The Reality of Online Education Programs

UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS

The Reality of Online Education Programs in Universities of Saudi Arabia

Case Study on the Online Bachelor Program at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Education in Leadership for Educational Justice

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Abstract

In 2018, Saudi Education Minister Ahmed Al-Issa ordered the country's universities to discontinue online bachelor's degree programs starting in the new academic year (Ministry of Education No: 143966, July 15, 2018). In one of his statements, Al-Issa said that the shutdown of these online educational programs was aimed at upgrading the quality of education by focusing on face-to-face classrooms. There was, however, no official investigation applied to online education in Saudi Arabia, neither about the decision to stop the programs nor focused on the quality of these programs. Further, it seems that educators and students alike are not happy with the decision, and they argue on social media outlets that the quality of these programs was equal to that of face-to-face classrooms. This research, thus, first conducts a qualitative study from a social constructivist perspective to investigate the reasons behind the decision to end the online bachelor's degree programs. The second part of this research examines the students' and faculties' satisfaction with the online programs and brings their opinions about the decision to light in an academic study. The research found that, although there was an internal study that was conducted in the Ministry of Education before the decision to end online education, the results and methodology of that study are not available to the public. Further, the research concluded that although both students and faculty agree that online education has some problems, they also both agree that they had a good experience with online education, which has provided access to the educational experience for those who may otherwise not have been able to continue their education. Almost all interviewees disagreed with the decision to end the online education programs and recommended only fixing the existing issues.

Keywords: online education programs, Saudi education, Saudi Ministry of Education, investigation, decision to stop online programs.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

The uses of online learning have increased significantly in the past few years, and higher education institutions have become highly dependent on this type of instruction for the education and training of members of society. Further, as indicated by Remeny (2002), the impact of progress in information and electronic communications technology will continue to affect all areas of social life in the coming years. Distance learning is a change in the educational structure, means, programs, and decisions. It depends on philosophical principles and the emergence of ideas that call for the liberalization of education away from traditional restrictions and toward equal opportunities and expansion in university education; on psychological grounds, distance learning acknowledges that the human ability to learn does not stop at a specific year and that the role of the teacher is auxiliary and complementary, providing individuals with the skills and capabilities needed to better fulfill their roles (Remeny, 2002).

Online learning is a global phenomenon that has grown very quickly because it provides educational opportunities for those whose circumstances prevent them from attending regular university classes; teachers and learners are physically separated, but they stay in communication using electronic media (Faith, 1988, p. 5). Moreover, Keegan (2000, p. 21) has stated that online learning is study and training for those who either cannot travel or attend governmental or private training centers or cannot go to universities, colleges, and schools due to their job or work commitments. According to Kauffman (2015), “Online education offers a convenience and flexibility that traditional face-to-face classes cannot, especially important for those learners balancing work, school and family” (p. 1).

Additionally, the integration of technology in education has never been as important as it is now. Today’s children are born into a world where technology affects all aspects of their lives.

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They use computers on a daily basis, watch television provided by streaming services, and have smartphones and tablet computers that provide access to the web—and infinite amounts of information—instantaneously. By using these devices to learn, investigate, and communicate, students are in many ways taking hold of the educational process and engaging in ways that could never have been imagined even a generation ago (Sung, Chang, & Liu, 2016). Because of this shift in the way students learn, the field of education and the ways in which teachers teach are being challenged to change accordingly.

Shifting educational paradigms are not new; previous generations faced similar challenges, adapting the ways in which teachers provided instruction through a variety of means. One of the most controversial adaptations was the earliest provision of distance learning to students who were unable to attend classes in traditional school settings (Abrami, Bernard, Bures, Borokhovski, & Tamim, 2011). Distance learning or online learning of prior generations was often provided through what was termed *correspondence coursework*, allowing teachers to provide materials that students worked on remotely and returned for grading and credit online. Traditional distance (online) learning was difficult to monitor, however, both in terms of quality and student work, and it was regarded as a less-than-ideal option for learning, particularly at the college level. While distance (i.e., online) learning has always held a small role in the education of students, it never truly gained momentum until the advent of technologies that supported distance learning in new and dynamic ways. As a result, educators are beginning to embrace the idea of distance learning with the aid of technology and the Internet through e-learning opportunities.

Once e-learning gained that momentum, universities across the world embraced the new education delivery method, including those in Saudi Arabia. Over the years, Saudi Arabian

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universities have graduated thousands of students with online academic degrees, from the first distance learning program in 1954 at Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University to the establishment of the first Saudi Electronic University in 2011, which offers majors in banking and financial sciences, health sciences, and computer science. According to Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, the number of distance education that were studying in online education program of 2018 only was 55899 students (Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, 2018).

Despite these numbers and percentages, in 2018, Saudi Education Minister Ahmed Al-Issa ordered the country's universities to discontinue online bachelor's degree programs in the new academic year (Ministry of Education No: 143966, July 15, 2018). When asked about this shutdown, Al-Issa said in a statement that it was aimed at upgrading the quality of education by focusing on face-to-face classroom instruction, but no study or investigation was provided that concluded online instruction negatively affected the quality of education. Furthermore, no academic research has been conducted that applied to online education in Saudi Arabia, whether regarding the quality of the education or the decision to stop it. In addition, it seems that educators and students alike are not happy with the decision; they argue on social media outlets that the quality of these programs was equal to the quality of face-to-face classes. Social media and Saudi media have seen growing debate over the decision to suspend distance education programs.

Problem Statement

As stated above, in the absence of an academic study or an official investigation, and given the evidence of public disagreement with the decision—especially those who are most

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affected by the decision (i.e., online class students and faculty)—were there enough reasons to implement a decision of this magnitude?

The purpose of this research was to conduct a qualitative study from a social constructivist perspective to investigate the process that led to the decision to end online bachelor's degree programs and, further, examine students' and faculties' satisfaction with the online programs and shed light on their opinions about the decision.

Theoretical Foundation

According to Gary Bridge (2019), rational choice theory (RCT) “is an approach that seeks to explain human affairs by making certain simplifying assumptions about what motivates individual action” (p. 1). Bridge explains that it is assumed that individuals have preferences about things in the world, and they act consistently; that is, they act as though they are trying to get most of the things they prefer (Bridge, 2019). Thus, acting in this manner is rational acting, and acting in ways inconsistent with preferences means acting less than rationally or irrationally, if it is inconsistent enough. RCT has been applied in several research fields to investigate and explain the rationale by which a decision is made and if, indeed, this decision is producing the maximum benefit for the individual, group, or society.

The Use of the Theory in This Research

Researchers and professionals have adopted RCT to understand decision-making in areas such as organizational psychology, economics, marketing, and education. Thus, RCT is one of the policy theories that suits this inquiry. Given that the Ministry decided to end online bachelor's degree programs in the country without citing enough evidence that might otherwise show the merits of this decision, the author assumed that it was a rational decision rather than a

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justified decision. Therefore, while collecting, coding, and analyzing data, the researcher considered the extent to which individual rational choice affected the reasoning for banning online bachelor's degree programs in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the theory was examined after results were reached to determine if the decision was indeed built on a rational choice and/or if it was justified, based on a thorough investigation and backed with the opinion of society.

Research Questions

Despite the almost universal acceptance of online education around the world, the Education Ministry of Saudi Arabia decided to stop online education in almost all universities in the country. There were no official investigations into online education in Saudi Arabia, nor were there any studies provided about the quality of the programs or reasons given for the decision to stop them. Moreover, it seems that educators and students alike are not happy with the decision and argue on social media outlets that the quality of these programs was equal to that of face-to-face classes. This study posed the following questions to guide further exploration into the decision to end most online education programs in Saudi Arabia.

1. Why did the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education choose to end online education programs?
2. What are the opinions of students who took online programs at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University about the decision to end online education?
3. What are the opinions of the faculties of online programs at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University about the decision to end online education?

Research Outline

This dissertation is organized as follows:

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1. Chapter 1: Introduction. The current chapter describes the background of this study, problem statement, research objectives, and research questions.
2. Chapter 2: Literature review. A thorough review of the related literature.
3. Chapter 3: This chapter includes a historical review of online education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
4. Chapter 4: Methodology. In this chapter, the research design, data collection, and data analyses are described.
5. Chapter 5: Data Analysis Results. This chapter describes the results of the analysis and summarizes the outcome.
6. Chapter 6: Conclusion: This chapter includes a discussion of the conclusions that cover the research contributions and also address recommendations and future work.

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Chapter 2 – Literature Review

As the advent of technology continues to influence and reshape education, it is necessary to have an understanding of the current knowledge of these technologies and how e-learning has become a viable and necessary part of the educational experience. Videos from YouTube, course management systems such as Blackboard, and communication tools such as Skype have contributed to the growth of e-learning throughout the world and the impact has been noted to be significant in all areas of education. The following is the result of my review of the literature regarding online education.

Individuals in the 21st century face more demands on their time and availability than ever before. Many have found that difficult choices must be made between school and a job that allows them to pay their obligations, even when an advanced education would better enable them to do so. Thus, e-learning has been an opportunity that many such people have embraced. In their work on the proliferation of e-learning, Gulzar and Leema (2016) found that e-learning has become a viable and inexpensive option for many who would otherwise be excluded from obtaining a college degree or other advanced education. “The flexibility of time, place, pace and individual learning is the most important reason behind the popularity and success of e-learning in developed countries” (Gulzar, & Leema, 2016, p. 1).

Their work, a qualitative research project designed to determine the attitudes toward adoption of e-learning opportunities at the university level, found that nearly all universities in their study used some type of e-learning to advance their educational offerings and that most professors even incorporated some facet of that platform into courses offered onsite. Students reported valuing the ways in which e-learning made learning accessible at nontraditional times and spaces where they otherwise might not have been able to attend classes. The authors found

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great enthusiasm for the adoption of e-learning by students at all levels, particularly by those who lived in areas remote to school campuses and those who found e-learning to be the most economical choice for obtaining advanced education (Gulzar & Leema, 2016).

Further focusing on the ways in which e-learning can support student success, Cook and Triola (2014) discussed the attributes of e-learning known to support changes in the ways students think about learning. The authors found five attributes common to e-learning, which they termed the *Five As*: (a) analytics, (b) adaptivity, (c) assessment, (d) access, and (e) agility. They felt these attributes were most important in shifting the ways students learned in an era where technology and instant access to information were available. These attributes, they felt, were the things that would eventually make e-learning opportunities more useful to students than traditional methods of delivery (Cook & Triola, 2014).

The first and most complex attribute of e-learning noted by the authors was that of the power of *analytics* (Cook & Triola, 2014). E-Learning platforms allow for the collection of data on student performance, which is currently done by hand (if at all) by teachers who wish to inform their practice and adapt delivery to students' needs. E-Learning platforms collect data on usage, achievement, and engagement and report it to the instructor, allowing for near-instantaneous changes in the platform and the material delivered, thus making it useful for students and teachers alike.

The second attribute, *adaptivity*, is directly related and speaks to the ability of technology to support instant changes in the delivery of material. Coursework can be adapted to student skill levels through the use of algorithms that allow for immediate shifts in the level of difficulty presented to a student without the need for professorial intervention (Cook & Triola, 2014, p. 931).

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Assessment, the third A, is different in e-learning through the availability of immediate results that allow both students and teachers to make choices and alter outcomes based on the amount of knowledge learned or retained in a specific section of coursework.

The fourth and fifth attributes, *access* and *agility*, were noted by the authors as those elements that allow students to access the right curriculum at the right time, no matter their location (Cook & Triola, 2014). Because so many individuals fail to find the right curricula to support their needs and are additionally unable to logistically position themselves to access that curriculum when it is located, these attributes of e-learning make it ideal for learners as they rethink the ways they access materials and interact with professors for eventual success.

Focusing on adult learners in the medical field, a meta-analysis of studies performed to assess the impact of e-learning opportunities on nursing students found that the students generally felt as though they benefitted slightly from the availability of e-learning (Lahti & Välimäki, 2014). The students reported feeling as though the availability of e-learning gave them options but did not necessarily replace the importance of in-person courses conducted by faculty members. The most important element to emerge from the analysis, however, was the difference in educational outcomes for students who participated in e-learning versus those who chose to attend only in-person courses.

The meta-analysis of the results of 11 studies conducted specifically with nursing students and e-learning found that outcomes for students who attended e-learning opportunities were not statistically different than those for students who attended traditional classes. This work suggests that, despite the decades-long assumption that the quality of e-learning was somehow inferior to that of material presented by an in-person professor, the actual learning taking place by students engaged in e-learning was no less effective than was that of students learning in

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person (Lahti & Välimäki, 2014). The authors, however, were careful to point out the need to study the delivery of e-learning opportunities in other disciplines to determine if the results of their meta-analysis held true over multiple subject matter areas.

Recognizing that student motivation is an essential element of success for any instructional delivery, Safiyeh Harandi (2015) conducted a qualitative study focused on understanding how e-learning impacts the motivation of students enrolled in such coursework. She found that e-learning increased motivation for students to participate in learning because they felt more connected to the material and able to access it at their own levels. Interestingly, the work also found that e-learning impacted the ways in which teachers teach as a result. According to her work, “There is a significant relationship between e-learning and students’ motivation. Findings indicated that when teachers apply e-learning, more motivation is generated by students and vice versa” (Harandi, 2015, p. 427).

Harandi’s findings are supported by other research that also found increases in motivation by students enrolled in e-learning opportunities. Yacob, Kadir, Zainudin, and Zurairah (2012), found that both male and female students demonstrated more awareness, motivation, and engagement in student learning opportunities presented online through e-learning than they did during in-person opportunities to learn. Their work suggested this may be true because students feel more in control of the e-learning process and are able to focus on their studies at times when other distractions of life are minimalized (Yacoba et al., 2012).

According to Yacoba et al., “Students’ e-learning systems play an important role in influencing the students” (p. 100). Their work found that students who were given appropriate e-learning platforms were more influenced to complete their work, found assessments to be more accessible, and generally reported a greater level of engagement with learning. They noted that e-

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learning is both engaging and educational in itself, allowing students to be aware of and access emerging technologies while, at the same time, remaining engaged in subject matter as well.

In their study of a hands-on and remotely operated laboratory engineering course, Corter, Esche, Chassapis, Ma, and Nickerson (2011) found that, “Attitudes toward the labs are highly influenced by the convenience dimension: Students like the new lab types because they can spend less time on setup and tear-down” (Corter et al., 2011). This supports the idea that students who are successful in e-learning situations are so because they find the format more engaging and the material more accessible. Because they feel more comfortable with the delivery, they are more likely to synthesize information, retain knowledge, and succeed in the coursework in a more independent fashion than they might have in the classroom.

While the actual platform of e-learning is noted to have a tremendous impact on the willingness and ability of students to learn, it should not go unmentioned that studies have also focused on the roles of the teacher in supporting students in the e-learning environment. In their study on students’ expectations of e-learning, Paechter, Maier, and Macher (2010) found that:

The instructor’s support in learning (and therefore the interaction between instructor and students) strongly contributes to learning achievements and course satisfaction. In students’ perceptions, the instructors’ counseling and support are especially important for their construction of knowledge, the acquisition of media competence, and for satisfaction with a course. (Paechter et al., 2010, p. 227)

Likewise, Cole, Shelley, and Swartz (2014) found that, “Student–instructor interaction and learner–content interaction were among the predictors of student satisfaction.” (Cole et al., 2014). Their work noted that, overall, students engaged in online and e-learning experiences reported fewer interactions with instructors. When those interactions were meaningful and

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supported learning and knowledge acquisitions, however, students reported equal satisfaction and engagement with the learning environment as did those in traditional settings. Clearly, e-learning integration is important to the course curriculum and students responded more favorably to their interactions with their instructors. Thus, according to Paechter et al. (2010):

The results of our study emphasize the instructor's expertise and role as a counselor and facilitator in learning. The instructor does not become less important in e-learning. On the contrary, students experience the instructors' support and expertise as especially important for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competences and for course satisfaction. (p. 228)

E-Learning is an important factor in modern education, but it is not more important than the role of the teacher of the class. This human interaction is still the key to a successful educational experience.

As noted by Stone and O'Shea (2019) in their study of returning students using online education, a factor for success was "creating a positive and engaging learning experience that includes integrated and embedded support, through the design and delivery of online undergraduate programs" (p. 66). The integration of technology and in-person support must be utilized by the institution in order for students to successfully use any online educational system.

Citing the importance of understanding the ways in which distance learning is unique, Abrami et al. (2011) stated that "distance education (DE) and online learning (OL) has evolved beyond simple comparisons with classroom instruction" (Abrami et al., 2011, p. 83). Simply put, the ways in which students learn and teachers teach have evolved to meet the specific delivery requirements of e-learning, allowing successes in ways that cannot be compared to the standard classroom experience. Some of these changes are a result of the need to address asynchronous

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learning, while others have been inspired by the changing ways in which students view their educational needs and the ways in which they engage with those elements. Abrami et al. (2011) also reinforced the importance of relationships between teacher and student in the e-learning environment but stressed that those relationships necessarily look different than those nurtured in the classroom due to the ways in which interactions occur via email, messaging, videoconferencing, and other indirect methods.

Recognizing that e-learning requires the guidance of a competent and compassionate instructor, Sung et al. (2016) discussed the importance of choosing the appropriate devices to support e-learning. Their work focused on understanding the appropriateness of device selection and how learning outcomes differed for learning experiences that used a variety of technology to support students. Their work found that, overall, students were able to be successful in e-learning opportunities that used a variety of technological devices but that it was critical they have a basic understanding of the operation and use of those devices prior to beginning the courses.

It was also found that teachers of e-learning courses need to be knowledgeable of the operations of any devices they select to support e-learning and student success (Sung et al., 2016). Through a meta-analysis of over 100 studies, the authors noted that students lacked confidence and achieved lower success rates when their instructors were not considered experts in the operation of the technology employed. This extended to all types of technology employed by studies included in the analysis (e.g., laptop computers; mobile devices, such as smartphones).

Saadat's study (2002), titled "Establishing a center for distance learning at King Saud University from the viewpoint of faculty members" (p. 18) aimed to identify the views of faculty members at the College of Education at King Saud University towards the establishment of a center for distance learning. The study sample included 51 faculty members at the College of

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Education at King Saud University, and the study results showed that there was a general agreement among a high percentage of the faculty members of the College of Education on the importance of establishing a center for distance learning at King Saud University.

Another study, which took a year, compared the teaching of two courses at two universities; the first was provided by direct e-learning for senior citizens, and the other was presented to traditional university students in a classroom (DiBiase, 2000). The two courses were in the field of geography, and they had the same educational goals and the same traditional attendance and course performance requirements. The analysis of information showed that the teacher spent 260 hours teaching students in the traditional way in the classroom; in comparison, 190 hours were spent teaching in the course given remotely. The average worktime for each student was 3.2 hours in the classroom and 2.7 hours for the distance course. In general, the study data could not prove the prevailing idea that distance learning requires more work than education in the classroom (DiBiase, 2000).

Themes Emerging From the Literature Review

The review of previous work on the topic of e-learning has uncovered several significant themes common among the results found in the work. First, the theme of accessibility is evident, as many of the researchers found that e-learning provides access to the educational experience for those who may otherwise not have been able to continue their education. This theme highlighted the importance of allowing nontraditional students access to learning as a way to improve their situations. The theme of accessibility is very important in this research since it helps in predicting the eventual outcomes of banning online education in colleges and universities in Saudi Arabia. One adverse consequence of the policy is limiting access to

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education in an era of digitalization, which would undermine the competitiveness of Saudi Arabia employees in the global labor market.

A second theme emerging from the literature review was that of the variability of the e-learning experience. Research across nearly a decade demonstrated the importance of variability, both in the platform used for delivery and the devices used. When the appropriate devices and platforms are used for e-learning, students benefit, and teachers are able to adjust their teaching styles to reach a wider array of student needs and interests. Undeniably, the variability theme would help the researchers to identify the connection between the use of technology in higher education and the quality of learning experiences and outcomes. In the context of Saudi Arabia, the issue of variability—rather than the quality of education—could have been the major concern triggering the decision to end online education.

Finally, the theme of connectedness emerged from the literature. The work examined showed that students involved in e-learning experiences must feel connected to both the material and their instructors for the learning to be successful. Students have been shown to exhibit a preference for e-learning over classroom settings, but that preference is only upheld when instructors are competent, available, and able to make connections with their students in ways that make them feel validated and included in the learning process.

These three factors must be taken into account when considering the decision of the Saudi Ministry of Education to stop online education. Before important decisions like these are made, there should be a framework to measure the accessibility, variability, and connectedness of the student experience. Likewise, the experiences of teachers with the technology must be considered. The success of any online educational program depends on several factors, and

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without a framework or theory in place to measure effectiveness, any decisions made could be misinformed or based on personal bias.

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Chapter 3 – Online Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

According to the Saudi Communications and Information Technology Commission (CITC), the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the fastest growing countries in the world in terms of e-learning (Al Saif, 2005). CITC data show the number of students enrolled in institutions of higher education has increased significantly in recent years (Al Saif, 2005). The reasons for this rapid growth include but are not limited to (a) the demand for higher education outstripped supply, and online education proved to be a suitable means of overcoming education limitations; and (b) online education offers the potential to deliver educational services to remote locations, thereby reducing disparities across the various regions and areas (Al Saif, 2005). To understand the path to the current state of e-learning in Saudi Arabia, this chapter covers the history and development of online education in Saudi Arabia.

The Development of Online Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

In 1998, the Fifteenth Teachers Council meeting approved the opening of computer department, which granted a bachelor's degree in computer education. Earlier, the Thirteenth Computer Conference had introduced computers to the education curriculum and issued a plan to develop student capability with computers for use during academic study and in their work after graduation.

Additionally, in the Fourteenth Conference on Computers, the following was recommended:

1. Computer centers were established in colleges of education to facilitate the process of scientific and academic research.
2. Computer courses were added to all majors offered by colleges to serve specialization.

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3. Laboratories necessary for teaching computer courses were provided in the different education stages before entering courses; this came as a result of the nature of computers requiring practical training.

Furthermore, the assignment of His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister, and Head of the National Guard (No. 7/B/16838, dated March 5, 2001), led to a national plan for the development of information technology in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Among the main objectives of this plan is investment in “distance learning” techniques to provide education and training for national cadres.

Moreover, one of the goals of the 2019 symposium on future visions for the Saudi economy, organized by the Ministry of Planning and titled “Labor and Saudization Policies and Challenges of the 21st Century,” was to open new study options in higher education (e.g., online learning, community colleges, and the open university) in order to respond to societal changes. Among the recommendations of the symposium was taking advantage of the technologies of distance learning and the adoption of open universities to provide more opportunity for all those who wish to learn and to improve the levels of teaching and education.

Timeline of Online Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

1. In 1954, Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University started a distance learning program in the Faculty of Religious Science, followed in 1965 by the Faculty of Arabic Language.
2. In 1978, King Saud University started distance learning programs in the Faculty of Art and Faculty of Business.
3. In 1972, King Abdulaziz University started correspondence studies in some departments.

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4. In 1976, King Saud University canceled correspondence studies.
5. In 1980, King Abdulaziz University established an independent unit for correspondence studies.
6. In 1987, Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University canceled correspondence studies.
7. In 1989, Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University resumed correspondence studies for female students.
8. In 2002, King Abdulaziz University began applying distance learning programs and set up a separate department for distance learning.
9. In 2005, the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education established the National Center of E-Learning & Distance Learning to implement a national plan for developing e-learning in the Kingdom.
10. In 2007, Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University began applying distance learning programs.
11. In 2008, the National Center for E-Learning and Distance Education was established.
12. In 2010, the Ministry of Higher Education issued regulations and laws governing distance learning programs in Saudi Arabia.
13. In 2011, the rules governing the issuance of licenses for distance learning programs in higher education institutions were established.
14. In 2011, Saudi Electronic University was established in Riyadh city as an education institution offering distance education service in banking and financial sciences, health sciences, and computer science. Several branches were then established in other Saudi cities.

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Online Programs of Saudi Universities

There are two types of universities in Saudi Arabia offering distance (i.e., online) learning programs. The first are universities offering traditional education in addition to distance learning (e.g., Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University and King Abdulaziz University). The second type includes universities offering only distance learning programs (e.g., Arab Open University, Knowledge International University, and Saudi Electronic University). Both types are illustrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 *Academic Departments Offering Distance Education Programs in Saudi Universities*

University	Faculty/Department
Umm Al-Qura	College of Da'wa and Usul-ud-din College of Shar'ah and Islamic Studies College of Arabic Language College of Art College of Education
Al-Imaa Mohammad ibn Saud Islamic	Shar'ah Department Economic Department Religious Department Arabic Language Department Business Administration Department
King Abdulaziz	Faculty of Science (Arabic Language, Islamic) Studies, Sociology, Psychology History, English Language Administration Department, Business Administration Department
King Faisal	Faculty of Sociology Science (Arabic Language, Islamic Studies, English Language, Social Studies) Faculty of Education (Social Education Department)

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University	Faculty/Department
Taibah	Faculty of Administration & Financial Science (Business Administration Department) Faculty of Social Science (Quran Studies, History, Geography, Islamic Studies, Arabic Language)
Taif	Shar'ah & Islamic Studies Department (Arabic Language Department)
Gazan	Arabic Language English Language Mass Communication
El-Goof	Islamic Studies Arabic Language
Tabuk	Islamic Studies Arabic Language Public Administration
Najran	Islamic Studies Arabic Language Public Administration

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology

Research Design

A qualitative approach was selected to address the research questions because they directly relate to the thoughts, perceptions, and experiences of teachers, students, and policy makers. According to Myers (2013), every qualitative research project must include the following essential elements: (a) a philosophical assumption about the social world, (b) a research method, (c) a data collection technique, (d) an approach to qualitative data analysis, and (e) a written record of findings (p. 57) (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Myers (2013) research design.

For the philosophical assumption, a social constructivist perspective views reality as a construct of events and people surrounding an individual (Myers, 2013). Furthermore, political institutions have an influence on the construction of realities in a given society. The integration

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of political theories through a social constructivist research paradigm, therefore, will foster the collection of relevant data from key participants.

A case study approach was followed as the research method. According to Myers (2013), a case study seeks to understand how and why a particular decision was made and uses empirical evidence from real people in real organizations to make an original contribution to knowledge. Thus, by taking a case study approach in this research, the use of empirical evidence to investigate the decision will ensure that the participants' stories are told with regard to their experiences with online education. All data gathered were used to answer questions aimed at producing new knowledge about online education programs in Saudi Arabia, particularly at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University. Possible future research can include the use of the grounded theory research method to build a theory behind the status of online education in Saudi Arabia.

Sampling

Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, relies on the researcher's judgment in selecting the units to be studied (e.g., people, cases/organizations, events, pieces of data; Black, 2010). The purposive sampling approach is also essential in this study because it fosters the representativeness of the sample population and thus enhances the collection of adequate data for analysis and identification of existing relationships between variables. Also making it suitable is the flexibility of the sampling technique, which allows the researcher to make adjustments that ensure the data collected reflect the actual situation on the ground (Glaser & Strauss, 2017). In the Ministry, interviews started with people who, based on public interviews and official press releases, were already confirmed

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to have played a part in the decision. They were given the researcher's contact information and were asked to share it with others they knew or thought were involved in the decision. For the university, an email was sent to all online education students and faculty that explained the study and its purpose. The researcher's contact information was provided for anyone interested in participating in the study.

Participants and Site of the Research

The research started with a sample size of 30 participants to facilitate the data collection process. The stopping point was set as data saturation, which is reached when no further information arises in the interviews. Inclusion criteria are crucial in the process of generating a sample population because it ensures the representativeness of the human subjects (Martínez-Mesa, González-Chica, Duquia, Bonamigo, & Bastos, 2016). The inclusion criteria for this study included the subjects being employees of the Ministry who were responsible for the decision or students or faculty who had prior experience in online learning at the higher education level. The participants were divided into three groups: (a) policy makers and employees of the Ministry who had been responsible for the decision, (b) students, and (c) teaching faculty at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University. The study was done in two locations: the Ministry of Education and Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University.

Table 4.1 *Participant Information (Ministry)*

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Position
M-E-1	Male	60–65	Ministry Employee
M-E-2	Male	55–60	Ministry Employee
M-E-3	Female	55–60	Ministry Employee

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Participant ID	Gender	Age	Position
M-E-4	Female	45–50	Ministry Employee
M-E-5	Male	50–55	Ministry Employee

Table 4.2 *Participant Information (University)*

Participant's ID	Gender	Age	Position
Dr.1	Male	50–60	Professor in an online program
Dr.2	Male	60–65	Professor in an online program
Dr.3	Male	50–55	Professor in an online program
Dr.4	Female	45–50	Professor in an online program
Dr.5	Male	55–60	Professor in an online program
Dr.6	Male	50–55	Professor in an online program
Dr.7	Female	55–60	Student in an online program
Dr.8	Male	40–45	Student in an online program
S.1	Female	45–50	Student in an online program
S.2	Male	25–30	Student in an online program
S.3	Male	50–55	Student in an online program
S.4	Male	25–30	Student in an online program
S.5	Female	50–55	Student in an online program
S.6	Male	30–35	Student in an online program
S.7	Male	20–25	Student in an online program
S.8	Female	45–50	Student in an online program
S.9	Male	30–35	Student in an online program
S.10	Male	30–35	Student in an online program

Data Collection

The data collection technique for this research was semi-structured interviews, and collection was done in two phases. The first set of interviews was with employees in the Education Ministry of Saudi Arabia who played a role in the decision. The interviews started

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with the people already confirmed via public interviews and/or official press releases to have played a part in the decision, then moved to others who were also involved in the decision, but not publicly named. The second set of interviews was with faculty and students from Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University who either attended or taught in the online programs (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2. Data collection flow chart.

Chapter 5 – Data Analysis and Results

Data Analysis

Because there were two phases of data collection, there were also two separate phases of data analysis. The first one was narrative analysis of the interviews from the Ministry. *Narrative* is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as “a spoken or written account of connected events; a story” (as cited by Soanes & Stevenson, 2004). Given that the reason for these interviews was to understand what happened prior to the decision being made, a narrative analysis was the most suitable data analysis technique.

For the second phase of interviews, a thematic coding technique was used to analyze the collected data. Open and axial coding were then carried out to distill the various inputs from the interviews into emerging themes and subthemes, which led to the creation of the core concepts and topic categories. The *open coding* method labels concepts, defines categories, and develops themes by focusing on their properties and dimensions (Myers, 2013). On the other hand, *axial coding* combines inductive and deductive reasoning to foster an understanding of the relationships between concepts and categories emerging from collected data (Blair, 2015). The purposive sampling technique, which allows both inductive and deductive thinking, fairly complements the open and axial data analysis approaches (see Figure 5.1).

Narrative Analysis

According to Myers (2013), a narrative can be written as a story created by the researcher. This kind of narrative is an edited reconstruction of events or aspects seen as relevant to the subject or theory being discussed (Myers, 2013). The first research question for this study was “Why did the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education choose to end online education

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programs?” This means that the narrative analysis carried out as a story would help answer the question.

After carrying out the interviews using open-ended questions, the model of Burke’s dramatism was carried out as described by Myers (2013):

This model suggests that there are five elements to every narrative. These elements are act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose; the five elements concern what was done (act), when or where it was done (scene), who did it (agent), how he or she did it (agency), and why (purpose). (p. 215)

Using this model, the researcher wrote a story about what happened before the decision to stop e-learning was made. According to Myers (2013), a narrative requires a plot as well as some coherence, and it has to have some sort of ordered sequence, often in linear form, with a beginning, middle, and end. The first part was conducted either in the Education Ministry of Saudi Arabia or at an off-site location if the participant so requested. The second part of the interview was conducted at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University or at an off-site location if the participant so requested. Interviews with Ministry employees typically lasted about 30–45 minutes, and interviews with students and faculty lasted about 25–35 minutes (see Appendix A for interview questions).

Coding Analysis

For the coding analysis, Glaser’s coding methods were followed, which break down the coding process into three types (i.e., open, selective, and theoretical coding). Glaser believes that the researcher needs to move from the data to an empirical generalization. Thus, the researcher started with the data taken from interviews with faculty and students. Working from transcripts

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of those interviews, the researcher analyzed the data to build the open coding; originally, 25 codes emerged from the data. Data were then grouped together into themes, and 18 themes emerged. Next, categories were built to integrate those separate themes by repeatedly examining and comparing the material, both within and across themes. Finally, two categories—the advantages of online education and the problems of online education in Saudi Arabia—substantiated the main concept of the current status of online education (see Figure 5.1).

The interviews with all the participants provided varying information about the state of online learning in Saudi Arabia. The coding process first suggested different themes that included both positive and negative experiences with online learning. The identified themes that included positive experiences of faculty and students were convenience, ease of use, flexibility, time-efficiency for students and faculty, cost-efficiency for institutions, and curricula and platforms equivalent to regular education and suitable for job market requirements. Identified themes that involved a negative experience included lack of communication from the professor's and student's side, a lack of connectedness to study materials on the student's side, having different requirements between universities, incorporating performance measurement strategies that varied between universities, having different levels of pre-training, and having more lenient requirements than in regular education.

The themes that provided positive results were further analyzed, and different subcategories emerged. Those themes that provided a positive experience for students and faculty were grouped under the user experience, and themes that related to convenience, flexibility, and ease of use were grouped into the subcategory of accessibility. The themes that involved enhancing efficiency for students, faculty, and/or the university were grouped under efficiency. Finally, the themes that ensured online learning was compatible with regular

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education and job market requirements were categorized under compatibility. The four subcategories provided reasons why online education should continue in Saudi Arabia, further delineating a distinct category of the advantages of online education.

Similarly, the themes that provided negative results were further analyzed, and different subcategories emerged. The themes that involved a lack of communication or study materials were categorized as being in one group under connectedness. The themes that involved having different requirements and pre-training, along with varying performance measurement strategies, were also grouped into a single subcategory, lack of guidelines. The two subcategories provided possible reasons for the decision to end online education in Saudi Arabia, and also populated the category of problems in online learning. The two main categories, the advantages and problems of online education, came together to answer the question of whether online education in Saudi Arabia should stop. The model below provides a detailed description of the factors that emerged from interview data. The research concluded that there was a sequential relationship among them.

Trustworthiness of and Bias in the Study

Qualitative research focuses on data trustworthiness instead of concentrating on the data itself, as with quantitative studies. Qualitative studies are essential because they measure things that numbers might not define, and their methods identify patterns before they show up in quantitative data. Qualitative researchers talk of trustworthiness in terms of whether the findings can be relied on. The most commonly used criteria for ensuring trustworthiness per Lincoln and Guba's definition (as cited in Korstjens & Moser, 2018) are transferability, credibility, confirmability, and dependability. Transferability is the degree to which qualitative study

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findings can be applied to other settings with other participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). This study utilized thick descriptions by explaining the experiences, behaviors, and contexts of online learning to ensure the experiences offer meaning to an outsider. The study provides sufficient descriptions of the research process and respondents for other researchers to assess whether the presented results can be applied to their specific settings.

To ensure trustworthiness, the researcher explored the concepts of dependability and confirmability. Dependability refers to how stable the results remain after a particular period, along with how readers evaluate the data, the interpretations of the findings, and the research conclusions to ensure that every aspect is supported by information gathered from the study participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Confirmability refers to the extent to which the research findings can be confirmed by other studies, showing that the conclusions are not based on the researcher's imagination but are derived from information provided by the respondents. Dependability and confirmability in this study were achieved by clearly describing all the research processes and steps from the beginning of the study to the development and review of the literature for related studies and on to the report of the results. Ensuring that the paper trail of research records were kept throughout the project maximized the dependability and confirmability of the study, thus ensuring its trustworthiness.

The last concept inherent in the study to ensure trustworthiness was credibility. Credibility refers to "the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. Credibility establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants' original views" (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). This study used different strategies to ensure credibility, including prolonged engagement and triangulation. The prolonged engagement involved

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investing adequate time during the interviews to build trust between the interviewer and the respondent. The interview with Ministry employees lasted for about 30 to 45 minutes, and interviews with students or faculty lasted for about 25 to 35 minutes, which provided sufficient time to build rapport and obtain rich data from the participants. Triangulation included data triangulation, method triangulation, and researcher triangulation, which were implemented in this study through the use of several data sources. Information about the same phenomenon was gathered from two different sites, the Ministry of Education and a university, as well as from a variety of people with different viewpoints on the subject, including Ministry employees, faculty members, and students. These strategies enhanced the study's credibility and, consequently, its trustworthiness.

Bias is a significant issue in research as it can affect the credibility of a study. This research used purposive sampling, which is prone to bias because the researcher uses their judgment when selecting participants. This study overcame bias through data triangulation, which involved multiple sources supporting the interpretations, thus enhancing confidence in the findings.

Findings From Interviews With Employees of the Ministry of Education

When some concerned individuals in the Ministry and other responsible persons noticed some deviations and negative behaviors in the online offerings of some universities (e.g., a huge number of graduate students, lower quality of graduates), they took their concerns to a higher-level employee of the Ministry, who raised them to the general secretariat of the Higher Education Council; then, the decision was proposed. An assembly of experts was appointed to study the decision, and after a careful, deep study of what was happening in the field of online

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education (e.g., bad and unwanted practices at some universities), the recommendation of the committee was to end all online bachelor's degree programs in Saudi Arabia except that offered by the Saudi Electronic University. This was accompanied by other recommendations for the Electronic University to open branches in other provinces of the Saudi Kingdom. There were no published papers or studies provided, but the Ministry referred to previous studies and investigations concluding that (a) online education was not successful, (b) admissions in great numbers exceeded the needs and capacity of the labor market, and (c) there were improper practices in some aspects—such as administrative, financial, and education practices—at certain universities.

One of the studies from the National Center and the Ministry of Economy made the following comments and recommendations:

1. The requirements of the labor market are not matching online education outcomes.
2. The focus should be on combining regular education with traditional education (hybrid education).
3. Distance education (online) should be offered only by specific universities (i.e., the Electronic University).
4. Specialties that are not in line with the 2030 Vision for education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia should be canceled.

The committee argued that this decision was for the benefit and interest of all sectors, and pointed out that the decision did not cancel all online education as there was still the Saudi Electronic University, which was entrusted with this mission. Further, they stated that the decision was made based on the current reality of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as the Vision 2030 Program's aim of skipping to the post petroleum stage (i.e., the industrial stage).

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This stage requires a review of the education sector, especially majors at universities, and the concentration should be on the majors that are needed to share in the development of the Kingdom, society, and the requirements of the labor market. They believed that online education was not meeting those requirements, and based on all these factors, it was necessary and logical to suspend online education and then conceive a plan to map it the right way.

One interviewee explained, “The decision was made, the effective date of the decision was set, and no new students were accepted. Those who were still studying were admitted before the decision, so the Ministry has an obligation toward them; those students may continue until they get their graduate certificate” (Interview M-E-2, Ministry Employee).

Problems of Online Education According to the Ministry

All of the Ministry employees interviewed believe that there was a gap between online education and regular education. One of the interviewed employees stated

The matter is not related to the quality of education, it is about the respect and view to the degree (certificate) itself, it became in hand and easy for everyone to get a graduate certificate, it was easy for the students of online education to have the syllabus, read and study it before one week of examinations, then they get the certificate. This practice resulted in a big number of students with doubt on their quality; these are the factors which make the certificate of online education have less value, while both certificates are from the same university. (Interview with M-E-1, Ministry employee)

The sentiments were identified by Aljaber (2018) when looking into the challenges of online learning in different universities across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Aljaber (2018)

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indicated that one of the primary challenges for e-learning is the lack of equal instruction and supervision in distance learning as compared to regular education. Lacking supervision and sufficient instruction results in underperformance by students and a reduced quality of the education. There is significant suspicion surrounding the use of the Internet and e-communication, where the Ministry feels that form of communication is unsafe and could expose students and faculty in a negative way (Aljaber, 2018). When students do not attend face-to-face lectures, it is uncertain whether they understand the concepts being taught or whether they attend online classes as required. While a student might perform excellently on examinations, it could be because they studied for only a short period immediately before sitting for the tests, while they had not put sufficient effort into studies throughout the semester (Aljaber, 2018). This uncertainty provides a clear distinction of academic performance between regular students and online learning students. While performance and results are similar, the lack of equal instruction and supervision casts uncertainty on whether online education is indeed an effective method of learning.

Another Ministry employee added, “Definitely, this will affect the regular student who sits for monthly exams and continues assignment under the supervision of the university teachers.” This interviewee further added, “An online student pays around 2,000 Riyals in a semester, studies one week before the final exams, then he is considered a graduate, while there are many factors have to be considered in the process of admission of regular students: ability test, achievement test, the score of the secondary school, and be involved all throughout the semester just to pass” (interview with M-E-2, Ministry employee).

Moreover, all of the interviewed Ministry employees believed that online education had a negative effect on university teacher performance and efficiency because they were conducting

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these classes on their own time, in the evenings, and they were paid a salary for that. As one employee stated, “The large number of online education undergraduates affected the production and performance of the university’s faculty, which in turn affected even regular education undergraduates” (interview with M-E-4, Ministry employee)

Furthermore, the Ministry interviewees all agreed that online education affected the outputs of Saudi universities in general. There is an accumulation of graduates who have certificates in majors that are not required, are unsuitable, and do not match the requirements of the labor market. If it is regularized, rearranged, and applied to what is required by the labor market, then it will have a positive effect.

The issue of quality has become significantly crucial in publicly operated services, particularly in education. Higher education institutions and the Ministry of Education have continuously engaged in striving toward the optimization of quality in education. Those opposing online education believe that it is impossible to provide the same quality standards of regular learning in online education. The primary argument is that online education does not provide the required interactions between students and their peers and faculty, different learning styles that foster high-level performance and quality education, or the many paths of learning and multiple experiences that allow students to construct meaning and reflect on it (Alhathlol, 2017). This is further interpreted as not providing the requirements of the job market due to the insufficient interaction for students and the other factors that are integrated throughout a course to instill the necessary skills and experiences. Alhathlol (2017) used the Sloan Consortium’s Five Pillars to show the quality standards that the Ministry of Education and higher education institutions should use to ensure online learning produces a quality education. The pillars include learning effectiveness, faculty satisfaction, student satisfaction, access, and scale (Alhathlol,

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2017). The pillars concern evaluating learning activities, exploring students' experiences with and perceptions of a program, providing the faculty with resources and support, and ensuring the institution can provide quality education even in an online learning setting.

Finally, a higher-level employee in the Ministry stated the following: "The online education program is very important, but now, the Ministry is reforming it according to strict conditions, high quality, a limited number of students according to the requirements of the labor market. By this, I think online education outcomes will be better" (interview with M-E-3, Ministry employee). Similarly, other studies acknowledge the importance of e-learning when the necessary measures regarding performance and quality are implemented. For instance, Al-Juda (2017) indicated that developing quality online learning systems in Saudi Arabia requires publishing useful resources through online education web portals, providing appropriate training to the relevant individuals, and improving the overall system in universities. With such strategies in place, the uncertainty surrounding e-learning would be eliminated or minimized, and there would be greater confidence in the quality of students emerging from such programs. The Ministry interviewees' sentiments being backed by the mentioned research shows why the Ministry decided to end the online bachelor's degree programs—they felt it was not an effective mode of learning.

Figure 5.1. The status of online education in Saudi Arabia.

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Findings From Interviews With Faculty and Students at Imam University

The findings of the analysis concluded that while online education has problems such as lack of communication between faculty and students, different requirements between universities, and more lenient requirements than regular education, the faculty and students both agreed that they had a good experience with it. Faculty and students also mentioned other advantages, such as the convenience of use, time-efficiency for students and faculty, and that online education provides access to educational experiences for those who may otherwise not have been able to continue their education.

Advantages of Online Education According to Faculty and Students

1. An overall good experience for both faculty and students. “Definitely it is different than the experience of regular education. You are dealing with students through a computer. It is an experience which has good” (interview with Dr-5, professor in online program).
2. A convenient forum for individuals with circumstances that prevent them from attending regular school. “It is necessary to thank Allah for the availability of this chance (online education) by which we could continue our education in balance with our work, we could qualify ourselves” (interview with S-6, online education student).
3. Easy to use.
4. Offers flexibility for students and faculty.
5. Cost-efficient, minimizing costs for the university.
6. Time-efficient for students and faculty. “It needs additional efforts but can be controlled by arranging the time” (interview with Dr-2, professor in online program).

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7. The curricula are fully compatible with traditional education. “It is typical, almost 95%” (interview with Dr-8, professor in online program).
8. The platforms are compatible with regular education (i.e., the same platforms and software are used in regular education).
9. The outcomes of online education are compatible with job market requirements. “We can say YES for some majors (specializations), for example, I teach some subjects related to legal (law) major in my university, this major is applicable and appropriate to the market of labor. The student needs to get a license from the university so as to be able to practice his legal (law) career. Online education awards him this license, so the goal is achieved, but this major is different than some other majors” (interview with Dr-3, professor in online program).

Problems in Online Education According to Faculty and Students

1. Lack of communication from the faculty side.
2. Lack of communication from the student side.
3. Lack of connectedness to the material from the student side.
4. Different requirements between universities.
5. Different performance measurements between universities.
6. Different levels of pre-training.
7. More lenient requirements than regular education.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This research consisted of a qualitative study from a social constructivist perspective to investigate the reasons behind the decision to end online bachelor's degree programs in Saudi Arabia. Further, it examined student and faculty satisfaction with the online programs through 23 semi-structured interviews conducted with three types of participants (Education Ministry employees, online education faculty, and online education students).

In order to answer the research questions, the study was divided into two stages. The first stage was conducted in the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia in order to understand the process that led to the decision to end online bachelor's degree programs. Five highly positioned (policy-maker) employees of the Ministry were interviewed, and the results showed that when some concerned individuals in the Ministry and other responsible persons noticed deviations and negative behaviors in some university's online education programs (huge numbers of graduate students, lower quality of graduates) they took their concerns to a higher-level employee in the Ministry, who raised them to the general secretariat of the Higher Education Council, and the decision to end online education was proposed. An assembly of experts was appointed to study the decision, and after a study of occurrences in the field of online education, because there were bad and unwanted practices by some universities, the committee recommended ending all online bachelor's degree programs in Saudi Arabia except one—the one offered by Saudi Electronic University. This was accompanied by other recommendations for the Electronic University to open branches in other provinces of the Saudi Kingdom. However, the study they cited was conducted but not published.

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The first research question aimed at looking into why the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education chose to end online education programs. The research showed that the Ministry ended online learning programs for a variety of reasons, including differing requirements of universities, the incorporation of different performance measurement strategies at the universities, different levels of pre-training required, and online education programs having more lenient requirements than regular education programs. While all of the reasons given for ending online education in Saudi Arabia are valid, they are not sufficient to warrant such a significant decision as ending online programs. With the adequate collaboration of the Ministry of Education and higher learning institutions, uniform requirements, performance measurement strategies, and quality standards can be set to ensure that all universities across the Kingdom follow the same rules. Having similar requirements, performance measurements, and pre-training at all the universities would eliminate the lack of guidelines that led to the Ministry doing away with online education.

Other results from the Ministry interviews revealed that the programs produced unqualified individuals because students could study for examinations one week before the exams rather than throughout a semester and still pass the exam. RCT explains that individuals have preferences toward things in the world, and they act consistently, meaning they act as though they are trying to get most of the things they prefer. The theory helped with answering this research question by showing that the Ministry acted rationally in an attempt to continue providing quality education to students and qualified individuals to the job market, which they feel online education does not produce. However, the issues could be eliminated with adequate collaboration by the relevant bodies and members to ensure that online education produces the high-quality individuals required in the job market.

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The second stage of the research took place at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, examining students' and faculties' satisfaction with the online programs and to shed light on their opinions about the decision. The results showed that while students and faculty agreed that online education had some problems, they also both agreed that they had good experiences with it and that online education provided access to the educational experience for those who might otherwise not have been able to continue their education. Finally, almost all interviewees disagreed with the decision to end online education programs. Returning to the theory of the research, the researcher believes that rational choices did play a role in this decision, and that additional investigation by the Education Ministry should have been performed before making a decision of this magnitude.

The second and third research questions sought to understand the opinions of students and faculty of online programs at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University about the decision to end online education. The research questions were answered by identifying the advantages and the problems of online education according to the faculty and students. Both groups stated that online education provided an overall pleasant experience dealing with each other through a computer that they did not have in regular education. They also agreed that the programs offered convenience to students, particularly those people who are restricted by factors such as work, caring for families, and proximity to the university from attending regular classes on a daily basis. Online education programs also proved to be flexible, easy to use, cost-effective, and time-efficient for both students and faculty. The interviewees indicated that the online curricula, platforms, and software were equivalent to those used in conventional education. Consequently, they also saw online education outcomes as consistent with job market

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requirements; for instance, lecturers indicated teaching subjects for the law major, which is applicable to and appropriate for the labor market.

The students and faculty members also identified problems related to online education. They included a lack of communication from both the faculty and student sides and a lack of connectedness to learning materials for students. While these problems are valid, both groups indicated that they were insufficient to warrant ending online programs in universities altogether. Both the students and the faculty members explained that the benefits outweighed the problems, and they believed that the existing challenges could be worked on so that they would align with the interests of all the affected members and bodies. Therefore, the opinion of the students and faculty regarding the Ministry's decision to end online education was that it was unwarranted and the Ministry had made the decision rationally without first implementing the necessary measures to give the programs a chance. Thus, more research into the perceived problems is required to show that the challenges could be worked on to produce positive outcomes.

Final Recommendations

1. The Ministry needs to set fundamentals and regulations for online education, including training the university teachers, selecting the students according to some criteria, and reviewing the curricula and majors to ensure they match the labor market.
2. Stricter regulation and enforcement are needed when evaluating higher education certificates to control online education and assure high-quality outcomes.
3. It is necessary to create a plan for online students to use for home assignments and to require attendance at a minimum number of online lectures. It is not enough to only give

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students exams at the end of the term; there should be assignments, exercises, and tests throughout the academic year.

4. It is important to create methods for better communication between students and professors.
5. Online education in Saudi Arabia needs to follow universal guidelines and requirements.
6. In order to close the gap between the huge number of online graduates and their lack of employment, jobs must be provided for the graduates of online education. One option is to encourage the private sector to hire more online graduates by offering incentives such as tax breaks.

Future Work

Future studies should include additional in-depth research into the quality and operation of online education in Saudi Arabia to further strengthen or refute the argument that online education was of the same level as international standards and that the decision may have been unfitting. A further point that can perhaps be used to demonstrate the value of online education is to make a comparison of universities that had offered online education and universities that had not offered online courses before the COVID-19 shutdowns occurred to determine if there was a difference in the outcomes, which could support the claim of the importance of online education. Because universities around the world transferred to online courses through COVID-19, such a study could explore whether certain factors related to having offered online education (whether from the previous experience of faculty, existing technology setups, or other factors) made a difference in delivering an education during this epidemic. A future research question could be,

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“Did universities in Saudi Arabia that offered online education in the past have better outcomes during COVID-19 than universities that did not previously offer online education?”

Limitations of the Study

Despite the significant contributions of this research, some limitations need to be addressed. First, the study sampled only five employees of the Ministry of Education. The small sample size on the Ministry side could have provided inconclusive results as to why the Ministry decided to end online programs. Having more individuals from the Ministry would have provided richer data and varying opinions on the topic, which could have ensured a better interpretation of the findings and a better understanding of the Ministry’s decision. Thus, future studies should use a bigger sample size to get more comprehensive results about the Ministry’s position regarding online education in Saudi Arabia. Second, while semi-structured interviews are an effective method of collecting data, using a mixed-methods approach in future research could be more effective because it might lead to a comprehensive understanding of online education and other possible factors related to e-learning systems. Finally, the study only included students and faculty members from one university, Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, to examine satisfaction with online programs and shed light on opinions about the decision. To provide more comprehensive findings, future studies should use participants from multiple universities to ensure the conclusions presented reflect the views of students and faculties across the country and are not the perceptions of only one university, thus enhancing the applicability and generalizability of results.

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Appendix A – Interview Questions

Interview Questions With The Ministry Staff:

1. Can you tell me what you know about the decision to end the online (distance) bachelor education program?
2. Was the decision made by a specific committee or by an individual?
3. What are the reasons behind this decision?
4. Can you explain more about these reasons?
5. Do you know if there has been any investigation or study suggesting that online education has not been successful?
6. Do you know if there has been any investigation or study linking the outcome of online education to face-to-face education?
7. In your opinion, who will be benefiting from this decision (student, faculty, policy makers, universities, the Ministry, job market)?
8. Is there any evidence that the quality of education, in general, has been affected by distance education?
9. Did the Ministry perform any quality tests for online education and have the result been compared with international standards in universities?
10. In your opinion, is distance education effective in its current form? If not, what do we need to improve it?
11. Do you believe that online education has impacted the productivity of faculty members in universities?
12. Do you believe that online education has impacted the overall output of universities who preform such programs?

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13. Do you believe that online education outcomes do not match the requirements of the job market?
14. From your point of view, where does the gap lie in our online education?

Interview Questions With Faculty Members:

1. Can you tell me about your experience in online education?
2. Have you taken any course to improve your knowledge of dealing with online education?
3. In your opinion, what are the pros of online education?
4. In your opinion, what are the cons of online education?
5. Do you think that online education is less efficient than face-to-face education?
6. Do you think there are gaps between online education and traditional face-to-face education?
If so, can you explain?
7. Are the curricula fully compatible with online education and traditional education?
8. Has your time teaching online education affected your outcome in face-to-face education?
9. In your view, do online students interact with the curriculum with the same seriousness or less or more as of face-to-face education students?
10. Do you agree/disagree with the decision to terminate the bachelor's online education programs? And why?
11. In your opinion, what are (if any) the problems in online education programs in Saudi Arabia?
12. In your opinion, what is/are the solutions to solve these problems?
13. Do you think the outcome of online learning meets the job market requirement? and if no, how can we raise its efficiency in this regard?

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14. From 1–5, 1 being “*Not at all Satisfied*,” 2 “*Partly Satisfied*,” 3 “*Satisfied*,” 4 “*More than Satisfied*,” 5 “*Very Satisfied*,” What is your level of satisfaction with the online bachelor education program?

Interview Questions With Online Program Students:

1. Can you tell me about your experience in online education?
2. Have you taken any pre-requisite courses before starting the program?
3. Do you think you achieved your academic goal through online education?
4. Would you have finished college if it were not for online education? And why?
5. As a student, what are the pros of online education?
6. As a student, what are the cons of online education?
7. Did you face difficulties in online education? Can you explain them?
8. Do you agree/disagree with the decision to terminate the bachelor’s online education programs? And why?
9. In your opinion, what are (if any) the problems in online education programs in Saudi Arabia?
10. In your opinion, what is/are the solutions to solve these problems?
11. From 1–5, 1 being “*Not at all Satisfied*,” 2 “*Partly Satisfied*,” 3 “*Satisfied*,” 4 “*More than Satisfied*,” 5 “*Very Satisfied*,” What is your level of satisfaction with the online bachelor education program?

Appendix B – Interview Questions in Arabic

مقابلة موظفي الوزارة:

- هل يمكن أن تخبرني ما تعرفه عن قرار إنهاء برامج تعليم البكالوريوس عبر الإنترنت (عن بعد)؟
- هل كان اتخاذ القرار لجنة معينة أم فرد واحد؟
- ما هي الأسباب وراء هذا القرار؟
- يمكنك توضيح المزيد حول هذه الأسباب؟
- هل تعرف هل اذا كان هناك أي تحقيق ، أو دراسة تشير إلى أن التعليم عبر الإنترنت لم يكن ناجحاً؟
- هل تعرف اذا كان تحقيق أو دراسة تربط نتائج التعليم عن بعد بالتعليم المباشر؟
- من وجهة نظرك في مصلحة من هذا القرار (الطالب - عضو هيئة التدريس- الجامعات - الوزارة- سوق العمل)؟
- هل هناك اي ادلة على ان جودة التعليم عامة تأثرت بالتعليم عن بعد؟
- هل تمت اختبارات جوده على مستوى التعليم عن بعد ومقارنتها بالمعايير الدولية في الجامعات؟
- من وجهة نظرك هل التعليم عن بعد مجدي بصورته الحالية ؟ واذا لم يكن كذلك فما الذي ينقصه؟
- تتوقع ان التعليم عن بعد اثر على إنتاجية اعضاء هيئة التدريس في الجامعات وبالتالي تأثرت مخرجات التعليم الجامعي عامه؟
- هل تعتقد ان التعليم عن بعد قد اثر على مخرجات التعليم الكلية للجامعات في السعودية؟
- هل تتوقع ان مخرجات التعليم عن بعد لا تتناسب مع متطلبات سوق العمل؟
- أين تكمن الفجوة في تعليمنا عن بعد من وجهة نظرك؟

مقابلة هيئة التدريس

- هل تستطيع ان تخبرني عن تجربتك في التعليم الأونلاين؟
- هل أخذت أي دورة على التعامل مع التعليم الأونلاين؟
- من وجهة نظرك ماهي ايجابيات التعليم الاونلاين؟
- من وجهة نظرك ماهي سلبيات التعليم الاونلاين؟
- هل تعتقد ان التعليم الاونلاين ذو كفاءة وجوده اقل من نظيره؟
- هل تعتقد أن هناك أي فجوة بين التعليم عبر الإنترنت والتعليم التقليدي؟ هل يمكن ان توضح؟

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هل المناهج متطابقة تماما للتعليم الاونلاين مع التعليم التقليدي؟

هل تأثر وقتك في متابعة التعليم الاونلاين عن التقليدي؟

من وجهة نظرك تفاعل طلاب الاونلاين مع المنهج بنفس الجدية او اقل أو اكثر من طلاب التعليم التقليدي؟

هل انت مع أو ضد قرار إنهاء برامج تعليم البكالوريوس عبر الإنترنت (عن بعد)؟ لماذا؟؟-

من وجهة نظرك ماهي (ان وجدت) المشاكل في التعليم الاونلاين؟

في رأيك ماهي الحلول لهذه المشاكل؟

هل تعتقد ان مخرجات التعليم الاونلاين تناسب سوق العمل؟ واذ لم يكن كذلك كيف نرفع الكفاءة فيها؟

من ١-٥ حيث ان ١=غير راضي تماما، ٢=راضي قليلا، ٣=راضي، ٤=اكثر من راضي ٥=راضي جدا ما مدى رضاك

عن برنامج تعليم البكالوريوس عبر الإنترنت (عن بعد)؟؟

مقابلة الطلاب

هل يمكنك ان تخبرني عن تجربتك في التعليم عن بعد؟

هل أخذت دورات قبله (قبل دخولك البرنامج) ؟

هل تعتقد انك حققت اهدافك الأكاديمية من خلال التعليم الاونلاين؟

هل تعتقد انك كنت تستطيع إنهاء درجة البكالوريوس بدون برنامج التعليم عن بعد ولماذا؟

كطالب ماهي إيجابيات التعليم عن بعد؟

كطالب ماهي سلبيات التعليم عن بعد؟

هل تواجه صعوبات في التعليم الاونلاين ؟ حددوها؟

هل توافق على قرار إنهاء برامج التعليم عن بعد ولماذا؟

في رأيك ماهي (ان وجدت) المشاكل في التعليم عن بعد؟

بنظرك ماهي حلول هذه المشاكل؟

من ١-٥ حيث ان ١=غير راضي تماما، ٢=راضي قليلا، ٣=راضي، ٤=اكثر من راضي ٥=راضي جدا ما مدى رضاك

عن برنامج تعليم البكالوريوس عبر الإنترنت (عن بعد)؟؟

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Appendix C – Recruitment Script

Dear Future Participants,

My name is Khalid Alharbi, and I am a Doctorate student at the University of Redlands. I am conducting a study entitled “The Reality of Online Education programs in Universities of Saudi Arabia: Case Study on The Online Bachelor Program at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University.” I want to do an interview with you that will take from 30 to 60 minutes. There are no known harms associated with your participation in this research because no identifying information will be attached to your response, your name will not be used.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time for any reason without explanation and without penalty. You may choose not to answer any question for any reason.

To give you an idea about my research, the next part is an abstract of my topic:

In 2018, Saudi Education Minister Ahmed Al-Issa ordered the country’s universities to discontinue online bachelor programs starting from the new academic year (Ministry of Education No: 143966, July 15, 2018). In one of his statements, Al-Issa said that the shutdown of these online educational programs was aimed at upgrading the quality of education by focusing on face-to-face classrooms. However, there was no official investigation applied to online education in Saudi Arabia, neither for the decision to stop the programs nor for the quality of these programs. Further, it seems that educators and students alike are not happy with the decision and argue on social media outlets that the quality of these programs was equal to the quality of face-to-face classrooms.

This research thus first conducts a qualitative study from a social constructivist perspective to investigate the reasons behind the decision to end the online bachelor’s degree programs. The

The Reality of Online Education Programs

second part of this research examines the students' and faculties' satisfaction with the online programs to bring their opinions about the decision to the light in an academic study.

And here is where I need your help. I want to conduct an interview with you regarding your experience in online education and your opinion about the Ministry's decision. If you agree to do the interview or would like more information before, please contact me at the E-mail address below:

Researcher Name: Khalid Alharbi

E-mail: Khalid_Alharbi@redlands.edu

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Appendix D – Debriefing Procedure

Thank you for your participation in this research. The goal of this study was to investigate the reasons behind the decision to end online bachelor's degree programs and whether ending these online programs was in the best interest of the student, educator, and the Saudi Education. In this research, you will be asked some questions about the decision and/or about online education in general, I will also give you my contact information and if you can please share it with others that you know or think were involved in the decision and might be willing to participate in the study. Your participation is not only much appreciated by the researcher, but the data collected could possibly affect the decision and could help resolve any existing problems in these online programs. If you have any questions about this study, please contact us.

Researcher Name: Khalid Alharbi

Email: Khalid_Alharbi@redlands.edu

Dissertation's advisor: Dr. James Valadez

Email: james_valadez@redlands.edu

Finally, if you need a copy of the final result, I can send you the final research once I am done, but please provide me with a way to communicate back with you in this regard.

Thank you!

Appendix E – Consent Form

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

(For use with adult subjects only)

What follows is a consent form that explains what will be happening if you choose to participate in this research study. The first section (Investigator Information) should have been completed by the investigator. If this section is incomplete, do not continue with the study. Do not participate if this study has not been assigned an IRB approval number. The information you need to provide begins on Page 2. Please read each section carefully.

Investigator Information (to be completed by Principle Investigator)

IRB approval
number:

Title of
project:

The Reality of Online Education programs in Universities of Saud
Arabia (Case Study On The Online Bachelor Program At Imam

The Reality of Online Education Programs

(Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University)

Name of principle

Khalid Alharbi

investigator (PI):

Email

Khalid_Alharbi@redlands.edu

of PI:

Telephone number

of PI:

Department or

major of PI:

Doctoral student in Educational Justice program

Position

held by PI:

☐ faculty

☐ administrator/staff

☒ student

If PI is a student or staff, complete the remainder of Investigator Information, otherwise go to next page.

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Name of faculty or administrator

Dr. James Valadez

sponsor:

Department or office of

Education school

sponsor:

Position held by

sponsor:

☒ faculty

☐ administrator

General Information about this Study

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Whether you do is entirely up to you. You may refuse to participate, or you may stop participating at any time for any reason without any penalty. In 2018, Saudi Education Minister Ahmed Al-Issa ordered the country's universities to stop online bachelor programs starting from the new academic year (Ministry of Education No: 143966, July 15, 2018). In one of his statements, he said that the shutdown of these online educational programs was aimed at upgrading the quality of education by focusing on face-to-face classrooms. However, there was no official investigation applied to online education in Saudi Arabia, neither on the decision to stop the programs nor the quality of these programs. This research will thus conduct a qualitative study from a social constructivist perspective to investigate

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the reasons behind the decision to end the online bachelor's degree programs and whether ending these online programs was in the best interests of students, educators, and Saudi education. The second part of this research will examine students' and faculties' satisfaction with online programs and bring their opinions about the decision to the light in an academic research study.

You are being asked to participate in this study because I believe you have some intel that can be of great interest to my research

The interview will take 30–60 minutes. I will ask you some questions regarding the decision to stop the programs and online education in general. No identifying information will be attached to your response, and you can stop the interview at any time.

Audiotaping

You will be audiotaped.

Protecting Your Privacy

The interview will be recorded using a microphone and special iPad (not the researcher's personal phone) to ensure security. Additionally, the researcher will protect the participants' confidentiality and anonymity by saving any identifying information (i.e. consent form) separated from the interview. Further, this information will be destroyed as soon as possible and will only be accessible by the researcher himself. Further, if the participant would like they can instead of printing and signing their name on the consent form, they can put an "X" in this box if the consent to participate.

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What Will Happen if You Experience Any Problems or Discomfort during or after Your Participation

You have the right to withdraw, which means that you have the right to refuse to answer questions or cancel the interview during its collection or after it has been conducted.

Questions about this Study

You may ask and have answered any question about the research. If you have questions or concerns, you should contact the Principle Investigator (PI), faculty, or administrator sponsor (if the PI is a student).

Researcher Name: Khalid Alharbi

Email: Khalid_Alharbi@redlands.edu

Dissertation's advisor: Dr. James Valadez

Email: james_valadez@redlands.edu

Questions or Concerns about the Investigators, Staff Members, and Your Participation in the Study

This study was approved by the University of Redlands Institutional Review Board (IRB). This board tries to ensure that your rights and welfare are protected if you choose to participate in the study. If you have any questions about your role or how you were treated by the research personnel, you may contact the Chair of the IRB at (jessica_hehman@redlands.edu or 909-748-8469).

Participant's Agreement

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I, _____ ,

Print Name Above

have read the information presented above. I have asked all questions I had at this time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Signature of Research Participant	Date

To be completed by researcher:

Print Name of Person Obtaining Consent

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent	Date

Appendix F – Consent Form in Arabic

موافقة على المشاركة في دراسة بحثية

(للاستخدام مع الأشخاص البالغين فقط)

فيما يلي نموذج موافقة يوضح ما سيحدث إذا اخترت المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية. يجب أن يكون القسم الأول (معلومات المحقق) قد أكمله المحقق. إذا كان هذا القسم غير مكتمل، فلا تواصل الدراسة. لا تشارك إذا كانت هذه الدراسة لم يتم تعيين رقم الموافقة عليها. تبدأ المعلومات التي تحتاج إلى تقديمها في الصفحة 2. يرجى قراءة كل قسم بعناية.

معلومات المحقق (تم اكمالها من قبل المحقق)

رقم موافقة IRB _____

عنوان المشروع:

واقع برامج التعليم عبر الإنترنت في جامعات المملكة العربية السعودية (دراسة حالة عن برنامج البكالوريوس عبر

الإنترنت في جامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية

اسم الباحث الرئيسي: خالد الحربي

البريد الإلكتروني:

رقم هاتف: ٠٥٠٤٧١٦٨٠٠ الرقم الأمريكي ٩٠٩٧٣٦٩٠٦٦

الإدارة أو التخصص: طالب دكتوراه في برنامج القيادة التربوية

الموقف الذي شغلته

عضو هيئة التدريس []

مسؤول / الموظفين []

طالب [x]

اسم الكلية أو المسؤول الراعي:

الدكتور جيمس فالاديز

الإدارة: كلية التعليم

المنصب الذي يشغله المسؤول:

عضو هيئة التدريس [x]

مدير []

معلومات عامة حول هذه الدراسة:

طلب منك المشاركة في دراسة بحثية إذا كنت لا تريد يمكنك رفض المشاركة، أو يمكنك التوقف عن المشاركة في أي وقت ولأي سبب دون أي مسؤوليه

في عام 2018، أمر وزير التعليم السعودي أحمد العيسى جامعات البلاد بإيقاف برامج البكالوريوس عن بعد ابتداءً من (العام الدراسي الجديد) وزارة التعليم رقم: 143966، 15 يوليو، 2018.

في أحد تصريحاته، قال إن إغلاق هذه البرامج التعليمية عن بعد كان يهدف إلى رفع مستوى جودة التعليم من خلال التركيز على الفصول الدراسية المباشرة. ومع ذلك، لم يتم إجراء تحقيق رسمي عن التعليم عن بعد في المملكة العربية السعودية، لا بشأن قرار إيقاف البرامج ولا جودة هذه البرامج

سيقوم هذا البحث بإجراء دراسة نوعية من منظور بنائي اجتماعي لبحث الأسباب الكامنة وراء قرار إنهاء برامج درجة البكالوريوس عبر الإنترنت وما إذا كان إنهاء هذه البرامج عبر الإنترنت في مصلحة الطلاب والمعلمين والتعليم السعودي

سيقوم الجزء الثاني من هذا البحث بفحص مدى رضا الطلاب وأعضاء هيئة التدريس عن البرامج الإلكترونية وتقديم آرائهم حول القرار بشكل دراسة بحثية أكاديمية

يطلب منك المشاركة في هذه الدراسة لأنني أعتقد أن لديك بعض الجوانب التي يمكن أن تكون ذات أهمية كبيرة لبحثي سوف تستغرق المقابلة من 30 إلى 60 دقيقة. سوف أطرح عليك بعض الأسئلة المتعلقة بقرار إيقاف البرامج والتعليم عبر الإنترنت بشكل عام. لن يتم إرفاق أي معلومات تعريفية بإجابتك، ويمكنك إيقاف المقابلة في أي وقت تريد

التسجيل الصوتي:

سوف يتم التسجيل الصوتي

حماية خصوصيتك:

سيتم تسجيل المقابلة باستخدام اي باد ذو ميكروفون خاص (وليس الهاتف الشخصي للباحث) لضمان الأمان. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، سوف يحمي الباحث سرية المشاركين وعدم الكشف عن هويتهم عن طريق حفظ أي معلومات تعريفه (بمعنى نموذج الموافقة) مفصولة عن المقابلة. علاوة على ذلك، سيتم إتلاف هذه المعلومات في أقرب وقت ممكن ولن يكون متاحًا إلا للباحث نفسه. علاوة على ذلك، إذا أراد المشارك أن يتمكن من ذلك بدلاً من طباعة وتوقيع اسمه في نموذج الموافقة ، فيمكنه وضع في هذا المربع إذا كانت الموافقة على المشاركة "X" علامة

ماذا سيحدث إذا واجهت أي مشاكل أو عدم الراحة أثناء أو بعد مشاركتك:

لديك الحق في الانسحاب، مما يعني أنه يحق لك رفض الإجابة على الأسئلة أو إلغاء المقابلة أثناء جمعها أو بعد إجراءاتها

إذا كانت لديك أسئلة أو مخاوف حول هذه الدراسة لا تتردد بطرحها

اسم الباحث: خالد الحربي

البريد الإلكتروني: Khalid_Alharbi@redlands.edu

أسئلة أو مخاوف بشأن الباحث

مستشار الأطروحة: الدكتور جيمس فالاديز

البريد الإلكتروني: james_valadez@redlands.edu

The Reality of Online Education Programs

تمت الموافقة على هذه الدراسة من قبل مجلس المراجعة المؤسسية لجامعة ريدلاندز (IRB) .
يحاول هذا المنتدى ضمان حماية حقوقك ورفاهيتك إذا اخترت المشاركة في الدراسة .

إذا كانت لديك أي أسئلة حول دورك أو الطريقة التي عاملوك بها العاملون في مجال البحوث ، فيمكنك الاتصال IRB

jessica_hehman@redlands.edu

909-748-8469

اتفاق المشارك

أقر أنا.....

انني قرأت المعلومات الواردة أعلاه

ولقد طرحت جميع الأسئلة التي كانت لدي في هذا الوقت. أوافق طواعية على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية

توقيع مشارك.....

التاريخ

يستكمل من الباحث

طباعة اسم الشخص الحاصل على الموافقة

توقيع الشخص الحاصل على الموافقة

Appendix J – Gate Letter

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
IMAM MOHAMMAD IBN SAUD ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
DEANSHIP OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

رؤية
2030
الهيئة العامة للتعليم
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

جامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية
عمادة البحث العلمي

Task facilitation

Fadilat / Your Excellency **May ALLAH save him**

Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University

May the peace, mercy and blessings of ALLAH (God) be upon you, and after

I refer to the student's wish at the University of Redlands, California / Khalid Ibn Badr Alharbi to conduct a study entitled "The Reality of Online Education program in Universities of Saudi Arabia " to complete the requirements for obtaining a PhD in Education.

Since the research topic requires conducting a field study and obtaining scientific and statistical data. So I hope to facilitate his task to apply the study tool and provide him with the necessary data.

my greetings and appreciation

and

May the peace, mercy and blessings of ALLAH (God) be upon you

Dean of Scientific Research

Prof. Mohammed Ibn Mohsen Babbain

رقم المعاملة: 57199
تاريخها: 1441/05/25
إرسالها: 1441/05/25
المرفقات: 8
رسم الجهة: 033

الرقم: / / التاريخ: / /

الهاتف: +966112582247 / فاكس: +966112590261 / ص. ب: 5701 - الرياض 11432
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الرقم
التاريخ
المشروعات

الجمهورية العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
(٣٨٠)

وزارة التعليم
Ministry of Education

عرض

معالي نائب وزير التعليم للجامعات والبحث والابتكار
وفقه الله

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

إشارة إلى الاستدعاء المقدم من / خالد بن بدر مطلق الحري، هوية وطنية رقم (١٠٣١٠٠٩٩٨٦) الذي يذكر أنه طالب مرحلة دكتوراه من ضمن طلاب برنامج خادم الحرمين الشريفين للابتعاث تخصص قيادة تربوية من جامعة ريدلاندز بكاليفورنيا ويلتمس الموافقة بالسماح له بإجراء دراسة ميدانية على بعض موظفي الوزارة حيث أن عنوان بحثه هو / واقع التعليم الإلكتروني في الجامعات السعودية (دراسة حالة على برنامج البكالوريوس عن بعد في جامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية).

أفيد معاليكم بأن هذه الوكالة ترى مناسبة الموافقة على طلب خالد الحري بإجراء دراسة ميدانية عن البحث المشار إليه أعلاه، أو التوجيه بما ترونه مناسباً.

وتقبلوا تحياتي وتقديري
الحائز
٣٠/٣

وكيل الوزارة للتعليم الجامعي
د. عبدالرحمن بن ناصر الحريف

شهادة
بأن النص العربي ترجمة
سليقة وصحيحة للنص الذي به دون
أشئ مسؤولاً عن مضمون الوثيقة
We certify that the Arabic text
is a fair and accurate translation
of the English text attached
hereto without any
responsibility
of the translator

الموافقة وموافقة
الإدارة

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
(٢٨٠)
نائب وزير التعليم
للجامعات والبحث والابتكار

برقية خطية

وفقه الله

معالي مدير جامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

أرفق لمعاليتكم نسخة من الاستدعاء المقدم من/ خالد بن بدر مطلق الحربي، هوية وطنية رقم (١٠٣١٠٠٩٩٨٦)، المتضمن أنه طالب مرحلة دكتوراه من ضمن طلاب برنامج خادم الحرمين الشريفين للابتعاث، تخصص (قيادة تربوية) من جامعة ريدلاندز بكاليفورنيا، ويلتمس الموافقة على السماح له بإجراء دراسة ميدانية، وحمل بحثه عنوان (واقع التعليم الإلكتروني في الجامعات السعودية دراسة حالة على برنامج البكالوريوس عن بعد بجامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية).

آمل منكم الاطلاع وإكمال ما يلزم، والإفادة.

وتقبلوا تحياتي وتقديري

ع

نائب وزير التعليم

للجامعات والبحث والابتكار

د. حاتم بن حسن المرزوقي