Online Learning/ Teaching in the Time of Coronavirus Pandemic in Israel: Highlight a Hard Situation

Yousef Methkal Abd Algani
Faculty of Education, Department of Teaching
Mathematics, Sakhnin College, Israel.
The Arab Academic College for Education in Israel-Haifa
yousefabdalgani@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0003-2801-5880

Jamal Eshan
Faculty of Education, Sakhnin College, Israel.
Gamale1@walla.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-1175-6926

ABSTRACT

The higher education institutions in Israel decided to move traditional teaching to distance teaching due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. The aim of the present study is, on one hand, to examine how online education has been carried out during pandemic and the difficulties and barriers they have. On the other hand, what were the student habits that either supported the online teaching methods, or made it difficult or partially impossible to study using internet sources. Teachers and learners were asked by request to volunteer in this project. Respondents were asked to include written observations on their online learning environment and education activities and on the issues they face. Numerous reviews were administered and directed by researcher in order to analyze the data for justification. Online learning has been introduced by educators using a number of activities running synchronously and using a variety of applications and networks, based on Colleges policy, ranging from management system, Moodle, run by the University to external facilities. Nonetheless, many problems have emerged from the students, the instructors, the college and the parents of the students, along with rational reasons. Consequently, online learning is not performing as expected because it lacks awareness, applicable policies, preparation and planning. Complexities are explored in online learning. To promote the facilitation of the online education process, future possible research is being driven and observed.

Keywords:

virtual pandemic learning, interactive E-learning, learning technology, online interactivity
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.Introduction

In early 2020, cases of the new COVID-19 or (Coronavirus) arose in Wuhan, China, where it is suspected that this new virus formed. As several countries were influenced by the contagion. This situation pushed the World Health Organization (WHO) to announce a health epidemic, as reports from COVID-19 say that positive cases have rapidly spread and internationally (McAleer, 2020; Velavan & Meyer, 2020). Reports from the media on this disease outbreak have overloaded everyday global mass (McAleer, 2020). In early March 2020, reported cases of COVID-19 began to occur every day in Israel (WHO, 2020). The leading officials in Israel then announced that the situation was severe and forced the quarantine on public life to take place. Traditional teaching/learning was affected negatively by this severe health crisis, leading to the online education to take place of all courses (Moorhouse, 2020). Since mid-March 2020, the Israeli Minister of Higher Education has agreed with all types of educational institutions to conduct online learning in the country in order to protect the health of all those participating in the teaching/learning process. New

circumstances require distance learning and must fully replace conventional teaching in the classroom with online teaching/learning that is likely to continue until pandemic period is over.

It has become an unused job for learners and teachers to conduct online education (Cao et al. 2020). Such circumstances certainly have an impact on teaching, especially the growth of learners. During the process of online teaching, in which investigators analyzes the efficacy of learning tools, learning styles, teaching/learning contexts, and in which it is considered that the comparison between traditional and non-traditional education is discussed. The main focus is often on learner's action and reaction (Gonzalez & Louis, 2018; Sun, 2014).

Despite the fact that a large number of studies have been done to assess the potential of distance classes (Gonzalez & Louis, 2018), research on distance classes is still very confined to a few reflections here and there (Sun, 2014), especially in Israel teaching of many subjects. The new circumstances of the disease have therefore led to unexpected fully online mathematics learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In fact, the distance educational system is seen as benefiting from the broad variety of online websites for education purposes, or also for other purposes, in achieving useful teaching materials; allowing interactivity with all its components in the academic setting: material content, teachers, and other learners; and asking for support in the learning process to achieve the full. In contrast of the old thought of fighting against using the social media in the service of learning, Al-Awawdeh (2017) wonders "rather than fight against the use of social networks in the classroom, would it not be possible to tame them in order to use them for pedagogical purposes? Thus, the idea of using a wide range of online sources might benefit the students during the distance education contrary to the old believe: this pandemic was a test to defeat this old believe.

Therefore, both Gonzalez and Louis reassure that learning through digital equipment such as iPads, tablets, laptops and computers that need a web connection is described as "learning" (2018). White sees that "online learning continues to spread internationally as students and teachers feel comfortable and see the opportunity to alternatively set up and access learning opportunities" (2008, 38). This point of view coincides with the general objective of online learning, which uses some applications and platforms to provide access and sharing, to perform educational tasks in a given subject (2008, 29).

Plaisance claims that distance learning eventually brings learners into a non-elective, non-traditional, online field of mathematics learning (2018). Thus, distance education will point to a variety of learning shifts, such as web-based learning, hybrid or mixed learning, and completely immersive online education. Regarding the use of social media in the service of learning, Al-Awawdeh (2017) notes that "SNSs like Facebook, Blog, or Twitter are still serving us as entertainment on a large degree" This point of view reassures that there is a gap between the possibility of leaning from social media and using it as entertainment. Benson (2002) and Conrad (2002) described online education as a new process that aims to improve students' ability to access opportunities.

In the light of the pandemic circumstances, this study focuses on how teachers perform online classes and what difficulties and challenges they face, as well as legitimate explanations. This study makes crucial contributions to enhancing distance teaching/learning analysis research based on recorded findings gathered from both teachers and students from two separate classes at the education colleges, Israel. It also provides comprehensive information of how teachers in the education colleges in Israel perform distance classes as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic in an unforeseen and totally unprepared situation. It also highlights the obstacles they experience during their online learning activities.

Methodology

Background of research and involved participants

In the sense of online teaching, the present study was carried at the education colleges in Israel, which favors the online teaching. Israeli teachers tend to be adapted with the new online teaching at all level in academic forums and classrooms to carry out their lessons. The level of students can be considered excellent with few exceptions. The future of the students is to become teachers.

Gathering and analyzing data

The questionnaire was edited and distributed, only a moderated number of respondents received, 14 teachers and 26 learners. During this online teaching experience, data and insights obtained from students

were used to improve this study and to provide better contributions, descriptions and understanding of what teachers provide. In Israel, in order to teach in Colleges, all teachers must possess a college diploma. The educators had educational experience ranging from 1 to 15 years in teaching. Both students and teachers have Hebrew as their native language.

Based on a direct invitation, 14 educators offered written thoughts/ answers on their experiences with online education and on the challenges they face in response to a list of pre-prepared questions. In addition, 4 of the respondents took part in a follow-up interview via the Zoom Network, as they made interesting insights and informative themes that were important for further analysis in the written reflections. As seen in the written observations, teachers were directed to share point by point clarifications on teaching methods, learning devices, resources, quizzes, assessments, and even activities for students to practice the online learning process carried out during the pandemic. Instructors describe the obstacles they faced during online education and to offer specific reasons for this.

To satisfy the study concerns, data collected was thoroughly reviewed and key rules were developed reflecting distance teaching trends and their issues were identified. In order to be analyzed further, all interviews were recorded and transcribed. The written and oral agreement was reached before the research was carried out by all respondents. In order to obtain detailed observations on the teaching activities of Online and their difficulties, transcribed data was carefully read. To show classification and emerging trends, data entry was performed. It has also removed recurring and obsolete information. It has also removed recurring and insignificant material. At the final point, ample excerpts have been published in the results section on the activities of online learning and its issues. To reinforce clarity of the noted findings without changing values and meanings of participants, few improvements in grammar were planned. The data coding was treated in detail by the authors to examine the observation, followed by several rounds of consultations to come to a conclusion on the results. The researchers are active lecturer at the education colleges in Israel and he reflects upon their concerns and thoughts.

DISCUSSION & Findings

This study concentrates primarily on three main issues that are involved in the process and problems of online education. This includes the teachers' apps and tools frequently used, how the instructional process is carried out, and what obstacles they face, along with rational explanations. The most popular and influential extracts from the teacher's answer are chosen for analysis to discuss each of the three core issues. Documented thoughts from all teachers are marked as 'W' for written, while oral interviews from the Zoom conference meetings are labeled as 'O'.

Technologies used for purposes of education

Teachers have used many apps and platforms in their teaching practice. This can be categorized into seven types: (1) Moodle, Online Learning system, as the key management system provided by the College; (2) talk and message (on WhatsApp for general instructions); (3) colleges-directed video conference mostly ZOOM (4); (6) further digital assistance could be on (YouTube via Google Share links); and (7) additional tools.

As requested and directed by the Colleges, the teachers mainly use Moodle to handle the online process as most teachers should have used it before.

Reflections from both teachers and students
-I prefer to use Moodle Because it doesn't have to be downloaded on mobile devices, students don't have to worry about wasting their data and just need a safe link. Learners only need to log into the system and enter the class details using their university account. It's quicker than other apps and more available. (O). - E-Learning is my favorite application. I use it to share all the stuff (W).

Second, because e-learning is implemented by the colleges, most teachers tend to use WhatsApp to conduct a lot of tasks.

- WhatsApp is considered the best choice for me to provide students with information, directions, exchange materials, hold discussions, provide questions and answers sessions, and give private feedback. It is simpler and can be used anytime, wherever, requiring the least amount of knowledge from both students and teachers (O).

The Zoom platform is motivated to perform the tasks needed by a university video conference.

- I use the Zoom Conference, which is integrated by The University into the Moodle system, to address the baselines, as in conventional meetings, to have an active and real conversation with the participants, and to allow for discussion sessions (W).

Mainly, Moodle is a resource used by educators for assessment. These are given by the College and used in the form of multiple choice responses, short answers, True or False choices, and essays to create online assignments.

- I use Moodle to generate tasks like three or four choices and True or False options for multiple choice responses. I also use Quiz on Moodle to construct distinct evaluations of four alternatives and essay types for various choices. Moodle needs a more reliable internet connection, while an insecure internet connection makes e-learning more accessible. Anyway, both of them often make it simple to achieve results (O).

- I use Moodle to build tasks in different choices because I have done this many times before (W).

Many educators also choose to use material from many providers of online courses YouTube and tutorials, as additional tools. To ensure comprehension, they share it with their students as supplementary material.

- YouTube is often used by educators in clips and animated film formats as a visual teaching medium. In my tasks, I insert YouTube links to provide my students with instructional material. (O).

- I share YouTube video with my students and I ask them on the website to do some exercises based on the information they collect from videos(O).

- After checking their validity with the content I cover, I direct my students to visit YouTube. They have to follow my explanations on Moodle and then do some exercises. It is generally a written activity, especially a thorough written assignment with questions on the video (O).

Practices of teachers in the field of studying online

Moodle allows educators more freedom to operate according to their time, with respecting the University schedule.

- The College has created a timetable schedule for these distance courses, so I can follow my university's strategy (W).

- I teach whenever I want! the educators have to carry out their teaching tasks, such as providing materials, designing quizzes or assigning student projects to complete the course (W).

- Teachers usually start their classes by checking the attendance of the students, but it is not necessary. Teachers then differ in using a wide variety of chosen resources, such as presentations in PowerPoint, online images, and pdf files, or making their own materials, such as short videos, diagrams, presentations in PowerPoint, word and PDF docs (O).

Educators upload the topics of classes to the Moodle or exchange them through WhatsApp. The teachers demonstrate the material before or after using, for example, on Zoom platform. In order to assess students' understanding of the subject, educators then create quizzes on Moodle. Teachers engage with students in discussions to have a clearer understanding and reinforce the lack of knowledge for students: teachers provide questioning and addressing session on WhatsApp to instruct students and solve learning difficulties. Educators then provide personal insight into the students' work. Feedback is commonly offered to help students enhance the growth of their skills. Finally, as an assessment, the teacher offers a score for each learner.

- First, I ask students in my class to state clearly if they are available as expected in online courses by specifying in the Zoom Chat section their full name and student ID number. It is not required on the basis of university policy, but is intended to attract the attention of students (W).

- I upload all the designed materials applicable to my classroom lessons in the form of a PowerPoint presentation on Moodle. To deepen learners' comprehension of themes, I also upload a range of alternate clips from YouTube. Then I give those materials also on WhatsApp (O).

-I use WhatsApp to upload and exchange documents and files, either from me or other colleagues (O).

- As a learning management system, I direct my documents to Moodle. In each class I teach, I upload these papers on Moodle (W).

-I explain the content on WhatsApp or Zoom. It is easy to explain the contents orally here (W).

- I write key points and notes then I post them on WhatsApp and Moodle (W).

-I conduct practice exercises such as multiple choices, papers and alternatives for True or False ad post them on WhatsApp (W).

- I guide my students to discuss the fundamental principle of understanding reading by first posing detailed questions to facilitate debate. These questions allow students to evaluate the material critically and encourage their skills in questioning and reasoning. To answer my questions, students are asked and motivated to point out other issues. In this dynamic debate, there is an exchange of views (O).

- Through WhatsApp and Zoom, I coordinate question and answer processes. Students are encouraged to ask questions in the group chat of each class about their special needs in online learning and lack of knowledge about the subjects taught (O).

- I also give students, through WhatsApp's private feedback, detailed recommendations on their results. I help students to understand what needs to be improved and the way it needs to be changed for better performance. This encourages students to make major changes to their education (W).

- I rate my students' work because it has to be checked (W).

In general, the tasks undertaken by teachers are similar to teaching activities in traditional classrooms, as the systematic framework of the proposed online activities is quite similar to those in traditional classrooms, because teacher's schooling does not include playing, machine learning and virtual reality. The knowledge and willingness of teachers to use new resources in distance courses, as well as students, really needs to be improved. Currently, to provide opportunities for learners in the newly implemented educational environment, educators need to be creative and innovative. That could be improved with more experience in the future. In short, it wouldn't be enough to move conventional classes to a virtual learning environment. In order to be valid for such a learning environment, they must create content, master online learning tools in field of mathematics teaching pedagogy.

Challenges and barriers for teachers as well as learners

Many issues have arisen in the process of education conducted online by teachers at the education colleges, Israel. The source of these problems differs, and they often come from the social atmosphere of learners, educators, or students. After a detailed analysis, the basic reasons for these problems were found: the first question is that many learners do not have their own equipment (smartphone, tablet, personal computer, etc.). Usually, it is due to the financial condition of parents / students. Another concern for learners is the economic condition of learners and their families, which is that they are unable to have sufficient data to allow them to access appropriate information on the Internet for distance learning. For them, a small level of internet data can be provided; this is not enough to actively engage in distance courses effectively.

- A number of students in my classroom do not have a suitable or modern mobile phone or a tablet that allows them to use online learning platforms. Because of their financial situation, the family cannot afford to give them a smartphone (W).

- Many students in my two classes suffer from weak internet access because they live in rural and mountainous regions (W).

The second problem is the weak signal of internet. Some of my students come from remote, mountainous and rural areas where there is a very poor signal, causing them a disturbance
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- Many students in my two classes suffer from weak internet access because they live in rural and mountainous regions (W).

Several students have a low level of digital literacy in each class. The running of programs and websites used for distance courses is challenging for them. The rationale here appears to be that it has not been used by learners to use technology in learning.

- Initially, to find out that they are present, my students do not know how to change the text on social networks or Zoom conversation. Because they have never used this technology before, some of my students also find it difficult to use the Zoom Tutorial. This inspired the university to create some video guides about how to use the Zoom application to help them understand how to use it and how to interact with texts, such as editing short texts for web chats (O).

Several students are also poor in general literacy, in addition to low levels of digital literacy. Even though it has been clearly explained, they do not comprehend the teacher's classroom instruction well. It is possibly because they do not engage in conversations with the teacher or because they are too lazy to obey the instructor's instructions.

- I still have to send the same guidance on topics every time (W).

As expected by the university, many students do not attend classes at those times of the week. At the time of online sessions, they are not present and ask their teachers what they have taught and given in the evening as a task. This is because the students are worried about misunderstandings about the case (online learning).

- My students think studying from home is fun. Online learning for them is not scheduled until noon in the morning. They will call me in the afternoon to ask if they have any assignments or projects. I don't normally support them if they don't work hours (W).

For a variety of different reasons, many students have the habit of sending their homework past the deadline: Several learners are too lazy to always do the task or assignment given. One of the causes is the minimal data on the Internet that is going to run out. For another reason, when uploading their work in the last few minutes, they may also experience poor internet connectivity, which causes a delay.

- Students who do not have their own devices will really do so and they may have to use any electronic devices accessible from their relatives. The misunderstanding that teachers do not grade their work can also affect it (W).

A further emerging problem is the unique degree of mastery of learners in mathematics induced by students' cognitive skill and learning style. It was common for students to have various levels of mathematics mastery, including in conventional classrooms. In an online learning environment, this is becoming a new challenge to educate low-cognition learners and a range of cognitive styles.

- I find it difficult to provide each of my students with tools that need more explanations for learning. It's because of the low intellect they have. It's pretty difficult to unexpectedly educate distance learners (W).
- My students will not be able to optimally master the mathematics, since they are not really accompanied by learning environments that are acceptable to their preferred style. Depending on the academic style of each learner in an online course, it is complicated and it takes a lot of time to prepare different learning environments (O).

In their online learning, some students are more worried about the workload they should be doing. They have quite a range of tasks and tasks given to them by Timelines.

- Broadly speaking, my students are under greater pressure to profit from online learning. This is because students research a wide variety of knowledge across full distance courses, but most of these subjects have timeline activities to be completed by learners (O).

There is a low level of online learning for many students. They also see that distance learning isn't serious. This big problem is that students have misconceptions about distance learning courses. They think that distance education is quick and holiday-like, so they are pretty optimistic.

- Many of my students are also unwilling to engage in online studies. They may not have any concept of online learning. They think that it's kind of interesting. Since they have never learned online before, it seems like a joke to them (O).

Teachers often face challenges emerging from themselves as the problems of the students arise. Initially, teachers aim to build materials in an online setting that are easy to understand, as some teachers only use low-tech application forms that lead to the lack of tools that their learners need to benefit from. This is also due to a lack of teachers' expertise and experience in the area of distance teaching.

- Challenges to create content that is both in line with core competencies and that is effectively accepted by individual students are highlighted in this semester (O).

Educators also find it difficult to provide personal input to students. It occurs because there is not enough time left for grading after finals, and many students have submitted their work late recently.

—I can't really provide some personal input in real time on each student's progress. The time given by the school to online learning as expected is not enough. As expected by the university, the time available for distance courses was not enough. Recently, several students have also submitted their jobs, so I cannot provide thorough feedback on their job on time. At different stages, learners would also respond to my feedback. It is easier to get personal input in real time on the student's achievement (W).

The shortage of proper instruments for high-tech integration is another concern with online education. Many students have already been found to be profoundly troubled by unreliable internet links, the lack of the ability to provide good internet information. They just have self-educating content. Educators, however, need to choose services that do not need a lot of internet information and can still operate on a weak internet connection, such as Moodle and WhatsApp.

- I have not really been able to involve my students in interactive and engaging online learning, because resources are limited and far from collaborative and productive online learning processes (O).

Furthermore, teachers find it challenging to engage in distance learning environments with shy and inactive students. There are a limited number of students who participate in the learning process actively. Some of the students are not concentrated, and they even tend to sleep. Whenever a videoconference allows them to participate. This seems to be due to the lack of treatment, weak internet access and poor communication skills of students, which prevents them from engaging in conversation and questioning and reacting to target mathematics activities. The abilities of students are becoming another problem with this phase of distance courses.

- My students tend to be quiet, and when I teach or talk to them, they don't speak much. They keep asking me to repeat same the directions (W).

Instructors are also worried about their lack of online teaching experience, preparation and encouragement. That's because before, online learning was not arranged and trained. In Israel, the answer to the Coronavirus pandemic has been sudden.

I do not see that we are able to switch from a conventional classroom to distance learning, as this learning is undertaken spontaneously in an immediate situation and has not previously been prepared (O).

In education, interaction between students and teachers is very critical. Even so, as is the case in conventional classroom learning, online learning really does not encourage engagement and communication. It happens

because the distance between the students and the teachers is small. Interaction and coordination between them is also not enforced.

> - Students would not be able to directly contact. In a distance environment, they believe that it is hard to connect and interact. In reality, online interaction and collaboration in learning contexts do not replace face-to-face meetings (O).

The lack of family treatment and support is a further concern. Parents must strive to control and support their children's participation in online learning. Even so, some parents don't pay enough attention to their children's' growth. They are taken far away from them by their company and jobs.

> - The development of children who take online courses is not monitored and tracked by many families. They're busy with jobs, and they can't really communicate between the problems of their children and their own work. They do not act remotely because they work in private jobs (W).

The last concern is that eye damage can be caused by heavy overuse of electronic devices. It's because the system produces radiation for our vision and our wellbeing that is not healthy.

> -After looking at our electronic screen for a longer time, my students and I noticed tension and burnout. This relates to the radiation exposure of machines or cell phones that, since they have been used for a long time, are not suitable for our eyes (O).

This study demonstrates that during the pandemic situation, the education colleges in Israel have asked educators to run E-learning. Teachers chose a number of databases based on their abilities and their learners' ability to access sites. Such tools range from management systems for Moodle to other valuable services such as WhatsApp. In addition, teachers conduct a number of activities via distance courses to educate their learners, ranging from attendance controls for students to student work scoring. Sadly, many problems come from faculty members, students and parents of students.

Educators need to have quick, straightforward and precise guidance about how tasks should be accomplished, as well as where learners need to submit their completed assignments. Indeed, tasks must be considered in deciding strategic priorities and organized in a synchronous manner in tasks that reflect real-life circumstances in an effort to promote and communicate effectively. It is expected that educators will then recognize disengagement, plan constructive assignments, provide better dialogue sessions, and also provide essential activities to keep learners on assignment. Students should then be given suitable assignments, content and suggestions.

Issues related to distance learning include pedagogy of technology, the creation of engaging activities, the advancement of structured learning, student support and the management of technical challenges could be solved if well performed. Issues arise from the lack of ability to provide required electronic devices for students and adequate internet information to provide a secure link to the internet. In reality, a well-established curriculum is going to be unfair if there are problems with access to technology. In addition, it takes greater time to organize distance classes than to schedule conventional learning, because distance education needs more planning time to excel in getting it successfully designed and established than conventional learning. To reduce stress and disengagement, it should be planned because learners can feel neglected and disconnected. That includes more learners taking responsibility and self-governing. They must be self-directed and highly motivated to spend time planning, sustaining, handling and focusing more effectively on their dedication to learning. In addition, teacher-learner and learner-content experiences have a substantial positive effect on the sense of accomplishment and happiness of the learner. Therefore, educators are expected to develop such class interaction to increase student learning.

Therefore, the previous mentioned recognized problems should enable educators to be reflective, open, creative and versatile in the direction of gradual growth. It helps educators to explore new technical resources to facilitate the learning. Educators need to plan functionally to identify instructional resources, coordinate successful activities, develop student engagement and assess student learning in order to select and implement relevant applications in a timely timeframe. Teachers are encouraged to actively engage in the promotion of career development programs to enhance their awareness of the integration of technology resources in mathematics teaching.

CONCLUSION

The current study presents many primary contributions to online education at the education colleges in Israel to the current restricted studies on online learning based on the

perspective and experience of teachers. In this sense, via a series of activities, educators have conducted distance classes, ranging from checking student attendance to synchronously grading student work based on school policies due to the pandemic outbreak. Different features and frameworks are used for distance courses, ranging from E-learning systems to external tools. Unfortunately, a lot of problems emerge from the social climate of teachers, educators and learners. As a consequence, as it lacks planning and training, online education is not going well. In order to enhance online learning, planning and training must be necessary and carried out because it takes more time to operate exactly as planned than conventional learning. Teachers must be trained and equipped with suitable skills and expertise to optimize their and students must be taught professionally. In order to track and preserve their children, the families of the students should be aware of their participation and interactivity in distance courses. However, because of the family's financial situation, the availability of facilities for learners, such as mobile devices and safe Internet access, is still important.

Any future teacher training needs to be incorporated into their curriculum through technology learning, telecommunications, and online courses, since it is unavoidable to incorporate technical implementation in mathematics learning. In a low-tech environment, researchers are allowed to improve online teaching tasks and the needs of teachers for teacher training in the implementation of learning technology. Previous research, as Moorhouse (2020) has pointed out, shows that in emergency circumstances, the transition from conventional classes to distance learning is also worthy.

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