platforms, and achieve competence in the outputs of field education learning and the participation of teachers in this, especially. The negative effects: Field education puts the student in classroom positions and real teaching problems, and they can contribute in case their presence may be remotely available; the student may lose some of these aspects. Students generally did not go through that stage in which students felt fear and shame or embarrassment at the beginning of this course as a good important experience. Reducing students' creativity in field education may result in a lack of several educational skills.”*

### ***Theme three: Challenges associated with the adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia***

The interviewees were asked to comment on the challenges associated with the adoption of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia; interviewee one stated:

*“One of these challenges is that students did not get enough or any training to face an audience because they have been doing all their assignments and tasks, even the final task, online. Another issue is that internet access in some places or rural places is not good. Especially for this kind of e-learning course as in this course (E-learning for English Language teaching and practice), many massive video recordings were required from students. Also, many students refused to record and share a video for themselves as they did the required tasks. They prefer sharing their audio only. In this way, audio only, eye contact, and body language, which are very important for teachers, are missing. Also, one of these challenges is that some students clashes with other courses in their timetable. Also, another issue that is very important for us as lecturers, we miss the whole important role of the expert teacher at school. The role of this expert teacher is to be like the supervisor for students at school. They can guide the training, arrange everything they need, and also help the lecturers in the evaluation at the end of training.”*

Also, in response to this, interviewee 2 indicated that:

*“Of course, time is not enough. This course has 6 hours load only, and it should be more. One semester of training will be quite good. Also, students have more than one course in addition to practicum in the 8<sup>th</sup> level of their degree.”*

In the same vein, interviewee 3 made it known that:

*“A perfect number of students lack minimum computer skills. Some of them could not get a proper video recording of them while they did some tasks in English practicing. Also, the amount of time for training is not enough. Also, every lecturer has a very good number of students, and he/she cannot train them because everyone has different issues. Lecturers’ loads should be considered. Also, some of my students have other courses, making it difficult to get the most out of training. At schools, they practice English with anyone but online only with the lecturer.”*

Furthermore, interviewee 4 stated:

*“The big challenge we faced was creating a virtual learning environment with real students to practice teaching with no real students or school. Every one of us is in their house, and however, we successfully could create such a virtual environment by encouraging students to imagine the whole training process is in the real world.”*

Also, interviewee 5 stated that:

*“We lack the means and technology essential for modern training methods. This strategy depends on only the cognitive side and neglects other sides of education goals. There are no clear rules or instructions that guide the training. Also, this method neglects individual differences between students. Finally, I believe we all missed the role of school teachers.”*

Lastly, interviewee 6 responded:

*“The lack of strong communication is noticed between students and their lecturers and the students between themselves. I’ve noticed that E-learning adoption for English Language teaching and practice is not attractive and boring as seen among students. It is like a boring routine for them. Adopting this method makes it difficult to practice some English language teaching practices and skills. It is not easy to evaluate students and measure their progress. It isn’t easy to get students to be engaged in the learning process. Students are not very active as they should be. They also can’t share their views. As lecturers, we miss the role of school teachers as evaluators. We used to get them involved as they were always in the field. Some students suffer from a weak internet connection and other technical issues.”*

#### ***Theme Four: The future of using E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia.***

The interviewees were also asked to comment on what the future holds for using e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia. In response to this, interviewee 1 stated:

*“I can say that it needs improvement and some changes. These challenges I have mentioned should be solved, and I believe it will be good but not as the face-to-face training.”*

Furthermore, interviewee 2 revealed that:

*“The future of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice is promising as many courses have been shifted to be online. Many training courses can be found in online channels by various famous learning centers around the globe. We need more time and skills to make it as successful as it should be.”*

Similarly, interviewee 3 stated that:

*“Our main goal is to ensure that teacher-students can deal with real-life teaching situations to achieve their lessons aims in real classes. As I said before, this needs a lot of training and time from both the lecturers and the students.”*

In the same vein, interviewee 4 responded:

*“It may be very successful and meet all the requirements of the education process if it is organized well under apparent instructions and roles ... learning outcomes and course description. Both trainers and trainees must adopt these course descriptions and Learning outcomes.”*

Also, interviewee 5 responded that:

*“I can say that the Platform played a great role in this adoption. The future of this course and other courses is promising as online learning is improving rapidly, but we need time and more work on this issue”.*

Lastly, interviewee six also stated:

*“I believe that e-learning for English Language teaching and practice can be improved easily. We need to make a lot of arrangements and a clear plan. A plan in which we can arrange training meetings through a well-designed curriculum in which we select suitable styles and teaching strategies for this course to meet the required goals. We must design an E-learning program, especially for English Language teaching and practice. This suggestion includes, as well, creating a training gate that works as a domain to connect all the different sides of this process, i.e., trainees, lecturers, teachers, schools, Education Administration, and Ministry of Education.”*

## **Discussion**

### ***Theme One: The level of adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia***

From the responses presented above, it could be seen that e-learning is mainly adopted for practicum courses such as the English Language in Saudi Arabian Universities. All the respondents indicated that they had been involved in using e-learning for students in several situations and in several times. However, the adoption of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions has not appropriately met the minimum requirements for such training. It is not as good as face-to-face training as it is often difficult to achieve excellent learning outcomes or astonishing results. This argument is major because English Language learning requires several practices such as consistent writing, pronouncing, making use of, and learning specific skills, which often prove difficult to learn with e-learning, as indicated by the respondents. This finding corroborates with Almaiah, Jalil, and Man (2016b), who argued that there is a high level of adoption of e-learning for courses in Higher Education Institutions in several countries of the world. However, there seems to be no doubt that e-learning is a challenge for both students and teachers in developing countries. It may be more difficult for less developed countries to accept e-learning and use it effectively as a constructive literary instrument. As a result of cultural, social, and developmental differences, several students and teachers find it not as comparable to face-to-face teaching, learning and practice.

### ***Theme Two: Impacts of the adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia***

From the responses presented above, it can be seen that there are two impacts of adopting e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions. The positive impact, as seen, allows students to be taught alone without the feeling of anyone around them. Also, it enhances their ability to explain, talk, move, and do more practical repetitions as they want. The use of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice enhances the

development of self-esteem among students, develops many software skills, and makes students very creative. Furthermore, adopting technology helps students acquire distance teaching skills and prepares them to practice and apply lessons on educational platforms. It also helps students achieve competence in the outputs of practical learning. The adoption of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions enhances self-learning among students, improves the training of a perfect number of students online without any change of school timetables, enhances flexibility, and can be adopted at all times.

However, it is also important to note that adopting the technology for English Language teaching and practice does not enhance students' access to proper face-to-face practical training. It enhances weak supervision, brings about inadequate positive communication, and results in weak essential training skills. Consequently, with the use of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice, students generally do not go through that stage in which students feel fear and shame, or embarrassment while making errors in practicing what is learned. This finding corroborates with Novikov (2020), who argued that e-learning allows teachers and students to become familiar with various software and platforms through e-learning tools and applications. E-learning also offers the opportunity for teachers and students to acquire software skills in students, makes students very creative at their leisure, gives them adaptable learning platforms, enhances self-learning among students and enhances flexibility (Dhawan, 2020a). Also, it corroborates with Mporananayo and Mbonnyuburyo (2020). They supported that online teaching enables students to be taught alone without the feeling of anyone around and enhances students' self-esteem. However, it does not give room for appropriate supervision and a feeling of shame and embarrassment for students when they make errors in what they are being taught.

### ***Theme three: Challenges associated with the adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia***

From the responses presented above, it can be seen that there are several challenges associated with the adoption of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia. It was indicated that adopting e-learning for English Language teaching and practice does not allow students to get enough training to face the audience because they get most of their tasks done online. Also, there is poor or no internet access in some places, and in many situations, internet access in most rural places is not good, especially for this kind of practical e-learning course. This method is also associated with several other technical issues. Also, the adoption of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions often makes some students reluctant to share records and videos of themselves while conducting practicals to ascertain they are actively involved in the practicals. As many of them prefer sharing their audio only. The adoption of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice does not give adequate room for eye-to-eye contact and body language, which are very important for teachers, and proper supervision for students at school.

Furthermore, part of the challenges associated with adopting e-learning for English Language teaching and practice is that many students lack minimum computer skills. And the amount of time for training is not adequate for them. In most cases, every lecturer has many students with different issues to train.

Also, there is a lack of adequate technologies essential for modern training methods, and often no clear rules or instructions guide the training in many online classes. In many scenarios, the adoption of E-learning for English Language teaching and practice does not enhance taking

into cognizance the individual differences that exist between students. It does not give adequate room for solid communication between students and students and between students and lecturers. In the same vein, this method makes it difficult to practice some teaching practices and skills, giving little or inadequate room to evaluate students and measure their progress. Consequently, it makes students not very active as they should be. This finding corroborates the argument of Taurus et al. (2015) that the challenges associated with adopting e-learning revolve around a lack of technological know-how, inadequate financial resources, and inadequate ICT capabilities. Other studies, such as Kisanga and Ireson (2015) and Mulhanga and Lima (2017), pointed out that inadequate technology resources and IT knowledge are the critical challenges associated with efficiently implementing existing e-learning programs. Similarly, this aligns with Surahman (2020), who asserted that undergraduates in many Indonesian regions indicated a moderate degree of satisfaction with the use of e-learning, as internet issues often hamper it, lack of sufficient direction from the instructors, lack of adequate technologies, hampers adequate evaluation of student's learning progress, gives no room for eye contact between students and teachers as well as takes little care of students' individual differences.

#### ***Theme Four: The future of using E-learning for English Language teaching and practice in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia.***

From the responses presented above, it can be seen that the future of e-learning for English Language teaching and practice is promising. Many courses have been shifted to be delivered online as institutions will continue to adopt this method for both practicum and theoretical courses. However, it needs improvement and some changes, while the students and the lecturers need more time, training, and skills to make it more successful as it should be. Furthermore, adopting a method for English Language teaching and practice will be very successful and meet all the requirements of the education process if it is organized well under apparent instructions and rules. This corroborates with the assertion of Dhawan (2020b) that the future use of the e-learning procedure of innovative digitalization in education is possible because of the increased flexibility, convenience of use, and improved level of effectiveness of online teaching and learning environment. It was further argued that online learning and teaching during the quarantine period imposed by COVID-19 allows strengthening the skills of utilizing various technological tools and applications as well as the ability to improve analytical reasoning and problem-solving skills of both students and lecturers. As a result, higher education institutions worldwide would continue using e-learning methods both in the present and future.

However, it is important to note that this study is limited in that few respondents made themselves available for the study. However, the respondents were chosen based on a personal connection which can make the respondents respond to please the researcher. This may in one way or another ~~other~~ constitute some bias in the responses provided.

#### **Conclusion**

In summary, the study's main aim is to examine E-Learning for English Language Teaching in Higher Education Institutions in Saudi Arabia during the Covid-19 Pandemic. E-learning is the future of theoretical and practical courses, such as the English language in Higher Educational Institutions. This technology is highly relevant in teaching English in today's technologically driven world. However, most institutions have adopted E-learning for both practical and theoretical learning, majorly in higher institutions. This technology usage will benefit everyone

involved; Higher Educational Institutions can save money and time while encouraging creativity. Student benefits include greater access to knowledge, greater time flexibility, and the ability to manage their studies and jobs more effectively if they are working students. Students can learn in various ways since instructors can provide lectures from the comfort of their homes at any time of day or night. Regardless of its beneficial impacts, using E-learning is often hindered by several challenges ranging from low technical know-how, problems of inadequate finance, poor or no internet access, and insufficient room for eye-to-eye contact while teaching. E-learning is widely regarded as a long-term trend that will continue to grow in importance in modern education and training, mainly when adequate solutions are provided to the potential problems or challenges affecting its use.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is therefore recommended that:

There should be robust cooperation between Universities and Education Administrations in all regions to ensure proper support and organization of the adoption of e-learning technologies in Higher Education Institutions (Dhawan, 2020b). Expert staff should be involved in the e-learning practicum courses, such as the English Language, while students must be asked to meet the minimum requirements of this course by assuring that they share their audio and video when required.

Students and staff should be trained and re-trained on using digital technologies; furthermore, education institutions and government agencies should support students with computers and adequate software (Taurus et al., 2015).

Educational institutions should create avenues for real-time face-to-face meetings on campuses to have real-time discussions with students about practical skills to complement e-learning. Also, a prominent list of instructions for all lecturers and students must be indicated by various tertiary institutions.

There should be more time allocated for e-learning practicum courses such as the English language; the lecturers should be given more time. The students should be encouraged to be active and to share their views with their mates. English language lecturers and other lecturers should also encourage the students to use pair reviews with their mates online with some extra marks given or awarded.

Maintaining and monitoring the quality of online training programs, such as establishing an inter-University Centre for evaluating the quality of e-learning courses and materials, is essential for practicum courses such as the English language to be most successful and engaging. The intricacy of e-learning-related issues must also be considered, from boosting the IT proficiency of lecturers and designers to establishing sophisticated e-learning for practicum courses such as the English language in universities (Almaiah et al., 2016b).

Achieving the lofty objective of fully implementing e-learning for practicum courses such as the English language will be impossible without the cooperation of several stakeholders, including academia, course designers and training practitioners, and technology vendors. Hence, there is a need for adequate cooperation between the stakeholders involved. It is not enough for trainers and practical course designers to have technical and pedagogical expertise to employ technologies, they must also be ready to include it in their teaching methods.

### About the Author

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