A Study of Saudi Students' Attitude Towards E-learning Through Blackboard During Covid-19

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to study students' attitudes toward incorporating Blackboard into the teaching of English language learning courses during Covid-19. The sample consisted of 179 non-English-major students from a large Saudi University in Saudi Arabia. The study adhered to a mixed-method approach; for quantitative analysis, a survey was conducted to collect data from students, and interviews were taken to collect qualitative data. The quantitative analysis comprised descriptive statistics and correlations using SPSS. The qualitative data was examined through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that most of the students were satisfied with using Blackboard in English language learning courses during Covid-19. Moreover, most students showed an inclination to enroll in an online course in the future. The findings further revealed that English was taught successfully and effectively at a Saudi University in Saudi Arabia during Covid-19. Students preferred learning from Blackboard as it enabled self-education, learning without temporal barriers, ease of use, and diverse material. The researcher also recommended improvements to enhance Blackboard English language learning: activity diversification, communication with teachers, English language use during classes, and weekly lectures and live broadcasts.

Keywords: blackboard, E-learning, EFL/ESL, quantitative, qualitative

1. Introduction

Online learning has increased, especially during the last two decades. This rise drastically increased during Covid-19 when online teaching became common worldwide. Saudi Arabia was no exception in this regard. To deal with this sudden change, universities in Saudi Arabia introduced Blackboard as a tool for online teaching and learning. It is a tool with all the features to simulate a real classroom context (Basilaia, G., Dgebuadze, M., Kantaria, M., & Chokhonelidze, G., 2020). The student's perception of the use of the online management system Blackboard is dependent on the effective utilization of these features (Santandrue et al., 2010). Software such as Blackboard provides an alternative to conventional teaching practices (Fageeh, 2011). The Covid-19 epidemic posed a serious challenge to language instructors worldwide, forcing teachers to switch from conventional learning to online learning (Dhawan, 2020). Kaufman (2015) contends that, in online learning, all the instructions and material are presented online and there is no room for face-to-face interaction. During Covid-19, teachers observed this phenomenon using Blackboard and other online platforms such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). English, the leading universal language required for decent employment, financial security, and social status (Guo & Beckett, 2007), dominates education worldwide. Therefore, educators have looked to enhance English as a foreign language (EFL) instruction to prepare learners for future employment.

1.1 Overview and Research Problem

Students' perception of online learning administered through learning management systems (LMSs) has been associated with effectively using these applications (Dhawan, 2020; Fageeh, 2011; Yen, 2020). Hence, students should be prepared to move from the conventional classroom to online learning, especially since virtual learning becomes the only alternative during times of emergency (Moawad, 2020). The abrupt and rapid transfer during the Covid-19 pandemic influenced students' perceptions of an LMS as an alternative to face-to-face (F2F) methods (Dhawan, 2020). In addition, researchers have highlighted the technical difficulties obstructing learning (Favale, Soro, Trevisan, Drago, & Mellia, 2020; Hoq, 2020) and reducing or eliminating direct learner-teacher communication. Notably, some students have perceived Blackboard as a supplementary learning tool (Robinson et al., 2017) or felt online interaction would replace this means of communication (Alshwiah, 2010). Furthermore, Moawad (2020) discovered that students worried about home and academic settings, appraisal and fairness, internet connectivity, and the technical skills necessary for virtual learning.

Students' negative or positive views have affected technology usage (Elfaki, Abdulraheem, & Abdulrahim, 2019). Hence, research on the perception and utilization of Blackboard could elucidate digital instruction effectiveness (Alharbi, 2015; Kashghari & Asseel, 2014), especially in English language learning (ELL). A student's attitude towards e-learning significantly impacts the student's intention to use Blackboard. This link between use and perception can influence virtual tool usage (Almekhlafy, 2020). The unexpected move from classroom ELL to online learning has surfaced as an EFL challenge (Yen, 2020). Given that few researchers have evaluated the use of

Blackboard for ELL courses, especially in Saudi Arabia, researchers need to explore Saudi Arabian students' Blackboard online ELL course perceptions to fill this search gap.

Saudi Arabia needs to develop and improve EFL instruction to embrace English. This shift impacts teaching content, learning contexts, and relationships among students and teachers. According to Al-Shammari (2007), English is the communication medium in several professions, such as aviation and medicine. ELL is a principal part of education in Saudi Arabia, as it is compulsory in all government public schools. Medical and scientific programs in Saudi universities use it as an instruction medium. This study explores student perception of Blackboard online ELL courses because understanding Blackboard and the challenges in learning through this mode remain paramount. Unveiling learner views will help improve foreign language (FL) teaching in Saudi Arabia and empower students to participate in the widespread use of English online.

1.2 Research Questions

This study will endeavor to answer these research questions.

1. How do non-English major students perceive learning through Blackboard?
2. How do non-English major students perceive Blackboard learning materials?
3. How do non-English major students perceive Blackboard versus face-to-face learning?

2. Literature Review

During Covid-19, teaching across the globe experienced a transition. Technology integration emerged as a crucial component in educational institutions, particularly in postsecondary education. Blackboard is an LMS system that academic entities have implemented globally. Slowly, educational institutions in Saudi Arabia have started using an LMS to enhance teaching and learning.

2.1 Face-to-Face Versus Technology-Integrated Instruction

Educational systems have adopted technology-based instruction (TBI) to promote education. Several Saudi Arabian universities have intermixed F2F with TBI by offering e-learning through Blackboard. Graham (2006) portrayed three primary reasons for traditional instruction integration: enhanced learning efficiency, improved access and suitability, and cost-efficiency. During Covid-19, there was a massive rise in the use of digital technologies to teach students (Kusmaryono et al., 2021). (Khan & Abid, 2021) postulated that education saw a paradigm shift from F2F teaching to e-learning. This pandemic enabled students and instructors to adopt various technological skills by introducing the novel use of digital tools.

2.2 Blackboard

Blackboard exemplifies how an LMS assists online teaching and learning. Narwani and Arif (2008) described the wide-ranging term LMS as an instrument that organizes and gives access to online learning services for learners, teachers, trainers, and administrators. Such services typically provide access to instructional material and communication tools. Hence, this e-learning system (software) has empowered higher education teachers, trainers, and administrators to administer technology-oriented instruction. For example, a program instructor who uses Blackboard may execute the application by simply using the default menu. Moreover, basic elements supplement conventionally delivered F2F instruction and allow complete online courses with little or no F2F interaction.

Bradford, Porciello, Balkon, and Backus (2007) defined the Blackboard learning system's potential advantages: improved accessibility, rapid response, upgraded communication, better follow-up, and competence building. While looking at the advantages and disadvantages of Blackboard Learn, Bradford et al. (2007) further suggested that Blackboard allowed learners to use the internet to promote educational performance. Critics have pointed out that Blackboard is pedagogically restraining due to widespread internet incompetence, troubleshooting, and rising costs. Therefore, scholars have developed open-source substitute LMSs, employing Blackboard features.

The instructor employs an introductory section to welcome learners. The learners gain familiarity with the program schedule, syllabus, equipment, and tools applied during the program. Furthermore, instructors inform learners about related information, assist in looking at the program appropriately, summarize the program, and outline the bigger picture. The course description allows the trainer to outline the program or course thoroughly. For example, the trainer may include the program's scope, significance, purpose, and advantages. Teachers make learning materials and other valuable data available in various content formats, such as text, video, audio, images, and animations. Moreover, the instructor may upload several documents as attachments. The assignment component may be used to assign homework. The trainer assigns tasks with clear directions and time limits when needed, emphasizing the course objectives, syllabus, and contents. The calendar tool may apprise students of homework deadlines. The students return their assignments via documents. After the assignments are submitted, the evaluator uses the grade center to assess them. The trainer may check the file, evaluate it, post a review, and re-submit the file. All files can be downloaded and deleted after the appraisal.

An online conference may be recorded to assist and enhance the student's learning. These recordings may be posted publicly across all Blackboard sections. This tool integrates mixed learning modes into the curricula, increasing course efficiency. This component also facilitates the flipped classroom, wherein theoretical learning occurs online, and practical exercises and concept engagement transpire through physical classroom discussions. This Blackboard discussion lets teachers form related threads on a specific topic. Such forums facilitate the instructor-student exchange of questions, answers, ideas, and concepts.

2.3 Framework

This study uses the technology acceptance model (TAM) model proposed by (Davis; this model assumes that whenever an innovative technology is introduced, it is dependent on several factors, including the perceived ease of use (PEOU), perceived usefulness (PU), behavioral intention (BI), and actual use (AU). Theorists addressing technology use and acceptance have focused on observations and feedback from end-users to encourage its practical and appropriate use. For instance, Davis' (1985) TAM unveiled effective measures to assess usability for the stakeholders (Hossain, Khan, Un-Noor, Sikander, & Sunny, 2019). Furthermore, TAM experts have posited an observable utility and application comfort-weighed effective technology. Hence, Hossain et al. (2019) examined learners' innovative technology opinions, appraising application utility and comfort. Also, Segars and Grover (1993) buttressed underapplication efficiency, practicality, and comfort. Additionally, Hossain et al. (2019) examined the genuine efficiency of online teaching and learning methods, exploring learners' responses and observations about a technology application. Venkatesh and Davis (2000) have proposed TAM2, incorporating perceptive development's collective impact. Moreover, Venkatesh and Davis' (2000) unified the theory of acceptance and use of technology Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and unmasked public opinion that affected technology adoption (Hoong, Thi, & Lin, 2017).

Thus, UTAUT spun into technology observation and application. Gördeslioglu and Yüzer (2019) researched the effectiveness of Blackboard for fostering listening and speaking skills in the foundational FL years and discovered encouraging learners' responses. Furthermore, Mohsen and Shafeeq (2014) studied Najran University instructors who gave encouraging Blackboard feedback regarding FL. However, learners' observations were discouraging. Mohsen and Shafeeq (2014) demonstrated that Blackboard improved teacher and learner association and maximized FL achievement. Al Zumor, Al Refaai, Eddin, and Al-Rahman (2013) displayed mixed-method instruction at King Khaled University that enhanced opportunities, reading skills, and vocabulary. However, the lack of internet access challenged Blackboard delivery, triggering student deterrence. Although learners' perspectives about learning using Blackboard have improved, Sun, Tsai, Finger, Chen, and Yeh (2008) showed that requiring internet access while teaching and learning EFL programs promoted learners' language skills and improved their observations.

Davis (1985) postulated that PEOU and PU are the two main factors that play a significant role in the acceptance of technology. The former takes into account the beliefs of people in perceiving the adoption of technology and the notion of effort attached to it, while the latter studies how people perceive the usefulness of technology and its contribution to improving their performance. TAM proposes that there is a causal relationship between these two constructs with three other constructs: "attitude toward using (ATT)" which studies the feelings of the user towards technology," "behavioral intention to use (BI)" which studies how a user develops plans to make use of technology or not, and "actual use (AU)" which studies how technology is used by users, this construct is related to BI because the intent of a user shapes the actual use of technology (Davies, 1989, p. 985).
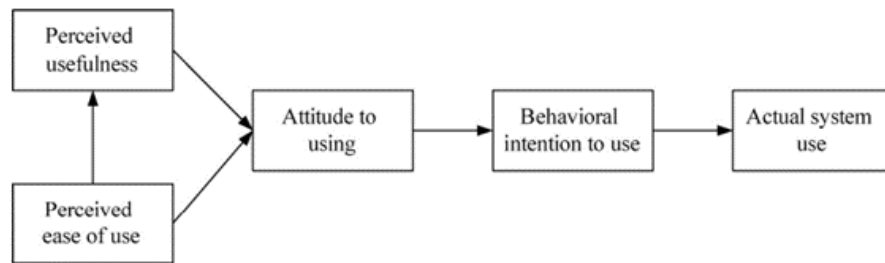

Figure 1. Technology acceptance model (Davies, 1989, p. 985)

2.4 Hypothesis of Research

Applying the arguments claimed by TAM (Davies, 1989) about the use of technology, this research proposed the following:

H1: PEOU of Blackboard by students of a large Saudi University in Saudi Arabia has a positive effect.

H2: PEOU of Blackboard by students of a large Saudi University in Saudi Arabia has a positive effect on the attitude of students toward Blackboard

H3: PU of Blackboard has a positive effect ATT PEOU of Blackboard by students of a large Saudi University in Saudi Arabia has a positive effect.

H4: PU of Blackboard has a positive effect on their BI towards Blackboard on students of a large Saudi University in Saudi Arabia

3. Research Methods

3.1 Research Design

This research utilized mixed research methods to collect qualitative and quantitative data concurrently. Mixed research methods were employed to collect, analyze, and interpret quantitative data. This approach allowed the researcher to embrace the strengths and overcome shortcomings when using the techniques individually. Creswell (2017) defined mixed methodology as numerous ways of seeing, hearing, and making sense of everyday life. The design complexity was required to investigate the abstractness of users' perception of online

Blackboard ELL instruction. The mixed research methods permitted the researcher to scrutinize a broader range of research questions to highlight the patterns (quantitative) and themes (qualitative), leading to rich descriptive results.

3.2 Survey Method

The survey entailed mixed methods, combining interviews and a questionnaire to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The study respondents completed a 15-statement, close-ended questionnaire with multiple answers to demonstrate their attitudes. The assertions probed the respondent's Blackboard usage, Blackboard ELL perceptions, Blackboard teaching and pedagogy, Blackboard ELL course satisfaction, and compared Blackboard ELL to F2F, using a 5-point Likert scale: "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Neither Agree nor Disagree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree." For qualitative data collection, the respondents answered five open-ended questions concerning beneficial Blackboard features, additional elements to enhance Blackboard ELL, perception of Blackboard material improving ELL, advantages, and disadvantages of Blackboard ELL, and suggestions to improve online ELL.

3.3 Research Instruments

In the survey's first stage, a structured, closed-ended questionnaire with 25 statements was administered. The respondents chose from a 5-point Likert scale with options such as "Strongly Agree" (code=1), "Agree" (code=2), "Neither Agree nor Disagree" (code=3), "Disagree" (code=4) and "Strongly Disagree" (code=5). For gender, respondents select from options "Male" (code=1) and "Female" (code=2). In a statement to measure respondent satisfaction, they selected from a 5-point Likert scale with options "Very Satisfied" (code=1), "Satisfied" (code=2), "Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied" (code=3), "Dissatisfied" (code=4) and "Very Dissatisfied" (code=5). The qualitative data collection contained an open-ended questionnaire where the respondents voiced their e-learning attitudes.

3.4 Sample Population, Sample Size, and Ethical Considerations

The study intended to evaluate the perception of ELL students using Blackboard for online ELL courses, so the sample population comprised non-English major students at a Saudi University in Saudi Arabia. The sample size (n=179) was distributed among groups of non-English major students. Some ELL learners had experience using Blackboard for ELL courses, while others had none. Moreover, this study also included learners who used Blackboard frequently (daily) and some who used Blackboard infrequently (once a month).

The researcher prioritized ethical issues related to empirical research during the pre-research, research, and post-research stages, safeguarding student data and responses. The researcher ensured that participants' data was safely stored and not used in any form or for any purpose except for the present research. The personal data of respondents will be deleted after the research is concluded. The researcher also ensured that the participants were fully aware of the study's purpose before data collection. Content from previous studies was adequately cited and referenced, giving due credit.

3.5 Data Analysis

The researcher used descriptive analysis to evaluate the quantitative data concerning the respondents' attitudes collected through the Likert questionnaire. Moreover, the researcher explored the variable relationship using Microsoft Excel and SPSS for correlation analysis and utilized Creswell's (2017) six-step process to analyze the qualitative ELL data: organization and preparation of raw data (transcribing interviews and typing and organizing field notes depending on the information source), reading the data to make a general sense of the information to comprehend the meaning as a whole, beginning detailed analysis (coding and arranging materials into texts segments and chunks before deriving the meaning), and utilizing coding to generate a few themes (generally four to seven). These principal themes were formed into headings, where narrative analysis unmasked themes, sub-themes, and interconnecting themes through a grounded theory chronology. In the final stage, the meanings of descriptions and themes were interpreted, comparing the findings with prior experts and other data analysis methods.

4. Data Analysis Results

4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The researcher conducted a survey consisting of 179 participants to understand their perceptions of Blackboard ELL courses. The respondents answered 15 closed-ended statements with options to choose from Likert, predetermined responses.

To ascertain previous Blackboard usage, the respondents were asked, "Have you ever used Blackboard before for an English language learning course?" The analysis of the 179 participants revealed that 46 (25.6%) had used Blackboards for ELL courses, while 133 (74.3%) had never used Blackboard. Thus, the results indicated that nearly three-quarters of the respondents had not used Blackboard for ELL courses.
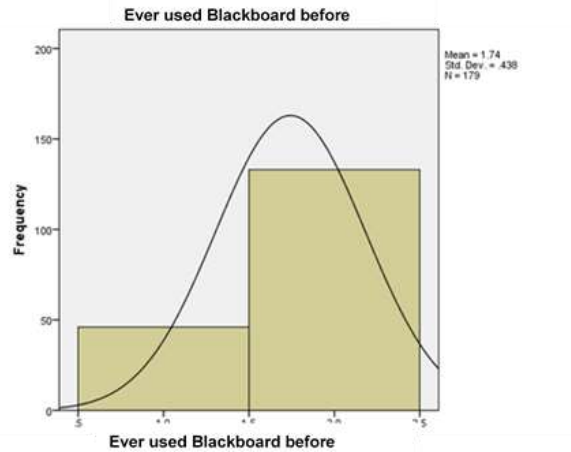
Figure 2. Respondent Blackboard usage

The respondents were asked a series of questions to probe Blackboard's ELL perceived student benefits. Of the 179 respondents, 84 (49.93%) strongly agreed that Blackboard offered an excellent, engaging ELL, while 61 (34.08%) agreed, as shown in Figure 2 (see Appendix B). Moreover, 17 (9.5%) remained neutral. On the other hand, only eight (4.47%) strongly disagreed, and 9 (5.03%) disagreed. Thus, 81% believed Blackboard provided an excellent, engaging ELL approach.
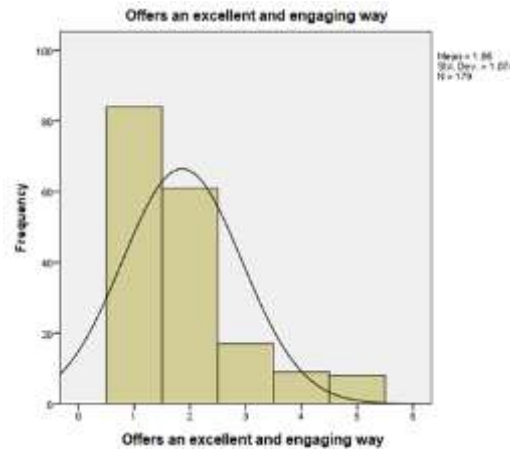
Figure 3. Offers an excellent and engaging way

Of the 179 respondents, 71 (39.11%) strongly agreed that Blackboard offered various ELL materials, while 74 (41.34%) agreed, as presented in Figure 3 (see Appendix B). Moreover, 28 (15.64%) remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, while only 3 (1.68%) strongly disagreed, and 4 (2.23%) disagreed. Thus, 80% of the respondents believed Blackboard offers various ELL materials.
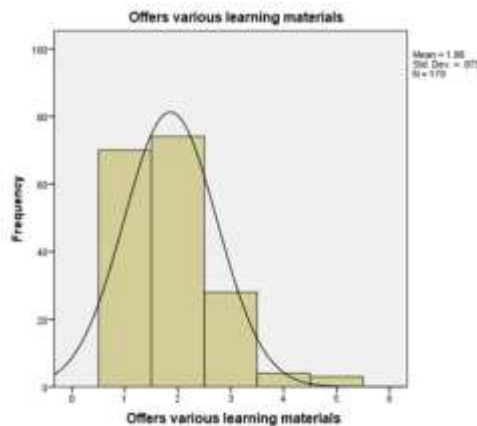

Figure 4. Offers various learning materials

Of the 179 respondents, 73 (40.78%) strongly agreed that Blackboard offered easy ELL materials, while 65 (36.31%) agreed, as portrayed in

Figure 4 (see Appendix B). Additionally, 40 (22.35%) remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and only 1 (0.56%) disagreed, while none strongly disagreed. Thus, the data analysis indicated that 77% perceived the learning materials offered on the Blackboard were easy.
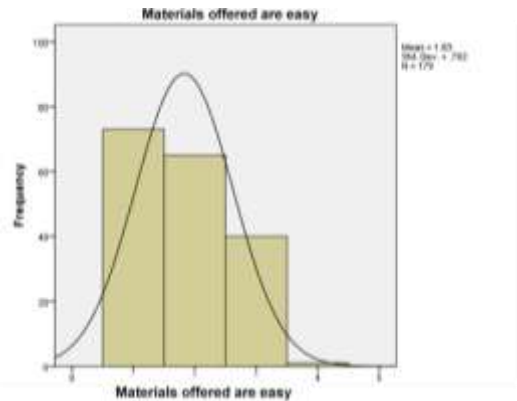

Figure 5. Material easiness

Of the 179 respondents, 46 (25.70%) strongly agreed that Blackboard helped improve ELL skills, while 64 (37.75%) agreed, as illustrated in Figure 5 (see Appendix B). Moreover, 43 (24.02%) remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. In addition, only 18 (10.06%) strongly disagreed, and eight (4.47%) disagreed. Hence, 63.45% felt Blackboard improved ELL skills.
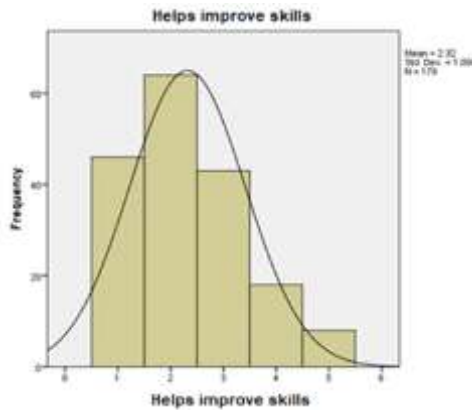

Figure 6. Blackboard improved ELL skills

Of the 179 respondents, 55 (30.72%) strongly agreed that Blackboard was more useful than F2F for learning English, while 33 (18.44%) agreed, as shown in Figure 6 (see Appendix B). Moreover, 45 (25.14%) remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. In disagreement, 23 (12.85%) strongly disagreed, and 23 (12.85%) disagreed. Thus, 49% of the respondents' found Blackboard was more valuable than F2F. Nevertheless, 51% remained neutral or disagreed with Blackboard's usefulness compared with traditional methods.
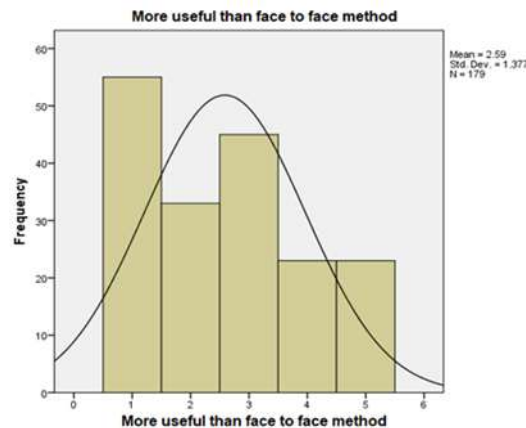

Figure 7. More useful than the face-to-face method

The participants responded, "Learning English using Blackboard makes me more focused than learning it in the classroom." Of the 179

respondents, 53 (29.61%) strongly agreed, while 33 (18.44%) agreed, as shown in Figure 7 (see Appendix B). Moreover, 50 (27.93%) remained neutral. Only 21 (11.73%) strongly disagreed, and 22 (12.29%) disagreed. Therefore, 48% perceived learning via Blackboard created more focus than the classroom. However, 52% either remained neutral or disagreed with the statement.
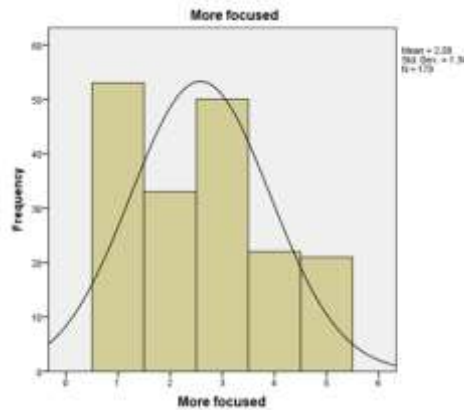

Figure 8. More Focused

The participants were asked, "There are enough exercises and materials for practicing what I learned on Blackboard." Of the 179 respondents, 64 (35.75.%) strongly agreed, while 81 (45.25%) agreed, as displayed in Figure 8 (see Appendix B). Moreover, 23 (12.85%) remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. On the other hand, only two (1.1) strongly disagreed, and four (2.23%) disagreed. Hence, 83.80% of respondents believed that Blackboard provided enough exercise and materials for practice.
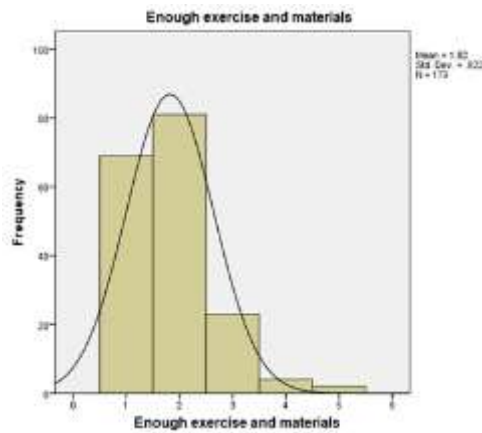

Figure 9. Enough exercises and materials

The second pedagogy-related question asked, "My teacher provides us with new learning materials every week." Of the 179 respondents, 132 (73.74%) strongly agreed, while 37 (20.67%) agreed, as presented in Figure 9 (see Appendix B). Moreover, nine (5.03%) remained neutral. However, no respondents strongly disagreed, and only one (0.56%) disagreed. Thus, 94.41% believed their teacher offered new learning materials weekly.
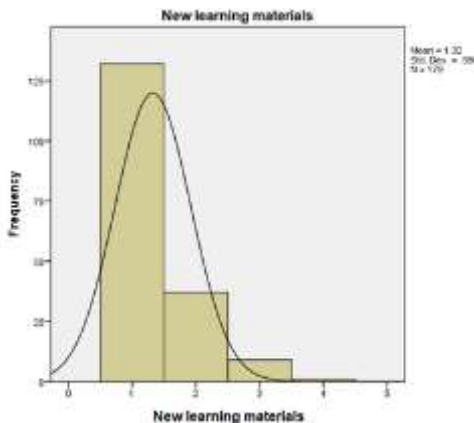

Figure 10. New learning materials

Another pedagogy-related question asked, "The group discussion on Blackboard is helpful for learning and practicing what I learn." Of the 179 respondents, 54 (30.17%) strongly agreed, while 80 (44.69%) agreed, as shown in Figure 10 (see Appendix B). Moreover, 40 (22.35%) remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. However, only one (0.56%) strongly disagreed, and four (2.23%) disagreed. Consequently, 74.86% felt Blackboard group discussion helped them learn and practice what they learned.
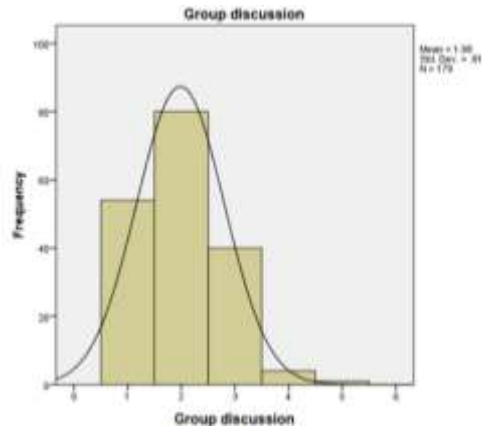

Figure 11. Group discussion

Of the 179 respondents, 82 (45.81%) logged in to Blackboard once a day, while 62 (34.64%) logged in a few times a week, as presented in Figure 11 (see Appendix B). In addition, 26 (14.53%) logged in once a week, and only nine (5.03%) signed in once every two weeks. Hence, 80.45% frequently logged into Blackboard daily or a few times a week.
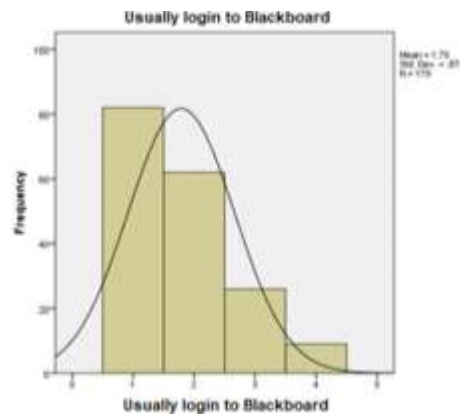

Figure 12. Blackboard login frequency

Of the 179 respondents, 86 (48.31%) strongly agreed that Blackboard made teacher contact easy, while 64 (35.96%) agreed, as displayed in Figure 12 (see Appendix B). Furthermore, 23 (12.92%) remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. Only one (0.56%) strongly disagreed, and four (2.25%) disagreed. Therefore, 84.27% perceived that Blackboard facilitated teacher contact anytime.
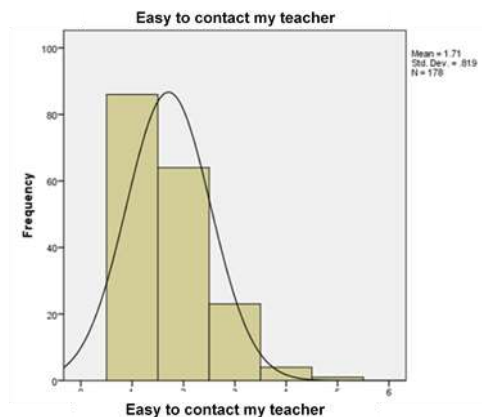

Figure 13. Teacher contact ease

Of the 179 respondents, 125 (69.83%) strongly agreed that grading in this online course was clear and fair, while 42 (23.46%) agreed, as

portrayed in Figure 13 (see Appendix B). Additionally, 10 (5.59%) remained neutral. None of the respondents strongly disagreed, and only two (1.12) disagreed. Thus, 93.29% viewed assessment and grading in this online course as fair and transparent.
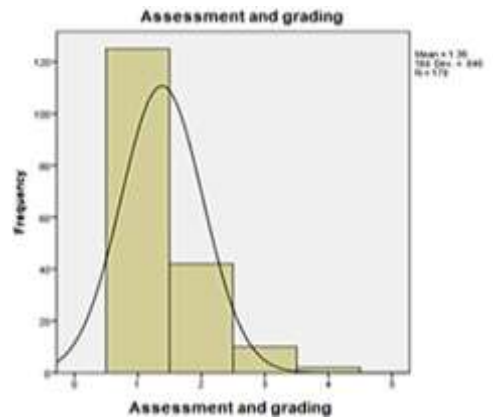

Figure 14. Assessment and grading perceptions

Of the 179 respondents, 74 (41.34%) strongly agreed they would enroll in an online ELL course in the future, while 52 (29.05%) agreed, as illustrated in Figure 14 (see Appendix B). Moreover, 36 (20.11%) remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. However, only 12 (6.70%) strongly disagreed, and five (2.79%) disagreed. Hence, 70.35% would enroll in an online learning course in the future, demonstrating satisfaction with Blackboard learning.
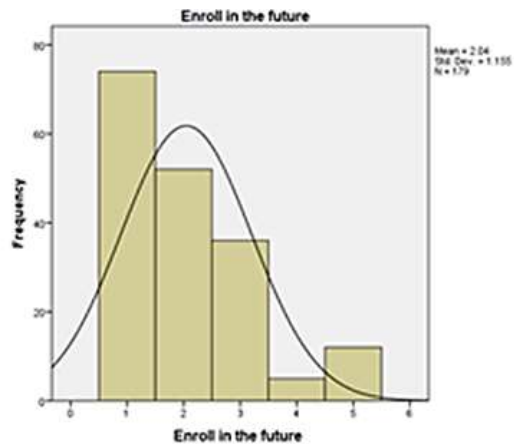
Figure 15. Future enrollment desire

Of the 179 respondents, 97 (54.19%) were very satisfied with their online course, while 55 (30.73%) were satisfied, as reflected in Figure 15 (see Appendix B). Furthermore, 10 (5.59%) remained neutral. In addition, only nine (5.03%) were strongly dissatisfied, and eight (4.47%) were dissatisfied with the online course. Thus, 84.92% were satisfied with the virtual ELL course using Blackboard.
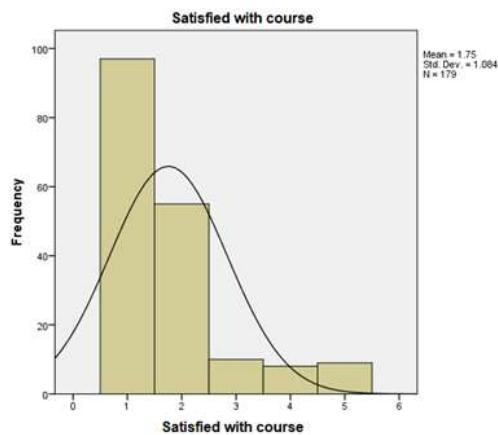

Figure 16. Course satisfaction

4.2 Correlation Analysis

The researcher conducted a correlation analysis of student Blackboard usage, correlating usage frequency with other variables. The findings revealed a positive, significant correlation (p=0.174, sig value=0.020) between Blackboard usage and the perception of Blackboard as an excellent, engaging ELL. The results prove H1 here because the students' choice of (PEOU)" of TAM as their responses corroborate it by showing a positive relationship between technology and the ease of its use. Thus, it can be seen that students perceive this ease because of the circumstances created by Covid-19. The students in the study are all inclined to take classes online through Blackboard because they perceive it as a novel way of learning.

These results implied that students believed Blackboard presented engaged learning. Moreover, a positive, significant correlation (p=0.154, sig value=0.039) was found between Blackboard usage and Blackboard ELL materials. These results revealed that student Blackboard usage made them aware that it offers a variety of materials. Here, the H2 is also proved because students yet again "(PEOU)" and believe that Blackboard successfully engages them. This causal relationship is significant because Saudi university students saw a drastic change in teaching methodology when teachers shifted to an online method during Covid-19. However, their response to the said shift was positive, which in TAM models, construct of PEOU reveals that the students' perceptions are positive towards the novel use of Blackboard during Covid-19.

The findings suggested a positive, significant correlation (p=0.179, sig value=0.017) between Blackboard usage and student perception that Blackboard offered accessible ELL materials. These correlation results indicated that Blackboard users found Blackboard learning easier than non-users. The data here proved H3 as students perceived the usefulness of Blackboard in their learning online during Covid-19. They had a positive attitude towards Technology (ATT) and found that Blackboard offers them accessible learning material.

Moreover, the analysis revealed a positive, significant correlation (p=0.159, sig value=0.033) between Blackboard usage and student perception that Blackboard improved ELL. The findings implied that Blackboard users believed it enhanced ELL. In addition, a positive, significant correlation (p=0.158, sig value=0.034) was indicated between Blackboard usage and student perception that Blackboard was more valuable than F2F. Once again, H3 is proved as students have a positive ATT towards Blackboard. Finally, a positive, significant correlation (p=0.174, sig value=0.020) was suggested between Blackboard usage and student online ELL satisfaction. The correlation showed that Blackboard users were satisfied with online ELL. Here, the researcher has found that H4 has also been proved because the actual use of Blackboard generates a positive result. There is no gap between theory and practice, and all TAM constructs have a positive relationship between student learning and the use of Blackboard during Covid-19.

Blackboard frequency was denoted by Blackboard logins occurring daily, a few times a week, once a week, or once in two weeks. First, the correlation analysis found a positive, significant correlation (p=0.214, sig value=0.004) between the frequency of Blackboard usage and the perception that Blackboard offers excellent and engaging ELL. These results suggested that a higher frequency of student Blackboard usage strengthens the perception that Blackboard presents a great ELL mode. Secondly, the study showed a negative, significant correlation (p=-0.205, sig value=0.006) between Blackboard usage frequency and the perception that using Blackboard enhanced ELL. These results indicated that as Blackboard usage increased, student perception of Blackboard enhancing ELL weakened.

Regarding satisfaction with Blackboard online courses, a positive, significant correlation (p=0.193, sig value=0.092) was found between the frequency of Blackboard usage and desired future online ELL course enrollment. Furthermore, the correlation analysis revealed that students' higher frequency of Blackboard usage increased the chances of enrolling in future online ELL courses. Finally, the correlation analysis indicated a positive, significant correlation (p=0.217, sig value=0.003) between Blackboard usage and student online ELL course satisfaction. Thus, the results implied that high Blackboard usage fostered student online ELL course satisfaction. All four hypotheses were proved as students perceived a positive relationship regarding TAM constructs of PEOU and PU.

4.3 Qualitative Data Analysis Results

This research used TAM to conduct an empirical study of the factors influencing students at a Saudi University in Saudi Arabia and their motivation and perceptions towards using Blackboard in the classroom. The results reveal that students have a positive attitude towards using Blackboard. The analysis shows that 64 respondents answered the five open-ended questions. This qualitative approach gathered students' views without having to select predetermined responses. Their responses were analyzed using thematic analysis to code the answers, and labels were provided for each answer. These labels then unveiled themes as the researcher grouped similar participant responses into broad themes.

4.3.1 Question 1 Themes

The first question was, "What are the most useful features of Blackboard that help you learn English?" Only 64 answered the question. The participants' responses regarding valuable Blackboard ELL features were divided into themes representing similar answers: ease of use, time flexibility, effective pedagogy, and self-education.

The respondents indicated that Blackboard provided simplified electronic slides, ease of asking questions, easy access to content, ease of attendance and learning, ease of communicating information, and quick access to information. In addition, the respondents liked the time flexibility because they could login at any time. This flexibility enabled them to return to the educational material at any time, an element not available in a conventional classroom. Moreover, Blackboard offers ample time for students to understand, review, solve problems, and rest. In the light of TAM, it can be contended that the students PEOU of Blackboard during Covid-19. Their perception was based on multiple

factors discussed above.

The respondents demonstrated that Blackboard diversified learning for many activities and exercises related to the subject. Additionally, they could listen to more explanations and solve exercises. The presence of additional exercises, audio explanations, and the ability to repeat activities often proved an essential Blackboard element. The audios, videos, and activities encompassing discussions were crucial Blackboard components facilitating ELL. The flexibility of questions, learning from one's mistakes directly during the exercises, and the possibility of re-explanation epitomized vital Blackboard components. The respondents found it easy to brainstorm and present ideas. Finally, the visual content and the explanatory sections also helped students. Blackboard led to self-learning. Students could go through various materials several times and learn independently without a teacher or classroom. In the light of TAM, it can be postulated that students here preferred using Blackboard during Covid-19 as it allowed them more chances to listen to material given to them by their teacher; moreover, students also enjoyed the usefulness of diverse material, which is usually not available in traditional face-to-face classrooms. This response also relates to ATT as the lexical choices of students reveal that they have a positive attitude towards Blackboard and are happy with the AU of technology.

4.3.2 Question 2 Themes

The second question asked, "What other features should be added to the Blackboard to help you learn English?" Only 51 answered this question. Twenty-five respondents stated they had no suggestions for adding features to Blackboard to facilitate ELL. The 26 remaining responses were divided into themes of activity diversification, enhanced teacher communication, using English during classes, weekly lectures, and live broadcasts.

The respondents suggested more activities should be added to listening, more tests with explanations, and more weekly activities. Furthermore, the respondents wanted more time with the teacher for classes and discussions and the ability to communicate with the teacher directly. The third theme dealt with using English in class discussions, which could improve language proficiency. The fourth theme entailed weekly lectures and live broadcasts, like an English class podcast to listen to during leisure activities. In the light of TAM constructs, it can be contended that students PEOU. However, they are not satisfied with PU because they believe that more should be done in terms of AU; it can also be contended that the BI of students towards the use of Blackboard during Covid-19 is positive as they are keen to propose changes to its AU.

4.3.3 Question 3 Themes

The third question was, "In your opinion, are the offered English learning materials suitable for your English proficiency level? And why?" Sixty answered the question. Twelve respondents believed the Blackboard English materials matched their proficiency, while 48 approved the suitability. The reasons were divided into learning ease, course content, and course level. This response relates to PEOU in TAM constructs; the lexical choices of students revealed that they are positive towards AU of Blackboard and believed that it contributes to improving their English language skills through online learning.

The respondents suggested that the course levels tended to be easy and not complex. In addition, the respondents asserted that online ELL courses had straightforward rules and procedures, even for beginning ELL students. Course clarity was another theme. The respondents suggested that clarity facilitated ELL progress. Moreover, the chapter explanations and presentations allowed them to learn English quickly. The content helped them memorize words easily. The respondents also mentioned that they found the course suitable if its level matched their education. Once again, students' responses corroborate the PEOU of TAM as they perceived that the material used to teach them through Blackboard was easy to understand. The themes identified by the researcher also link to the TAM construct.

4.3.4 Question 4 Themes

The fourth question was, "Mention some advantages and disadvantages of using Blackboard for online English learning courses." Only 52 answered the question. Twelve did not give a proper answer, but 40 respondents provided their views on Blackboard's advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of using Blackboard for ELL were categorized into several themes: the ability to learn anytime, ease of use, effective pedagogy, and fun learning integration. This question is linked to the PU of the TAM construct, as the students were asked to identify the practical usefulness of Blackboard for English language teaching.

The participants' responses identified the first significant themes: the time capacity and flexibility Blackboard offers for an online ELL course. The respondents contended that the ability to learn anytime provided them with learning flexibility that suited their schedule. The respondents expressed that the course was easy to use, and they remained comfortable learning English through it. Furthermore, the course and study materials were accessible, and communicating information was also easy. Here the responses of students reveal that in PU, they have a positive ATT towards the use of Blackboard for English language teaching during Covid-19; moreover, there is no gap between the BI and AU as all the students responded similarly.

Additionally, the respondents explained that the course provided practice to improve language skills. The organized content presented assignments and activities, making them easy to complete. Moreover, the homework, virtual classes, and weekly learning activities promoted ELL. The respondents felt that diverse online methods combined with straightforward study material and exercises constituted the benefits of online Blackboard ELL courses. The respondents believed Blackboard learning was enjoyable and engaging, making ELL fun. Furthermore, the respondents also felt Blackboard facilitated learning for students and the teacher. Once again, students PU of Blackboard to learn the English language.

The disadvantages of Blackboard for ELL were categorized into several themes: lack of face-to-face interaction, lack of colleague interaction, too many duties and activities, lack of regular lectures and tests, and eye strain due to frequent device use. The participants believed the lack of F2F interaction with the teacher and colleagues reduced learning effectiveness, and a teacher's presence benefits students. The analysis of the interview data revealed that the lack of colleague interaction in group discussions in ELL courses posed a disadvantage. In addition, the respondents viewed the many duties and activities in Blackboard ELL as challenging to keep pace with. Another disadvantage encompassed the lack of weekly lectures and explanations in English. Additionally, the respondents felt tests insufficiently gauged students' ELL mastery. The respondents also claimed that frequent device use and staying in front of the Blackboard strained their eyes. These responses negate all four hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, and H4). In light of the TAM model, it can be postulated that there is a negative relationship between PEOU and PU and the use of Blackboard during Covid-19 to teach English. Multiple factors contribute to this, including the strain that excessive use of technology causes on students' eyes, the absence of teachers, and a reduction in learning effectiveness. However, these disadvantages are outweighed by the advantages of using Blackboard to teach English.

4.3.5 Question 5 Themes

The fifth question entailed, "Any other suggestions to improve this online English learning course?" Of the 179 respondents, 48 answered the question. Although 38 had no suggestions for improving the online ELL course, four respondents expressed their satisfaction with it, as they found the course integrated and excellent. They also declared that the material was appropriate and valuable. In addition, they highlighted that the Blackboard ELL delivery was very appropriate. Of the 48 respondents who answered this question, ten offered recommendations for the online ELL course: course content, English language communication, and teacher communication. The lack of responses here revealed that students PU of Blackboard of teaching material to learn English during Covid-19

The respondents suggested increasing explanations by audio, adding a podcast, providing short explanations, and adding more innovative activities differing from traditional education. Respondents desired direct student communication in the student's native language to enhance ELL and the production of a simple oral presentation to give the student confidence. The third theme was related to the teacher, suggesting improved teacher communication and retention of the existing teacher.

5. Discussion

During Covid-19, universities across Saudi Arabia introduced Blackboard to teach students online. The readiness of the universities to apply this new system and the attitude of students to adopt this change of teaching through technology were the most critical issues to ensure Blackboard's success. In this regard, the results of this study indicated that most students were satisfied with Blackboard-based English language learning. Moreover, most students suggested they would enroll in online learning in the future, demonstrating their satisfaction with Blackboard. The findings of this study reveal that H1, H2, H3, and H4 were accepted as there is a positive relationship between the use of Blackboard to teach the English language at a Saudi University in Saudi Arabia and student satisfaction. Through a quantitative analysis, the study empirically found that the content used at the university is a determinant of students' PEOU in the light of TAM.

My findings reveal that the TAM model constructs of (PEOU), (PU), (ATT), (AU), and (BI) have a primary role in increasing acceptance of the use of Blackboard at a Saudi University in Saudi Arabia during the Covid-19 outbreak. The students' responses highlighted the effectiveness and satisfaction of using Blackboard for English language instruction. The study found that most students believed Blackboard provided excellent, engaging English language learning, and helped improve English language skills. Furthermore, most students felt Blackboard offered diverse, accessible ELL materials, implying students were highly satisfied with Blackboard learning. Hence, they would like to continue using this mode in the future due to its ease of use, perceived effectiveness, and ability to improve their English language skills. This study proposes that Blackboard positively influences the way students PEOU and PU of it, especially during Covid-19.

This study also compared Blackboard with traditional classroom methods and concluded that nearly half of the students claimed Blackboard was more valuable than F2F. Nevertheless, another half remained neutral or disagreed with the usefulness of Blackboard compared to traditional delivery. Similarly, nearly 50% of the students believed learning using Blackboard made them more focused than classroom learning, while another half remained neutral or disagreed. These results implied that the effectiveness of Blackboard over traditional classroom methods remains contested, and it remains unclear which method is better.

Concerning the teaching methods and pedagogy, the results showed that most students agreed that Blackboard provided enough practice exercises and materials and their teacher gave them new learning materials every week. Additionally, most students believed Blackboard's group discussions helped them learn and practice what they learned. Most students acknowledged that Blackboard allowed them to contact their teacher anytime, and assessment and grading in this online courseware were fair and straightforward. These results indicated that Blackboard's learning methodology or pedagogy was effective, and students remained satisfied with the study materials, teacher's availability, and assessment tools.

In an analysis of Blackboard usage for students who were currently using Blackboard, the study showed that student Backboard usage generated the belief that it presented engaged learning and fostered awareness that it offers a variety of materials. These findings indicated that Blackboard promoted English language learning and provided vast learning resources. Therefore, it can be implied that new students enrolling in Blackboard English learning courses will be satisfied with learning and material availability. The results also revealed that Blackboard users found learning materials easier than non-users. This familiarity implied that once students started using Blackboard, they understood the learning materials available. The study also suggested that Blackboard users believed this mode improved their English skills, and new users may experience the same.

Furthermore, Blackboard users perceived that ELL through Blackboard was more beneficial than F2F. This belief indicated that Blackboard non-users might experience the same if they start using it. Moreover, the findings also revealed that Blackboard users were satisfied with online ELL courses. This contentment suggests that only users can evaluate Blackboard satisfaction, and non-users may experience the same once they use it.

The researcher also determined that Blackboard use, denoted by user login frequency, impacted student Blackboard English language learning perceptions. The results suggested that students who used Blackboard more frequently were likelier to believe this method was engaging. Therefore, significant Blackboard usage by students strengthened the view that Blackboard presented an excellent English language learning tool. The results indicated that students using Blackboard frequently were more convinced about the effectiveness of this method. However, the findings also revealed that as Blackboard usage increased, the student perception of its usefulness for improving English language skills weakened. These findings implied that a gap in the teaching approach or materials affected the frequent user's Blackboard perception.

Regarding satisfaction, the analysis reveals that high Blackboard usage increased the chances of enrolling in future online English language courses and student online English course satisfaction. Therefore, the results suggested that high Blackboard usage improved student satisfaction and enhanced the chances of future enrollment. Therefore, administrators of the online course must engage students. Moreover, the role of teachers is also important here as they need to adopt new ways to engage students online and increase their interest in online teaching.

The study found that the most valuable Blackboard features fostering English learning entailed ease of use, time flexibility, the ability to learn anytime and anywhere, effective pedagogy or learning methods (learning materials, teacher involvement, and group discussions), and options for self-education. These results showed that students found some features unavailable in traditional classrooms, such as self-education and time flexibility, which helped them learn English via Blackboard. The study also indicated that most students remained satisfied with the suitability of the English learning material for their Blackboard proficiency. Ease of learning, course content, and course level was suitable for their proficiency. These results implied that the online English learning course was designed to suit the English proficiency of English non-major students.

In terms of Blackboard's English language learning advantages, the ability to learn anytime, ease of Blackboard use, fun and learning integration, and effectiveness of pedagogy were identified as significant advantages. On the other hand, the disadvantages of using Blackboard were lack of face-to-face teacher interaction, lack of colleague interaction duties and activities, lack of regular lectures and tests, and eye strain due to frequent device use. These results indicated that students valued face-to-face interaction with instructors and peers, which is absent in Blackboard. Moreover, the lack of regular tests and lectures limited mastery.

Students recommended additions to Blackboard to help them learn English: English usage during classes, weekly lectures, and live broadcasts. These results indicated that students would like to improve teacher communication and use English as a communication medium in discussion and course content. Therefore, significant stress must be given to communication with teachers, activity diversification, and improving lecture and podcast frequency to enhance Blackboard English language learning.

Finally, it can be postulated that the study found that the factors PEOU and PU had a significant and positive correlation with the use of blackboard during the novel coronavirus outbreak. This indicates that students at a Saudi University in Saudi Arabia find technology user-friendly and are encouraged to use it to learn the English language.

6. Conclusion

The study objective was to investigate student perception of Blackboard usage in English language learning courses. The findings indicated that most students were satisfied with English language learning courses using Blackboard. Moreover, most students indicated they would enroll in online learning in the future, demonstrating satisfaction with Blackboard. This desire highlighted Blackboard's English language instructional effectiveness. Furthermore, learning anytime, self-education, ease of use, and diverse study material engendered significant advantages from using Blackboard. The features that should be added to Blackboard to help students learn English are activity diversification, enhanced communication with teachers, English language usage during classes, and weekly lectures and live broadcasts. Moreover, English learning course content should be developed. Future studies should focus on students' perception of specific features of Blackboard-based learning, such as live broadcasts, activity diversification, and improving communication with the teacher. Moreover, future studies should also endeavor to maintain gender balance while conducting a survey among students.

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