Iraqi EFL Preparatory School Students' Preferences on Online Learning

By

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the global higher education sector, and the mode of delivery has shifted to blended learning or fully remote. Online education necessitates reliable and stable internet access and technology on both the instructor's and student's ends. This paper aims at finding out EFL preparatory school students' preferences on online learning. The sample of the study includes (400) EFL preparatory school students have been selected form different Directorates of Education in Baghdad. The closed questionnaire has been delivered to the participants, and after assuring the validity and reliability of the instruments, they were applied to study samples. The results show that the students prefer; watching video lecture, using their phone for learning, having multiple choice exams, getting immediate feedback from their teachers, using discussion and group work for assignments, engaging in google classroom and google meet, using iPad and laptop, and studying via telegram and YouTube.

Finally, suggestions for further studies have been exposed.

Keywords online learning; educational technologies; platforms; preparatory school; COVID-19

Introduction

During the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous nations have made the decision to close all educational institutions, including preschools, schools, colleges, and universities. The decision is made to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to limit physical contact between students, faculty, and staff (by following social distancing policy). In Iraq, the Ministry of Higher Education has mandated that all teaching and learning activities in universities and colleges transition from face-to-face to online learning (Osman & Alwi, Khan, 2009).

The term "online learning" refers to the process of receiving educational information via the internet. Teaching and learning processes have grown more viable online because of a variety of platforms and technologies available for this purpose. Devices that enhance communication, collaboration, and the flow of information are widely accepted (Levy, 2017). Students now have access to a wider range of online resources, including video conferencing,

chat and forums, online examinations, and remote laboratories, thanks to the widespread adoption of mobile devices and the rapid growth of telecommunications services (Herrador, Hernández & Hontoria, 2020). This article examines a number of commonly used asynchronous learning technologies, looking at their benefits and weaknesses as well as the extent to which they are currently being used.

Online learning can be aided by a wide range of resources. Google Meet, Zoom, Jitsi, Microsoft Team, and Cisco Collaboration Solutions are some of the most often used video conferencing platforms. In online learning, students can take full advantage of video conferencing by rewatching previously recorded videos for revision. While online video conferencing has several limitations, such as low connectivity, bandwidth and audio and video quality, conducting online learning utilising video conferencing once a week throughout the COVID-19 period would be a better way for teaching-learning processes. Each online video conferencing service has its own advantages and disadvantages, and how a user decides to make use of it is entirely up to them. The cost and pricing of establishing these online platforms for online learning would be one of the most important considerations (Nambiar, 2020).

Learning Management Systems (LMS) are commonly used to support the OL. A Learning Management System (LMS) is an online platform that connects educators and students via online communication (Adzharuddin, 2013). The LMS also provides educators with online materials, conversations, task evaluations, and other online activities to monitor and administer their own classrooms.

Some schools, like uFuture, Blackboard, and Spectrum, have their own Learning Management Systems (LMS). Non-campus LMSs include Google Classroom, Schoology, and Moodle. Educators can assess their students' success by keeping tabs on their OL development.

Therefore, as these LMSs provide features to monitor students' performances, finding the right LMS or any other online learning tools are very crucial in order to provide an effective learning environment and know what does students prefer.

Hence, this study investigates What are the Iraqi EFL preparatory school students' preferences on online learning.

Methodology & Procedures

This part discusses the methodology and provide a full detailed description of all the procedures used to achieve the aim of the study. It deals with the following:

1   Population and sample.
2   The instruments; the questionnaire and its applications.
3   The description of the statistical methods utilized for data analysis and result computing.

Methodology

The methodology involved in the current study is the descriptive methodology. According to Johnson and Christensen (2017, p. 406), the primary purpose of descriptive study is to provide an exact description of the characteristics of a phenomenon.

Descriptive methodology falls into different types and among them is the survey research which is employed in the present study.

Mills and Gay (2016, p. 222) define survey research as an instrument for collecting data that identify one or more features of a given group. A questionnaire is used to collect data for a survey by asking members of a population a set of questions.

Population and Sample

Population, according to Blankenship (2010), is a group of organizations or individuals that can be studied (p. 82).

According to Sharad, & Al-Bakri (2021), the population refers to the persons from whom the sample is drawn in order to collect the necessary data and answer the study question.

The population of the present study involves Iraqi EFL preparatory school students in Baghdad. The population is distributed into six General Directorates of Education (Al-Karkh 1st., Al-Karkh 2nd., Al-Karkh 3rd., Al-Rosafa 1st., Al-Rosafa 2nd., and Al-Rosafa 3rd.).

For any research study, a sample refers to the items, events, or people that represent the characteristics of the larger group from which the sample was drawn (Mills & Gay, 2019, p. 147).

To achieve the aim of the study, The sample involves 400 EFL preparatory school students in Baghdad, chosen from different General Directorates of Education and as shown in Table (1).

Table 1 The Distribution of Students' Sample

No.	General Directorates of Education	Number of students
1	Al-Karkh 1st.	**69**
2	Al-Karkh 2nd.	**53**
3	Al-Karkh 3rd.	**66**
4	Al-Rosafa 1st.	**73**
5	Al-Rosafa 2nd.	**68**
6	Al-Rosafa 3rd.	**71**
	Total	**400**

Instruments of the Study

The instrument used to conduct this study is a questionnaire. According to Richards (2017, p. 87), the most frequent research tool is a questionnaire since it is simple to produce, can be used with a large number of people, and provides data that can be quickly examined and computed. A questionnaire, according to Mills & Gay (2019, p. 55), is a written collection of questions or statements to be answered by a selected set of research participants; it enables researchers to collect huge amounts of data in a relatively short period of time.

However, the closed questionnaire is used to meet the aim of the present study.

The questionnaire was created using the following resources:

1   Related literature: This section includes books, journals, and articles relevant to the study's topic.
2   Consulting ELT professionals, Online learning and computer sciences.
3   Examining the pre-designed questionnaires that tackle the flipped classroom and preferences on online learning.

Final Application of the Three Questionnaires

After establishing the instruments' validity and reliability, the questionnaire has distributed to students on Tuesday, January 20, 2022. The questionnaire has been personally handed to them.

Mathematical and Statistical Means

To accomplish the aim of this study, the SPSS program has been utilized. The statistical methods employed in this investigation are:

1   Pearson Coefficient of Correlation A formula was employed to determine the reliability of the three questionnaires.
2   The percentage is used as a mathematical means to calculate perception of each instrument's component.

Data Analysis and Results

In order to achieve the fourth aim of the study which is (finding out Iraqi EFL preparatory school students' preferences on online learning.) a questionnaire of (92) items has been applied on a sample (400) students to find out their preferences on online learning. The students' responses have been obtained on each of the (13) components and as the following:

Course Content Delivery Preferences

Five Items have been included in this component. The analysis of results reveals that (3) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.591) to (3.317), and standard deviations ranging between (0.609) to (0.833). Two items are found to be not preferred since their mean scores ranging between (2.424) to (1.673), and a standard deviation ranging between (1.074) to (0.704). See Table (2).

Table 2 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Course Content Delivery Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
3	Videos	3.591	0.609	First
2	Pictures / graphics	3.491	0.637	Second
4	Podcast or YouTube	3.317	0.833	Third
5	I prefer online learning rather than traditional learning in the classroom	2.424	1.074	Fourth
1	Textbook (soft copy)	1.673	0.704	Fifth

Communication Method Preferences

This component includes (6) items, the analysis of results displays that (4) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.175) to (2.695), and standard deviations ranging between (0.808) to (0.831). Two items are found to be not preferred since their mean scores ranging between (1.724) to (1.642), and the standard deviation ranging between (0.680) to (0.632) as indicated in Table (3).

Table 3 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Communication Method Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
6	Phone	3.175	0.827	First
10	Online Chat via social media	3.093	0.831	Second
9	Platform message board	3.068	0.810	Third
11	Other Communication methods	2.695	0.808	Fourth
8	Personal official Email	1.724	0.680	Fifth
7	School official Email	1.642	0.632	Sixth

Online Exam Preferences

This component consists of (5) items, the analysis of results affirms that (3) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.546) to (3.048), and standard deviations ranging between (0.702) to (0.958). Two items are found to be not preferred since its mean scores ranging between (2.386) to (1.704), and the standard deviation ranging between (0.694) to (0.646) as indicated in Table (4).

Table 4 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Online Exam Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
14	Multiple choice/true-false exams (closed-ended questions)	3.546	0.702	First
12	Exams that allow multiple attempts	3.326	0.793	Second
15	Short answer or single sentence response exams	3.048	0.958	Third
16	Timed exams (forced completion)	2.386	0.694	Fourth
13	Essay exams (open-ended questions)	1.704	0.646	Fifth

Feedback, Assessment, and Evaluation Preferences

Seven items are included in this component. The analysis of results displays that all the items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.622) to (2.893), and standard

deviations ranging between (0.646) to (0.986). See Table (5).

Table 5 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Feedback, Assessment, and Evaluation Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
17	Exams and assignment results are announced on time in online course.	3.622	0.646	First
20	Instructors give more feedback to students during online course.	3.437	0.729	Second
21	Using online course activities to observe the development and outcomes of students.	3.357	0.724	Third
23	Monitoring the progress of students online to make course assessments.	3.155	0.799	Fourth
19	Using continuous exams in online course to motivate students to work harder.	3.120	0.902	Fifth
18	Using E-tests to assess students' performance.	2.915	0.986	Sixth
22	Using online course to evaluate students.	2.893	0.832	Seventh

Online Assignments Preferences

This component comprises of (7) items. The analysis of results Points out that (4) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.253) to (2.933), and standard deviations ranging between (0.807) to (0.934). Three items are found to be not preferred since their mean scores ranging between (1.828) to (1.613), and the standard deviation ranging between (0.661) to (0.864) as indicated in Table (6).

Table 6 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Online Assignments Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
26	Discussion Board/Forums	3.253	0.807	First
25	Group work	3.224	0.934	Second
28	Homework	3.046	0.846	Third
24	Individual work	2.933	0.895	Fourth
30	Presentations	1.828	0.864	Fifth
27	Research Paper	1.684	0.753	Sixth
29	Project	1.613	0.661	Seventh

Online Platforms Preferences

This component holds (14) items, the analysis of results revels that (5) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.480) to (2.811), and standard deviations ranging between (0.719) to (0.977). Nine items are found to be not preferred since their mean scores ranging between (2.351) to (1.440), and the standard deviations ranging between (0.475) to (0.974) as shown in table (7).

Table 7 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Online Platforms Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
31	Google Classroom	3.480	0.719	First
32	Google meet	3.288	0.834	Second
44	Pre-recorded videos	3.257	0.880	Third
42	Quizbot	3.226	0.768	Fourth
41	Live lectures	2.811	0.977	Fifth
33	Campus LMS (uFuture/iLearn, Blackboard, Spectrum)	2.351	0.974	Sixth
43	Lecture Slides	2.024	0.732	Seventh
37	Quizziz	2.008	0.772	Eighth
36	Moodle	1.971	0.707	Ninth
35	Edmodo	1.966	0.752	Tenth
38	Kahoot	1.786	0.475	Eleventh
34	Schoology	1.608	0.568	Twelfth
39	Padlet	1.555	0.497	Thirteenth
40	Emails	1.440	0.496	Fourteenth

Device Preferences

This component includes (10) items, the analysis of results suggests that (7) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.388) to (2.631), and standard deviations ranging from (0.698) to (1.030). Three items are found to be preferred since their mean scores ranging between (1.782) to (1.633), and standard deviations ranging from (0.539) to (0.908) as previewed in Table (8).

Table 8 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Device Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
51	iPads	3.388	0.698	First
47	Laptop PC	3.335	0.839	Second
45	iPhones iOS	2.997	1.030	Third
46	Android phones	2.993	0.935	Fourth
52	Android tablets	2.811	0.968	Fifth
53	Windows tablets	2.697	0.933	Sixth
54	Other devices or another smartphone	2.631	0.891	Seventh
48	Mac laptops	1.782	0.908	Eighth
49	PC desktops	1.691	0.574	Ninth
50	Mac desktops	1.633	0.539	Tenth

Live Meeting Technology Preferences

Seven items are involved in this component. the analysis of results indicates that (3) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.477) to (2.680), and standard deviations ranging from (0.749) to (0.939). Four items are found to be not preferred since their mean scores ranging between (2.060) to (1.953), and standard deviations ranging between (0.681) to (0.727) as shown in Table (9).

Table 9 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Live Meeting Technology Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
55	Google Meet	3.477	0.749	First
58	Free Conference Call (FCC)	3.037	0.852	Second
56	Zoom	2.680	0.939	Third
57	Microsoft Team	2.060	0.727	Fourth
61	GoToMeeting	1.988	0.701	Fifth
60	Livestorm	1.971	0.681	Sixth
59	Skype	1.953	0.725	Seventh

Social Media Used Preferences

This component Incorporates (11) items, the analysis of results affirms that (5) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.724) to (2.893), and standard deviations ranging between (0.565) to (1.016). Six items are found to be not preferred since their mean scores ranging between (2.057) to (1.460), and standard deviations ranging between (0.500) to (0.901) as indicated in Table (10).

Table 10 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Social Media Used Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
71	Telegram	3.724	0.565	First
63	YouTube	3.402	0.746	Second
64	Instagram	3.066	1.016	Third
62	Facebook	2.986	0.862	Fourth
70	WhatsApp	2.893	0.951	Fifth
72	Viber	2.057	0.901	Sixth
69	Pinterest	1.835	0.739	Seventh
68	Tumblr	1.815	0.636	Eighth
66	Google Plus	1.724	0.859	Ninth
67	LinkedIn	1.517	0.500	Tenth
65	Twitter	1.460	0.525	Eleventh

Preparing Lecture and Representation Preferences

This component possesses (6) items, the analysis of results revels that (4) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.442) to (2.900), and standard deviations ranging between (0.717) to (0.829). Two items are found to be not preferred since their mean scores ranging between (2.095)

to (1.926), and standard deviations ranging between (0.933) to (0.764) as indicated in Table (11).

Table 11 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Preparing Lecture and Representation Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
74	Interactive lectures that engage learners	3.442	0.717	First
78	Visuals (images, diagrams, concept maps)	3.364	0.803	Second
77	Watching (videos, animations)	3.182	0.829	Third
73	More traditional presentation / lecture format	2.900	0.881	Fourth
76	Listening to (podcasts, radio)	2.095	0.933	Fifth
75	Reading content	1.926	0.764	Sixth

Internet Access Preferences

This component consists of (3) items, the analysis of results displays that (2) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.502) to (2.837), and standard deviations ranging between (0.710) to (0.963). Only one item is found to be not preferred since its mean scores (2.033) and standard deviations ranging between (0.807) as shown in Table (12).

Table 12 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Internet Access Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
80	Home internet	3.502	0.710	First
79	Mobile data	2.837	0.963	Second
81	Portable internet modem	2.033	0.807	Third

Time Spent on Online Learning Preferences

This component encompasses (5) items, the analysis of results indicates that (2) items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.182) to (2.620), and standard deviations ranging between (0.842) to (0.960). Three items are found to be not preferred since their mean scores ranging between (2.006) to (1.444), and standard deviations ranging between (0.628) to (0.930) as indicated in Table (13).

Table 13 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Time Spent on Online Learning Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
82	1 to 3 hours per day	3.182	0.842	First
83	4 to 6 hours per day	2.620	0.960	Second
84	7 to 9 hours per day	2.006	0.930	Third
85	10 to 12 hours per day	1.520	0.647	Fourth
86	Above 12 hours per day	1.444	0.628	Fifth

Frequency of Connecting Preferences

This component includes (6) items, the analysis of results shows that three items have been preferred with mean scores ranging between (3.111) to (2.528), and standard deviations ranging between (0.734) to (0.987). Three items are found to be not preferred since their mean scores ranging between (2.164) to (1.753), and standard deviations ranging between (0.924) to (0.996) as shown in Table (14).

Table 14 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and Ranks of Frequency of Connecting Preferences

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
88	A few times a day	3.111	0.734	First
87	Every hour	2.575	0.996	Second
89	Once a day	2.528	0.987	Third
90	Twice a week	2.164	0.996	Fourth
91	Once a week	2.004	0.950	Fifth
92	Once a month	1.753	0.924	Sixth

To identify Students' preferences on each component and on the questionnaire items as a whole, the means scores and the standard deviation on the whole questionnaire viewed the results indicated in Table (15).

Table 15 Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and Ranks of Students' Preferences of the Questionnaire components

No. in the questionnaire	Item	MS	SD	Rank
4	Feedback, assessment, and evaluation preferences	3.214	0.802	First
1	Course content delivery preferences	2.899	0.771	Second
10	Preparing lecture and representation preferences	2.818	0.821	Third
3	Online exam preferences	2.802	0.758	Fourth
11	Internet access preferences	2.79	0.826	Fifth
7	Device preferences	2.595	0.831	Sixth
2	Communication method preferences	2.566	0.764	Seventh
5	Online assignments preferences	2.511	0.822	Eighth
8	Live meeting technology preferences	2.452	0.767	Ninth
9	Social media used preferences	2.407	0.754	Tenth
13	Frequency of connecting preferences	2.355	0.931	Eleventh
6	Online platforms preferences	2.34	0.725	Twelfth
12	Time spent on online learning preferences	2.154	0.801	Thirteenth
	The whole questionnaire	2.607	0.797	

From the above table, it is found that:

1. The fourth component in the questionnaire (Feedback, assessment, and evaluation preferences) has been ranked first, with a mean score of (3.214), a standard deviation of (0.802), and a percentage of (80%).
2. The first component of the questionnaire (Course content delivery preferences) has been ranked second, with a mean score of (2.899), a standard deviation of (0.771), and a percentage of (72%).
3. The tenth component in the questionnaire (Preparing lecture and representation preferences) has been ranked third, with a mean score of (2.818), a standard deviation of (0.821), and a percentage of (70%).
4. The third component in the questionnaire (Online exam preferences) has been ranked fourth, with a mean score of (2.802), a standard deviation of (0.758), and a percentage of (70%).
5. The eleventh component in the questionnaire (Internet access preferences) has been ranked fifth, with a mean score of (2.790), a standard deviation of (0.826), and a percentage of (70%).
6. The seventh component in the questionnaire (Device preferences) has been ranked sixth, with a mean score of (2.595), a standard deviation of (0.831), and a percentage of (65%).
7. The second component in the questionnaire (Communication method preferences) has been ranked seventh, with a mean score of (2.566), a standard deviation of (0.764), and a percentage of (64%).
8. The fifth component in the questionnaire (Online assignments preferences) has been ranked eighth, with a mean score of (2.511), a standard deviation of (0.822), and a percentage of (63%).
9. The eighth component in the questionnaire (Live meeting technology preferences) has been ranked nineth, with a mean score of (2.452), a standard deviation of (0.767), and a percentage of (61%).
10. The nineth component in the questionnaire (Social media used preferences) has been ranked tenth, with a mean score of (2.407), a standard deviation of (0.754), and a percentage of (60%).
11. The thirteenth component in the questionnaire (Frequency of connecting preferences) has been ranked eleventh, with a mean score of (2.355), a standard deviation of (0.931), and a percentage of (59%).
12. The sixth component in the questionnaire (Online platforms preferences) has been ranked twelfth, with a mean score of (2.340), a standard deviation of (0.725), and a percentage of (58%).
13. The twelfth component in the questionnaire (Time spent on online learning preferences) has been ranked thirteenth, with a mean score of (2.154), a standard deviation of (0.801), and a percentage of (54%).
14. As for the whole questionnaire, the mean score has been found to be (2.607), with the standard deviation of (0.797), and the percentage has been (65%).

Discussions of Results

Iraqi EFL preparatory school students believe that;

Students prefer delivering the contain via videos, pictures, graphics and YouTube podcast and do not prefer the soft copy of the textbook. Because, first, the use of video in

instruction is memorable and comprehensive. Video-based learning is highly interesting for all students. A combination of audio, text, and graphics accelerates the delivery of information. Second, the use of video in education is cost-effective. There are numerous free web resources that provide instructive videos for classroom use. Video content is also accessible. If students want to learn a new talent, they can likely locate thousands of materials and courses in a matter of minutes. The accessibility of video-based education is its greatest asset. Fourthly, educational video content can be personalized. Individuals are able to learn at their own pace and with a personalized learning experience when videos are used for instructional reasons. A video can be viewed and rewatched as many times as necessary to ensure comprehension. Additionally, you may pause whenever necessary. A short press of the space bar provides you all the time you need to take notes, mentally rehearse, or pause to study the topic. If this problem happened in the classroom, you would need to raise your hand to prevent the teacher and the class from answering your questions. Even if they do not comprehend a topic, students often refrain from interrupting the lesson.

Students prefer to study and communicate with their teachers via phone, Platform message board, and social media chat. The only difference between them is that students do not prefer to communicate by official emails because the Iraqi preparatory students are not familiar to use official emails and it considers difficult for them. The preference for phone is due to numerous advantages, including the ability to share knowledge without any limitations of space or time, the capacity to facilitate the development of critical thinking, participatory learning, problem-solving, and lifelong communication skills, and the ability to share knowledge without any limitations of space or time. Mobile technology "supports the transmission and delivery of multimedia content and real-time, synchronous and asynchronous debate and discourse using voice, text, and multimedia" (Traxler, 2009, p. 17). There are a variety of programs for mobile phones that can be utilized in the teaching and learning process, including common software such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint (Mtega et al., 2012) and applications for language learning, problem-solving, etc.

A.   Students prefer multiple choice/true-false exams (closed-ended questions), Short answer exams, but they are unlike teacher, they prefer exams that allow multiple attempts and do not prefer essay and timed exams. Students prefer making multiple choice/true-false exams because it is easy and fast to be answered by students.

B.   Students prefer to be able to view their scores at the end of the exam.

C.   Students prefer to get feedback directly online which help them to improve.

D.   Students do not prefer presentations, research paper, and project because students do not like a homework that take a long time and hard effort from them.

E.   Students prefer only four platforms; google classroom, google meet, pre-recorded videos, and Quizbot and do not prefer the others because these preferred group of platforms are the most common used in Iraq and both teacher and students are familiar with, beside that these platforms are friendly use with easy interface that allow them to do many functions.

F.   Students prefer to use devices like Laptop PC, iPads, Android phones, iPhones iOS and do not prefer to use PC desktops, Mac laptops and Mac desktops because the second collection are expensive and not affordable by all teachers and students.

G.   Students prefer only Google Meet and Free Conference Call (FCC). Students tend to use what is easy and free. These programs are consisted for this kind of learning for

example; the teachers in google classroom can share presentation, record the lesson and get the attendances.

H. Students mostly prefer to study by using Telegram and YouTube and do not prefer any other social media programs. The most frequently used social media app in Iraq are; telegram, what's up and YouTube. These apps allow students to do many easy functions, for instance, in WhatsApp, the students believe that it is the most common communication tool with the teachers and their friends due to the low bandwidth requirement of the application.

I. Students prefer to watch the content to be viewed as Images, interactive lectures and videos. This kind of presenting the data considers easy to memorize and understand the content by students and can cover the different learning styles of students (for example: Visual style).

J. Students prefer to use home internet and mobile data when teaching students online and do not prefer portable internet modem because the last option is expensive and not affordable while home internet is the most common used and consider as the less expensive one and all families are familiar with.

K. Students prefer to spent time on teaching students for 1 to 3 hours or 4 to 6 hours per day and do not prefer to spent more than these hours. It is obvious for all those students cannot sit for a long time in front of the screen.

L. Students prefer to connect only a few times a day or every hour when teaching or studying and do not prefer to connect once a day, twice a week, once a week, and once a month. This study shows us that students prefer to distribute their online study on different time per day for example; to study two hours in the morning, two hours in the afternoon and three hours at night. That's is fine for them.

Conclusion

The study reveals that students prefer online learning because it allows them greater freedom to connect and collaborate with one another, as well as engage with their study materials at their convenience and with the flexibility of space and time. The study suggests that technology facilitates quick access to knowledge, resulting in the establishment of favorable attitudes towards it among students. The study validates the benefits of online learning, such as the convenience of studying from any location, which is not available with traditional face-to-face instruction.

Suggestions for Further Studies

The researcher proposes some suggested studies to be dealt in the near future:

1- Advantages, Disadvantages, and Challenges of Implementing Online learning at the Preparatory School.
2- Iraqi EFL University Teachers and Students' social media, Devices and Platforms Preferences on Online learning.

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Appendix

Students' preferences on online learning questionnaire

Dear Respondent,The researcher is investigating "Iraqi EFL Preparatory School Students' Preferences on Online Learning". I request you to answer the items of the enclosed questionnaire by ticking (√).

There is no need to write down your name. The answers will be used for research purposes.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Directorate of Education:

A-   Al-Rosafa 1.
B-   Al-Rosafa 2.
C-   Al-Rosafa 3.
D-   Al-Karkh 1.
E-   Al-Karkh 2.
F-   Al-Karkh 3.
G-   2. Students' Preferences on Online Learning

1 -Course content delivery preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	preferred	neutral	not preferred	strongly not preferred
1	Textbook (soft copy)					
2	Pictures / graphics					
3	Videos					
4	Podcast or YouTube					
5	I prefer online learning rather than traditional learning in the classroom					

2-Communication method preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
6	Phone					
7	School official Email					
8	Personal official Email					
9	Platform message board					
10	Online Chat via social media					

No	Items
11	Other Communication methods

3-Online exam preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
12	Exams that allow multiple attempts					
13	Essay exams (open-ended questions)					
14	Multiple choice/true-false exams (closed-ended questions)					
15	Short answer or single sentence response exams					
16	Timed exams (forced completion)					

4- Feedback, assessment, and evaluation preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
17	Exams and assignment results are announced on time in online course.					
18	using E-tests to assess students' performance.					
19	Using continuous exams in online course to motivate students to work harder.					
20	Instructors give more feedback to students during online course.					

No	Items					
21	Using online course activities to observe the development and outcomes of students.					
22	Using online course to evaluate students.					
23	Monitoring the progress of students online to make course assessments.					

5-Online assignments preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
24	Individual work					
25	Group work					
26	Discussion Board/Forums					
27	Research Paper					
28	Homework					
29	Project					
30	Presentations					

6-Online platforms preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
31	Google Classroom					
32	Google meet					
33	Campus LMS (uFuture/iLearn, Blackboard, Spectrum)					
34	Schoology					
35	Edmodo					
36	Moodle					
37	Quizziz					
38	Kahoot					
39	Padlet					
40	Emails					
41	Live lectures					
42	Quizbot					
43	Lecture Slides					

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
44	Pre-recorded videos					

7-Device preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
45	iPhones iOS					
46	Android phones					
47	Laptop PC					
48	Mac laptops					
49	PC desktops					
50	Mac desktops					
51	iPads					
52	Android tablets					
53	Windows tablets					
54	Other devices or another smartphone					

8-Live meeting technology preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
55	Google Meet					
56	Zoom					
57	Microsoft Team					
58	Free Conference Call (FCC)					
59	Skype					
60	Livestorm					
61	GoToMeeting					

9-Social media used preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
62	Facebook					
63	YouTube					
64	Instagram					
65	Twitter					
66	Google Plus					
67	LinkedIn					
68	Tumblr					
69	Pinterest					
70	WhatsApp					
71	Telegram					
72	Viber					

10- Preparing lecture and representation preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
73	More traditional presentation / lecture format					
74	Interactive lectures that engage learners					
75	Reading content					
76	Listening to (podcasts, radio)					
77	Watching (videos, animations)					
78	Visuals (images, diagrams, concept maps)					

11- Internet access preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
79	Mobile data					
80	Home internet					
81	Portable internet modem					

12-Time spent on online learning preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
82	1 to 3 hours per day					
83	4 to 6 hours per day					
84	7 to 9 hours per day					
85	10 to 12 hours per day					
86	Above 12 hours per day					

13-Frequency of connecting preferences

No	Items	strongly preferred	slightly preferred	neutral	Least preferred	strongly not preferred
87	Every hour					
88	A few times a day					
89	Once a day					
90	Twice a week					
91	Once a week					

92　　Once a month