



Benefits and Challenges of the E-Learning in the Light of Covid 19 Crisis

Assist. Inst. Ansam Muthanna

**Al-Mustansiriyah University\College of
Arts**

Ansama699@gmail.com

Introduction

Technological progress and Internet connectivity have changed a great deal on the level of life as a whole and in various domains. The World Wide Web, for instance, the educational and teaching side, has been one of the information platforms that open the door to people in all parts of the world. After the boom of the Internet and information technology, it opened the door to access to knowledge, education and high-quality training to a large extent and many were able to People have improved their life, professional and scientific skills, through information systems and the web, they have been able to access many pages, studies and websites that have changed their thinking, actions and practices, and they have not had the ability to obtain them without the availability of this technology .

E-learning is one of the means that supports the educational process and transforms it from the stage of indoctrination to the stage of creativity, interaction and skill development. This term collects all electronic forms of teaching and learning where the latest methods are used in the fields of individual or group education or scientific publishing by adopting computers, storage media, networks, and web pages. Rapid transitions in the field of technology to the introduction of new forms of learning and education that further strengthened the idea of person or self-education; where the learner continues to learn according to his time, capacity and speed of learning according to his previous experiences and abilities. E-learning is one of these evolving patterns of so-called distance learning in general, and computer-based education in particular. Where e-learning relies mainly on computers and networks to transfer knowledge and skills and its implementations include web-based learning, machine learning, virtual classrooms and interactive collaboration. Lesson content is delivered via the Internet, via audio, video and CDs .

With the importance of technological development and e-learning, We find that there are significant shortcomings in several countries around the world and in Arab countries, in particular in investing and directing this process and means of benefiting from it and growing knowledge and its transfer and distribution on a broader scale in society, and also regrettably that technological progress has restricted several people to social media programs and some programs that do not lead to that knowledge and sciences that raise the level of knowledge of society and to a beneficial harmful benefactor .

In countries with imaginative thinking and a strategic view of their people and how problems are dealt with creatively and trigger the way of thinking outside the box and from the angles that ordinary people do not see, it has emerged that one of the means of survival, and away from the virus and contamination, is the need to step away from the interactions and meetings between Society. Yet there is another issue, the school gatherings in schools and colleges, and it will continue to be the major problem for the countries in which it values education and places it on its list of priorities, as some countries have hurried to compel male and female students not to attend natural classes in universities or schools, but have ended the matter here and stopped education. Yes, but we think it has advanced and turned the educational cycle into e-learning in a record period. Both colleges, schools, educational destinations and those in need of meeting have advanced into electronic systems and e-learning. So, has this been the educational situation of many Arab countries, do we have the infrastructure that enables us to travel and keep up with these systems Or do we still think the same way in education that if we lose our girls, our daughters will stay at home and schools and universities will stop, an problem that needs to be examined by experts and those responsible for communications and education ministries and ministries related to it .

Until the picture becomes clear to many who do not know the benefits of e-learning, I will list some of these benefits to you:

- 1- Facility of access and versatility, where education and training programs can be accessed at anytime, anywhere, whether from your mobile computer or your smartphone, and this ensures that you can learn quickly and comfortably from home and aboard your vehicle, as well as from trains and transport .
- 2- Plains and lack of budget charged to benefit from schooling, and that may not be applicable in all areas of education and training, but there are a number of free and semi-free educational and training services or places that can connect with them to exclude you from fees .
- 3- Serves various learning types because we vary in learning styles and ways of thought, e-learning helps you to find the style that suits you, whoever wants to learn visual images through video clips will find that and whoever wants to learn through written notes and tests will find that and other patterns which can navigate through e-learning .

- 4- Independence and self-motivation to learn, and not all people are at the same speed of learning and understanding, and for this the learner moves the correct courses between the means and locations for him and in a way that achieves an optimistic and subjective individual .
- 5- The possibility of receiving observable results and analyses, because organizations, colleges and educational and training centers often complain about inadequate access to respected analyses carried out by employees in the conventional way and the opportunity to evaluate them in order to know the learning curves and support them; while e-learning allows you to do so easily and easily to know the effectiveness of the curriculum or The teacher in improving the education level of the beneficiaries and obtaining direct and live reports on this .
- 6- Preserving and maintaining records for learners and beneficiaries, whereby e-learning offers knowledge of learners' records, the quantity and quality of the educational programs they have completed, and maintaining them to decide the degree to which educational or functional objectives the beneficiary wishes to achieve allowing a clear evaluation of the curve of education and benefits .
- 7- Simulation and Interaction. By e-learning, learners will gain a lot of contact with their peers and others at the same educational, administrative, functional or professional level and share experiences in their various languages and places with one another .
- 8- Cooperation and the building of communities through forums, live discussions and the direct transfer of unique events which, in effect, revive employees and learners in a spirit of cooperation with others and team culture .
- 9- Feedback, understanding of the performance, scope of control and gain to the learner through interactive elements such as short assessments, immediate interviews and others .
- 10- Asking, reaching, and benefiting from experts all around the world, building positive relationships and arranging the live and direct meetings they need .

From here it becomes clear the importance of e-learning and of reconsidering what we have accomplished from the technology system and how the world has reorganized itself in the face of disasters and epidemics so that the educational cycle continues and people continue to create homelands and do not stop at obstacles, but minds have to work and think about ingenuity and turn challenges into grants .

Distance learning versus new Covid 19

UNESCO warns of the threat of 500 million students around the world because of the suspension of studies ... and virtual education programs provide a lifeline Just as the new Corona epidemic Covid 19 swept the barriers of time and space, the calls for "distance learning" - which accompanied the spread of the virus - came to sweep the barriers of space and time as well .

The spatial invasion made the lack of fixed spatial barriers an excuse to rise across expansive internet networks to various worlds, and the chimp sweep had the resources to get rid of the going and routine and crowd out others in search of the speed of access to space, which may be narrower than the expansive minds tolerate. Under the title Education disorder due to the new Corona virus and responding to it, a UNESCO report stated that the spread of the virus has set a record for children and youth who have stopped attending school or university. As of March 12, 61 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and the East have announced Middle and North America and South America from the closure of schools and universities, or implemented the closure, as 39 countries closed schools throughout, affecting more than 421.4 million children and young adults, and an additional 14 countries closed schools in some areas to prevent the spread or contain the virus. If these countries resort to closing schools and universities nationwide, the education of more than 500 million other children and young adults will be disrupted, according to the organization .

With all its audio-visual resources, illustrations and animations, distance education has transformed from indoctrination to interactive mode with visual and auditory effects, making the rigid educational process more attractive, and helping students access content without interruption. At the thresholds of leaves smell, which the Egyptian Ministry of Education and Technical Education hastened to go through the Egyptian Knowledge Bank as a way to solve the two-week research suspension there. UNESCO notes that the wealth of digital educational resources has made new demands for higher education systems and institutions, which include developing innovative curricula, curricula, alternative educational paths and higher education methods, all of which can be facilitated via the Internet, distance education and short skill-based courses

The company has developed a range of services to assist with distance learning, including the Black Board framework, which is a framework to focuses on creating and electronically correcting decisions, tasks, tasks and exams, and engaging with students through a virtual environment and smartphone-downloaded apps. Also, the Edmodo platform, which is a free social platform that provides teachers and students with a safe environment for communication and cooperation, and the exchange of educational content and digital applications, in addition to homework, grades and discussions. The Adrak application, which is concerned with teaching the Arabic language via the Internet, and the Google Classroom application, which facilitates communication between teachers and students, whether inside or outside the school. Some Egyptian colleges - including the Faculty of Pharmacy at Cairo University - have resorted to providing participation in it (Free) to all of its students as a method of distance learning, and Seeaw, a digital app that helps students document what they learn in school and share it with teachers, parents, classmates, and even the world, and the Mindspark app, which relies on an educational system Adaptive online, helping students practice and learn mathematics .

E-learning challenges in light of the Corona crisis and beyond

The use of the Internet in the cycle of education is not born yet, but goes back to before 2000. Most colleges use what's called "learning management systems" today. In view of the world's Corona crisis; most educational institutions have turned towards e-learning as a more appropriate solution to ensuring sustainability of the educational cycle. The use of online video chatting applications such as Zoom, Google, Meeting, and Web Exit has increased significantly, among others .

According to Tech crunch, these programs' downloads crossed 62 million times between 14-21 March 2020, with campaign bans launching in several countries. There was also an increase in the usage of other educational apps and programs. For example, Google Learning Case, Office 365, Apple apps, service assessment pages, and interactive activities. According to the same site, downloads of IOS and Google education programs increased by 45% in a week, and many readers of these lines may experience these experiences themselves while they are "forcibly" staying in their homes. Despite the positives of e-learning, many questions remain in the minds of its effectiveness as a complete alternative to traditional methods and how prepared for that? What are the challenges facing e-learning?

1- Educational content: Many teachers resort to what is called "Instructional Design", in order to prepare an educational material that achieves the goals very efficiently. This design is generally based on studying the educational needs of students, setting goals and appropriate means to achieve them, and tools to measure the extent of learning and feedback. Examples used in educational design are ADDIE, ASSURE, and others. E-learning is no exception. But what's the challenge here? There are several aspects to consider before using e-learning. We offer the most important of them .

- **Teaching aids:** Choosing educational means is a fundamental challenge in the traditional and electronic educational design, but in the latter it is greater, especially with the urgent need to employ interactive learning that increases students' attention by direct involvement as contributors rather than as recipients, and this will increase the motivation factor and achieve better results. Here, the teacher must make a significant effort to determine the appropriate interactive means for each goal; The process of engaging students in different places, and maintaining their attention across devices, is not easy, but it is certainly not impossible .

The same applies to the evaluation process , in particular the calculation of marks (Summative Assessment); while written examinations are considered to be the most common method, particularly in mid-term and final examinations-despite a noticeable shift to alternative evaluation methods-electronic evaluation appears to be difficult because monitoring is impossible to avoid fraud by using the same devices .

There are a lot of programs and applications available on the Internet to achieve student interaction in the educational process individually or in groups, including Quizziz, Socrative, Padlet, kahoot and Mindmaps, not to mention the applications provided by Google, Microsoft, Apple and others. All that the teacher needs is good planning to choose the appropriate method for each educational goal, but it may not yet be sufficient for the final evaluation and monitoring of students' scores .

Covering different needs and learning styles: Considering the diversity of learning styles is part of planning elements for a fair and effective educational process; There are - according to Fleming and Mills's (VARK) model - four basic modes of learning: Auditory Learners, Visual Learners, Kinesthetic Learners, and Read and Write Learners. The responsibility of the teacher here is to vary his means to cover different

needs. It may be appropriate for the hearing to focus on speaking from his side during the educational session, but it is tedious for both the visual and the dynamic. Here the instructor must choose the correct programs and applications to prepare a variety of instructional materials according to the various trends .

2- The readiness of the teacher: The term "Baby Boomers Gen" is called the categories that were born between 1944 and 1964, and one of the biggest problems facing this category - with regard to the subject of this article - is the readiness to use modern technology in the learning process, This is not a derogation from them, but it is a reality imposed by the late discovery of many technology devices and applications .

It was among those who sensed the importance of joining her knees so that he learned and used them, and some of them believed he was indispensable to them. Nevertheless, the tyranny of technology, the passion of generations with it, and the awareness of the environment of the need to reduce the use of leaves to other factors; which constituted a shock to this group, which has now become under the de facto imperative to use technology, and in detail extends beyond uploading and sharing files on electronic clouds even further .

There is another category - not from this generation, but from generation X and generation of millennials (millennials) - she lived in a state of denial and neglect of all these variables, she did not use technology appropriately in the past, and she now lives in the same dilemma, but she may be Better than the previous generation, given its knowledge of the basics of technology .

Consequently, the Corona crisis has led to the introduction of teacher courses in the area of e-learning and its various means. There's no doubt they'll face a funny challenge that's their students' speed in keeping pace with technology compared to them and their choice here is to accept it with a sporty spirit and some fun .

3- Availability of technology: Availability of technology is an important factor for the success of the idea of e-learning, without it would become a dream. There are different levels of this challenge. Availability of devices, the Internet, Internet speed and Internet bundles, each of which is a challenge in itself or in combination with others. The student (or even the teacher) may have the device, but he may not have internet access in the first place, and if it is available, it may be slow, or perhaps with an insufficient package to cover video presentations and large-sized materials .

Here the teacher needs to consider all of his students' requirements to select the most suitable methods for the community. For instance, if the issue is related to the lack of appropriate packages for students, then the materials may be packaged in small or medium sizes, and it may also be easier to minimize or use video in direct meetings for a limited period of time.

Basic trends in the use of digital technology in education

The first trend: education with digital technology

Here, digital technology plays an assistant's role in the educational process and can be used as a tool, method or technique used by the teacher during education and used by the student during his learning and actual practice of his activities, resulting in many applications, such as: computer simulations, video games and interactive educational programs, and other applications .

The second trend: digitally managed education

Here technology plays the role of (director and supervisor) in the process of education and differs from the first path in its ability to form an integrated educational environment that incorporates both the teacher and the student and the curriculum in which lectures can be given, questions answered, supervision of participating students, submission of assignments and submission of examinations, and others. Among the things that happen inside the real classrooms, and resulted in a large number of applications known as virtual classes .

The third trend: education on digital technology

Here, digital technology appears as a source of information and a basis for learning, because the teacher does not use it as a resource (first direction) or as a virtual learning environment (second direction), but rather as a teacher by which technology-related knowledge, information and skills are taught, and this pattern appears in information technology and computer science books; and its contents deal with topics Specialized, such as: programming, algorithms, multimedia, databases, computer design, and other topics .

Given the fact that digital technologies involves a wide variety of positive and some negatives, we cannot ignore the great position they can offer us in normal circumstances as well as in unique (critical) periods that we often go through, such as: the Corona crisis.

Education and Corona crisis

The definition of a crisis refers to an uncommon situation that affects individuals with a specific danger or hazard that affects the course of a person's everyday life, either at the personal, family, community or global level. In another language, the crisis from the system's point of view is a set of inputs which negatively affect Education operations and their outputs .

But in many cases, the crises are not directly affecting education. The real estate and economic crisis, for example, which occurred about ten years ago, had an effect away from education, and the global oil price crisis (up and down) did not affect education, except that in this circumstance we live. A crisis different from its predecessors, which is the spread of Corona disease, which started in China and started to spread in most countries of the world. The latest global shock directly affected the education process mainly and most of the countries in which it appeared .

The explanation for the effect of Corona 's disease on the educational process is its method of transmission, which in most cases requires direct contact with the patient or touching contaminated surfaces, which obliges decision-makers to avoid conferences , meetings and social activities limited to a particular location, and educational institutions are one of the largest in our contemporary world; which led countries to make difficult decisions to close educational institutions, such as: kindergartens, schools (public and private), universities and colleges, education centers, and care homes, among others .

Our students today need many basic skills; To help them use digital technology-based learning tools, including:

- 1- Basic skills for using digital technologies, such as: running and closing computers, downloading and managing apps, being able to sign in to educational applications, including: creating a new user and maintaining a personal account, joining learning groups and sharing and saving educational resources; in addition to dealing with digital device extensions such as: Speakers, audio and video recorders, etc. In order to be able to handle these devices properly, and to employ them while learning .
- 2- Searching skills across digital knowledge networks (the Internet), including: their ability to access relevant educational websites, their ability to search, process , store and retain the information needed, and their ability to differentiate between correct and incorrect information;
- 3- Self-learning skills: In order for students to be able to learn alone in conditions of interruption of education .
- 4- Problem solving skills: These skills are important as they help students cope with the uncommon (new) problems they encounter and work on solutions to solve them .
- 5- Crisis Response Skills: To help students to understand and take seriously the real circumstances that arise as a matter of urgency, not recklessness, and the ability to respond in crucial moments, and to continue their learning during disruption periods, and to rely on themselves. School readiness for digital learning in the opinion of school principals (analysis from the 2018 International Student Assessment Program and its implications for responding to the Corona Virus Crisis) .

About 1.5 billion students in more than 170 countries have seen their schools closed as their governments tackle the emerging Corona Virus pandemic. Now, education ministries around the world are trying to ensure continuity of learning for children and youth through distance learning. In most cases, efforts include the use of various digital platforms that contain educational content and a variety of educational technology solutions to keep communication and learning spaces as open and motivating as possible .

The dilemma faced by all countries is that while these technical solutions tend to be the best way to minimize major learning losses during a crisis (especially for disadvantaged students), they also risk widening gaps in education on equal opportunities. Consequently, if the digital gap in education were to rise during school closures, then deprivation will rise in literacy and learning gaps. For some, the continuity of learning is ensured, while others are denied .

Recent initiatives are focused on ensuring that all students have access to the Internet which is the digital divide's first dimension. This will enable all students with educational content to access online instructional materials and digital platforms .

Nevertheless, there is a slight gap in Internet connectivity even in wealthy countries where Internet access is open to all. The Corona crisis has highlighted two other dimensions of this digital divide.

The second dimension is the digital divide: without guidance, interacting with online content is less complex and less learning-oriented for students from poorer social and economic backgrounds. The third dimension is the digital school gap: the capabilities and capabilities of each school to provide individual or

equivalent digital and sequential learning for all students; Promote and monitor participation with these materials; And provide notes that help to maximize learning outcomes. For example, a school may send only printed material or indicate that students watch video clips aimed at the general public, while another school is able to almost follow classes or start innovative ways to use digital applications for collaborative learning and individual student support. With this great variation in schools' capabilities, it is easy to see why this digital divide is the most appropriate way to ensure students continue to learn during the pandemic .

As school principals are most familiar with their schools, in the 2018 International Student Assessment Program we searched the Principals questionnaire to find out what they meant about the ability of their schools and teachers to develop and handle interactive learning environments for the students. Their responses provide some hope but they also provide an image that is very realistic and disappointing.

1. Do managers agree that there is an effective online learning support platform available to their students?

Principals in over half of the educational systems surveyed said most students aged 15 are in a school without an appropriate online learning platform. This is the case in all Latin American and Caribbean participating nations, most nations in Europe and Central Asia (not the Baltic States, Turkey and Kazakhstan); and all countries from the Middle East and North Africa except Qatar, in addition to a large number of high-income countries and member countries of the Organization Economic cooperation and development (France and Portugal had 35% of students without access to the Internet, Germany 34% and Japan 25%). While most countries fall within the range of 35% to 70%, universal access to these platforms is only available to a few countries, including all Nordic countries, Singapore, Qatar and the four Chinese regions participating in the evaluation program, and to a lesser extent Australia, New Zealand and Thailand And the United States. In general, most countries are in the range of 35 percent to 70 percent of school-enrolled students as the main reports that there are effective online platforms for learning support. Consequently, education systems around the world are still very far away from the global reach of successful online student learning platforms .

2. Do teachers have the technical and pedagogical skills necessary to integrate digital devices into teaching?

Managers had a more optimistic outlook on the matter. Only a few extreme values (most notably Japan), most countries have around two-thirds of 15-year-old students in schools whose principal claims teachers have digital technology technological and pedagogic skills. Yet again, leaders of the high-income OECD have no better ranks than middle-income countries. The differences between regions are relatively small, although Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East and North Africa are lagging behind Europe, Central Asia, East Asia and the Pacific. The answers to this question offer some hope in the Corona crisis, while two-thirds seem small to teachers while, at the same time, increasing questions about the remaining one-third, whose teachers have no skills that are now indispensable for effective digital learning during school closures .

3. Are there effective professional resources to learn how to use digital devices available to teachers ?

Managers have been reasonably positive in their opinions on this question. For most countries, there are between 45% and 80% of students in schools whose principals see effective resources for teachers to use available digital devices, with very few countries reaching 90% and above. Here again, the rich countries are not particularly different from the middle-income countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia. The two extreme values are Japan and Hungary, where principals report a shortage of these resources (affects 19% and 29% of students, respectively). With nearly a third of students with teachers lacking access to these professional resources, the Corona crisis increases the urgency of ministries of education and private service providers around the world to create and provide more and more resources for teachers and parents are now demanding this as well .

How successful have we been using digital technology tools in education at the time of the Corona crisis ?

At the time of the current crisis, the amount of progress using digital technologies dictates many of the major factors that vary from one area to another, or from one experience to another. To assess the

probability of effectively applying digital learning resources in a time of crisis, decision-makers must answer the following key questions :

1. Does the curriculum and its objectives, content, activities and “learning resources” support the use of digital tools?
2. Did the teachers receive adequate training on the use of the necessary applications and technologies, especially when the crisis occurred ?
3. Are students prepared and pre-taught how to use the appropriate applications?
4. Do all participants in the education have: supervisors - teachers - students of appropriate tools and technologies ?
5. Is the infrastructure necessary to use digital technology tools available: Electricity - Networks – Internet ?

To the extent that the answer is positive we can say that the use of digital technology tools is effective and feasible, and that these digital tools can give us the desired results, so that we can overcome our current crisis.

What do the decision-makers have to do after the outbreak of the Corona disease ?

Those responsible for educational curricula and their policies must evaluate and thoroughly review the use of digital technology tools during the crisis, identify weaknesses, correct errors and enhance the benefits of current experience, as well as develop comprehensive, comprehensive and appropriate strategies separately for each stage of education; so that the work is joint, and that Not every educational institution is unique in its own initiative, which may weaken the desired results from the use of digital learning tools at the time of our current crisis. We wish safety to everyone, God Almighty .

Conclusion

Certainly, due to the outbreak of the Corona virus, the crisis that confronted the education sector propelled e-learning to the forefront, rendering it an irreplaceable choice (except for the lack of infrastructure). Teachers will face great challenges in coping with this sudden shift but many obstacles can be overcome with appropriate planning .

There is a significant question in many people's minds, which is: Will the e-learning momentum continue after Corona, or will it fade and things return to their previous track? Between those who think-or even hope-that things would return to the way they were and those who believe the long-awaited e-learning is irreversible, there are many opinions here. The good news is that most school principals are completely confident about the pedagogical skills of their teachers and provide resources to help them use digital learning while students stay at home. It is now important to ensure universal access to the Internet, as this can allow schools to use educational technology effectively, and in age-appropriate ways, within their regular education. The goal is a smooth transition to distance learning, to allow learning to continue during any future interruption in school operations .