

Challenges Envisioned in E-Learning on EFL Learners' Performance: A Case Study in Samtah Campus

Dr. Sobhana Nandyal Panduranga (Faculty) Ms. Seham Arishi (Head)
Dept. of English, College of Sciences & Arts, Samtah Campus, Jazan University, KSA

Abstract

E-learning is a process of learning, through electronic technology outside a traditional classroom. It may be a course, a program or a degree delivered completely online. It is a learning environment which uses Information and Communication Technologies as a platform for teaching and learning activities. It has been defined as "pedagogy empowered by technology", though 'digital technology' is more appropriate. It involves the use of electronic devices like PC, laptop etc., to provide learning material and training.

The present study was aimed:

1. To investigate the current problems of EFL learners and teachers in e-learning - A questionnaire was administered to EFL learners to identify the problems of e-learning and an open-ended questionnaire was given to the EFL teachers to examine the problems that they have faced while teaching online courses.
2. To study the impact of e-learning on EFL learners' performance among undergraduate students of Jazan University - The samples chosen randomly from different levels, showed that most of the learners have scored well in online quizzes and assignments, while their scores are relatively low in final exams.
3. To suggest a few perspectives on e-learning to improve the performance of EFL learners - There is a possibility of use of proxy, in online assessment tests and scope for plagiarism, which will be difficult to control or regulate. Hence, the teachers must design the assignments and quizzes in a way to keep check and gauge the level of comprehension among the students; Teachers and learners should be oriented on e-learning and its related hardware/software to motivate adoption of e learning - a modern technology in the education process.

Keywords: E-learning, EFL learners, challenges, performance.

1. Introduction

The twenty-first century has led to remarkable changes in several aspects of our lives with the advent of internet, an advanced digital technology. Today, most of the people are familiar with Online- banking, booking tickets, shopping, networking etc. The digital technology has revolutionized the education field also and has influenced the teaching and learning process in a big way. It has become an essential tool of communication and information, thus offering unique advantages to both educators and learners. E-learning is getting popular among learners because of its useful features. E-learning can be categorised into formal lessons, which are structured, and informal which could be discussions, e-mail etc. E-learning includes both types of learning, that help learners to perform better.

Rajan Bhandari (2014) stated that E-learning is different from conventional face-to-face classroom teaching and in short, stands for learning by electronic means. It means learning is not directly from lecture notes, books or face-to-face from teacher but through electronic means which are web-based lessons or online lessons. With advanced technology, the learners can access lessons from anywhere and at any time. The lessons can be made more interesting using multimedia i.e. combination of text, graphics, sound and animation. Lessons can be delivered to the learner by various means such as PC, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), mobile phone and TV.

Marc. J. Rosenberg (2001) defined LMS as "A Learning Management System which uses internet technologies to manage interaction between users and learning resources. An LMS is essential for creating an environment where employees (educators) can plan, access, launch and manage e-learning on their own".

Clarey (2007) defines "Learning Management System (LMS) as a software that automates the administration of training events {Elaine Biech (2008) in American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), section V, pg.396}. The LMS registers users, tracks courses in a catalogue, and records data from learners; it also provides reports to management. An LMS is typically designed to handle courses by multiple publishers and providers. It usually doesn't include its own authoring capabilities; instead, it focuses on managing courses created by a variety of other sources". Learning Content Management System (LCMS) combines the most essential pieces of the learning puzzle – namely courses and learning materials.

1.1 Types of E-Learning

The different types of e-learning are:

1. Purely online - there is no face-to-face meetings/contacts;
2. Blended Learning – is a combination of online and face-to-face, wherein, the user can design the course

- with combination of online lecture and offline lecture;
3. Virtual Learning - supports virtual lectures, workshops and attendance tracking information. Recorded virtual lectures are re-playable;
 4. Synchronous - involves online studies through chat and videoconferencing. It is a real time learning tool like a virtual classroom;
 5. Asynchronous - is also called as location independent learning where students learn the same material at different times and locations, and is opposite to synchronous learning;
 6. Instructor-led group – is similar to virtual learning. It is the practice of training and learning between an instructor and learners, either individuals or groups (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org>);
 7. Self-study – the learner works alone, progressing at own pace through a series of lessons delivered by the computer using - text, graphics, animation, audio or video as well as questions, exercises and assessments (<https://onlignment.com>);
 8. Self-study with Subject Matter Expert (SME) – SMEs provide content resources and review design documents, scripts, media assets, and test questions for accuracy. (<https://thelearningcoach.com>);
 9. Web-based – is one way to learn, using web-based technologies or tools in a learning process (www.tut.fi);
 10. Computer-based - the delivery of a learning, training or educational program by electronic means (www.derekstockley.com.au).

1.2 Delivery Methods in E-learning

The delivery methods in E- learning are -

Print: E.g., e-text, textbooks, e-zines;

Video: E.g., streaming video, video tape, satellite transmission, cable;

Audio: E.g., streaming audio, audio tape;

Review and Exams: E.g., electronic, interactive, paper;

Communication: is of two types - synchronous and asynchronous

Synchronous: learning from the sources of virtual classroom, has set time, phone/internet classroom sessions – e.g., chat, audio/video/teleconferencing, webinars, application sharing and messaging instantly.

Asynchronous: is student directed, self-paced learning- e.g., email, listservs, threaded discussion, weblogs, forums, groups and messages boards.

(<https://www.worldwidelearn.com/elearning-essentials/elearning-types.htm>)

1.3 Barriers to Implementation of E-Learning

Rajan Bhandari (2002) stated that for e-learning to achieve set level of standards, technological, social and pedagogical barriers, including the required change of mindset of the stakeholders, must be taken care before the implementation of e-learning.

Technological aspect: E-learning requires a thoroughly built-in technological infrastructure, for its smooth functioning. The initial capital outlay for setting up the infrastructure for e-learning can be high, due to setting up of servers, PCs and internet at reasonable access speed. Also, necessary tools are required for synchronous or asynchronous learning event.

Social aspect: Lack of self-confidence among teachers and feeling of isolation among learners form the major barriers under social aspect. Teachers and learners need to master skills for online teaching and learning.

Pedagogical aspect: It is imperative to familiarise learners and teachers with the novel way of learning because education has become more learner-directed than teacher- directed. Learners need to acquire new skills of learning, explore resources, gather information, share knowledge and experience with others.

Mindset aspect: E-learning requires a total change of mindset at various levels. To implement e-learning, support from policy makers is needed in any organization. The stakeholders (educators and learners) become the greatest limitation to e- learning implementation if their mindset is not ready to accept the change.

Despite the various benefits from e-learning, there are also some pitfalls that need to be considered. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of E-learning have been summarized from the literature:

1.4 Benefits/Advantages of E-learning:

Klein and Ware (2003), Algahtani (2011), Hameed et al, (2008), Marc (2002), Wentling et al. (2000), Nichols (2003) in their studies have listed the advantages of e-learning -

1. Highly flexible - it can be undertaken anywhere and anytime. E-learning simplifies the process and allows the students from all over the world to complete courses created by world's best universities. E-learning includes a huge number of learners worldwide.
2. Cost-effective learning - it helps both educational institutions and students. Colleges can save money on instructors and don't have to provide students with space for learning and some additional materials for

their education. Students don't have to travel somewhere to build new skills and gain new knowledge. In e-learning, teachers require to record their lectures using the learning materials which can be used whenever required, while the students can access the same from any place and at any time.

3. Universal access - it allows students to study from any place where they have a stable internet access. It also allows them to study at any time they feel comfortable. It not only makes the learning process easier for people living in different time zones but also allows the students to combine online education with work or getting a college degree. It also allows students to organize their time more effectively.
4. Innovative teaching - it can make learning interesting and provides single effort to the educator catering to different types of learners (ex...auditory learners, visual learners, and kinaesthetic learners)
5. Self-paced learning - makes learners comfortable to tread the learning path at their own pace
6. Accessibility - allows the sharing of resources from all the experts with the click of a button. In online, the learners will be able to communicate with each other in chats and forums. One can share one's progress on social media, and so on. It may be a factor of self-motivation/refresher for the learners.

Regardless of the advantages of e-learning, there are certain disadvantages which need to be considered, as it will encourage to search the ways that could reduce the drawbacks of online training in the research studies conducted by Collins et al. 1997; Klein and Ware 2003; Hameed et al, 2008; Almosa, 2002; Akkoyuklu and Soylu 2006; Lewis 2000; Scott et al. 1999; Marc 2002. Dowling et al. 2003 argue that, learning materials available online, though helps in improving learning, cater only for specific forms of collective assessment. Young (1997), Burdman (1998) opined that the most important disadvantage of e-Learning is the complete absence of personal interactions, not only between learners and educators, but also among peer groups. Almosa (2002), felt that regardless of the advantages of e learning, disadvantages involved should also be paid attention, to find ways and means of reducing the inherent drawbacks in e learning. Llona Hetsevich (2017) also listed a few of the disadvantages of E- learning in her work.

1.5 Pitfalls/Disadvantages of E-learning:

1. Lack of motivation – It hinders the progress of the learners.
2. Lack of infrastructure – It affects the pace of e-learning process
3. Technological issues - can be one of the major problems. If they are not resolved in time, it becomes difficult to pursue online training. Stable internet access with reasonable speed, and computers that are efficient to support online stream, are very important. Students must be familiarized with the technologies and constantly updated.
4. Lack of social interaction - could make the learners feel isolated. It also affects the social behaviour of the learners in society. Hence, collaborative forums and online discussions/training need to be initiated.
5. Learning may be considered impersonal in the absence of an instructor by some learners, due to which they might feel isolated and deprived of support.
6. Lack of feedback - from the educators is one of the drawbacks in students' progress. The students will be able to improve only when they know their flaws and weak points. While online instructors do give students feedback, they still may not have enough time to concentrate individually, explaining every detail. This could lead to some students lagging, having un-answered doubts, resulting in non-completion of their course.
7. Communication skills – E learning as a method, may not help improving communication skills among the learners as they lack exposure with their peer groups.
8. Lack of control mechanism – there is a possibility of use of proxy, in assessment tests in e-learning and scope for plagiarism, which will be difficult, to control or regulate such activities.
9. Limitations - not all fields or disciplines can utilize the e-learning technique in education. For example, the scientific studies that involve practical component cannot be studied through e-learning. Researchers have argued that e-learning is more appropriate in social sciences and humanities than in medical/engineering/agricultural sciences, pharmacy etc., where practical and professional skills are essential.

Cost factor - E-learning may also lead to congestion or heavy use of some websites which may bring about unanticipated costs both in time and money, as reported by Collins et al. 1997; Klein and Ware, 2003; Hameed et al, 2008; Almosa, 2002; Akkoyuklu & Soylu, 2006; Lewis, 2000; Scott et al. 1999; Marc, 2002.

2. Rationale of the Study

The emergence of information and instructional technologies and their influence on teaching and learning has brought about significant changes in academic environment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). KSA has witnessed unprecedented growth in higher education and E-learning in recent times. The new learning trend has made mandatory to equip teachers in educational institutions with the necessary skills to cope with the new

challenges. The urgent need for e-learning in KSA has resulted from the massive population growth vis-a-vis the scarcity of teachers in both quantity and quality, including the need to reduce financial burden. In 2002 e-learning was started in KSA and has slowly gained momentum, recognition and interest among academic institutions, academics and students. In this regard, the Ministry of Education, KSA is striving for the pursuit of excellence.

Of late, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of education in general and to learn English language in its true form and manner among the Saudi students in particular. The students are self-motivated to learn English as a foreign language in the higher education institutions. E-learning has become a buzz in the field of education and it caters to the needs of modern day learners. Language teaching is one such field where technology has taken over and improved the ways of learning and teaching. E-Learning Systems are a technological development that have reformed and restructured the delivery and interaction of students and teachers with course materials and related resources. E-Learning systems have been widely used in developed countries and have recently become more popular in many developing countries.

2.1 Research Title

The research study has been entitled as “**Challenges Envisioned in E-Learning on EFL Learners’ Performance: A Case Study in Samtah Campus**”.

2.2 Research Questions

1. What are the current problems of EFL learners in e-learning?
2. What is the impact of e-learning on EFL learners’ performance?
3. How can EFL learners overcome problems in e-learning and improve their performance?

2.3 The Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the current problems of EFL learners and teachers in e-learning;
2. To study the impact of e-learning on EFL learners’ performance; and
3. To suggest a few perspectives in e-learning to improve learners’ performance.

2.4 Operational Definitions of Key terms

E-learning: learning by electronic means.

EFL Learners: learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Saudi students in the present context.

Challenges: are considered as problems in this context /situation.

Performance: completion of a task with application of knowledge, skills and abilities. (overt manifestation of any ability which is observable and measurable).

2.5 The Present Scenario

The teaching and learning in Samtah campus of Jazan University have had to be adapted for online teaching due to administrative and technical reasons. Needless to say, it is imperative to improve teaching & learning environments to support the students in an efficient manner as the number of students is increasing every academic year. Hence, use of computers and new technologies have become crucial part of teaching and learning. This rapid rise of technology has revolutionized the English Language Teaching (ELT) too.

The investigator being a teacher of English has found it worthwhile to conduct a study in Samtah campus on the current problems / potential challenges of e-learning and its impact on EFL learners’ performance and suggest flexible perspectives. To achieve the aforesaid objective, research has been conducted in three phases. In the first-phase, the barriers restraining the advantages of E-learning, as focussed in the literature reviews were analysed. In the second-phase, a questionnaire-based survey has been conducted among the stake holders of E-Learning i.e. learners and educators in Samtah campus of Jazan University. In the third phase, to achieve the objective, i.e., “to study the impact of e-learning on EFL learners’ performance”, online assessment was analysed. It is assumed from the analysis that the learners were able to discuss the assignments and quizzes with each other via social media, which was quite evident from their scores. While the scores were extremely high in the assignments and quizzes, their performance was very poor in the Final examinations, as the examinations were not online. The samples chosen randomly from different levels, show the difference in the learners’ academic performance level in online assessment and actual final exam scores.

3. Literature Review

Light has been thrown on similar studies which were selected from ScienceDirect, IEEE Journals, Emerald Publishers, Taylor and Francis, Springer and Google scholar data-bases.

Ali, M. Al-Shehri (2010) in his study examined the current and future developments and challenges of E-learning in KSA. A qualitative approach was used to explore views of 30 senior academicians involved in E-

learning during their attendance at a two-week course on the subject. All participants considered themselves as decision makers on E-learning in their units or departments. They felt that E-learning had come to stay, but acknowledged challenges in respect of resources, organization, management, and information technology. The fast development of E-learning poses many challenges. The study recommended that clear vision and strategic planning with prospective E-learners in mind are essential to make E-learning programs cost effective.

Reem Alebaikan and Salah Troudi (2010) attempted to investigate the nature of obstacles and challenges encountered at Saudi universities while implementing a blended learning approach. Practical recommendations that would facilitate transition to a blended learning university environment, were presented. It hoped that the study would help to provide insight for the faculties and the decision-makers throughout higher education in Saudi Arabia. Although this investigation was specifically related to the implementation of blended learning in the universities of Saudi Arabia, the assumptions and recommendations contained herein are of great value to other populations facing similar challenges.

Salem Alkhalaf, Anne Nguyen, Steve Drew (2010) in their report on the assessment of eLearning systems in KSA, mentioned that the conceptual framework is the Information System (IS) Success/Impact Measurement, the framework pioneered by DeLone & McLean (1992) and extended by Gable, Sedera & Chan. They proposed a range of indicators/items to measure the four dimensions of success and impact of an eLearning system as modelled by the framework.

Algahtani, A.F. (2011) In this study, e-learning's effectiveness was evaluated at two universities in Saudi Arabia, through male learners' perceptions. The data was collected by mixed methods – 1. using a questionnaire from a sample of 300 learners and 2. a focus group interview for 21 learners. The findings showed that e-learners were able to learn autonomously using all features made available by the technology. They reported that they were motivated by the interactivity of e-learning and pursued their courses with intensity and success. The study collected learners' views about the positives and negatives of e-learning, its requirements and barriers, as well as learners' suggestions for the development of e-learning. Learners appreciated the opportunities offered by e-learning and the way it supported their studies, facilitating communication and accommodating their learning needs and circumstances. They recognised that it helped to meet an increased demand for learning. On the other hand, they noted some hazards to physical and social health and some confusion arising from the diversity of information accessible through ICT. They felt improvements could be made by planning, training and by specialized personnel. Most of the barriers they noted arose due to infrastructural weaknesses and lack of motivation for e-learning. This study applied social science methodology to the innovation of e-learning so that decision makers and other stakeholders can assess aspects of its effectiveness, to provide a more secure base for action. The definitions of e-learning were categorized from three different perspectives: the distance learning perspective (Perryton, 2002; Alarifi, 2003; Holmes and Gardner, 2006), the technological perspective (Wentling et al. 2000; Nichols, 2003) and the pedagogy perspective of e-learning (Khan, 2005; Schank, 2000). The study concluded with some recommendations as well as suggestions for future research.

Khlood Al-Siraihi Al-Harbi (2011) in the article discussed the factors that influence e-learning in Saudi higher education through analysing the perceptions and attitudes of Saudi university students ($n = 531$). It reported the results of a survey conducted to investigate the acceptance of e-learning in a Saudi higher education institution as perceived by university students. The findings demonstrated that attitudes toward e-learning, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control as well as e-learning systems attributes were critical determinants of students' behavioural intention to use e-learning. By explaining students' behavioural intentions, the findings of this study will help to provide insight into the best way to promote e-learning acceptance among students.

Abdullah Alshwaier, Ahmed Youssef and Ahmed Emam (2012) in their research study on

Cloud computing, provided a shared pool of computing resources that can be rapidly and elastically provisioned and released, based on users' demand to serve a wide and constantly expanding range of information processing needs. Due to its tremendous advantages this technology is maturing rapidly and is being adopted in many applications including government, business, and education. They studied on how cloud computing can benefit e-learning education in KSA. They discussed the cloud computing educational environment and explored how universities and institutions may take advantage of clouds not only in terms of cost but also in terms of efficiency, reliability, portability, flexibility, and security. They presented several case studies for educational clouds introduced by popular cloud providers which reflect the increasing interest in this new trend. They also discussed future challenges to cloud education.

Hussain Ahmed Liton (2012) in his paper explored the new flights and avenues of developing EFL teaching-learning aspect in the intermediate level. He valorized to investigate the possible corridors in the realm of language learning motivation with a view to develop and incorporate EFL teaching-learning affairs and attempts to diagnose the predicaments of EFL learning in Saudi colleges through survey questionnaires and observation of both teachers and students. The sample constituted 380 students and 94 teachers from all renowned institutions of the Kingdom. The paper offered some useful and effective recommendations to speed

up EFL learning outcomes based on the results of statistical data analyses and observation of the research survey.

Salem Alkhalaf, Steve Drew, Rayed AlGhamdi, Osama Alfarraj (2012) in their paper presented findings from a study evaluating eLearning systems in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). To date, however, little attention has been paid to the issue of measuring the impact of eLearning on academic staff at higher educational institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Responding to this gap in the literature, this study investigated the impact of e-Learning systems in higher education institutions in this context. A survey based on the Information System (IS) Success/Impact Measurement Framework was executed in a sample population of faculty members using e-Learning in two top universities in the KSA. The findings of this study showed positive academics' attitudes towards eLearning systems in higher education, helping faculty members to improve their job performance, and educational organizations to provide better and new products and services to users.

Ali Mohammad Al-Asmari, M Shamsur Rabb Khan (2014) in their paper have considered the growth of e-learning in KSA. It analysed the potential need and the overall impacts of e-learning on various stakeholders. It also discussed the current e-learning developments as well as prospects.

Valentina Arkorful and Nelly Abaidoo (2014) in their study investigated the effectiveness of using e-learning in teaching in tertiary institutions. In institutions of higher education, the issue of utilizing modern information and communication technologies for teaching and learning is very important. This study reviewed literature and gave a scholarly background to the study by reviewing some contributions made by various researchers and institutions on the concept of e-learning, particularly its usage in teaching and learning in higher educational institutions. It unveiled some views that people and institutions have shared globally on the adoption and integration of e-learning technologies in education through surveys and other observations. It looked at the meaning or definitions of e-learning as given by different researchers and the role that e-learning plays in higher educational institutions in relation to teaching and learning processes, and the advantages and disadvantages of its adoption and implementation.

Yahya Al Alhareth, Neil McBride (2014) in their paper, reviewed the literature of e-learning in Saudi higher education by considering several aspects including: information regarding e-learning in Saudi Arabia through different sections, which are, its history, current online programmes in higher education, the internet and women's e-learning and challenges and limitations of e-learning. The initiatives to introduce e-learning to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) have led to a rapid increase in e-learning. However, Saudi Arabia is still in the early stage of its e-learning development and faces many challenges, which might affect the adoption and successful application of e-learning in Saudi Arabia especially for women.

Quadri et al (2017) presented a research paper which attempted to study the various barriers that are affecting the successful implementation of E-Learning in Saudi Arabian Universities. This study reviewed various barriers from literatures and identified most important E-Learning barriers which are described and grouped in four dimensions such as student, instructor, infrastructure and technology, and institutional management. Sixteen barriers falling under these relevant dimensions were validated for their importance quantitatively through university students, instructors, and E-Learning staff of some well-known universities in Saudi Arabia. A survey instrument was developed and tested on a sample of 257 respondents of Saudi Arabian Universities. It was found that infrastructure and technology dimension is the most significant as perceived by respondents. Results of the study also revealed that, all barrier factors are highly reliable, therefore should be taken care for successful implementation of E-Learning systems.

4. Research Methodology

Analytical and descriptive methods have been used to analyse and describe the problems of e-learning among the undergraduate students of Jazan University, Samtah campus.

4.1 Sample

30 English teachers in the Dept. of English constituted the teachers' sample. The learners' sample of the study comprised 100 subjects of the Dept. of English, Samtah campus.

4.2 Instruments

- i) An open-ended questionnaire was administered to EFL teachers to examine their current problems in e-learning. EFL Teachers Open ended Questionnaire in Appendix-A1 may be referred.
- ii) A questionnaire was also administered to EFL learners to examine their current problems in e-learning. The question items were on barriers related to infrastructure and technology, teaching and learning, evaluation and to seek learners' opinion about past and present aspects and future prospects of e-learning. EFL Learners' Questionnaire in Appendix-A2 may be referred.

5. Results of the Study

The data collected by administering EFL Learners' Questionnaire and EFL Teachers' open-ended Questionnaire

has been analysed.

5.1 Analysis of the EFL Learners' Questionnaire

All the question items in the EFL Learners' questionnaire as below/Appendix-A2, have been analysed and calculated in percentages.

1. Do you use e-learning to learn English as a foreign language?

100% of the sample has expressed that e-learning is used to learn English as a foreign language.

2. Did you face any problems when you attended online lectures?

100% of the sample has expressed that problems are faced when online lectures are attended.

3. Did you face any blurred sound problems when you attended online lectures?

55% of the sample has expressed that blurred sound problems are faced, when online lectures are attended, while 45% expressed having faced the problem sometimes.

4. Did you face any frequent parking when you attended online lectures?

45% of the sample has expressed that frequent parking is faced when online lectures are attended, while 55% expressed having faced sometimes.

5. Did you have discussions and forums in online lectures?

50% of the sample has expressed that they had discussions and forums in online lectures, while the other 50% of the sample has expressed having discussions and forums sometimes.

6. Did you submit assignments online?

90% of the sample has expressed that they submitted assignments online but 10% of the sample could not submit as they had some technical issues.

7. Did you submit midterm quiz online?

85% of the sample has expressed that they submitted midterm quiz online but 15% of the sample could not submit as they had some technical issues.

8. Did you do your Final exams online?

100% of the sample expressed that they have not done Final exams online.

9. What is your opinion about the e-learning of English in Samtah campus?

Only 5% expressed their opinion that they liked e-learning of English in Samtah campus. But 95% have expressed their opinion that they did not like it.

10. Do you want your campus to totally change to e-learning?

77% of the sample expressed that their campus can be totally changed to e-learning. But 23% of the sample expressed that their campus should not be changed to e-learning. This indicates that if necessary steps are taken to improve the e-learning or minimise the problems, the learners were ready to accept e-learning system of education.

11. Did the use of e-learning make any difference in teaching and learning of English?

11% of the sample expressed that the use of e-learning made difference in teaching and learning of English but 89% of the sample expressed that the use of e-learning did not make any difference in teaching and learning of English.

12. Would you like to continue with e-learning in future?

15% of the sample expressed that they would like to continue with e-learning in future but 85% of the sample expressed that they would not like to continue with e-learning in future.

5.2 Analysis of the EFL Teachers' open-ended Questionnaire

The responses given by EFL teachers have been listed in terms of challenges faced by both teachers and learners. The responses in terms of disadvantages in this study are in line with the researches of Collins et al. (1997); Klein and Ware (2003); Hameed et al. (2008); Almosa, (2002); Akkoyuklu and Soyly (2006); Lewis (2000); Scott et al. (1999); Marc (2002), Llona Hetsevich, (2017).

5.2.1 Challenges of EFL Teachers and Learners:

Technological aspects –

- ✚ Technical efficiency level of the students is low;
- ✚ Learners had problems with sound clarity during (Virtual Lectures) VL sessions;
- ✚ Learners experienced lot of disturbances during VL sessions, there by frequently; losing connectivity and finding it difficult to login again; Resultantly, teachers and learners were finding themselves in different chat rooms;
- ✚ Teachers and learners had login issues with Virtual Lectures (VL);
- ✚ As there were several problems with Virtual Lectures (VL), Media Lectures (ML) were started. With the introduction of MLs, teachers are not able to track whether the learners are accessing/concentrating on the lectures;

Teaching and learning aspects -

- There is no scope for teachers to ensure that all the students are paying attention to the lectures as the e learning situation is not of face to face interaction type;
- Possibilities are there for the students to merely login and coddle in other activities;
- Ultimately the process of teaching and learning in e learning is reduced to a mere formality.

Evaluation aspects –

- Lack of feasibility for online exams;
- With respect to online assessment, students were able to score highly in assignments and quizzes, as they have the scope to discuss and exchange answers on social media;
- On contrary, the students scored very poor in their Final examinations as there was no scope for exchanging or discussing in the examination hall and in front of the invigilators.

The samples chosen randomly from different levels, show the difference in the learners' academic performance in online assessment and actual final exam scores.

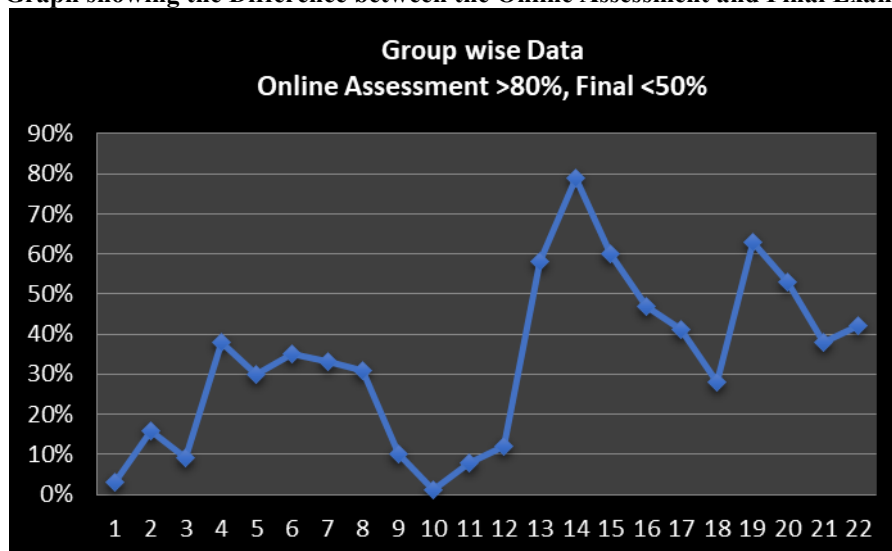
5.2.2 Group wise Data Analysis- Inference

The data showed that:

- 5 of the 22 group samples, the difference between online assessment and the final exam is more than 50%.
- 10 of the 22 group samples, the difference between online assessment and the final exam is more than 25% but less than 50%.
- the remaining 7 of the 22 group samples, the difference between online assessment and the final exam is less than 20%.

Hence, it is inferred that most of the learners have scored extremely well in online assessment, i.e., quizzes and assignments, while their marks are relatively very low in final exams.

Graph showing the Difference between the Online Assessment and Final Exams



5.2.3 Perspectives of the Investigator

- The recorded virtual/media lectures should be at a reasonable pace of delivery in order to help the students to listen and understand the lectures any number of times;
- There is a possibility of use of proxy, in assessment tests in e-learning and scope for plagiarism, which will be difficult to control or regulate. Hence, the teachers must design the assignments and quizzes in a way to keep check and gauge the level of comprehension among the students;
- Constant feedback should be given by the teachers in students' forum to enable them to identify their weaknesses and improve upon them;
- Students' contribution to database should be encouraged to facilitate collaborative learning;
- Both the teachers and the learners should be oriented on e-learning and its related software to motivate them to accept and enforce the modern technology in education process;
- Provision of advanced technology viz., high speed servers/network/internet, high speed PCs to the users, motivate adoption of e learning.

6. Conclusion

The e-learning has its own merits and demerits. While the merits are mostly focused on the accessibility, flexibility and cost effectiveness, the demerits, are about the personal and emotional factors which are not critical and can be fixed with time. Not all courses can be taught online. Some courses do require physical presence,

working with non-digital objects and in a different environment (ex. practical component). E-learning can be complimentary to the traditional learning process, making it more diverse and allowing students to gain additional knowledge about certain subjects. Hence, both types of educational methods which are equally important should be blended in a way to get optimum output.

Summing up this research study, the researcher has observed from the analysis of the EFL teachers and learners' questionnaires, that both were ready to accept the change from the traditional mode of teaching to modern day e-learning, if all the technological issues involved are properly taken care of.

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Appendix-A1 --- Open ended Questionnaire for EFL Teachers

Dear teachers

I am conducting a research study entitled "Challenges envisioned in E-Learning on EFL Learners' Performance: A Case study in Samtah campus". I request you to give your responses in this questionnaire. I appreciate your kind cooperation.

Thank you

Primary Investigator: Dr. Sobhana Nandyal Panduranga

Co-investigator: Ms. Seham Arishi

List the problems of EFL teachers and students in Online teaching and learning.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Appendix-A2 --- Questionnaire for EFL Learners

Dear students

I am conducting a research study entitled “Challenges envisioned in E-Learning on EFL Learners’ Performance: A Case study in Samtah campus”. I request you to give your responses in this questionnaire. I appreciate your kind cooperation.

Thank you

Primary Investigator: Dr. Sobhana Nandyal Panduranga

Co-investigator: Ms. Seham Arishi

Please tick (√) the response that you find relevant

1. Do you use e-learning to learn English as a foreign language?
1. Yes 2. Sometimes 3. No
1. Did you face any problems when you attended online lectures?
1. Yes 2. Sometimes 3. No
2. Did you face any blurred sound problems when you attended online lectures?
1. Yes 2. Sometimes 3. No
3. Did you face any frequent parking when you attended online lectures?
1. Yes 2. Sometimes 3. No
4. Did you have discussions and forums in online lectures?
1. Yes 2. Sometimes 3. No
5. Did you submit assignments online?
1. Yes 2. Sometimes 3. No
6. Did you submit midterm quiz online?
1. Yes 2. Sometimes 3. No
7. Did you do your Final exams online?
1. Yes 2. Sometimes 3. No
8. What is your opinion about the e-learning of English in Samtah campus?
1. Yes – I like it. 2. Neutral 3. No – I don’t like it.
9. Do you want your campus to totally change to e- learning?
1. Yes 2. Neutral 3. No
10. Did the use of e-learning make any difference in teaching and learning of English?
1. Yes 2. Neutral 3. No
12. Would you like to continue with e- learning in future?
1. Yes 2. Neutral 3. No