



English Major Student-teachers' Attitudes towards the Use of E-Learning at Kuwait University in Light of the Corona Crisis (COVID-19)

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Abstract

The Goal of The Study: The present study aimed to explore the attitudes of English major student-teachers at Kuwait University on the use of e-learning in light of the Corona Crisis (COVID-19).

Study Methodology: The analytical descriptive methodology was followed to design this research. Thus, the data was collected by a 3-Likert-scale questionnaire consisting of 25 items distributed into 4 domains. SPSS was used to calculate frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. One-way ANOVA and t-test were administered to identify statistical significance differences if existed.

Sample of The Study: The participants in this study were Kuwait University English language student-teachers majoring in both primary and intermediate stages. They were enrolled in Basic Teaching courses and were taught by the researcher. In total, they were 80 participants representing fifty females and thirty males.

Study Results: The outcomes of the t-test showed that there were statistically significant differences in domains 3 and 4 with reference to gender, in favour of male students, and to major in favour of the intermediate stage. As for the ANOVA test, results showed that there were no statically significant differences with reference to years of study.

Study Conclusion: The study concluded that English language student-teachers had a negative attitude towards e-learning and reluctant to use it based on their unfamiliarity with it. Statistically significant differences were identified in both the third and fourth domains with reference to gender, in favour of male student-teachers, and to major in favour of the intermediate

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stage. The study concluded with several recommendations in light of the study findings.

Keywords: E-learning, Student-teachers, English Major, Kuwait University, Corona Crisis (COVID-19).

Introduction

As a result of the widespread of the global Corona virus pandemic disease (COVID-19), all aspects of life worldwide have been affected. This deadly disease has forced countries to close schools, colleges, and universities as well as all work places. Based on the UNISCO report (2020), the closures have impacted over 60% of the world's student population. Since February 2020 onwards, the number is on increase as more countries followed this step of disrupting education to avoid life loss among students, teachers, and administrative staffs (World Bank, 2020). The cancellation of classes has been a bitter reality faced almost in all countries in the world and that has caused massive anxiety and uncertainty on what is the best way to deal with this pandemic disease while keeping the wheel of life going especially in the education sector. The State of Kuwait is not different from other countries when it comes to citizens' lives, as high levels of health precautions have been strictly administered and followed. Consequently, further procedures were later added in order to fight and contain the spread of the Corona virus disease. Thus, the Cabinet issued a decision at its extraordinary meeting on February 26th regarding the disruption of study for public and private schools, universities and colleges (Kuwait News Agency, 2020). Therefore, Kuwait University confirmed its commitment to the Cabinet's decision and disrupted study at its colleges since February 26th as to be completed on August 9th 2020 (Kuwait University, 2020). However, the future of students matters as they need to pursue further studies or join the job market. As a result, the search for an educational alternative has become a must. According to Mulenga (2020, p. 1) as a consequence of countries locked down, "there is a paradigm shift in terms of learning world-wide. Most institutions around the world are moving away from the traditional classroom face-to-face learning to digital learning". With such unexpected outbreak of COVID-19, Kuwait University is working hard to launch online education upon

commencing the remaining of the spring semester on August 9th by providing an intensive nine weeks' online workshops' plan from June 7th to August 6th to both staff members and students in all of its colleges (Kuwait University, 2020). Bao (2020) clearly describes the situation which Peking University faces and is applicable as well to Kuwait University as follows:

It is a massive, disruptive shift to move all the existing courses online in a matter of days. In general, a complete online course requires an elaborate lesson plan design, teaching materials such as audio and video contents, as well as technology support teams. However, due to the sudden emergence of the COVID-19, most faculty members are facing the challenges of lacking online teaching experience, early preparation, or support from educational technology teams (p. 113).

Students will experience a paradigm shift in their mode of learning (Peters, 2002). They will shift from physical classroom learning and face-to-face interaction with their professors to digital learning which they are unfamiliar with and are not used to. This applies to Kuwait University students; it will be a new experience for them. For the first time, they will be officially using e-learning to study, communicate with their professors, submit assignments, and take tests as well. The present study aims to investigate the attitudes of English major student-teachers towards the use of e-learning at Kuwait University in light of the Corona Crisis (COVID-19).

Literature Review and Previous Studies:

In all educational settings including university level, the main teaching and educational delivery model for teachers is face-to-face traditional lecturing influenced by teacher-centred learning model (Nagaraju, Madhavaiah & Peter, 2013). In a normal university classroom setting, a professor lectures and students take notes. In addition, it is the norm that interactions, discussions, and classroom participations take place. However, as a result of technology revolution and advancement in information and communication, teaching methods and information delivery have been influenced with the shift

towards learner-centred (Lestari, Widjajakusumah, 2009). The popularity of technology adoption in the domain of education has increased, especially since the emergence of the World Wide Web 2.0. During the 2000s era, technology has become one of the most valuable resources in educational settings as a result of the arrival of Web 2.0., which made it possible to edit, interact, and publish material virtually. That has resulted in the inclusion of e-learning as a new trend in knowledge delivery in general public education and in higher education levels as well. Al-Fadli (2008, p. 418) points out that “it is claimed that students can learn more from e-learning than through traditional classroom methods, perhaps because students become more involved in the learning process through interactivity”. One way to look at e-learning is the shift from teacher-cantered to learner-centred. Teachers become facilitators of the learning process more than being authoritarians and dominators of classroom teaching procedures and events (Hirumi, 2002). This encourages students’ autonomy and critical thinking skills to achieve the goals of the studied course (Salmon, 2003). Due to the widespread Corona Crisis (COVID-19), e-learning is becoming popular and a dominating learning model.

Defining E-Learning:

When it comes to defining e-learning which stands for electronic learning, several definitions were given and all evolve around the same concept. For Rosenberg (2001, p. 28) “e-Learning refers to the use of Internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance”. In addition, the Commission of the European Communities (CEC, 2002, p.6), defines e-learning as the “use of new multimedia technologies and the Internet to improve the quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services as well as remote exchanges and collaborations”. Koohang & Harman (2005, p. 77) define it as “the delivery of education (all activities relevant to instructing, teaching, and learning) through various electronic media. The electronic medium could be the Internet, intranets, extranets, satellite TV, video/audio tape, and/or CD ROM”. Simply, MacDonald,

Stodel, Thompson, Muirhead & Hinton (2009, p. 39) define e-learning as a form of “learning that takes place via the internet”.

Advantages and Disadvantages of E-learning at University Level:

E-learning is attracting educators and professors at university level to integrate it with traditional face-to-face teaching because of the advantages it holds. AlSharhan (2018, p. 3) confirms that “e-learning as its general umbrella, offers considerable benefits to build and support creative, collaborative, and communicative capacities within learning environments”. Smith & Taveras (2005) affirm that e-learning allows students to manage the temporal and spatial restrictions which they encounter in traditional learning contexts. Spender (2001) adds that e-learning gives extra and more flexible methods of communication which allow students to interact with each other easily. Al-Fadhli (2008) explains that flexibility is another important feature about e-learning as it supports learners’ autonomy and learners’ choice of what to study and how. In addition, e-learning helps to reduce traditional classes’ impact on the environment by lowering paper use and energy consumption. Bhatia (2011) elaborates stating that students are allowed to access diverse contents anytime, and anywhere. With that, students can control their learning experiences, select the courses they want, and study them anytime and anywhere. In addition, Zabadi & Al-Alawi (2016) list other advantages of e-learning including the amount of the courses studied, the regeneration of the studied material, and the immediate assessment of education efficiency. Furthermore, AlSharhan (2018) mentions other advantages of e-learning which encourage its application in Kuwait higher education level i. e. Kuwait University. AlSharhan (2018, p. 3) affirms that e-learning “can prepare students to be efficient in their university life, acquire self-learning skills and solve problems related to the students’ capacities, attendance, and dynamic curricula in the higher education institutions”. Raheem & Khan (2020, p. 3136) draw our attention to several handy features of e-learning that encourage implementing it in education. They state that e-learning is “simply web-based, always available, free access to e-manuals, clear, easy to follow, step by step instruction, and the best and most convenient, comprehensive way to learn on one’s own, and is comprehensive”.

When it comes to the disadvantages of e-learning, the model is not a problem or challenge free. There are many drawbacks related to e-learning model. The availability of the course content 24 hours seven days a week indicates that physical attendance of students is not a requirement. This has a negative consequence as it could reduce the social and cultural interaction between students and make them feel isolated and unsupported due to the absence of the instructors when needed (Welsh, Wanberg, Brown & Simmering, 2003). Students may feel bored because there will be no interaction as they are used to in face-to-face classrooms. This makes it difficult for e-learning to replace the role of the teacher, or even to dominate the learning/teaching process solely (Mutambik, 2018). In addition, students and teachers need to have computer skills and familiarity with word processing, and awareness of different internet browsers (Collins, Buhalis, & Peters, 2003, Mutambik, 2018). Furthermore, Prebianca, Vieira, & Finardi (2014) add that computer anxiety is another disadvantage for both students and teachers. In addition, students' dependence on the teacher as a result of the dominance of face-to-face classes makes it hard on them to be autonomous learners. As for e-learning and English language teaching, Westbrook (2006) disputes that incorporating e-learning into the studying of English as a foreign language did not achieve the anticipated outcomes. Furthermore, Bailey & Lee (2020) point out that the onset of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has presented challenges for education including transferring courses online, which gave experienced online lecturers an inherent advantage over their less tech-savvy counterparts. However, online teaching poses challenges and affords less opportunities for EFL instructors who rely on live communication for pronunciation and speech lessons.

Debski and Gruba (1999) remind us that the successful inclusion of e-learning for the teaching and learning of EFL could be measurable. However, proper assessment methods that capture the perceptions of both students and teachers towards technology use still would demand consideration. According Payne (2020).

It is difficult to have an interactive L2 conversation with more than about four to six individuals; either use the break-out rooms

feature if the whole class is meeting at the same time or schedule separate sessions with smaller groups. Conversational turn-taking in a video conference is challenging enough when everyone is speaking their first language (L1), let alone an L2. (p. 246).

Therefore, Yang and Chen (2016, p. 170) provide practical suggestions for effective online instruction like “well-designed course content, motivated interaction between the instructor and learners, well-prepared and fully supported instructors, creation of a sense of online learning community; and rapid advancement of technology”. In addition, Yang and Chen (2016, p. 170) warn teachers that e-learning requires more effort than traditional face-to-face teaching model. They elaborate “it is a common practice that online instructors devoted more time and energy to online courses in comparison with their counterparts who teach in traditional classrooms”.

Previous Studies:

This section will shed light on studies investigated English language students’ attitudes towards e-learning at university level. The first section will be on the studies of English language students’ attitudes on the use of e-learning during COVID-19 which are rare when conducting the present research. In the second section, light will be shed on studies of English language students’ attitudes on the use of e-learning. The third section will be on studies conducted on e-learning in general at Kuwait University.

E-Learning and English Language Learning During COVID-19

To find out English language learners’ perceptions on online learning in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Allo (2020) interviewed learners of English studying at University Kristen at Toraja in Indonesia. The semi-structured interview questions were addressed to participants by calling them via WhatsApp application. Participants perceived online learning as very helpful in the middle of the pandemic. However, they pointed out the importance of considering the availability of electronic devices and internet access to all students, financial issue and cost which students may shoulder, as well

as online learning implementation. Students hoped that lecturers made use of facilities such as free Messenger application in the Online Learning System. They welcomed e-learning as it focuses on individual tasks which support social distancing between learners. Yet, they did not mind joining online group tasks to help classmates who did not have an internet access. As for the implementation, they wanted the course material and assignments to be preceded by explanations by adding teacher's voice note as it was difficult to understand the tasks.

Atmojo & Nugroho (2020) investigated how EFL teachers carry out online EFL learning and its challenges. For the purpose of the study and through invitation of participants, 16 EFL teachers volunteered to participate in this research. The researchers requested the EFL teachers to make written reflections regarding their practices in carrying out online EFL learning and the challenges they encounter. Among the participants, five of them were involved in a follow-up interview individually. In addition, a semi-structured interview was administered. Data coding was done and appropriate extracts were informed in the results' section. The data was validated by coding it independently by both researchers who continued several cycles of discussion. The results showed that the EFL teachers carried out online learning through a series of activities ranging from checking students' attendance to giving score on students' work synchronously, or asynchronously depending on each school policy. Various applications and platforms ranging from learning management system to additional resource were employed. However, many problems emerged from students, teachers, and students' parents along with the valid reasons. The researchers concluded that online learning did not run well since it lacks preparation and planning.

Bailey & Lee (2020) conducted a study to investigate how to help EFL newcomer instructors who rely on live communication for pronunciation and speech lessons to overcome the steep learning curve associated with computer-assisted language learning (CALL). The study aimed to map expected benefits, challenges, and strategies of implementing an online EFL course among teachers with different

levels of online teaching experience. A group of 43 EFL university instructors teaching communication courses in South Korea completed a survey measuring benefits and challenges for teachers, benefits and challenges for students, communication channels, and activity types. Analysis of variance across no-, low-, and high-experience groups revealed several findings. Key differences between experience level included expected challenges for instructors and activity choice. Those with online teaching experience perceived fewer obstacles and used a wider array of communication channels and activities when doing so. All groups reported similar levels of expected benefits for instructors and teachers and challenges for students.

English Language Students' Attitudes on The Use of E-Learning

Mutambik (2018) performed an empirical investigation using group interviews with students and teachers in order to gain insights into their perceptions about the role of e-learning in studying EFL in Saudi Arabia. The findings revealed that e-learning was useful from students' points of view as it encouraged flexibility and interactivity. According to students, e-learning promoted independent learning with less intrusion from their teachers. When comparing the views of students to those of their teachers, it showed that students were more informed about e-learning than their teachers.

Erarslan and Topkaya (2017) conducted a study on 47 students studying at the School of Foreign Languages at Pamukkale University in Turkey to find out their attitudes towards e-learning and the possible effects of an online course on their success in English. The participants received face to face classes as well as online courses as an extra opportunity to practice the language including language areas such as grammar and vocabulary together with language skills except for speaking. A questionnaire was used to explore their attitudes towards the online course. Both online grades and in class midterm and quiz grades were compared as well. The study results revealed that although students showed partly positive attitudes towards the online course; yet, the online course did not help students in terms of their overall success at the preparatory class.

Zabadi & Al-Alawi (2016) conducted a study to examine the attitudes of students at the University of Business & Technology (UBT) in Dahban and Sari campuses towards e-learning. As for the sampling technique, the stratified random sampling was used in choosing the study sample which included (371) students from four colleges and English language centre. The primary data was gathered from the participants through a well-structured questionnaire seeking responses based on the role of gender, technology usage, and skills. The findings indicated that UBT participants own a high attitude standard towards e-learning in favour of males with reference to gender. In addition, males scored higher means in technology usage and skills as well.

E-Learning Research at Kuwait University:

Although e-learning is growing rapidly and is integrated with traditional face-to-face education in many educational settings worldwide, it is still a growing field of learning at Kuwait University. While it has attracted the attention of researchers and educationists, the focus of e-learning research was on other educational fields than English language teaching and learning. The studies looked at the opinions and attitudes of academic staff, managers, and students (Meerza, 2017; AlDhafeeri & AlAjmi, 2015; Alkharang & Ghinea, 2013; Alsanaa, 2012; Al-Fadhli, 2009 & 2008).

Meerza (2017) examined the critical factors which influence undergraduates' attitudes towards the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in higher education institutes in Kuwait. The sample which consisted of 717 undergraduates was selected from public and private universities in Kuwait. The critical factors examined in this study were the type of university, language of learning, and ICT support. Mixed methods such as quantitative and qualitative methods were applied for data collection. The quantitative results revealed that the usefulness of ICT and the ease of using its elements were the key dimensions of undergraduates' attitudes towards ICT. Another result showed that the examined factors had a direct impact on undergraduates' attitudes. Moreover, the qualitative results pointed out that the factor of peer learning had a strong impact on undergraduates' attitudes towards the use of ICT.

AlDhafeeri & AlAjmi (2015) aimed to identify the factors that influence the adoption of e-Learning technologies at Kuwait University. Four major dimensions were examined as major factors of the study problem: educational, technical, course-related, and administrative. For the purpose of the study, a qualitative exploratory approach was employed to address the research question. The participants were students from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences at Kuwait University. In total, 76 students received semi-structured interview questions. The research identified five main dimensions that reflected the reasons of the reluctance of the faculty members at Kuwait University to use technology represented by e-Learning including: management support, planning issues, training, motivation, and efficient technical support.

Alkharang & Ghinea (2013) explored the barriers that affected or prevented the adoption of e-learning in higher educational institutions in Kuwait as an example of a developing country, and compared them with those found in developed countries. To collect the needed data, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with academics and managers in higher educational institutions in Kuwait. The findings revealed three important barriers which were lack of management awareness and support, technological barriers, and language barriers.

Alsanaa (2012) searched students' acceptance of incorporating communication technologies in the form of e-learning at Kuwait University. A total of 251 students responded to a questionnaire consisted of 34 items. The main findings indicated students' acceptance of the use of technology in education to a plausible extent and this reflected a positive attitude towards using social media for school work.

Al-Fadhli, (2009) investigated the attitudes and perceptions of 118 (19 females and 99 males) faculty staff members from various colleges at Kuwait University towards the e-learning approach by responding to a questionnaire. Mainly, three domains were tested (challenges facing the implementation of e-learning model, the advantages provided by e-learning, and the mode of e-learning preferred by faculty), and represented in a 5-Likert scale questionnaire which consisted of 10 items. The findings revealed that the faculty staff

members were optimistic for the potential impact of e-learning. They also responded positively regarding the role of e-learning in its ability to enhance students' self-learning. A narrow majority of the respondents (52.3%) were positive about the role of e-learning in contributing to the ease of the teaching process. In terms of challenges, forty-nine respondents (41.5%) believed that the technical problems associated with e-learning will be a major factor confronting the implementation of e-learning at Kuwait University. Finally, among the three modes of e-learning (Fully online, Blended, Supplemented), most respondents chose the 'Blended' mode as a suitable form of e-learning to start with.

Al-Fadhli (2008) examined the factors that might affect students' perceptions of e-learning courses based on their views of information systems in Kuwait. The participants were divided into experimental (38 students) and control groups (41 students). After the experiment they responded to a Likert-scale-type questionnaire consisted of 25 items distributed into four domains as: (a) collaboration, (b) role of the educator, (c) cultural aspects, and (d) satisfaction. The findings showed that the participants were marginally positive towards collaboration in the e-learning environment. Students' attitudes towards the role of the educator in facilitating or hindering e-learning received the highest rate of responses. This indicated that educators played a significant role in creating a friendly environment which was necessary for a successful e-learning. As for cultural aspects, students' attitudes towards e-learning were tested according to their gender. Although both male and female students had positive attitudes towards e-learning, female students were positive in evaluating e-learning elements more than male students. In general, students were satisfied with their e-learning experience as they had a chance to improve their critical thinking skills, and enjoyed the experience compared to traditional learning.

From the above literature and previously cited studies, e-learning has been investigated and applied in different educational fields at university level. Student, teachers, and managers' opinions and attitudes have been carefully investigated. It showed different attitudes towards e-learning based on the encountered experiences. Thus, the implementation of e-learning requires a steady process to avoid the previously encountered disadvantages and benefit from its advantages.

Research Problem:

During regular semesters at Kuwait University, students meet with their professors face to face inside the classroom to attend lectures, fulfil the goals of the course outline, and practice different activities and presentations. All that aim to stimulate and support the learning process, allow students to participate, and raise their questions and inquiries in order to enhance their understanding. However, during the crisis of Corona (COVID-19), the spring semester of 2019/2020 was interrupted and students had to stay at home as a health precaution to prevent the spread of the virus among staff and students (Kuwait University, 2020). The present study explores the attitudes of English major student-teachers towards the use of e-learning to be able to achieve the goals of the course and deliver the remaining of its content in order to finish the semester.

Research Questions:

The present study discusses the following questions:

- 1 - What are the attitudes of English major student-teachers at Kuwait University towards the use of e-learning during the Corona crisis (COVID-19)?
- 2 - Are there statistically significant differences among the responses of the participants with reference to the study variables (gender, major, and years of study)?

Based on the second research question, the null hypothesis is as follow:

It is expected that there will be no differences of statistical significance indication at the level ($P \geq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the participants with reference to the study variables (gender, major, and years of study) based on the results of both t-test and One Way ANOVA.

Research Objectives:

The present study is an attempt to find out the attitudes of English major student- teachers at Kuwait University on using e-learning in light of the Corona crisis (COVID-19).

Research Significance:

The present study is of paramount significance as it is to the best knowledge of the researcher is the first study conducted to document

the attitudes of English major student-teachers towards the use of e-learning at Kuwait University. The findings of the study will shed light on the importance of considering e-learning side by side to traditional teaching during unexpected crisis future-wise. It will provide a better understanding of the factors that influence the adoption of e-learning at Kuwait University. It will be a reference for future studies and decisions especially for decision makers at Kuwait University.

Study Methodology:

Participants:

The participants in this study consisted of 80 English major student-teachers attending the courses “Basic Teaching” for both primary and intermediate school majors, which were taught by the researcher. In total, 30 (37.5%) males and 50 (62.5%) females responded to the questionnaire. Forty-five (56.3%) of them were majoring in primary stage education and 35 (43.7%) were majoring in intermediate stage education. Their years of study varied as 25 (31.3%) were in their fourth year, 46 (57.5%) were in their third year, 7 (8.7%) were in their second year, and only 2 (2.5%) were in their first year. All participants were Kuwaitis and native speakers of Arabic. Table (1) presents the demographic data of the participants.

Table (1)
The Demographic Data

Variable		Frequency	Percentage	Total
Gender	Male	30	37.5%	100%
	Female	50	62.5%	
Major	Primary Stage	45	56.3%	100%
	Intermediate Stage	35	43.7%	
Years of Study	Year 1	2	2.5%	100%
	Year 2	7	8.7%	
	Year 3	46	57.5%	
	Year 4	25	31.3%	

Instrument:

To achieve the objective of the study, the quantitative research design was employed following the descriptive methodology. Thus, the data was collected by a questionnaire which was designed based on reviewing previous relevant literature on e-learning. The demographic data included participants' gender, major and years of study. The questionnaire covered 25 items distributed into four domains titled as follows: awareness of e-learning as a learning tool (7 items), skills in using e-learning (5 items), attitudes towards communication between professor and student colleagues electronically (6 items), and attitudes towards the evaluation process based on e-learning (7 items). The questionnaire followed a three-point Likert-type scale as follows: 1 (agree), 2 (neutral) and 3 (disagree). For the purpose of analysing the participants' responses, means' will be interpreted and evaluated as follows:

- 1 - Less than 2.00 indicates low agreement.
- 2 - Equal to 2.00 and less than 2.50 indicates moderate agreement.
- 3 - Equal to 2.50 to 3.00 indicates high agreement.

Instrument Validity and Reliability:

To establish the content validity of the questionnaire, it was emailed to 3 faculty members from the College of Education at Kuwait University. Two of the reviewers were English major, while the third reviewer was majoring in evaluation and measurement. Their remarks and corrections were taken into account, which basically were related to the wordings of the questionnaire items, and the relevance of the items based to the questionnaire domains. Thus; the questionnaire items were rewritten and modified accordingly. The reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the 25 items and was found (0.805) which was suitable for the study.

Data Collection and Procedures:

The present study was administered during the Corona virus (COVID-19) curfew in the spring semester of the academic year 2019/2020 at Kuwait University, in the month of March. To collect the

data, the questionnaire was written using google forms. English major student-teachers from both majors (primary, and intermediate) attending the course (Basic Teaching) were contacted through the My U application. They were introduced to the objective of the study and they were assured the confidentiality of their participation. Then, the questionnaire link was provided with a clarification on how to respond electronically to the questionnaire items. Eighty students responded willingly.

Data Analysis:

In line with the objective of the study, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used to calculate frequencies, means and standard deviations. The t-test and analysis of variance (One Way ANOVA) were used to identify significant differences with reference to the study variables (gender, major, and years of study).

Results:

Results of the First Research Question:

This section provides an answer to the first question “What are the attitudes of English major student-teachers at Kuwait University towards the use of e-learning during the Corona crisis (COVID-19)?”. Tables (2) to (6) provided answers to the above mentioned first research question. Means and standard deviations were used for analysis purposes.

Table (2)
English Language Student-teachers' Awareness of E-Learning as a Learning Tool

Domain 1: English Language Student-teachers' Awareness of E-Learning as a Learning Tool	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Agreement
1) E-learning is essential in light of the Corona crises (COVID-19).	1.39	0.797	Low
2) E-learning will contribute to achieving the educational goals of the English courses and the completion of the semester.	1.44	0.835	Low

Cont/ Table (2)
English Language Student-teachers' Awareness of E-Learning as a Learning Tool

Domain 1: English Language Student-teachers' Awareness of E-Learning as a Learning Tool	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Agreement
3) English language presentations can be submitted/ presented through e-learning.	1.71	0.992	Low
4) E-learning may not help to comply with the specified times of study and assigned English language homework, which will increase the accumulation of the scientific material for study.	1.92	1.000	Low
5) E-learning helps to choose the appropriate time to study the content of English courses.	1.47	0.852	Low
6) E-learning encourages to adhere to the deadlines for submitting English language homework online.	1.36	0.776	Low
7) E-learning is considered a support for traditional education of English language courses.	1.57	0.909	Low

Table (2) showed that the overall level of agreement of student-teachers' awareness of e-learning as a learning tool was low. Regardless of the fact that all items indicated low means based on the responses of the participants, the highest two means among the items were seen in items 4 and 3. The lowest two means were in items 6, and 1. This could be justified by student-teachers' unfamiliarity with this type of learning as they were used to traditional learning since they started their education. Although, they are willing to complete the course and come to an end of the spring semester, still they don't find e-learning as a choice since they believe that they may not comply with the specified time of study or due dates of turning in assignments. Results showed that student-teachers still prefer traditional education.

Table (3)
English Language Student-teachers' Skills in Using E-Learning

Domain 2: English Language Student-teachers' Skills in Using E-Learning	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Agreement
8) I have a tablet/laptop/computer that enables me to use e-learning.	1.83	0.992	Low
9) I am good at surfing the internet which helps me search for information related to the course content.	2.45	0.852	Moderate
10) E-learning does not need training to master its use.	1.92	0.909	Low
11) I am familiar with how to use educational platforms provided by Kuwait University.	1.94	0.656	Low
12) I am used to e-learning in other courses.	1.82	0.990	Low

As presented in Table (3), the overall level of agreement of student-teachers' to the domain items was low. The highest means were found in items 9, and 10. The lowest means were found in items 8 and 12. The results indicated low skills of student-teachers in using e-learning due to several factors such as not having a device available to be able to go online. They were unfamiliar with using e-learning platforms offered by Kuwait University, and they even were unaware that these platforms exist. In addition, they did not take courses online previously. Although, student-teachers were good at surfing the internet, yet most of if not all of them use technology for socialization, but not maybe for learning.

Table (4)
English Major Student-teachers' Attitudes towards Communicating with the English Language Professor and Student-Colleagues Electronically

Domain 3: English Major Student-teachers' Attitudes towards Communicating with the English Language Professor and Student colleagues Electronically	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Agreement
13) I prefer that e-learning English lectures to be recoded and broadcasted via YouTube.	1.78	0.982	Low

*Cont/ Table (4)**English Major Student-teachers' Attitudes towards Communicating with the English Language Professor and Student-Colleagues Electronically*

Domain 3: English Major Student-teachers' Attitudes towards Communicating with the English Language Professor and Student-colleagues Electronically	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Agreement
14) I prefer that e-learning will take place as a direct contact between the English language professor and students for better communication.	1.49	0.868	Low
15) The English language professor can be easily contacted during office hours electronically.	1.10	0.447	Low
16) I do not mind if office hours will be electronically instead of meeting the English language professor's meeting directly in his/her office.	1.31	0.730	Low
17) The goal of meeting the English language professor can be achieved electronically during office hours.	1.42	0.817	Low
18) E-learning contributes to communication better between EFL student-teachers' colleagues in the course.	1.73	0.968	Low

As seen in Table (4), the overall level of agreement of student-teachers' to the domain items was low. The highest means were found in items 13, and 18. The lowest means were found in items 16 and 15. For many students meeting the professor during the office hours will help them to discuss several issues regarding their studies, grades, and even their encountered problems with the course content. When all this shifts to be done as an online meeting, it may limit their chances of such direct confidential discussion.

Table (5)
English Major Student-teachers Attitudes towards the Evaluation Process Based on E-Learning

Domain 4: English Major Student-teachers Attitudes towards the Evaluation Process Based on E-Learning	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Agreement
19) I will not have a difficulty preparing my English homework because I have a good command of the English language.	1.98	0.987	Low
20) E-learning requires many writing activities in English and tasks to score good grade and that will be time consuming for me.	1.79	0.968	Low
21) As a student-teacher of English, I do not mind to be evaluated based on e-learning results.	2.49	0.868	Moderate
22) My evaluation of what I learned electronically (online) of my English course will be satisfactory for me.	1.88	0.943	Low
23) Theoretical exams (essay) of the English course can be applied through e-learning.	2.35	0.797	Moderate
24) Objective exams (Multiple Choice questions, etc.) of the English course can be applied through e-learning.	1.99	1.006	Low
25) I prefer that the e-learning exams of English major courses to be taken inside the classroom.	2.39	0.540	Moderate

As seen in Table (5), the overall level of agreement of English major student-teachers' to the domain items was low. The highest means were found in items 25, and 23. The lowest means were found in items 19 and 24. The evaluation process was another issue which English major student-teachers were concerned about. In a classroom setting, students can clarify their understanding of certain exam questions. This makes them feel comfortable due to the presence of

their professor. When it comes to taking the exams online, they showed low level of agreement as well.

Results of the Second Research Question:

This section provides an answer to the second research question and the related null hypothesis as follows "Are there statistically significant differences among the responses of the participants with reference to the study variables (gender, major, and years of study)?" . As for the null hypothesis, it is expected that there will be no differences of statistical significance indication at the level ($P \geq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the participants with reference to the study variables (gender, major, and years of study) based on the results of both t-test and One Way ANOVA.

Table (6)
The t-test Results of ToT_1 to ToT_4 By Gender

Variable Name	Female			Male			T.	D.F	Sig 2-tailed
	No.	Mean	S.D.	No.	Mean	S.D.			
Domain 1	50	1.606	0.442	30	1.720	0.612	-0.941	78	0.350
Domain 2	50	1.868	0.457	30	1.822	0.468	0.416	78	0.679
Domain 3	50	1.360	0.398	30	1.679	0.543	-2.947	78	0.004 *
Domain 4	50	2.240	0.546	30	2.683	0.357	-3.788	78	0.000 *
Domain All	50	1.653	0.349	30	1.751	0.447	-1.054	78	0.295

As seen in Table (6), the demonstrated results showed that there were statistically significant differences in the responses of the participants with reference to gender in domains 3 and 4 as the level of significance is $p \geq 0.05$. Male students' mean scores in both domains 3 (1.679) and 4 (2.683) were higher than female students' mean scores (1.360) and (2.240). This could be justified by the fact that female students are more keen to interact with their professors face-to-face for further clarifications and communications reflecting their feminine nature. While male students are less articulate during class time and thus, they are not keen to discuss issues during class meetings.

In addition, female students prefer to take exams in person, while male students find it motivating not to attend classes just for the sake of taking the exam as they can take it online. Based on the results, a significance level existed in both domains 3 and 4. Thus, the null hypothesis could not be fully rejected.

Table (7)
The t-test Results of ToT_1 to ToT_4 By Major

Variable Name	Primary Stage			Intermediate Stage			T.	D.F	Sig 2-tailed
	No.	Mean	S.D.	No.	Mean	S.D.			
Domain 1	45	1.591	0.432	35	1.723	0.594	-1.136	78	0.260
Domain 2	45	1.893	0.444	35	1.794	0.479	0.939	78	0.351
Domain 3	45	1.378	0.393	35	1.604	0.552	-2.105	78	0.039 *
Domain 4	45	2.232	0.561	35	2.625	0.387	-3.425	78	0.001 *
Domain All	45	1.663	0.347	35	1.719	0.439	-0.618	78	0.539

As presented in Table (7), the results demonstrated that there were statistically significant differences in the responses of the participants in the study domains 3 and 4 with reference to major (primary and intermediate stage) as the level of significance is $p \geq 0.05$. By comparing the means of both majors, it showed that the mean scores of the intermediate stage in both domains 3 (1.604) and 4 (2.625) were higher than the mean scores of the primary stage in domains 3 (1.378) and 4 (2.232). This could be justified by the fact that intermediate stage students need more interaction with their professors as this reflects the nature of the stage and the age of the learners they will teach in the future. It is noticed that a significance level existed in both domains 3 and 4. Thus, the null hypothesis could not be fully rejected.

ANOVA
Table (8)
F-Test (ANOVA) of TOT_1 to TOT_4 Results by Year of Study

Variable Name	Variable Source	D.F	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-Ration	Sig.
Domain 1	Between groups	4	0.573	0.191	0.736	0.534
	Within groups	74	18.922	0.259		
Domain 2	Between groups	4	0.421	0.140	0.659	0.580
	Within groups	74	15.532	0.213		
Domain 3	Between groups	4	1.423	0.474	2.195	0.096
	Within groups	74	15.767	0.216		
Domain 4	Between groups	4	1.331	0.444	1.616	0.193
	Within groups	74	20.052	0.275		
Domain ALL	Between groups	4	0.359	0.120	0.798	0.499
	Within groups	74	10.960	0.150		

The results presented in Table (8) showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the study domains between the total of answers according to the years of study as the level of significance is $p \geq 0.05$. The results could be explained by the fact that the participating student-teachers would experience e-learning for the first time and they do not have a previous knowledge to build their responses on. As for the null hypothesis, it is accepted as there was no statistically significant indication level identified in the four domains.

Discussion:

The main purpose of introducing e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis is to find a solution for the disrupted education in the spring semester at Kuwait University. The responses of English major student-teachers to the questionnaire items presented in the study four domains indicated students' anxiety from joining this experience. When it comes to their awareness of e-learning as a learning

tool as presented in the first domain, student-teachers' responses did not reflect that. Students did not see the essentiality of using e-learning during COVID-19 crisis as Allo (2020) indicated in his study. This can be a major issue to consider which is looking for different teaching methods during normal course time to be able to introduce them as formal teaching methods during crisis to avoid students' apprehension and fear from going through trial and error. They did not see that e-learning can be a support to traditional education. This is not in line with the findings of Al-Fadli (2008) who concluded that e-learning can encourage more learning than through traditional classroom methods. Furthermore, student-teachers do not see that e-learning can help to achieve the course goals as they do not have a previous experience with it before. Thus; a sudden shift to it is not their best preference. This opposes Salmon's (2003) findings which showed that e-learning could help achieving the goals of the studied course. Student-teachers do not see the highlighted advantages as a reason to go for e-learning. Some of these advantages are choosing the suitable time to study or submit assigned work and presentations online without being forced to attend class in person. The results contradict those of Erarslan and Topkaya (2017) as their participants showed partially positive attitude towards e-learning.

The responses of the student-teachers to the second domain's items represent their skills in using e-learning. To be able to use e-learning, students must have the tool to do so. Some students may encounter a difficulty in having the required tool to join e-learning. This confirms with the findings of Alkharang & Ghinea (2013) who drew our attention to technological barriers which include the availability of electronic devices and internet access as Allo (2020) pointed out. Although student-teachers partially agree that they can surf the internet with minimal skills and without special training, yet they do not have a previous experience of e-learning in their previous classes. In addition, they indicate that they are unfamiliar with how to use the educational platforms which Kuwait University provides. Students may be active in social media and familiar with its different applications, yet educational platforms require a careful training and

guidance to avoid any unexpected problems as that will affect their studies, grades, and future in general. The findings support those of Prebianca, Vieira, & Finardi (2014) that students may suffer from computer anxiety as a result of being forced to switch to it during crisis or difficult times.

The third domain focused on students' attitudes towards their communication with their professors when e-learning is applied. Students reflected their concerns regarding how effective that can be. They are unsure that this goal can be achieved as some of them prefer face- to-face interaction to be able to express themselves which was similarly indicated by Prebianca, Vieira, & Finardi (2014). This signifies students' needs to interact and communicate with their teacher. In addition, there will be no guarantee that their emails will be answered in the right time as the professor may be busy or dealing with other students' inquiries and questions and that may delay the reply to other students' emails. Moreover, students do not see the feasibility of online communication with their colleagues as that can be based on previous experiences. In general, the findings support those of Meerza (2017) on the impact of peer learning on undergraduates' attitudes towards the use of e-learning. In addition, the findings support those of Allo (2020) as the participants welcome e-learning as it focuses on individual tasks. This brings in to focus Welsh, Wanberg, Brown & Simmering's (2003) warning about the possibility of a reduced social and cultural interaction between students themselves and their professors as that will make them feel isolated and bored due to the lack of interaction between themselves as with their professors.

The fourth domain discussed student-teachers' attitudes towards the evaluation process and how they perceive it. They show that they do not mind the online evaluation, however, they are concerned about the load of the assignments. This can be time consuming as they may experience other work from other professors and that can affect the quality of their work. Although they welcome both theoretical (essay) questions as well as objective questions and they do not mind to take them online, they still prefer to take them inside the classroom even if they have to access the exam questions online. This explains a student's

need to meet face to face with their professors on the exam day as that will overcome any unexpected issue related to the nature of the exam or the exam questions. These results match those mentioned by Allo (2020) as students need to have their professors' explanation of the assigned tasks in the form of voice notes to avoid any misunderstanding of the tasks. This brings to light the conclusion drawn by Debski and Gruba (1999) that professors need to consider proper assessment methods when implementing e-learning. In addition, the findings match those of Westbrook (2006) when he argued that it might not be feasible to achieve the anticipated outcomes of e-learning when used for teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Furthermore, the findings remind us of those reached by Erarslan and Topkaya (2017) that the online course did not help students to achieve the expected overall success at the preparatory class. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to consider a well deigned and simplified course content to avoid any unexpected misunderstanding among the students who vary in their individual differences as Yang and Chen (2016) postulated as e-learning requires more effort than traditional face-to-face teaching model.

As for t-test results, significant differences were identified in domains three and four with reference to gender in favour of male students and that matched the findings of Zabadi & Al-Alawi (2016). As for the major variable, students of intermediate stage major scored higher means than students of primary stage major. However, there were no significant differences identified with reference to years of study based on the findings of the One Way ANOVA test.

Conclusion:

The present study aimed to investigate the attitudes of English major student-teachers at Kuwait University towards the use of e-learning in light of the Corona crisis (COVID-19). The study examined the impact of gender, major, and years of study on student-teachers' attitudes based on the study 3-Likert scale questionnaire which consisted of 25 items presented in four domains. The findings revealed that student-teachers were apprehensive and reluctant to use e-learning

as they are unfamiliar with this experience and that indicates a negative attitude towards e-learning. This can be a result of students' fear to score low grades as a result of e-learning as that may affect their final course grades. Therefore, many student-teachers prefer face-to-face traditional teaching since that will bring comfort and lower their anxiety because of the presence of their professor. This will prevent student-teachers from experiencing isolation and loneliness as they are non-native speakers of English and the need for socialisation and face-to-face interaction is a must in order to practice the language. However, with the necessary social distancing because of COVID-19, this can be achieved through specified timing for online class meeting, instead of an open access to the course material based on students convenience. Statistical significant differences were identified with reference to the gender in favour of male student-teachers and major in favour of the intermediate stage in domains three and four. Yet, there were no statistically significant differences with reference to students' years of study. Students' responses resembled several findings of the discussed and cited studies on the negative impact of e-learning based on an unprepared and unstudied decisions of introducing it. It is very crucial to consider the responses of student-teachers based on the findings of this study to tackle the issue of e-learning for successful implementations. It is worth remembering the recommendation of the National Institute of Education (NIE, 2013, p. 80) that "having the technological infrastructure and the software applications is one thing-utilizing technology effectively to achieve the desired learning outcomes is quite another". In addition, student-teachers' familiarity and use of social applications do not necessary guarantee their readiness to study online without being trained in normal circumstances on how to use e-learning and probably blend it with the traditional face-to-face education. This will help student-teachers to adopt a positive attitude towards e-learning.

Based on the discussed findings, the present study concludes with scientific, practical recommendations, and suggested future studies as follows:

The Scientific Recommendations:

- E-learning is a must during crisis for all majors in general, and for English major in particular so students continue their studies and continue practicing the language as much as possible.
- E-learning is a tool added to complete traditional English language learning during crisis.
- Traditional learning is important especially when learning a foreign language like English as it enhances more classroom interaction between the teacher and students on one side, and students with students on the other side.
- Traditional teaching establishes rapport between the language teacher and his/her students.

The Practical Recommendations:

- Introducing English language student-teachers to the importance of e-learning as a good solution to continue education during crisis.
- Training English language student-teachers on e-learning during regular classes to establish a positive attitude towards online learning and an understanding of how to learn through it easily and successfully.
- Training English language academic staff intensively on the use of e-learning for better teaching performance during COVID 19.
- Training English language academic staff on the process of transferring the content of the syllabus to be electronic and online for a smother use.
- Training both English language academic staff and English language student-teachers on how to use the electronic forms for online assignment submission and exam taking.
- Providing the needed necessary technical support for both English language academic staff and English language student-teachers to avoid any technical problems.

Suggested Future Studies:

In addition, it is recommended to conduct further studies like:

- An exploratory study of the opinions of English major student-

teachers on the impact of e-learning on developing their English language skills.

- A quasi-experimental study to compare the responses of control and experimental groups of English major student-teachers based on actual e-learning experience;
- A comparative study of e-learning with face-to-face traditional teaching to compare English major students' achievement results;
- A comparative study of the opinions of professors with those of student-teachers regarding the use of e-learning in teaching English.

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اتجاهات الطلبة المعلمين للغة الإنجليزية في جامعة الكويت نحو استخدام التعلم الإلكتروني في ضوء أزمة كورونا (كوفيد-19)

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الملخص:

أهداف الدراسة: هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى استكشاف اتجاهات الطلبة المعلمين للغة الإنجليزية في جامعة الكويت حول استخدام التعليم الإلكتروني في ضوء أزمة كورونا (كوفيد-19).

منهجية الدراسة: تم اتباع المنهج الوصفي التحليلي لتصميم هذه الدراسة. وعليه، تم جمع البيانات من خلال استبانة على مقياس ليكرت الثلاثي، وتتكون من 25 بنداً موزعة على أربعة محاور. تم استخدام برنامج الحزم الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية (SPSS) لحساب الترددات، النسب المئوية، المتوسطات الحسابية، والانحرافات المعيارية. كما تم تطبيق اختبار تحليل التباين الأحادي واختبار (ت) لتحديد الفروق ذات الدلالة الإحصائية.

نوعية الدراسة: شارك في هذه الدراسة عدد من الطلبة المعلمين في جامعة الكويت في تخصص تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في كل من المرحلة الابتدائية والمرحلة المتوسطة المسجلين في مقرري مبادئ تدريس، والذين تقوم الباحثة بتدريسهما. إجمالاً، بلغ عدد المشاركين ثمانين مشاركاً ومشاركة منهم 50 من الإناث و30 من الذكور.

نتائج الدراسة: أظهرت نتائج اختبار (ت) وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في المحورين الثالث والرابع تعزى لمتغير الجنس لصالح الطلبة الذكور وتغير التخصص لصالح المرحلة المتوسطة. أما بالنسبة لاختبار التباين الأحادي، فلم توجد فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية تعزى لمتغير سنوات الدراسة.

الخاتمة: خلصت الدراسة إلى أن الطلبة المعلمين للغة الإنجليزية لديهم موقف سلبي تجاه التعليم الإلكتروني ومتريدين في استخدامه بناءً على عدم الإلمام به. تم تحديد فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في المجالين الثالث والرابع مع الإشارة إلى الجنس لصالح الطلبة المعلمين من الذكور والتخصص لصالح المرحلة المتوسطة. اختتمت الدراسة بعدة توصيات في ضوء نتائج الدراسة.

المصطلحات العلمية: التعليم الإلكتروني، الطلبة المعلمون، تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعة الكويت، أزمة كورونا (كوفيد-19).

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