The effect of Applying (E-learning) in Higher Education: Study on a Number of Students from different Universities in Iraq

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Abstract
COVID-19’s pandemic has hastened the expansion of online learning across all levels of education. Countries have pushed to expand their use of distant education and make it mandatory in view of the danger of being unable to resume face-to-face education. This study aims to determine the challenges and obstacles face by students in Iraqi universities with e-learning. It founds that the main problems that influence and impact online learning during COVID-19 are related to technical, academic, and communication challenges. The study results show that a total of 39.89% agreed that e-learning facilitates the learning process from various aspects, and a total of 42.13% disagreed with that, and a total of 17.8% are moderate.

Keywords: e-learning, questionnaire, E-learning platform

INTRODUCTION
Since the traditional classes and schools began to be prevalent, where a teacher and a group of students physically meet in the same time and place. Also, students use a paper and pencil to write down the lecture notes directly from the teacher. Cost reduction pressures and concurrent quality create the stipulations to transform the higher education [1].

Electronic educational technology, mostly called e-learning, has become more and more important in the last decade. Computer-based learning systems provide benefits for students as well as lecturers by offering more flexibility about place, time and pace. In addition, these platforms often offer more ways for interactions and motivation than traditional learning settings.

The fast improvement in communication and information technology resulted development for all aspects of life. The cost-effective as well as widespread technologies utilized to reach information and link students greatly changed the learning idea as the Internet and computer technology arose, the learning’s long-established setup of is being developed into what is called e-learning [2].

E-learning can be defined as the Internet technology usage for enhancing performing as well as knowledge. Every technology of E-learning enables students to control the content, time, pace of learning, learning sequence and media, permitting them so as they can tailor the experiences of theirs to satisfy their individual learning goals [1].

2- E-learning Definition and Types
2.1- Distance Education and E-learning

In distant education, students can study in their own time and at any place they choose (house, office or library) without a direct contact with the teacher. Technology is considered to be a critical element of this type of education.

E-learning, which is pointed to as an electric learning or learning on the Internet, can be a knowledge gaining that happens through media as well as every electronic technology. In plain languages, it can be denoted as “learning that is enabled electronically”. Normally, it can be undertaken online, as learners have the ability to reach their items of learning on the Internet no matter where or when. It usually happens in as courses, programs and degrees on the Internet [3].

2.2 Types of E-learning
2.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of E-learning

**Advantages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Good (%)</th>
<th>Bad (%)</th>
<th>Moderate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>E-learning platform and technologies that were used during E-learning.</td>
<td>40.83</td>
<td>39.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The ways that the topics were represented during e-learning.</td>
<td>38.33</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The capability of learning and assimilating information about solely learning on the Internet.</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>45.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The way that teachers evaluate students’ daily performance during class.</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>40.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disadvantages**

- **Adjunct**
  - The adjunct E-learning can be considered as the situation that E-learning is utilized as a helper in a conventional class supplying relative independence to students.

- **Blended**
  - Blended e-learning, Alghatani (2011) and Zeitoun (2008) showed that, for utilizing e-learning, the delivering of the materials of courses can be divided between the method of conventional learning and the method of e-learning.

- **Wholly Online**
  - That can be the method on the internet which could be free from taking part in conventional learning or classroom taking part [3].

This Type can be divided into:

- **Asynchronous e-learning** - usually made easier by media like discussion boards and e-mails, backs the relationships of work between students and with instructors, even as a participant does not have the ability to connect to the Internet simultaneously. So, it can be considered as a flexible e-learning’s key component. Actually, a lot of persons have a course on the Internet due to their asynchronous nature, merging work, family with education.[4],[5].

- **Synchronous e-learning** - usually backed by media like chatting and videoconferencing. Students and instructors try out synchronous e-learning as more sociable and being away from frustrating via asking questions and answering them at the same time. synchronous sessions assist every e-student feels as he/she is a participant more than an isolated person [4].

**E-learning assists the compensation for the shortages of academic staff, comprising instructors, lab assistants and facilitators etc.**

**E-learning might as well result congesting or heavy usage of a few sites. That might cause unexpected expenses in money and time.**

3- **Methodology**

A questionnaire on the Internet for examining learners’ perceptions with respect to e-learning was conducted and distributed to number of students in different universities in Iraq.

In this study, a number of general questions was addressed and can be divided into four categories:

1. E-learning platform and technologies that were used during E-learning.
2. The ways that the topics were represented during e-learning.
3. The capability of learning and assimilating information about solely learning on the Internet.
4. The way that teachers evaluate students’ daily performance during class.

The questions were written in Arabic to be more understandable by most of the students for accurate answers.

3.2 Participants

Students from different universities in Iraq including government universities (The University of Baghdad, The University of Technology, Al-Nahrain University) and various private universities (Al-Bayan, Al-Salam, etc.)

3.3. Data Collection Method

The form was sent through social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram) and through google classroom and so on, and the questionnaire lasted for a month.

4- Results

The results below were obtained from the questionnaire. Each category contains a group of various questions. ”Good” exemplifies the learners’ percentage that is compatible with e-learning and ”Bad” exemplifies the learners’ percentage who is not compatible.
From the results of the questionnaire, we found that a total of 39.89% agreed that E-learning facilitates the learning process from various aspects, and a total of 42.13% did not agree with replacing the traditional classroom learning with E-learning and that they would have learned more effectively in a traditional course, and a total of 17.8% are moderate with the idea of E-learning.

5- Conclusion

This paper gives an assessment of the influence of an e-learning system on individual students in Iraq. This paper has shown that e-learning could give greater flexibilities on the learning process. The main benefit of e-learning is that it enables learning at any place and time while its disadvantages are the students may find it difficult to understand most of the information without face to face contact with the educator and some of them find difficulty in reaching the needed resources and materials. In short, e-learning is considered as an integration of technologies in teaching and learning. It allows students to learn effectively but eventually it is the teachers who still need to play their roles and carry out their tasks in order for learning process to happen.

REFERENCES


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