



Educational Analysis of Young EFL Learners during COVID-19 in Saudi Arabia: Rooting Its Effect

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This study is undertaken to pave the way for an enlightened understanding of the effects and reflections of COVID-19 with respect to the educational landscape in terms of distance and online learning set up/learning resources, professional development, management and parental involvement. The researcher employs a mixed-methods approach by utilizing Creswell's [1] explanatory sequential design. There are 100 respondents selected for purposive sampling, which included teachers, students, parents, and school admin staff. The data has been collected from 5 cities located in different regions of Saudi Arabia. Based on the results, the study shows that distance and online learning set-up really have a positive impact on students in the Saudi Community. These kind of educational endeavors develop skills for independent learning and they become well-equipped with online learning techniques and styles. It is quite obvious that students hold positive views towards online classes. However, teachers need to enhance their skills when it comes to instructional tools, especially in using computers which is necessary in an online class. Though the school management provides a relevant answer to the queries of students, parents and teachers, the school management should provide support to authorized bodies or the community. In this study, parental intervention is not significant and useful for the students' assessments. However, parents expect a high standard of performance from their children. It can be revealed in this part that parental intervention is not useful for students' assessment. In doing

so, parents should also limit setting a standard of performance for their children. This might affect the emotional performance of a child. Aside from material support, parents should continue to provide emotional support to their children, especially in these trying times.

Keywords: Saudi Community; online learning; professional development; management; parental involvement.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world is a challenging pedagogical landscape. Hence, this is a great feat to remind every educator to adapt to the changing world. The need for learning has decreased due to the current challenging times. Because of the Coronavirus outbreak, this has greatly affected the world, leading global institutions to take accelerated measures and forcedly close to ensure the safety of students and faculty. UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay [2] cited in Demuyakor [3] says: "Never before have we witnessed educational disruption on such a large scale" (p. 1). This virus is considered as one of the deadliest and most disruptive viruses in the history of mankind. Rapid information disclosure is a top priority for disease control and prevention. Hence, it affects not only the lifestyles of many, but also the academic system around the world. Obstacles may arise during the assessment process of EFL students, specifically young students, during such a challenging and stressful time. Furthermore, such obstacles could be caused by various factors the student may be exposed to or experience during the obligatory quarantine.

Abdallah [4] E-learning has dramatically changed the manner and process of delivering learning courses and imparting necessary knowledge. Speed, time and distance related issues greatly affect educational learning. Consequently, educational institutions take advantage of digital means in order to avoid hindering students' education. However, learning does not end even though the world experiences havoc. Teachers explore new assessment methods that would align and adapt to the new learning environment set-up.

Roblyer, et al. [5] explain that students' ability to complete an online course has less to do with their ability to learn course content and "appears to depend more on motivation, self-direction, or the ability to take responsibility for individual learning" (p. 11).

Online engagement learning is really different from facilitating online courses, especially when

parents have limited understanding and experience with online courses. As a result, it is important to understand why and how parents choose to be involved in their children's learning within the context of online courses.

Assessment knowledge is an essential component of language learning. It is considered a complex procedure and the development of reliable and valid assessments is challenging because they can be affected by numerous factors, even within traditional classroom environments. Primary school language learners' assessment tends to be subjected to psychological, sociocultural, and physical composite measures (Dorckell & Marshall, [6]). Researchers such as Bailey [7], Dorckell and Marshall [6] argue that socioeconomic status, language and dialect disparity, hearing deficiency, and test types impact the assessment results. Moreover, Bailey claims that technological advances can be of great benefit to the development of young language learners and consultants alike.

Furthermore, encouraging students to use their preferred modern learning strategies has sparked interest and become a topic of discussion in the field of language teaching (e.g., Richmond & Cummings, [8]; Eishani et al., [9]). However, such modern strategies can be challenging for teachers due to the sudden change in the classroom environment (Baticulon et al., [10]). The Covid-19 pandemic's effect on the educational process has forced students and their instructors to learn how to utilize virtual platforms in a short time without prior training. Due to the sudden change, problems related to students' attendance and other issues have risen. These problems are largely caused by internet connection issues, and the lack of proper technological devices. They might also be enforced by psychological stress and lack of adequate social relationships (Baticulon et al., [10]; Demuyakor, [3]). To deal with this issue, instructors have to resort to different evaluation assessment methods. These evaluation methods have to be equally effective and novel and similar to what the instructors and

their students have been familiar with (Rasmitadila, et al., [11]).

Hence, this study sheds light on an enlightened understanding of the effects and reflections of Covid-19 with respect to the educational landscape in terms of distance and online learning set up/learning resources, professional development, management and parental involvement.

1.1 Research Significance

This study is examined in order to pave the way for an enlightened understanding of Covid-19 with respect to the educational landscape. It is important for all those who are concerned with the meaningful and quality education of learners and for the Saudi Community. The study will benefit the following:

Saudi Community: This gives an insight into educational environments in understanding the Saudi community.

Teachers: The result of this study will give insight into the understanding, effects, and reflections of Covid-19 with respect to educational atmospheres. This study is not only a takeoff in the field of reflections; more importantly, this academic and cultural research will create a ready and well-studied reference material.

Schools: Academic institutions have a significant role in the promotion and preservation of culture and learning materials. The school carries the responsibility of providing opportunities for the academic community to respond to the mandate of developing value-laden educational research among its faculty, staff, and students. This study will also improve research in the academe.

Future Researchers: The research results, methodology, and analysis of this study may serve to guide future researchers to conduct, enhance, and develop their skills in conducting similar academic research.

1.2 Research Statement of the Problem

Several studies have been conducted to examine educational issues during the Covid-19 pandemic, tackling first and foremost the issues faced by adult learners. Demuyakor [3], for example, focuses on Ghanaian students' views

on online learning in China. Also, Syahrin and Salih [12] examine the effect of utilizing students' preferred styles on their ESL development during online learning. However, assessment topics' concerning English language learners during the Covid-19 pandemic is an issue that has not been investigated previously. Furthermore, students' views on their assessment procedures during the pandemic have not been examined widely. Thus, this study will be distinctive as it will help in filling a gap in the field of online learning assessment as it has been conducted during the distant learning era, initiated by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. Further, this research could be beneficial to other researchers and EFL instructors, as it could be a new resource for online EFL learning and teaching. Moreover, the targeted educators and learners of this study are associated with institutions that have to move to an online learning setting, as opposed to being an e-learning institution initially.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to report the different reflections of Covid-19 on the Saudi Community and the observations of Saudi EFL teachers on the issues they have faced during the assessment of young Saudi EFL learners in light of the Coronavirus pandemic. More specifically, this study aims to investigate the students' viewpoints on the possible contributing factors that might have either improved or hindered their EFL development in relation to the distant learning environment caused by Covid-19. Further, this study attempts to specify the effects and reflections of Covid-19 with respect to the following:

This part of the study handles the educational assessment system and its impact on Saudi Arabia during Covid-19 in terms of distance and online learning set up/learning resources, professional development, management, and parental involvement.

Determine the impact of educational assessment on the Saudi Community.

1.4 Research Questions

In attempting to analyze such reflections of Covid-19, one must take into consideration the impact of educational EFL assessment issues that have arisen in the Saudi Community, in particular, primary EFL teachers' and their students' points of view, as well as parents and

school admin staff. The following overarching research questions pin down such an impact, with each research question targeting a particular impact:

What are the educational reflections of Covid-19 on the Saudi Community in terms of distance and online learning set up/learning resources, professional development, management, and parental involvement?

What is the impact of educational assessment on the Saudi Community?

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, schools and universities are forced to close their doors and move to compulsory digital and distance learning environments. Hence, the educational system is seriously affected as a result of this sudden shift in the educational environment. Consecutively, many studies about the quality and effectiveness of online distance education have been conducted and the results are varied. Some have looked at the pandemic as an opportunity to acquaint students and teachers with the virtual courses, while others view this pandemic as a real catastrophe, claiming that neither the teachers nor the students are equipped for such a sudden and drastic change (Syahrin & Salih, [12]). Moreover, other researchers have investigated the obstacles faced during language assessment of young students; a really challenging issue that has attracted their attention for some time (e.g., Dorckell & Marshall's review, [6]).

2.1 Online Engagement

The increasingly heavy demand for the virtual educational environment caused by the coronavirus pandemic poses new challenges to young learners' language assessment. However, there are other researchers, such as Carter et al. [13], who recommend considering students' views regarding their own assessment process strategies to proficiently adjust and accumulate satisfactory assessment results. Furthermore, according to Richmond and Cummings [8], accommodating online courses on instructional design decisions that utilize the students' preferred learning styles will have the most conducive impact on producing effective learning objectives alongside contributing to a positive online classroom experiences and outcomes.

2.2 Assessment of Young Language Learners during Covid-19

Young language learners' assessment has been one of the areas affected by the sudden resort to the virtual classroom environment. Previous research has focused on what practitioners and scholars used to consider when assessing young learners' language skills in the context of a traditional face-to-face classroom environment (e.g., Dorckell & Marshall's review, [6]). According to Dorckell and Marshall [6], there are many factors that could affect language assessment results, especially in the case of a face-to-face learning environment. These include socioeconomic status, language and dialect disparity, hearing deficiency, and test types. Furthermore, they claim that psychometrically sound assessments of language have been indicated to be crucial in developing effective interventions. Secondly, according to them, preschool children's language trajectories differ considerably, since existing screening measures have significant limitations. Finally, they also claim that composite language performance measures are excellent indicators of language problems and disorders of single-component skills.

However, Bailey [7] believes that there is still a need to conduct more research on language and young language learners' progression. Furthermore, she argues that accumulating evidence from a research program on self-assessment provides information that children benefit from self-reflection, entailed by self-assessment practices. Moreover, according to her, more research is needed on teacher professional development as such research represents a crucial language assessment area for young learners. Finally, she claims that technology has solved many assessment problems in the fields of data collection, storage, and management. In fact, technology has helped in structuring effective, enjoyable assessment methods for young learners, such as tests mimicking video games, and enables meeting the objectives of the learning and teaching process.

Unfortunately, during the Covid-19 pandemic, assessing young learners' language has become difficult due to the lack of physical face-to-face communication between the students and their teachers (Baticulon et al., [10]). Consequently, assessment issues faced during this period might have increased because of the remote learning

experience caused by the coronavirus pandemic. However, utilizing the students' preferred learning styles within an online learning environment could improve the assessment process.

Scholars such as Eishani et al. [9] believe that the learning process can be enhanced when the teaching style matches the students' learning style. Furthermore, the argument of Graf et al. [14] claims that those students who participate in online courses which match their preferred learning styles attain better results than those who do not. Additionally, Richmond and Cummings [8] indicate that online courses have the most effect when they are based on instructional design decisions, which include course delivery construction, student-teacher communication, projects, and tasks that align with the online learning setting, and effective use of online resources that work efficiently with the students' learning styles. They suggest Kolb's [15] Learning Styles Inventory as a learning style framework combined with the teaching and learning effective delivery of an online course.

2.3 Difficulties in Online Learning Assessment

Although the employment of students' learning styles can be helpful in improving their EFL levels, other factors could affect the learning assessment process negatively. Baticulon et al. [10] identify barriers to online learning from the perspective of medical students in the Philippines. They claim that adjusting learning styles and performing responsibilities remotely, as well as poor communication or lack of clear directions from educators, are the most frequent difficulties faced with online learning. Their research identified six different barrier types that could hinder the learning and teaching process. Among those barriers are technological barriers such as lack of devices or limited access due to device sharing, unreliable internet access, lack of technical skills, and issues with the online learning platform. Other barriers anticipated in their studies are individual and domestic barriers, such as difficulty adapting to the new learning environment, psychological and physiological issues, financial distress, limited space, and home responsibilities. In addition to institutional barriers, such as poor communication between the learners and their instructors, lack of skills required to employ teaching methods to accommodate the new learning environment effectively, and excessive cognitive focus without

opportunity for peer interaction, there are also personal barriers to overcome.

2.3.1 Teacher views on assessment issues in light of distant learning

Scholars find interest in research examining teachers' viewpoints on the abrupt shift to an online learning setting caused by the Coronavirus outbreak. In the case study of Rasmitadila et al. [11], the perception of primary school teachers of online learning, in a program developed in Indonesia called School from Home during the Covid-19 pandemic, is analyzed. They are exposed to semi-structured interviews, and also asked to answer surveys in order to understand their views about the current assessment issues in an online class during Covid-19. The researchers distinguish four main themes: instructional strategies, challenges, support, and motivation of teachers affect the teaching learning process. They find that teachers' challenges in an online learning assessment context can be categorized into technical difficulties, learners' conditioning, the participation of learners, and online teaching experience. Moreover, teachers emphasize that the cognitive skills assessment of online students becomes unreliable due to parents providing answers to the assignments and tests ascribed to the students. Further, participating teachers in their study argue that instructional strategies require modification and that governments, schools, social organizations, school committees, and parents must work together to determine and formulate virtual learning goals. Furthermore, the study participants believe that parents must be involved in understanding the material taught in order to provide support for their children to understand the subject matter and obtain competencies. Finally, it is found that the online learning assessment context in Indonesia is resolute with digital readiness, support and collaboration from all stakeholders, including government, schools, teachers, parents, and the community as a whole. This collaborative idea with regards to the educational scheme of Indonesia significantly maps pedagogical learning.

2.3.2 Views of students in light of distant learning

Scholarly articles investigating the effects of the unexpected transition to virtual courses on learners are focused mainly on university students. In the research study of Adnan and Anwar [16], a vast majority of Pakistani students

have been surveyed about their perspective concerning online learning amidst the coronavirus. Researchers find out that online learning does not provide satisfactory results in underdeveloped countries like Pakistan. The students are unable to access the internet due to technical as well as monetary issues. The lack of face-to-face interaction between the students and their instructors, the lack of traditional classroom socialization, and response-time related issues are also added.

In the undertaking of Demuyakor [3], he investigates the satisfaction level of higher education Ghanaian students in Beijing, China. This includes learning styles, team contracts, and a variety of assessments. The findings show satisfaction with implementing virtual learning courses, as the majority of the sampled learners support the initiative. Furthermore, he finds out that participating in online learning tends to affect students financially. He claims that students outside China are affected by Covid-19 financially, too. The impact of online classes is quite negative. Students are forced to spend more money on internet services to provide virtual learning. Moreover, he claims that internet connectivity is significantly slow and this has caused serious problems for students residing outside Chinese universities' dormitories.

2.4 Proposed Strategies for Online Assessment

Research studies offering strategies for online learning during the pandemic have developed due to the abrupt necessity of changing to a virtual classroom environment. Carter et al. [13], for example, recognize types of strategies and provide the needs of the students' self-regulated learning framework in an online environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. They consider the students' views on their learning process. Providing pacing support, engagement monitoring, and family support are the main emerging strategies that could provide support in the online teaching and learning environment.

Moreover, Rasmitadila et al. [11] claim that modifications of the general curriculum will guarantee flexibility and organization amongst all the learning components. They emphasize that technology readiness must be improved by providing access to internet facilities. Similarly, teachers must be trained in using technology applications, as is emphasized by Macià and García [17]. Thus, providing available education

means may reduce virtual learning's operational costs (Harsasi, [18]). Finally, Borup, Chambers, and Stimson [19] and Liu [20] guarantee that the improvement of the educational process depends on the strong relationship between teachers, caregivers, and school institutions.

2.5 Technological Framework

According to Sejpal [21], the use of self-learning modules in teaching is another form of individual instruction. This is called the modular approach to teaching and learning. If self-learning modules are available on some topics, they can be given to students as assignments for self-learning. The concept of 'module' is strictly linked to the idea of a flexible language curriculum. This study is anchored on Bruner's [22] constructivism theory. Constructivism, as cited by Fosnot [23], emphasizes the active role of the learner in building, understanding, and making sense of information. Constructivist teaching is learner centered where students are actively involved in knowledge construction rather than passive learners. A major theme in the theoretical framework of Bruner [22] is that learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current and previous knowledge. The learner selects and transforms information, constructs hypotheses, makes decisions, and relies on his/her own understanding. Cognitive structure (schema) provides meaning and organization to experiences and allows the individual to go beyond the information given.

Fontanillas et al. [24] emphasize that the assessment process cannot be overlooked. It is a must during the learning process that teachers and students get involved in developing online assessment skills. Project based assessment learning is used in order to improve dynamic peer assessment. They further emphasize how interactive assessment analysis is developed, which results in high levels of satisfaction with the e-assessment activities.

Moreover, technology utilization and students' learning style preferences in the classroom complement each other, as indicated by the study of Syahrin and Salih [12]. Accordingly, learning style utilization can greatly support teachers when attempting to improve students' EFL development level. Further, incorporating Kolb's learning styles framework can be a resourceful technique for accomplishing a successful ESL e-learning course delivery. This

study also involves utilizing Moodle Warburton's Interpreting Technologies in Use to help teachers infer the relationship between technology, pedagogy, and the students experience in the online classroom. This framework identifies the scope of the technology of learning activities, the pedagogy, and the students' role in e-learning contexts. It is important to note that the expression "technologies in use" means the technologies, tools, and learning activities that the learners experienced on Moodle for the specific ESL course.

In other words, the teacher should try and encourage learners to discover principles by themselves. With the use of the module, the learner will be able to process new ideas that they read from in the module. From there, they can depend on their own understanding and develop their problem-solving skills. Parents at home can also guide their children in performing tasks. Collaboration between teachers, learners, and parents takes place during flexible learning.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method and processing of the data are done in stages according to the following steps:

1. Collecting the data using online surveys and semi-structured interviews.
2. Analyzing the data using inductive and thematic techniques.

Below there are full explanations of the research design, participants, data collection, and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This is a quantitative research which employs a mixed-methods approach by utilizing Creswell's explanatory sequential design [1]. This allows gathering data that can be analyzed for frequencies, describing demographics, gauging opinion, gathering information about prevailing conditions or situations, and evaluating satisfaction. Hence, the survey method is appropriate for this study. Creswell [25] notes that quantitative research is the process of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study, while qualitative research is the approach to data collection, analysis, and report writing that differs from the traditional quantitative approaches. Quantitative research on a variety of subjects involves data collection

that is typically numeric and the researcher tends to use mathematical models as the methodology of data analysis. Additionally, the researcher uses the inquiry methods to ensure alignment with statistical data collection methodology.

3.2 Participants

There are 100 respondents which include the teachers, students, parents and school admin staff. They are chosen for purposive sampling. The data is collected from 5 cities located in different regions of Saudi Arabia, namely, Riyadh from the middle region, Jeddah from the western region, Dammam from the eastern region, Abha from the southern region, and Tabuk from the northern region. Collecting data from multiple locations is done to allow the researcher to collect as much comprehensive data as possible to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. A purposive sampling technique is used by distributing surveys online using Google Forms to EFL teachers located within the five cities mentioned above; the teachers are asked to deliver a different survey to their students. The five cities' selection is based on the virus spread statistics provided by the Saudi Ministry of Health's online daily reports.

3.3 Data Collection

The researcher employs a mixed-methods approach by utilizing Creswell's explanatory sequential design [1]. Data collection is done in two stages, starting with online surveys, then moving to semi-structured interviews to acquire in-depth data. The data collection starts by gathering questionnaire answers from the Saudi Community, including primary EFL teachers and their students, parents, and school admin staff. The survey includes: distance and online learning set up/learning resources, professional development, management, and parental involvement in relation to each reflection in the form of short answers through Google Form. The questions are organized based on the literature relevant to the research purpose, which covers the educational reflections. They are distributed in the Arabic and English languages and then the English version is translated for the study purposes. The survey data is collected from April 1, 2021, to May 1, 2021, and around 120 responses have been targeted, but 100 of them have really engaged. After the questionnaire data is collected, a transcript of each participant's results is prepared, and initial codes are created.

The second stage of the data collection is conducted using semi-structured open-ended questions with 20 of the 120 elementary EFL teachers and their students, parents, and school admin staff who have answered the survey. The researcher constructs interview guides based on the initial code from the first stage data. The purpose of conducting interviews is to collect more insightful data. Interviews are conducted online for 1.5 - 2 hours per participant via the Zoom site from May 5, 2021, to May 15, 2020. Every day, the researcher has been interviewing two respondents separately

3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of the data uses inductive and thematic analytics to identify, evaluate, and create a theme based on the participants' expressions, proposed by Galloway and Jenkins [26] (cited in Rasmitadila et al., [11]). The responses of each participant are coded using keywords so as not to overlap. The NVivo 12 program is used to accelerate the coding and categorization of the researcher. The data from the questionnaire and interviews are entered into Nodes and Cases to be grouped into data with specific codes. According to Liu [20], this inductive technique identifies themes that participants may possibly provide in response to the research questions.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part shows the result of educational analysis and its impact to Saudi Arabia Community.

Table 1 presents the data on the distance and learning set up as well as the learning resources during Covid-19 in the Saudi Community. It reveals that 20% and 45% strongly agree and

agree respectively that they develop skills of independent learning, and 10% and 5% disagree and strongly disagree. Meanwhile, students obtain required information from the internet with 20% strongly agree and 50% agree. With these, there is still 15% who disagree and 5% strongly disagree.

A respondent said: "This online class really helps me develop my skills as regards to independent learning, but there are times when I really have hard time working on my assigned task due to poor internet connection".

One of the interesting findings in this study is that when a vast majority of 47% of students is allowed to learn/work at their own pace during lessons, there are still 11% and 6% who strongly disagree and disagree respectively. Students become well equipped with online learning techniques and styles which 39% strongly agree and 46% agree, but there are still 14% who strongly disagree. A student's respondent interestingly shares her experience in this online class:

"In this kind of class set-up, it made me realize that there are still things that I need to improve with my learning styles that I already have. My learning curves really changed and I saw it today. This is really challenging and exciting".

Moreover, 20% and 35% of the respondents strongly agree and agree that they do not encounter internet problems in online classes, and 20% strongly disagree and 10% disagree on this issue. It is quite obvious that students hold positive views towards online classes. Indeed, the vast majority of respondents express satisfaction with distance learning given the kind of set up they have.

Table 1. Distance and online learning set up/learning resources

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Students develop skills of independent learning.	20%	45%	20%	10%	5%
Students can obtain required information from the Internet.	20%	50%	10%	15%	5%
Students are allowed to learn/work at their own pace during lessons.	47%	34%	2%	11%	6%
Students become well equipped with online learning techniques and styles.	39%	46%	1%	14%	-
Students have no problems with internet connection.	20%	35%	35%	20%	10%

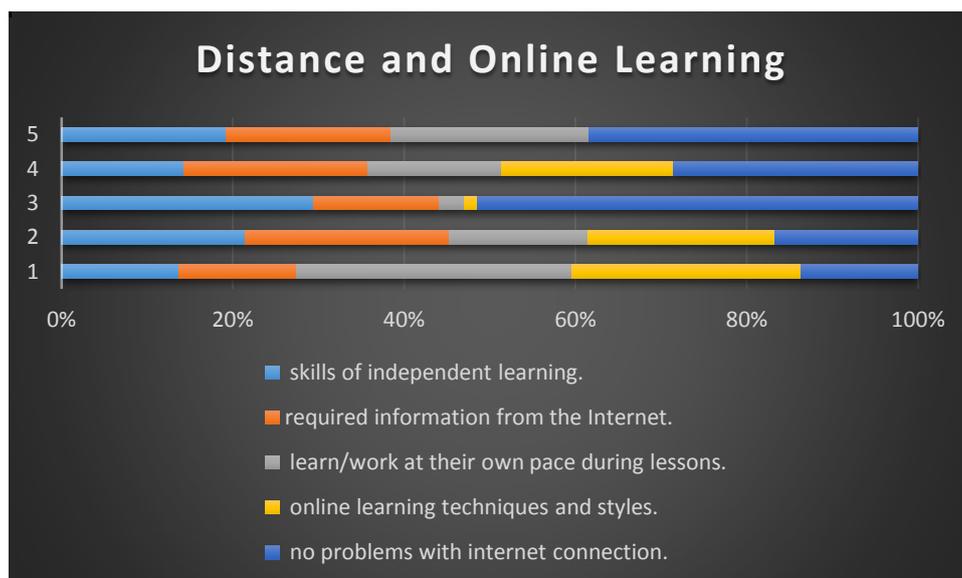


Table 2. Professional development

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The school collects and circulates information regarding professional development in the school.	5%	45%	10%	35%	5%
The school provides time for teachers to achieve professional development (PD) (e.g., by arranging professional days within the regular school year, and through organizing rotating schedules for PD and organizing replacements for teachers attending courses).	34%	37%	1%	25%	3%
Arrange conferences or webinars where teachers and/or researchers present their scientific research and discuss educational problems.	7%	23%	3%	35%	32%
Participate in network groups of teachers (e.g., one organized by an outside agency or on the Internet).	27%	42%	3%	18%	10%
Teachers lack enough knowledge/skills to use computers for instructional purposes.	3%	10%	30%	45%	12%

Table 2 shows the professional development of teachers during Covid-19 in the Saudi Community. It reveals that 45% agree that the school collects and circulates information regarding professional development in the school and 35% strongly agree and only 5% disagree with this. The data shows that 34% of the respondents strongly agree while 37% agree that the school provides time for teachers to achieve professional development (e.g., by arranging professional days within the regular school year, and through organizing rotated schedules for PD and organizing replacements for teachers attending courses). However, there are still 25%

who disagree and 3% who strongly disagree with this. Furthermore, some teachers and/or researchers feel bad because they cannot present their scientific research and discuss educational problems such as conferences and webinars. The respondents answer to this result as 35% disagree and 32% strongly disagree with this. Meanwhile, only 7% strongly agree, 23% agree, and 3% are neutral. Teachers can participate in network groups (e.g., one organized by an outside agency or on the Internet) where 27% strongly agree, 42% agree, and 3% are neutral on this, while 18% and 10% disagree and strongly disagree respectively. It is

revealed that 45% disagree and 12% strongly disagree that teachers lack enough knowledge/skills to use computers for instructional purposes, which shows a positive point in the use of instructional materials.

A teacher respondent added: "I am already old in this kind of set-up. There are times when I ask for help from my children about how to operate a simple digital device. During online classes, I am having a hard time running on the computer".

Table 3 shows the management in the Saudi community with regards to the educational landscape during Covid-19. Mentoring and/or peer observation represent part of a formal arrangement that is recognized or supported by the school or educational authorities. It is strongly agreed by 22% and 13% agreed by the respondents, while 40% and 20% disagree and

strongly disagree respectively. It is revealed that 32% and 19% disagree and strongly disagree that the management provides additional instruction and practice opportunities for students with special needs, and only 14% and 11% strongly agree and agree on this issue. The respondents show a very high percentage of 43% to agree that the management provides relevant answers to the queries of students, parents, and teachers, and this is seconded by 26% of respondents who strongly agree, but there are still 15% of respondents who disagree, 9% strongly disagree, while 7% are neutral regarding this issue. The respondents disagree that the management provides support by authorized bodies or the community with a percentage of 35% and 32% strongly disagree. Only 10% of the respondents strongly agree, 18% agree on this issue, and 5% are neutral.

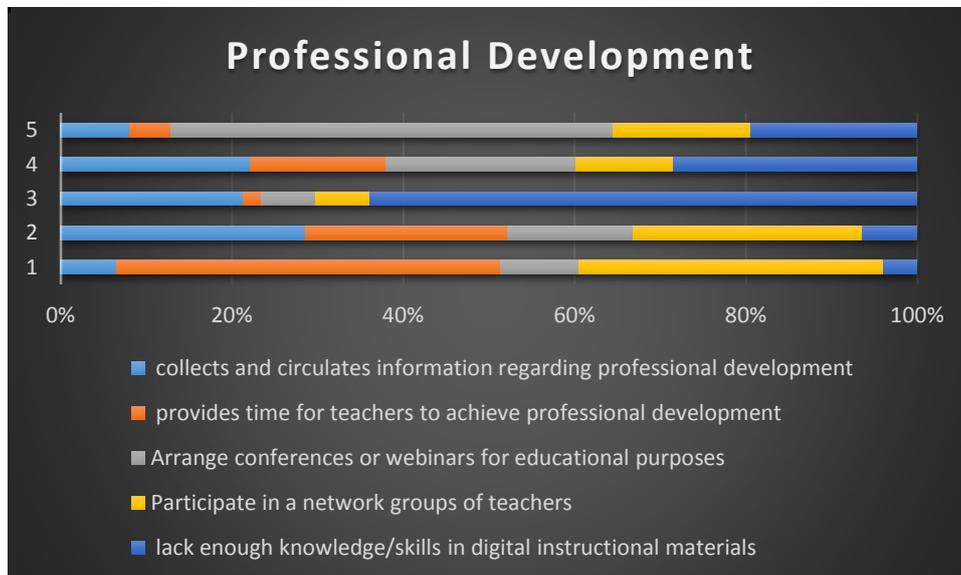


Table 3. Management

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Mentoring and/or peer observation represent part of a formal arrangement that are recognized or supported by the school or educational authorities.	22%	13%	5%	40%	20%
Provide additional instruction and practice opportunities for students with special needs.	14%	11%	24%	19%	32%
Provide relevant answers to the queries of students, parents, and teachers.	26%	43%	7%	15%	9%
Provides support by authorized bodies or community.	10%	18%	5%	35%	32%
The school should invite employers and/or practitioners to talk to students within or outside instructional time.	27%	45%	1%	17%	10%

A school staff respondent said: “This may not be perfect, but I believe that the management are doing their best to meet the needs of everyone, especially at these trying times”.

The school should invite employers and/or practitioners to talk to students within or outside instructional time is strongly agreed by 27% and agreed by 45% of respondents, but 10% and 17% strongly disagreed and agreed respectively. Only 1% who are not sure about this issue and neutral.

Parental intervention is demonstrated in Table 4 by its impact on the educational landscape in the Saudi Community. Majority of 48% out of 100 respondents strongly disagree and 22% disagree that parental intervention is significant and useful for students’ assessments. Meanwhile, 49% of the respondents strongly agree that parents should monitor students’ assignments and it is strongly disagreed by 2% and disagreed by 18%. In the above data, it is revealed that parents should provide emotional support for their children as 53% and 30% strongly agree and agree, respectively. However, 5% of the respondents disagree that parents should

provide emotional support and it is seconded by 2% strongly disagree by the respondents. However, a reasonable number of respondents are neutral with 10% in this respect.

A parent respondent said: “I do not actually put so much pressure on the performance of my children in school. I want them to learn and to grow from their mistakes. I always tell them that they need to be responsible for their actions wherever they are”.

A similar result to the previous item is parents should provide material support for their children, as 45% and 20% strongly agree and agree, respectively. However, a significant percentage of 15% of the respondents are neutral, 12% disagree that parents should provide material support and it is seconded by 8% strongly disagree. It is a pressure on the students that 52% strongly agree that parents expect a high standard of performance from their children and another 20% agree on this point. Meanwhile, only 9% of the respondents disagree and only 2% strongly disagree. There is an important neutral indication of 17% of the respondents who are not sure in this regard.

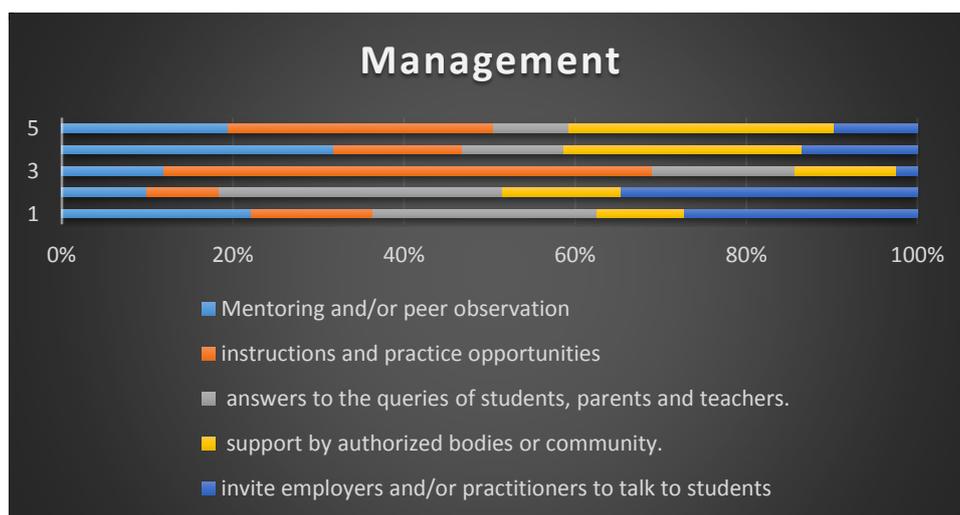
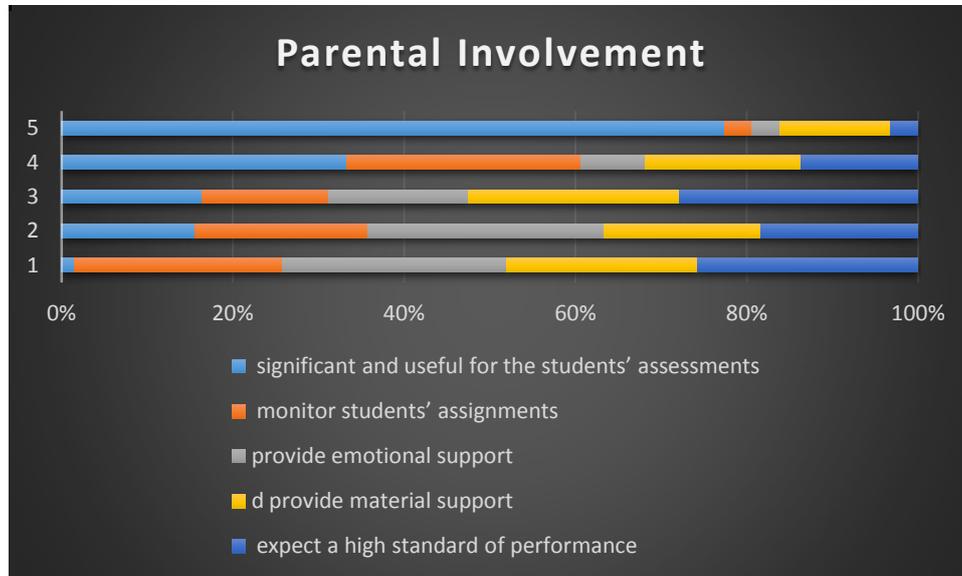


Table 4. Parental intervention

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Parental intervention is significant and useful for the students’ assessments.	3%	17%	10%	22%	48%
Parents should monitor students’ assignments.	49%	22%	9%	18%	2%
Parents should provide emotional support.	53%	30%	10%	5%	2%
Parents should provide material support.	45%	20%	15%	12%	8%
Parents expect a high standard of performance from their children.	52%	20%	17%	9%	2%

A parent who strongly agrees with putting a standard on their children’s’ performance said: “Putting a standard on my children’s performance does not mean I am pressuring them. It is my way of saying that they should put value and effort in education. They are lucky enough to be able to enter the school. Besides, millennial are very different in their way of thinking. They are more aggressive and still need guidance”.



Impact of Educational Assessment to Saudi Community



The above illustration shows the interconnectedness and impact of the educational landscape in the Saudi Community; the distance and online learning set-up, professional development, management, and parental involvement. The underlying model investigates the students' viewpoints on the contributing factors that might have either improved or hindered their EFL development in relation to the distant learning environment caused by Covid-19.

4.1 Distance and Online Learning Set Up/Learning Resources

Based on the results, it shows that Distance and Online Learning Set-up really has a positive impact on students in the Saudi Community. These kinds of educational endeavors develop

skills for independent learning and they become well-equipped with online learning techniques and styles. It is quite obvious that students hold positive views towards online classes. Indeed, the vast majority of the respondents express satisfaction with distance learning given the kind of set up they have experienced.

4.2 Professional Development

The data show satisfaction for teachers that the school provides time for them to achieve professional development (PD) (e.g., by arranging professional days within the regular school year, and through organizing rotating schedules for PD and organizing replacements for teachers attending courses). However, teachers need to enhance their skills when it

comes to instructional tools, especially when using computers where it is necessary in an online class.

The school also needs to arrange conferences or webinars where they can present their scientific research and discuss educational problems. These kinds of undertakings will help to improve the educational and professional growth of educators.

4.3 Management

Though the school Management provides a relevant answer to the queries of students, parents and teachers, the school management should provide support to authorized bodies or the community. They should also recognize mentoring and/or peer observation as part of a formal arrangement by the school or educational authorities and provide additional instruction and practice opportunities for students with special needs.

If the school management coordinates with one another, the educational system in the Saudi Community would be more child-friendly. The management should also make a way where teaching and students can go hand in hand. In this way, it will make a positive difference in educational pedagogy.

4.4 Parental Involvement

Parents play an imperative role in child's development. However, in this study, parental intervention is not significant and useful for the students' assessments. Therefore, parents expect a high standard of performance from their children. It can be revealed in this part that parental intervention is not useful for students' assessment.

It is very important that parents should guide their children. If not, then, there are possibilities that students might encounter a serious problem in their educational journey. In doing so, parents should also limit setting a standard of performance for their children. This might affect the emotional performance of a child. They will be pressured with their studies to the point where they can no longer enjoy their life. Aside from material support, parents should continue to provide emotional support to their children, especially in these trying times. This will create a life changing experience and bonding for the family.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study has been investigated to pave the way for an enlightened understanding of the effects and reflections of Covid-19 with respect to the educational landscape in terms of Distance and Online Learning Set Up/Learning Resources, Professional Development, Management, and Parental Involvement. This is significant for all those who are concerned with the meaningful and quality education of learners in the Saudi Community. Due to the acute concern of Covid-19 pandemic, Rasmitadila et al., [11] claim that "the participating teachers believe... that instructional strategy needs... change and that all stakeholders, including governments, schools, social organizations, school committees, parents, must sit together to determine and formulate online learning goals that are in line with a national curriculum based on humanism" (p. 103).

Based on the results, it shows that Distance and Online Learning Set-up really has a positive impact on EFL students in Saudi Community. These kinds of educational endeavors develop skills for independent learning and they become well-equipped with online learning techniques and styles. Although, on one hand, other studies have proved the opposite results of the current study, such as Adnan and Anwar [16], who indicate that "online learning is proving helpful in safeguarding students' and faculty's health amid the COVID-19 pandemic, however, it is not as effective as conventional learning" (p. 49). It is quite obvious that students hold positive views towards online classes. Indeed, the vast majority of the respondents expressed satisfaction with distance learning given the kind of set up they have experienced. On the other hand, Abdallah [4] calls our attention to the fact that "E-learning proves a great encouragement for students around the world, along with Abu Dhabi students as well. The doors of e-learning are open and accessible to all, providing continuous learning opportunities to all without any barrier, which will lead to improved learning quality" (p. 39).

In Professional Development, the data of this study represents satisfaction for teachers that the school provides time for them to achieve Professional Development (PD) (e.g., by arranging professional days within the regular school year, and through organizing rotated schedules for PD and organizing replacements for teachers attending courses). However, teachers need to enhance their skills when it

comes to instructional tools, especially when using computers where it is necessary in an online class. The school also needs to arrange conferences or webinars where they can present their scientific research and discuss educational problems. These kinds of undertakings will help to improve the educational and professional growth of educators.

Though school management provides a relevant answer to the queries of students, parents, and teachers, they should provide a support to authorized bodies or the community. They should also recognize mentoring and/or peer observation as part of a formal arrangement by the school or educational authorities and provide additional instruction and practice opportunities for students with special needs. According to Richmond et al. [27]; “the structure of the course should include a variety of succinct learning episodes rather than broad, open-ended learning units” (p. 63).

However, if the school management coordinates with one another, the educational system in the Saudi Community would be more learner-friendly. The management should also find a way where teaching and students can go hand in hand in this way, which will make a positive difference in educational pedagogy. This result is consistent with those of Syahrin and Salih [12], who assert that having information about the students’ learning styles will help us design and deliver the online course effectively” (p. 53).

Meanwhile, in Parental Involvement, parents play an imperative role in child development. However, in this study, parental intervention is not significant and useful for students’ assessments. Nevertheless, parents expect a high standard of performance from their children. It can be revealed in this part that parental intervention is not useful for student’s assessment. It is very important that parents should guide their children. If not, then, there are possibilities that students might encounter a serious problem in their educational journey. In doing so, parents should also limit setting a standard of performance for their children. This might affect the emotional performance of a child. They will be pressured with their studies to the point where they can no longer enjoy their life. Aside from material support, parents should continue to provide emotional support to their children, especially in these trying times. This will create a life changing experience and bonding for the family. Borup et al. [19] conclude that

“while obtaining parental research participation has proven difficult in supplemental online programs ..., parents can provide unique insights into strategies that may help improve learning outcomes” (p. 19).

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents’ written consent has been collected and preserved by the authors.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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