

The Evaluation of Virtual Education from the Viewpoint of Gulf universities Students During Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The study aimed to find out the advantages and challenges of education through virtual classes, from the viewpoint of students of IAU and Qatar University, in the Islamic studies and Islamic culture courses. To achieve the aim of the research, a descriptive and analytical method was used. The study sample consisted of 822 students. The study tool consisted of a verified questionnaire containing (35) paragraphs, answers should be attributed to the 5-points Likert Scale. The results showed that the overall assessment of the two axes came at a high level. The positive paragraph "makes students more enthusiastic to learn" came last, the challenges paragraph "There are threats that reduce opportunities to benefit from educational applications through virtual classes" came in the first order, and the paragraph "impedes the effective achievement of the lesson objectives" in last rank.

The results also showed that there were statistically significant differences at (0.05 α) about the advantages of education through virtual classes attributed to the university variable for the benefit of Qatar University students. The absence of statistically significant differences attributed to the gender variable. The presence of differences on the axis of advantages attributed to the work variable in favor of working students, and in contrast, the differences were revealing of the challenges in favor of unemployed.

Keywords: Corona virus- Courses of Islamic culture E-Learning- Virtual Classroom.

1- Introduction

Educators and academics remained for a long time between accepting and rejecting e-learning until (COVID-19) pandemic occurred, which enforced everyone to rearrange papers, and obliging decision-makers to take critical positions and decisions to protect students and teachers, the most severe of which was the closure of educational institutions, and the suspension of public education. All of which caused the distance of more than 1.6 billion students from education in 161 countries. Therefore, the alternative was to resort to technology and its tools as a temporary and safe solution and way out of the crisis that nobody knows how long the crisis will last. Thus, the voices that were fighting this type of education disappeared, and they were considered as a waste of effort and money. Therefore, the education developing methods that remained for decades were regarded as an intellectual luxury. It became an urgent necessity, after the crisis demonstrated its value and its suitability for implementation. (Chandovi, 2020).

E-learning is a form of learner-centered education that requires good preparation, in terms of design, implementation, development and management, to ensure its effectiveness and achieve the intended outcomes (Aql, Khamis and Abu Shqair, 2012; Muhammad 2017). It is also a convincing alternative to regular education that is characterized by excitement and pleasurable, in addition to Low economic cost, speed of access to content, ease of managing the educational process, and measuring the impact of learning (Al-Najm, 2019). Al-Khalifa (2012) adds that e-learning achieves equality among students in the subject of participation, increases interaction, facilitates communication with the teacher and students, and takes into

account the styles of learners through the diversity in the presentation of learning channels, as it allows the content for students to benefit from it later, and facilitates the evaluation process, which, in return there are a set of challenges and obstacles associated with this type of education, including: the absence of educators from designing electronic content and the uniqueness of the specialists in that. It affects the teacher how s/he teaches, and the learner how to learn. Besides, the weakness of privacy and safety policies, which are vulnerable to penetration from time to time, and the limited learning through the five senses. The dependence on hearing and seeing, and the lack of equal opportunities, as many students do not have computers, in addition to the difficulty to access the internet, the need for continuous training for teachers, administrators, and students.

On the other hand, educational institutions sought to benefit from the developments of e-learning, which led to the development of a new generation based on interaction. As a result, virtual classes emerged as one of the types of e-learning, as they represent wider and bigger classes than real classes in which students and their teachers choose the time freely away from traditional teaching techniques. They communicate in a vast world of knowledge sources that do not include the boundaries of the teacher and the curriculum only. This is done through available tools such as correspondence, mail, and dialogue forums, and this type represents asynchronous virtual classes, while the other type is so-called the synchronous virtual classes' in which the teacher and the learner meet at the same time through an online applications such as Board' Blak, Webct, or Zoom and others, through the tools provided by these applications, such as whiteboards, virtual rooms, chatting, and interactive video ... (Al-Hamidawi, 2016, Karman & Aydemir & Kucuk 2013).

As a result of the importance of e-learning and virtual education subject, many studies have addressed the evaluation of this type of education in schools and universities, and students' and teachers' perspectives, and among those studies:

Al-Tuwaim study (2020), which aimed at revealing the advantages and challenges facing the teaching of the Holy Qur'an through e-learning for people with intellectual disabilities. To this end, descriptive documentary approach was used. The results showed that the most prominent advantages of e-learning are: flexibility, saving time and effort, and enhancing the participation of introverted students, and the ease of monitoring and evaluation of learning, while the most prominent challenges constituted the lack of electronic competencies among users, and the weakness of the infrastructure.

Also, Sifaw and Abdullah (2020) study sought to demonstrate the difficulties of applying e-learning in the teaching of chemistry from the viewpoint of students, teachers, and supervisors at the secondary stage in Libya. The results showed that all difficulty aspects are manifested in individual contexts, technology, and related to the curriculum achieved a high degree. However, the most prominent individual difficulties were confined in the fear and lack of competencies to deal with technology and tests, and the belief that e-learning increases burdens. However, contextual difficulties were represented by the lack of specialists in designing electronic materials, the increase of social isolation. In respect of technological difficulties, are embodied in the ease of penetration, weakness of protection programs, and high cost. Most importantly, the most prominent difficulties related to the curriculum were the intensity of the curriculum, its traditional construction pattern, the lack of supportive activities, and the difficulty of implementing the evaluation activities.

Al-Rashidi (2019) study indicated the effectiveness of a training program based on virtual classes in terms of developing thinking skills of Islamic studies teachers in the State of Kuwait. For this objective, quasi experimental approach was used. The test was applied on 20 teachers. The findings of the post application for the test showed the effectiveness of the training program in developing the performance and cognitive skills of teachers.

In addition, Al-Hamad (2019) study pointed out the reality of the faculty members 'use of electronic platforms in teaching Sharia sciences at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University. The findings revealed that female teachers use medium-grade e-learning platforms the most famous of which is Blackboard. The whole impediments axes, namely administrative, personal, technological, and social achieved medium degree. It is noteworthy that the most notably impediments are the lack of availability of technologies and laboratories related to forensic sciences.

Furthermore, Al-Ahmari (2019) study, aimed at evaluating the experience of the Saudi virtual school (synchronous virtual education), from students' and teachers' perspectives. The findings revealed that the most prominent advantages of learning by virtual classes are manifested in the pleasure of learning, solving the problem of teachers 'absence leading to higher achievement, especially in Islamic studies courses, which occupied the first rank among other courses. They also raise students' motivation for continuous learning and encourage them to employ technology. On the contrary, its inapplicability to suit the scientific subjects, its impediment to communication with students, and its difficulty to take into account individual differences are considered from its disadvantages.

Aljader(2019) study aimed at revealing the reality of virtual classes reality and difficulties from the students' point of view at Turkish University of Sakarya. The results showed the presence of obstacles to e-learning, most notably the lack of enrichment activities, the low degree of privacy and security in the system, the weak of achieving the content goals, the lack of questions clarity, the lack of diversity, and their weak connection with the content (Sharef, 2019).

Al-Abbasi and Al-Mazah (2019) study aimed at evaluating the e-learning experience at King Khalid University from the teachers 'point of view, and the results showed that the average of the general axis of the advantages of e-learning achieved 'strongly agree', such as: the ease of communication with students, providing immediate feedback, and the diversity of evaluation methods, enhancing self-learning, taking responsibility, and arousing students' interest, while the general average for the negatives axis achieved 'strongly disagree', such as the need for a long time, and the inappropriateness of e-learning for all disciplines, and solation (Al-Zahrani, 2018).

Al-Nafjan (2018) study, revealed the reality of e-learning through virtual classes for the preparatory year female students at King Abdulaziz University. The results showed that the average of the advantages achieved a high degree, such as its role in increasing the participation of students, improving communication, increasing focus, it applicability to the all curricula, the system is clear, easy to adjust and control. On the other hand, the study revealed that the general average of negatives achieved high degree, such as poor connection to the Internet, frequent technical faults, and the need to possess high technical skills, ...

Al-Subaie (2015) study aimed to evaluate the experience of virtual classes from female students' perspectives at Imam Muhammad bin Saud University. The results showed that the average for the advantages achieved a medium degree and the highest degree were in favor of: increased comprehension, self-learning, and ease of communication. The average for challenges axis achieved medium degree, such as its long duration, distracts female students, and lack of focus, while the most prominent obstacles were, the frequent breakdowns, Internet problems, and the absence of technical support.

It is worth noting that most of the previous studies used the descriptive method. The used tool was a questionnaire except Al-Twaim (2020), Al-Rashidi (2020) and Al-Zahrani (2018) studies. Therefore, the difference between the current study and the previous studies becomes clear in terms of:

- The paucity of studies related to e-learning or virtual education through the Islamic Studies and Culture courses except for the study of Al-Tuwaim (2020, Al-Rashidi 2020; Al-Hamad 2019; and Al-Zahrani (2018), while the objectives, methodology, and tools of these studies are completely different from the current study.
- The privacy of the two universities that were studied, as they are among the largest academic sectors in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, with the diversity of colleges and departments in them.
- To the best of the researcher's knowledge, the lack of studies that tackled the advantages and challenges of education through virtual classes attributed to the following variables: university, gender, work status, especially in light of the Corona pandemic.
- The current study coincides with most of the previous studies in terms of using the descriptive method and the questionnaire as a tool for data collection.

2- The Problems and Questions of the Study

Regardless the presence of various studies that revealed the importance of electronic and virtual education on student achievement and improvement to their performance skills in normal situations in general, and for the students of Islamic studies and culture courses in particular, such as the study of Al-Rashidi (2019) and Al-Hamri (2019) which recommended adopting the idea of virtual classes due to their ability to solve many educational problems, such as benefiting students from the competence of distinguished teachers, solving the problem of the absence of some of them ... etc. However, the results of other studies showed that the degree of employing teachers of Islamic studies for e-learning and virtual learning applications achieved medium degree, such as the study of Al-Hamad (2019) Al-Maraiah (2018). Also, Abdul Karim (2019) study showed, that Islamic studies occupied the last rank among the rest of the courses, in terms of employing e-learning applications in them. Although it occupied the first rank among other courses concerning the degree of benefit from the results of E-Learning on student achievement attributed to Al-Ahmari Study (Al-Ahmari, 2019).

In light of the transformation resulting from the Corona pandemic, some studies such as the Al-Adli study (2020) called for expanding the use of e-learning programs and its applications and improving its efficiency, due to the absence of accurate information on the reality of education through virtual classes in the courses of Islamic studies and culture at the University of Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Qatar University in the State of Qatar due to the current exceptional circumstances. Accordingly, both researchers decided to address this topic to study the advantages and challenges,

and to provide recommendations to improve the efficiency of this type of education, especially with the continuing crisis, and more specifically, the study came to answer the following sub-questions:

- What are the advantages of learning by virtual classes in the courses of Islamic studies and culture from the students' perspectives at Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University and Qatar University?
- What are the challenges that hinder the achievement of education goals through virtual classes in the courses of Islamic studies and culture from the students' perspectives at Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University and Qatar University?
- What are the differences between the averages of the responses of the study sample at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) attributed to the variables: the university, gender, and work status?

3- The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study boils down as follows:

- Advantages and characteristics of learning by virtual classes.
- Challenges that hinder the achievement of educational goals through virtual classes.
- Exposing the extent of differences in the responses of the study sample about the advantages and challenges attributed to the variables: university, gender, and work status.

4- Significance of the Study

Theoretical Significance

In addition to what has been mentioned previously about the difference between the current study and previous studies, the theoretical importance of the study is highlighted as follows:

- Global interest in education through virtual classrooms, which became the topic of the day in light of Covid-19 pandemic.
- The importance of the courses in which the virtual education was evaluated (the courses of Islamic studies and culture), and their great impact on the formation and evaluation of students' personality.

Practical Significance

-The results are beneficial for decision makers in the above mentioned universities covered by the study for the purposes of building plans and policy-making, developing the competencies of faculty and students, improving curricula, harmonizing teaching methods and evaluating in a way that ensures greater effectiveness of virtual education, especially in light of the ongoing Covid-19 crisis.

5- The Terminologies of the Study

- **E-learning:** the use of electronic and computer multimedia such as sound, image, graphics, search mechanisms, electronic libraries, and internet portals in the process of transferring information to the learner, to provide an educational environment with multiple sources either in synchronous or asynchronous manner, depending on self-learning and interactive learning (Al-Gunde, 2012). However, both researchers defined it as taking advantages of electronic programs, tools, and electronic applications either in synchronous or asynchronous manner.
- **Virtual Classes:** Parker & Martin (2014) defined it as a digital environment that enables the teacher and the learner to communicate effectively using multimedia, with sound, image and written texts like a real classroom. The researchers defined it as: a technology-based learning environment in which faculty members are able to communicate and interact with their students by voice, image, and writing, at a specific time, despite of geographical distance, with the ability to save the educational content for later use.
- **The Curricula and Islamic Education:** they are the specialized courses taught in the colleges of Sharia, or any subjects of Islamic culture taught in the various colleges as either optional or compulsory requirements in both targeted universities.

6- The Study limitations

- **Subjective limitations:** the study is limited to researching in the advantages and challenges of virtual learning in light of the Covid-19 pandemic attributed to university variables such as gender and work status.
- **Spatial limitations:** the study is connected with Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Qatar University in the State of Qatar.
- **Temporal limitation:** the study is related to the time period in which the study was carried out, which is the second semester of 2020.

6.1 Method

The descriptive and analytical approach was used in this study

6.2 The Sample and the Population of the Study

The study population consisted of the students who studied Islamic studies or culture courses in both targeted universities during the second semester of 2020 AD. The sample consisted of (822) male and female students, and Table (1) shows the distribution of the number of students in the study sample attributed to its variables.

Table (1) the distribution of the study sample attributed to university, gender, and work variables

Study variables	Category	Number	Frequency
University	Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University	457	%55.6
	Qatar University	365	%44.4
	Total	822	%100
Gender	Male	314	%38.2
	Female	508	%61.8
	Total	822	%100
Work	Employed	118	%14.36
	Unemployed	704	%85.64
	Total	822	%100

6.3 The Instrument of the Study

A questionnaire was designed to achieve the goal of the study, which included two parts, the first part contained the primary data of the subjects of the study, while the second part contained (35) paragraphs distributed on two axes, the first axis measures the advantages of learning by virtual classes and includes (22) paragraphs, while the second measures the challenges of learning by virtual classes and includes (13) paragraphs, and the response to the items of the tool is according to 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree = 5, agree = 4 degrees, to some extent= 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1).

6.4 The Validity and Reliability of the Study

The validity of the tool was verified in its initial form by presenting it to a panel of (7) arbitrators of university professors who belong to different educational specialties. The opinions of the referees were taken into account. Accordingly, the necessary adjustments were made. After that, the study tool was applied to an exploratory sample from the study community and outside its sample, which consisted of (30) male and female students, and then the internal consistency validity coefficients were extracted using the Pearson Correlation coefficient, in each indicated paragraph. Table (2) shows the values of the correlation coefficients.

Table (2) the values of the correlation coefficients for the study tool paragraphs, with the total score of the indicated axis (n = 30)

The advantages of learning by virtual classes				The challenges of learning by virtual classes	
Phrase No.	Pearson correlation coefficient	Phrase No.	Pearson correlation coefficient	Phrase No.	Pearson correlation coefficient
1	**0.669	12	**0.800	1	**0.697
2	**0.784	13	**0.612	2	**0.665
3	**0.666	14	**0.697	3	**0.674
4	**0.871	15	**0.617	4	**0.720
5	**0.718	16	**0.739	5	**0.662
6	**0.818	17	**0.819	6	**0.828
7	**0.803	18	**0.709	7	**0.879
8	**0.768	19	**0.669	8	**0.806
9	**0.700	20	**0.727	9	**0.819
10	**0.886	21	**0.593	10	**0.848
11	**0.804	22	**0.743	11	**0.781
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** Statistically correlation coefficient at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.01$).

The data in Table (2) indicate that the values of the correlation coefficients for each paragraph of the tool correlate positively and statistically with the total score of the axis contained at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.01$), which indicates the suitability of each of the paragraphs to measure the axis contained. After verifying the validity of the internal consistency of the study tool, the stability coefficients were extracted for the two axes of the study tool, using Cronbach's alpha equation. As shown in Table (3).

Table (3) stability coefficients for the two study tool axes (n = 30)

Axes	No. of Paragraphs	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
The advantages of learning by virtual classess	22	0.959
The challenges of learning by virtual classess	13	0.932

6.5 Statistical Treatment

• Means and standard deviations were used to answer the first and second questions, and for the purposes of interpreting the average of the sample responses, the criterion derived from the range equation was used as follows:

- Range, which represents the difference between the highest score and the lowest score on the scale $5-1= 4$.

- Category length = $4 \div 5 = 0.80$ that represents the length of each of the five categories of the scale.

Table (4) illustrates the criterion for interpreting the average of the sample responses, attributed to the five response categories.

Table (4) the criterion for interpreting the average of the sample responses according to the five response categories

Response levels	Average	The level of advantages and challenges
Strongly agree	5.00 – 4.21	Extremely high
Agree	4.20 – 3.41	High
To some extent	3.40 – 2.61	Medium
Disagree	2.60 – 1.81	Low

Strongly disagree	1.80 – 1	Extremely low
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To answer the third study question, an Independent Samples t-test was used to reveal the differences between the responses of the sample members attributed to the variables: university, gender, and work.

7- Findings and Discussion

7.1 Answering the first question: What are the advantages of learning by virtual classes in the curricula of Islamic studies and culture from students' perspectives at Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University and Qatar University?

To answer this question, the average and the standard deviation of the responses of the study sample individuals were calculated. As illustrated in Table (5).

Table (5) means, standard deviations, and the order of the study sample responses about concerning the advantages of learning by virtual classes

No. of Paragraph	The advantages of learning by virtual classes	Means	Standard deviation	Ranks	Level
1	Keeping pace with technological developments in education field	3.87	1.02	3	High
2	It improves the creative skills of students	3.37	1.11	14	Medium
3	It simplifies the content and makes it clearer	3.26	1.13	17	Medium
4	It makes learning more enjoyable compared to traditional learning in regular classroom	2.99	1.13	21	Medium
5	It provides the effort exerted by students to achieve learning	3.50	1.17	12	High
6	It encourages logical thinking	3.25	1.16	18	Medium
7	It makes students more enthusiastic to learn	2.91	1.14	22	Medium
8	The learner feels more comfortable learning in real classes	3.39	1.12	13	Medium
9	It reduces the economic cost of education	3.90	1.17	1	High
10	It achieves the lesson objectives in a shorter time than regular teaching	3.53	1.21	11	High
11	It improves students' achievement	3.24	1.22	19	Medium
12	It facilitates sharing assignments between student and teacher	3.67	1.19	9	High
13	It reduces the rates of students' absence from lectures	3.84	1.15	6	High
14	It increases students' responsibilities towards learning	3.67	1.16	8	High
15	It is characterized by flexibility as it allows students to choose a learning time that suits them	3.83	1.19	7	High
16	It suits all scientific and academic majors	3.01	1.22	20	Medium
17	It improves students skills in employing technology in learning	3.89	1.11	2	High
18	It is recommended as an alternative to the education in real classes	3.27	1.15	16	Medium
19	It allows the communication with the faculty members anytime	3.59	1.18	10	High
20	The students feel as they are in real classroom due to the existence of teacher, student, curricula.	3.29	1.21	15	Medium

No. of Paragraph	The advantages of learning by virtual classes	Means	Standard deviation	Ranks	Level
21	The programs of virtual classroom consist of tools that make such kind of education appropriate, such as control tools, image and voice participation, video, and writing.	3.84	1.05	5	High
22	The programs that are used in virtual classes are commensurate with the operating system without problems, such as Windows, Android, and Mac IOS.	3.86	1.15	4	High
The average for the advantages axis of e-learning		3.50	0.90	-	High

The results in Table (5) show that the advantages of learning by virtual classes, in general achieved a high level, while a mean accounted for (3.50), and a standard deviation amounted to (0.90). This indicates the importance of the advantages included in this axis, as they constitute real advantages for this type of learning. The findings of this axis are consistent with the findings of Al-Abbasi, Al-Mazah (2019), and Al-Nafjan (2018) studies, which showed that the general average axis for the advantages of e-learning achieved a significant degree. However, it is inconsistent with Al-Subaie (2015) study, which showed that the average of the advantages achieved a medium degree.

The detailed results also indicate that the advantages of learning by virtual classes ranged between medium and high level. Where (10) paragraphs achieved an average level, and their average ranged between (2.91) and (3.39), while the rest of the paragraphs achieved a high level, and their average ranged between (3.50) and (3.90). The paragraph (9) which states "reduces the cost Economic education" occupied the first rank with a mean accounted for (3.90) and a standard deviation amounted to (1.17), followed by paragraph (17) which states "developing students' skills in employing technology in education" with a mean accounted for (3.89) and a standard deviation amounted to (1.11) which achieved a high level.

However, paragraph (7) which states "makes students more enthusiastic to learn" occupied the last rank with a mean accounted for (2.91), and a standard deviation amounted to (1.14) that achieved a medium level, preceded by paragraph (4) which indicates "makes learning more enjoyable compared to the pattern of learning in regular classes with average accounted for (2.99), a standard deviation amounted to (1.13), that achieved a medium level.

The results of paragraphs (7) and (4), which came in the last and before the last order, appear to be harmonious, as students' motivation to learn in this pattern decreases due to the low level of pleasure, the abundance of distractions and distractions, in addition to the increase in the academic burdens on students, and their bearing of a large part of the responsibility for their learning, which appeared in the field of challenges in a high degree, in addition to that it is a new experience, imposed by the circumstances of the pandemic and the students' need to adapt to it.

The detailed results of this axis partly agree with the results of Al-Tuwaim (2020) study which showed that electronic learning is characterized by flexibility and time saving. Similarly, Zahrani study (2018), which indicated that it improves the understanding of the Qur'anic text, saves time. In the same vein, Al-Ahmari (2019), which showed that Virtual classrooms encourage students to employ technology and improve achievement. Also, Al-Abbasi, Al-Mazah (2019), and Al-Subaie (2015), which showed that it facilitates the communication between the teacher and students and promotes self-learning. In addition, it is consistent with Al-Nafjan (2018) study, which showed that it increases the participation of students, improves communication. Also, the system is clear, and facilitates adjustment and control through the availability of special tools.

However, the study partly differs from the results of the study of both: Sifaw and Abdullah (2020) and Al-Ahmari (2019), which showed that virtual classes increase the cost to the user, hinder communication, and do not suit scientific materials. The study is inconsistent with the results of Al-Abbasi and Al-Mazah (2019), and Sharaf (2019) and Al-Subaie (2015), which showed that it considers time-consuming. It is not in line with Aljader (2019) study, which indicated that it impedes the achievement of the objectives of the lesson. The reason behind this variation is attributed to the diversity of the study societies, e e-learning programs, and used applications, and the different content of the curricula through which the study was carried out.

7.2 Answering the second question: what are the challenges that hinder the achievement of education goals by virtual classes in the curricula of Islamic studies and culture from the students' perspectives at Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University and Qatar University?

To answer this question, the means and standard deviation of the sample responses were calculated on the second axis. As illustrated in Table (6).

Table (6) means, standard deviations, and the arrangement of the study sample responses about the challenges that hinder the achievement of education goals through virtual classes in Islamic studies courses

No. of Paragraphs	The challenges that hinder the achievement of education goals by virtual classes	Means	Standard deviations	Ranks	Level
1	It reduces students' interest in the curriculum	3.30	1.09	10	Medium
2	The practicalities are difficult to understand by this type of education	3.58	1.17	3	High
3	It leads to students' tension during the learning process	3.40	1.19	9	Medium
4	It hinders the effective achievement of the lesson objectives	3.03	1.18	13	Medium
5	It suits a particular category of learners	3.57	1.05	5	High
6	It reduces the interaction between students	3.41	1.13	8	High
7	Students are more engaged by learning in virtual classrooms	3.58	1.19	4	High
8	It increases students' burdens and duties	3.99	1.17	2	High
9	The absence of face-to-face interaction between a teacher and his student leads to teaching and learning problems	3.45	1.18	7	High
10	This type of education leads to students' indiscipline	3.25	1.21	11	Medium

11	The course is shortened by focusing on some of the essential aspects of the lesson	3.46	1.12	6	High
12	Learning apps by virtual classes are exposed to the risk of privacy violation	3.08	1.18	12	Medium
13	There are threats that reduce the chances of benefiting from learning applications through virtual classes such as Internet quality and pressure on the program during prime time.	4.09	1.09	1	High
The average for the education challenges axis by virtual classes		3.48	0.87	--	High

The results in Table (6) indicate that the students' responses in the two targeted

universities about the challenges that hinder the achievement of the education goals through the virtual classes in the studies or Islamic culture courses achieved high level, with a mean accounted for (3.48), and a standard deviation amounted to (0.87).

This result indicates that what was included in this axis are real obstacles that limit the effectiveness of education through virtual classes, where (8) items came with a high level of challenge, and their average ranged between (3.41) and (4.09), while the rest of the paragraphs came with a medium level and their average ranged between (3.03) and (3.40). The reason behind the existence of many challenges might be attributed to the novelty of the experiment and the sudden shift in education systems from realistic to default in line with the requirements of the Covid 19 pandemic.

The results of this axis are generally in line with Sifao and Abdullah (2020), Sharaf (2019), and Al-Najan (2018) results which showed that the axis of obstacles achieved at a high degree, while it is inconsistent with both Al-Abbasi and Al-Mazah (2019) studies, where the result of the axis achieved 'not strongly agree'. Also, Al-Subaie (2015) study which resulted in this axis with a medium degree.

The detailed results indicate that the challenge in paragraph (13) which states “there are threats that reduce the chances of benefiting from learning applications through virtual classes such as Internet quality, and the pressure on the program at peak time” occupied the first rank with means accounted for (4.09), a standard deviation amounted to (1.09) with a high level, followed by the challenge mentioned in paragraph (8) which states “increases the students’ burdens and the duties that are required of them to fulfill ”with means achieved (3.99) and a standard deviation accounted for (1.17) with a high level.

Regarding the first challenge related to the threats to education through virtual classes, such as poor quality of the internet, and so forth. It might be explained as one of the obstacles to all applications that depend on the Internet, as poor internet coverage leads to frequent interruptions and fluctuations in the quality of the connection, which affects the quality of education, as it was found by referring to the descriptive statistics of the study that the most used program was the Blackboard collaborate ultra-program, with a frequency of 67.6% among the rest of the programs provided by the two universities, which means a lot of pressure on this program alone, which led to communication problems that led to consider it the biggest challenge, whereas the second challenge related to the increasing burdens and duties on students which considers a natural matter where students become more self-reliant, and they assume greater responsibility for their learning, instead of relying on their teachers as in regular education, while the challenge in paragraph (4) which states "hinders the effective achievement of the lesson objectives" occupied the last rank with means accounted for (3.03) and a standard deviation amounted to (1.18) with a medium level, preceded by the challenge mentioned in paragraph (12) which indicates that "the learning applications are exposed during the virtual classes to the risk of breaching privacy "with means of (3.08), a standard deviation of (1.18) that achieved a medium level.

Possibly the reason for what was mentioned in paragraph (4), which occupied the last rank is considering that education through virtual classrooms impedes the achievement of the lesson objectives. This result is explained by the effectiveness of university policies in the training speed and qualifying teachers and students, providing technical support, and benefiting from best related teaching practices. In addition to the faculty and students bearing their responsibilities and the speed of their response to the requirements of the technical transformation during the pandemic period.

The paragraph related to the exposure of applications to privacy violations came before the last rank as a hindrance and achieved a medium level of challenge, which is due to the strength of the programs applied in virtual education , as they are specialized programs affiliated with leading international companies in this field that have sought to improve their services, double their capabilities, to address challenges first hand, and to protect applications, which reduced the risk of violating users' privacy, as in free programs available for public use.

The detailed results of this axis partly agree with the results of Siffo and Abdullah (2020) and Al-Jader Aljader (2019), which showed that among the main disadvantages of e-learning is the low degree of privacy and security, ease of penetration, and weak protection programs. On the other hand, it differs from the study of Sharaf (2019) Al-Nafjan (2018), which indicated that one of the most prominent obstacles is the frequent disruption of the Internet, technical failures. Also, Al-Subaie (2015) study that revealed that this type of education leads to students' busyness and lack of focus, while differing with the results of the study of both: Sharaf (2019) and Al-Jader Aljader (2019) which showed that it impedes understanding and weakens the achievement of goals. Also, Al-Abbasi and Al-Mazah (2019), which indicated that this type of education does not suit all disciplines. In addition, Al-Subaie (2015) study, which indicated that it hinders verbal and written communication with the teacher; The reason for this difference is due to the different study societies and the different e-learning programs used, and the academic courses through which the study was carried out.

7.3 Answering the third question: what are the differences between the averages of the responses of the study sample at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) attributed to the variables: university, gender, and work status?

7.3.1 The findings related to the differences between the average of the sample responses attributed to the university variable.

Table (7) The result of the t-test to reveal the significance of the differences between the average of the sample responses on the two axes of the study tool, attributed to the university variable (dh = 820)

Axes	University	No.	Means	Standard deviation	(t) value	Statistical significance
Advantages	Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal	457	3.34	0.95	-5.789	*0.000
	Qatar University	365	3.70	0.78		
Challenges	Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal	457	3.50	0.91	0.881	0.379
	Qatar University	365	3.44	0.84		

Statistical significance at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

The results in Table (7) indicate that there are statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the average of the study responses about the advantages of learning by virtual classes attributed to the university variable, as "t" calculated value for the differences between students' responses in The University of Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal and Qatar amounted to (-5.789), which is a statistically significant value at the level of ($\alpha \geq 0.05$). The significance was in favor of Qatar University students, as the average of the responses of Qatar University students on the axis of adjectives achieved (3.70), which is higher than the average of the responses of Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University students that accounted for (3.34).

Possibly this is explained by the fact that the reliance on technology in general in the State of Qatar is greater than in Saudi Arabia, as the State of Qatar came in second place in the Arab world after Bahrain and ranked 39 in the world out of 175 countries, while Saudi Arabia came in 54th place attributed to the annual report measuring the information society issued by the Federation International Telecommunication and Information Technology Conference held in Tunisia (Mubasher 2020). Possibly the expansion of the application of blended learning before the pandemic at Qatar University, which, in turn, led to a higher evaluation of the advantages by the responding group of students of this university, whereas the results showed that there were no statistically significant differences at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the averages of the sample responses about the challenges that hinder the achievement of education goals through virtual classes, as "t" calculated value for the differences between students' responses in the two universities of Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal and Qatar are on this axis (0.881), which is a non-statistically significant value at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

This is explained by the similarity of the circumstances in which the shift towards education took place through virtual classes, in addition to the similarity of the programs used in both countries, as 80% of the study sample use the Blackboard collaborate ultra-program by 67.6% and the (Zoom) program by 13%; This prompted the companies that own the application to develop their programs in light of the challenges that emerged from the pandemic period, and may also be due to the similarity in the nature of the Islamic studies and culture decisions through which the evaluation was carried out.

It is natural that a number of challenges arise that are unanimously agreed upon at the beginning of the overall implementation. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there are no previous studies have addressed this variable.

7.3.2 Results related to the differences between the average responses of the sample attributed to the gender variable.

Table (8) The result of the t-test to reveal the significance of the differences between the average of the sample responses on the two axes of the study tool, attributed to the gender variable (dh = 820)

Axes	Gender	No.	Means	Standard deviations	(t) value	Statistical significance
The advantages of e-learning	Male	314	3.52	0.86	0.444	0.657
	Female	508	3.49	0.95		
The challenges that hinder the achievement of e-learning goals	Male	314	3.50	0.88	0.703	0.483
	Female	508	3.46	0.89		

The results in Table (8) indicate that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) between the averages of the study sample responses on both axes of the study tool, attributed to the gender variable, as the value of "t" calculated for the differences between male and female responses on the advantages axis accounted for (0.444), and the "t" calculated value for the differences between male and female responses on the challenges axis amounted to (0.703). These values are not statistically significant at the level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

This indicates that male and female students' evaluation of the advantages and challenges came to a close degree. The reason behind that might be attributed to the similarity of the circumstances in which the transition to e-learning took place in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition to the similarity of the e-learning programs that were applied such as Blackboard and Zoom. Also, the similarity of the courses in which the study was conducted such as Islamic Studies and culture courses which led to a convergence of responses regardless of gender.

7.3.3 Results related to the differences between the average of the sample responses attributed to the work variable

Table (9) The result of the t-test to reveal the significance of the differences between the average of the sample responses on the two axes of the study tool attributed to the work variable (dh = 820)

Axes	Work	No.	Means	Standard deviations	(t) value	Statistical significance
Advantages	Employed	118	3.94	0.72	5.698	*0.000
	Unemployed	704	3.43	0.93		
Challenges	Employed	118	3.14	0.74	4.458-	*0.000
	Unemployed	704	3.53	0.89		

* Statistical significance at significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

The results in Table (9) indicate that there are statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the average of the sample responses on the two axes of the study tool attributed to the work variable in which 't' calculated value for the differences between the responses of employed and unemployed students on the axis of the advantages of learning by virtual classes accounted for (5.698), which is a statistically significant value at the significance level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). Where the significance was in favor of working students. Also, "t" calculated value for the differences between the responses of

employed and unemployed on the axis of challenges amounted to (-4.458), which is a statistically significant value at the level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in which the significance was in favor of unemployed students.

It is noticed that the average of the working students' responses accounted for (3.94), which is considered higher than the average of unemployed students' responses that achieved (3.43). Possibly the working students see education through virtual classes as a solution to the balance between their university studies and their work and through it they find ample time to fulfill their other obligations that were not available during normal learning. Therefore, their evaluation of the advantages of e-learning came to a greater degree than unemployed students.

Regarding the challenges axis, it is noticed that the average of the of unemployed students' responses achieved (3.53) which is higher than the average of working students' responses that accounted for (3.14). This finding is consistent with the first result, as education through virtual classes includes more advantages and fewer challenges from the workers' perspective because it brings more benefits to them more than their unemployed and full-time colleagues, who in turn consider that this type of education includes fewer advantages and bigger challenges, increases the burden and makes them responsible for their learning.

It is worth mentioning that there are no previous studies that tackled the variables included in this question, as the studies that have been reviewed were limited to studying the reality of e-learning and virtual classes, identifying their pros and cons, and suggestions for their development from students' or teachers' perspectives.

8. Conclusions

In general, the students' assessment of the pros and cons of virtual education has been high, which means that the two universities in question are advancing the e-learning systems, which means more attention to improving the experience to maintain the quality of higher education under exceptional circumstances. Students at the University of Qatar assess the benefits of virtual education more than their IAU counterparts, who understand the progress and excellence of e-education at the University of Qatar, and that there is no difference between male and female students on the advantages and Challenges of virtual education. It also concludes that working students prefer virtual education to face-to-face education because it gives them ample time to attend their jobs.

9- Recommendations and Suggestions

9.1 Recommendations

In light of the findings of the study, both researchers recommend academic leaderships at Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University and Qatar University as follows:

- Enhancing the utilization of the advantages of learning by virtual classes, such as reducing costs, increasing students' skills in employing technology, and activating controls and adjustments.
- Improving the points related to the advantages, on which the response was moderate, such as adding what is necessary to increase students' motivation, make education more enjoyable, and make virtual education suitable for different disciplines.
- Reducing the challenges and threats to benefit from educational applications in virtual classrooms, adding what is necessary to facilitate understanding of applied aspects such as simulation programs, and increasing students' integration during learning in a way that ensures reducing their busyness, and diversifying teaching strategies to suit different types of learners.
- Increasing dependence, in normal situations, on blended learning, teaching some units or subjects through virtual classes due to its role in refining teachers' and students' technical skills, a readiness to face the conditions of exceptional education, and taking into consideration the conditions of working and married students.

8.2 Suggestions

Implement further studies on:

- Evaluating the educational experience through virtual classrooms at different stages of study from the point of view of students and parents.
- Evaluating the pros and cons of virtual classes, and development proposals from the viewpoint of faculty members in Gulf universities.

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