Self-efficacy of Saudi English Majors after the Emergent Transition to Online Learning and Online Assessment during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

This research explores the sense of self-efficacy among Saudi English majors at Jeddah University during the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced all schools in Saudi Arabia to suspend face-to-face learning and, instead, use the online Blackboard platform. The study's objectives are to determine Blackboard's effect on Saudi learners' self-efficacy beliefs, identify factors influencing these beliefs in the online context, and determine the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and academic performance. Phone interviews, an online questionnaire, and online performance tests served as data collection instruments. The results indicate that urgent Blackboard use negatively affected the subjects' self-efficacy beliefs, and there is a positive, significant relationship between academic performance and perceived self-efficacy. Among other factors, familiarity with Blackboard, technical competence, and a readiness to embrace technology strongly influenced the students' self-efficacy beliefs. This paper also presents implications and pedagogical recommendations drawn from the results.

Keywords: self-efficacy beliefs, academic performance, online learning, Blackboard platform, influential factors

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduce the Problem

Educational specialists largely agree on the fundamental development trends that should be implemented across all educational levels to reap the benefits of, and meet the challenges posed by, the twenty-first century. Contemporary learners are expected to acquire skills that are substantial drivers for success, both personally and professionally. They are required to become lifelong learners. This idea of lifelong learning is far from new. A very old saying encourages people to learn "from the cradle to the grave"—meaning that learning is a continuous process, starting at birth and ending at death. University students, in particular, must develop the skills that will enable them to become lifelong learners, so they can easily adapt to changes and succeed in modern society and the labor market (Mauch et al., 2001). In this respect, the self-efficacy theory, first introduced by Bandura (1977), recommends that, to become lifelong learners, people must believe in their ability to learn effectively and to attain their educational goals. Thus, they will meet the academic demands placed on them. Such self-efficacy is becoming increasingly vital, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused educational institutions to urgently shift to online learning methods. Teachers have attempted to employ various technology-based tools as a substitute for conventional classrooms. This change calls for increased focus on self-efficacy as being both domain- and situation-specific. As school suspension becomes a must, Saudi Arabia has pioneered the transition to virtual learning, moving to a previously established online learning mode: The Blackboard platform. It is, therefore, interesting to investigate the cognitive and affective aspects of online learning among Saudi university students to better understand how the COVID-19 transition has impacted the effectiveness of their learning and to determine how their self-efficacy contributes to their academic achievements. To gain better insights into what affects degrees of self-efficacy, factors influencing self-efficacy were foregrounded in light of the sampled learners' statements.

1.2 Problem Statement

Understanding learners' beliefs, attitudes, and cognition is essential for fostering the learning experience. Such characteristics, which include comprehension and control over the learning experience, relate to academic achievement because they govern how the learning process is planned, monitored, and evaluated. Self-efficacy is, thus, a contributing factor to both learning and academic performance. A study such as this has become necessary due to the emergent, unplanned transition to online learning stimulated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this paper will describe how Saudi students, who are majoring in English at Jeddah University, perceive their self-efficacy in meeting the demands they have been given in response to the COVID-19 emergency.

1.3 Rationale for the Study

Faced by the COVID-19 pandemic, as early as March 9, 2020, the Saudi Ministry of Education called for the immediate closure of all schools and universities across the country to secure the safety of students and employees. In response to this emergency, and due to its already well-established Blackboard system, Jeddah University immediately switched to online teaching. According to the E-Learning Center at the University of Jeddah, on April 4, 2020, 29,809 students attended 1,568 online sessions, during which 614 files were shared; 4,391 tests were taken; and 7,560 discussion boards were held. This study is, therefore, driven by the need to investigate how students perceive their self-efficacy in facing this emergent transition and how those beliefs have impacted their academic achievement—particularly because perceived self-efficacy have been repeatedly associated with academic achievement across various domains and contexts.

2. Literature Review

Learning is no longer perceived as a "stage" in a person's life but, rather, as a lifelong process. This view is beginning to guide and organize the educational sector, as lifelong learning is considered a substantial tool in the hands of twenty-first century students—helping them become "capable of addressing the increasing multiplicity and integration of different modes of meaning making, where the textual relates to the visual, the audio, the spatial, and the behavioral" (Shoffner et al., 2010, p. 80). Accordingly, the role of educational settings, especially higher education, is to equip learners with the skills and attitudes essential for lifelong learning. Related to this is learners' self-efficacy, which substantially impacts research and education. Firmin and Miller (2005) assert that high motivation, a positive attitude, the capacity to appropriately handle negative feelings, and confidence in one's own capabilities to design, pursue, and successfully complete a task are necessary for lifelong learning. Academically, self-efficacy is assumed to affect learning progress either by improving it or making it lag behind (Bandura, 1984).

Conceptually, self-efficacy refers to people's beliefs in their abilities to accomplish a task successfully (Bandura, 1995). At the operational level, self-efficacy is defined as learners' perceptions of their abilities to adjust to different situations and how confident they are about organizing and putting plans into action to realize goals. It is their personal confidence about their capacity to learn. Simply put, self-efficacy, as expressed by Snyder and Lopez (2007), is what people believe they can do with their skills under various circumstances. Thus, it regulates motivation, effort, persistence, and achievement (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2008; Bandura, 1997). It is the channel between personal, behavioral, and environmental interactions during the learning process. Bandura (1997) also reports that the self-efficacy variable is a multi-dimensional concept based on: 1) magnitude, which reflects how difficult people believe their allotted tasks to be; 2) strength, which refers to people's confidence in their abilities to successfully accomplish the different components of a task; and 3) generality, which reflects the degree to which self-efficacy on one task positively relates to other tasks or domains. Theoretically speaking, Waaktaar and Torgersen (2013) maintain that people can improve their self-efficacy by observing their successes, receiving rewards and encouragement, and experiencing mastery in a given task.

Students with a stronger sense of self-efficacy challenge themselves to realize goals that are less likely to be achievable. They tend to expend more effort to meet their commitments, and, most often, they attribute their failures to personal factors under their control rather than to external factors. Self-efficacious learners are confident in their capability to control their motivation, behavior, and social environment. In fact, these inner, cognitive self-evaluations shape all their educational/learning experiences and extend to include their attainment of certain levels of behavioral performance and how much effort they apply to achieving their goals. On the other hand, learners with low levels of self-efficacy cannot manage difficulties in unexpected situations, and, thus, they discontinue learning when they feel they are unable to follow the course (Ahmad, 2013). Similarly, Heslin and Klehe (2006) argue that learners with low perceived self-efficacy tend to attribute their failures to external factors (e.g., teachers, course settings). Such a denial of responsibility, according to Heslin and Klehe (2006), prevents these

learners from having any chance of future improvement. This gap between the two categories of learners may widen or shrink if different learning modes, such as digital instruction, are introduced.

2.1 Self-Efficacy in the Online Context

Digital learning is a new paradigm in higher education, which has been gaining recognition in recent years. It has been introduced as a challenging and promising alternative to traditional teaching methods, and its effectiveness is determined by learners' levels of acceptance, adoption, and satisfaction (Saadé, 2007). These components make up learners' self-efficacy beliefs. Contrary to traditional education, "research on self-efficacy in online environments is in its infancy" (Hodges, 2008, p.10). However, with the forced closures of academic institutions due to COVID-19, e-learning has largely become the only option, which has made giving research attention to this learning mode an urgent necessity.

The present study hypothesizes that the sudden transition to online learning is affecting learners' self-efficacy beliefs. To date, research on self-efficacy and online learning has essentially focused on learners' degrees of confidence in using computers and other technology-related tools. Jan (2015) has measured American graduate students' academic and computer self-efficacy, prior experience with online learning, and satisfaction with this educational mode—finding a positive and significant relationship between the variables. Similarly, Lim (2001) and Womble (2007) cite a strong correlation between their subjects' computer self-efficacy and satisfaction. Womble (2007) goes a step further, claiming that students' self-efficacy is a determinant of their intention to take online courses in the future. It has also been demonstrated that computer literacy and familiarity with the internet impact self-efficacy. McCoy (2010) concludes that students with greater perceived self-efficacy tend to be more comfortable with online courses due to their frequent use of the computer and the internet. Karsten and Roth (1998) also report that, the higher the level of computer self-efficacy, the better the learners' performance in web-based courses. Lim (2001) has found that self-efficacy is an authentic predictor of students' satisfaction with online courses. Likewise, Bradley et al. (2018) have recently compared two groups of learners with different degrees of self-efficacy, proving that students with higher self-efficacy can accomplish online academic tasks more successfully than those with lower self-efficacy, who tend to be less successful and unable to control their e-learning.

2.2 Self-Efficacy and Academic Performance

Nasiriyan et al. (2011) argue that self-efficacy is an academic-specific domain. In other words, self-efficacy strongly relates to learners' perceptions of their own capabilities and their belief that they can accomplish a certain task. Research has demonstrated the deep control self-efficacy has over a person's thoughts, feelings, and actions. In practical terms, learners' perceptions of their own capabilities and skills, as well as the outcomes they expect from their efforts, affect, to a very large extent, their learning performance. Because they are "two important characteristics in the learning process" (Meral et al., 2012. p. 1144), self-efficacy and academic achievements have attracted attention from many authors, who, examining the relationship between them, have found that self-efficacy strongly influences academic achievements. Mousoulides and Philippou (2005), for instance, have conducted a study in Australia to determine the relationship between students' motivational beliefs/self-regulation strategies and academic achievements. They report a strong, positive correspondence between the variables and recommend training students to have high self-efficacy, which will improve their academic performance and achievements at later stages. Similarly, Pajares and Miller (1994) compare learners with high self-efficacy to their counterparts with lower perceived self-efficacy—reporting that the former develop a sense of engagement and are more likely to challenge themselves with difficult tasks. The academic performance of highly self-efficacious students improved significantly, while those with a poor level of self-efficacy exhibited low aspirations and displayed disappointing academic results. Meral et al. (2012) have studied many variables in relation to academic achievement, but they have concluded that perceived self-efficacy substantially controls learners' academic performance; no significant relationships were found for the other variables. Similarly, Honicke and Broadbent (2016) focus on how self-efficacy influences student academic performance, confirming the findings of earlier research that established a positive relationship between the variables. However, Honicke and Broadbent (2016) also add other mediating and moderating variables that enhance academic performance, including effort regulation, deeper processing strategies, and goal orientations. Motlagh et al. (2011) examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement among high school students, concluding that self-evaluation, self-direction, and self-regulation significantly correlate with academic achievement and that "self-efficacy is [also] a considerable factor" (p. 765).

Given the substantial role self-efficacy plays in improving learners' academic performance, as reported in the extant literature, the factors influencing this variable are worth investigating, with a particular focus on online learning. This will be the center of the next section.

2.3 Factors Influencing Self-Efficacy

As maintained by Bandura (1997), "self-efficacy perceptions can and do change as a result of environmental, cognitive, and behavioral effects that a person experiences in the course of everyday life" (as cited in Peechapol et al., 2018, p. 75). For instance, Kim and Park (2017) empirically confirm the hypothesis that, in the context of online learning, students' prior online experience and knowledge variables are influential factors for self-efficacy and their degree of accepting and adopting e-learning. Peechapol et al. (2018) strongly agree, affirming that "computer experience significantly affected computer self-efficacy for learners" (p. 75). Possessing the skills necessary to perform a task also increases or decreases learners' perceived self-efficacy. If learners consider their success to result from abilities they have developed, they become much more self-confident about succeeding in the same area in the future (Landry, 2003). Still another factor contributing to self-efficacy is observing others' activities. In the academic context, these "others" are social models, mainly classmates. Learners judge their own performances by their peers' work. Through these vicarious experiences, as termed by Bandura (1997), learners measure their own proficiency (Marra & Bogue, 2006).

In Saudi Arabi, after resorting to digital learning via the Blackboard platform because of COVID-19, academicians have raised other concerns about learners' self-efficacy beliefs. These concerns are the focus of the current research, which intends to answer the following questions:

1) How does Blackboard use affect Saudi learners' self-efficacy?

2) What is the relationship between Saudi learners' self-efficacy beliefs and their academic performance?

3) In the Blackboard online context, is there a significant difference between the performances of learners with high and low perceived self-efficacy?

4) What factors influence the level of Saudi learners' self-efficacy in the online context?

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects

Recruitment emails for this research were sent to all fourth-year, Saudi English majors at Jeddah University, Khulais Branch (N = 156). Of these, 90 (aged 22 to 26) responded favorably and were included in the study.

3.2 Instruments

This paper employed three data collection instruments. The first was a 15-item, seven-point Likert scale (1 = Not sure at all; 7 = Perfectly sure) online questionnaire (Appendix A), which combined aspects of topic-related scales deployed by other researchers: Bandura's (1990) scale and the Morgan–Jinks Student Efficacy Scale (MJSES) (Jinks & Morgan, 1999). These scales were adapted and abridged by the author of this paper to fit its aim. The questionnaire investigated the participants' self-efficacy beliefs towards Blackboard online learning. It contained three sections, each of which included five items and covered one of the three dimensions according to which self-efficacy varies. The first section (Magnitude) investigated the students' perceptions of how difficult the move to Blackboard online learning is; the second section (Strength) focused on the learners' beliefs about their capabilities to complete Blackboard tasks; and section three (Generality) examined the students' perceptions of the generality of a task as compared to similar tasks in their field of study.

The second instrument was the participants' final English exam. Their English language proficiencies were examined according to their performances on this exam. Choosing final exam grades to measure achievement was justified by the fact that these exams were taken on Blackboard.

The third instrument was a phone interview (Appendix B). It involved ten questions. Only the frequently recurring responses across all interviews were thematically coded and analyzed.

3.3 Procedure and Data Analysis

As mentioned above, the questionnaire was administered online. After the researcher received confirmation emails proving that the questionnaires had been completed, 20 participants were randomly selected for phone interviews to clarify the questionnaire data and to determine factors influencing the participants' self-efficacy in the online Blackboard context.

The data collected from the questionnaire and the final English exam were fed into SPSS 16.0 for analysis and to reflect on the students' answers. Cronbach's alpha, standard deviations (SDs), and means were computed. The Pearson correlation coefficient was applied to determine the relationship between the learners' self-efficacy beliefs and their language performance on Blackboard, while paired sample t-tests were conducted to investigate the effects

of high and low self-efficacy on learners' Blackboard performance. After being transcribed, the informants' frequent answers and comments during the phone interviews were thematically coded and interpreted to feed the fourth research question.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings reported in this section concern how the urgent switch to the Blackboard platform has affected Saudi learners' sense of self-efficacy. A mean score of ≤4.0 indicates a negative effect, while scores ranging from 4.1 to 7.0 signify a positive effect. The average response value for each of the questionnaire's Likert-scale statements was calculated by adding all participants' answers for each individual statement and dividing those sums by the total number of respondents (90). Self-efficacy was then measured by obtaining ratings for Magnitude, Strength, and Generality. Total scores were calculated, and the following results were found.

Table 1. Informants' Total Average Response for the Dimensions of Self-Efficacy

Dimension	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Magnitude	20	27	36	0	3	1	1
Strength	10	23	40	1	2	3	1
Generality	31	31	18	2	3	2	3

As Table 1 indicates, the total mean scores did not reach 3.0 for any of the focal self-efficacy dimensions. This signifies that the rapid, emergent transition to Blackboard online learning has negatively impacted the perceived self-efficacy of Saudi English majors, who are not yet prepared to totally switch to Blackboard. This lack of preparation may affect their self-efficacy beliefs about studying online. Almost all of the participants' average responses equal 2.7, 2.4, and 2.5 on the scale in terms of task difficulty (Magnitude), their confidence about accomplishing tasks (Strength), and Generality, respectively. These findings indicate that the Saudi learners are neither sure in their abilities to complete tasks as perfectly as possible nor well equipped with appropriate tools to perform their academic tasks. This echoes the findings of Ardito et al. (2006), who confirm that students' online readiness is key to the success of any online program. Similarly, Saadé and Kira (2009) mention a "computer phobia," which persists among university students, despite the technological boom of the last few decades, and is triggered by the current urgent move to digital learning. This, according to Saadé and Kira (2009), influences students' perceptions about how easy computer systems are to use. Likewise, McInerney et al. (1994) assert that, the more anxious students are about using computers and online learning, the lower their self-efficacy becomes. Thus, McInerney et al. (1994) conclude that "anxiety [towards using computers] predicts levels of self-efficacy, which in turn predict performance" (p. 181). The following paragraphs, therefore, focus on performance.

Table 2. Mean, Cronbach's Alpha, Standard Deviation and Correlation between Academic Self-Efficacy and Language Performance

Variable	Number of items	Mean	Cronbach's alpha	Standard deviation	N	R	P	Note
Self-efficacy	15	43.45	0.71	5.8				
					90	.227*	0.47	Sig.
Language performance	40	29.46	0.87	5.1				

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

As Table 2 displays, the author-designed questionnaire was standardized, with a reliability coefficient of 0.71, while the language performance test reliability coefficient was 0.69. The reliabilities of both instruments were valid and, thus, acceptable.

Table 2 also presents the results found after applying Pearson correlations, which indicate a positive and significant relationship between the participants' self-efficacy beliefs and language performance (r=.227*, N=90, P<.05). Thus, self-efficacy positively contributes to the Saudi learners' language performance. This finding strongly agrees with many other studies, such as that of Zajacova et al. (2005), which asserts that self-efficacy positively correlates with improved academic performance. Such performance includes all language constructs, without any empirical evidence of exceptions. Li and Wang (2010), for example, focus on reading skills and confirm that self-efficacy positively correlates with reading achievements. The same holds true for listening. Rahimi and Abedini (2009) also

show strong evidence of the positive relationship between self- efficacy and reading, and, concerning writing, Woodrow (2011) affirms that self-efficacy is predictive of learners' writing achievements.

To answer the question concerning the difference between learners with high and low perceived self-efficacy, a paired sample t-test was carried out, and the following results were obtained.

Table 3. Paired Samples T-Test for Learners with High and Low Perceived Self-Efficacy

	Mean	St. Deviation	T	df	Sig (two- tailed)
High self-efficacy language performance test scores	-3.21	5.86	1.74	10	0.039
High self-efficacy language performance test scores	5.27	8.59	-2.87	60	0.012

The total score for the self-efficacy questionnaire was 100. Students whose scores were >70 were considered to have high perceived self-efficacy, while those with scores <30 were considered to have low perceived self-efficacy. Out of the 90 participants, only ten (12%) scored >70, while 60 fell into the low self-efficacy category. The findings, as displayed in Table 3, indicate that high self-efficacy has a significant, positive effect on learners' language performance, while low self-efficacy has a significant, negative effect. These results confirm those in the previous paragraphs, which implied that Blackboard negatively influences learners' sense of self-efficacy. This leads to the question concerning what factors influence self-efficacy in the online environment, which is covered in the following paragraphs.

Concerning the factors influencing their perceived self-efficacy during the transition to online learning, respondents mentioned that they were not prepared for this urgent and sudden move. This confirms Bandura's (1997) claims that self-efficacy beliefs change because of the environmental, cognitive, and behavioral effects people experience each day. The urgent introduction of and sudden move to Blackboard incarnate the environmental factors that may influence learners' self-efficacy beliefs. The online learning environment, and Blackboard in particular, seem to be a substantial challenge as the students are suddenly moving from a highly interactive, conventional way of learning (regular English classes) to "remote," socially isolated learning, with almost no interactions. This falls in line with Cho and Jonassen (2009), who have examined the human interaction dimensions of self-regulated, online learning and found that learners' interactions are much less likely to happen as they perceive online learning to be "a dehumanized activity." Intertwined with this is the participants' lack of experience with Blackboard and with online learning in general, which withers their self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1994) calls this "mastery experience" (also called "past performance"), which summarizes learners' previous experience with similar tasks, the lack of which may negatively influence their self-efficacy beliefs about accurately performing an unfamiliar task. The informants in this study also frequently mentioned their familiarity with technology-based tools (particularly Blackboard) as influencing their perceived self-efficacy. Similar results have been found by Yokoyama (2019), who argues that learners' "familiarity with online learning devices may affect the relationship between ASE [academic self-efficacy] and academic performance in online learning settings" (p. 3).

The participants also highlighted their lack of the skills and competence required to accurately use Blackboard as being an area of weakness. This echoes Bandura's (1997) statement that those who possess the skills needed to perform a task have a high level of perceived self-efficacy, which leads to better use of cognitive resources. Bin Hasan et al. (2014) add that "people with high self-efficacy are more focused on task requirements and less distracted by performance anxiety and off-task cognitions" (p. 697). This justifies the current research splitting the Saudi learners into two groups: those with high perceived self-efficacy and their counterparts with low perceived self-efficacy.

The respondents also foregrounded the absence of their instructors as an influential variable leaving them uncertain about their abilities to use Blackboard. This withdrawal is attributed to two main factors. First, the instructors themselves are not skilled enough in using technology-based tools, which contradicts the Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SLT), introduced by Bandura (1997), on which self-efficacy is based. It emphasizes teachers' knowledge and skills, which are deemed sufficient for effectively fulfilling the tasks they are required to do. The second reason is cultural. From the perspective of this study's participants, the teachers' physical absence affected their self-efficacy beliefs. As Alrabai (2018) maintains, Saudi learners are still accustomed to a teacher-centered culture, which prevents student individualism or independence in the learning process—opposing, to a certain extent, the premise of online courses.

The fact of being "remote," as articulated by many of the respondents, is also considered a very influential factor. The respondents complained about the absence, not only of their teachers, but also of their peers, who, according to Hassan et al. (2014), "often act as a point of comparison as students form conceptions of their own academic capability" (p. 897). The subjects conveyed that comparing their performance to that of their classmates is an indicator of their proficiency in fulfilling tasks. In the online context (Blackboard, in this case), such comparison seems impossible.

5. Limitations

Before presenting the concluding remarks, it seems relevant to point out that the current results may be confounded by several issues. The literature review is linked to self-efficacy beliefs in traditional settings, since research concerning the topic in online settings is still incipient. Additionally, collecting data through online questionnaires may have affected the students' responses. The data was also collected immediately before final exams; thus, the responses may have been influenced by the respondents' emotional states. In fact, the research was conducted just as Blackboard was being introduced, which is a relatively insufficient time for the students to provide insights. Their responses may have been mere instant reflections on a new experience, subject to change over time. Accordingly, different results may have been found if the study had been conducted at a later date. One last limitation relates to the participants themselves. They all belong to the same culture. Therefore, generalizing the results to students coming from other cultures may be problematic.

6. Recommendations and Conclusion

The current findings suggest different pedagogical implications for educators hoping to produce self-efficacious English language learners. In light of the factors found to affect Saudi learners' self-efficacy, educators must increase students' self-efficacy by encouraging them to frequently use computers and take online courses. Learners should also be briefed about the importance and effectiveness of the online tools, in addition to being trained in how to use them. Students' readiness to take online courses boosts their confidence and, thus, their academic performance—the ultimate goal behind adopting any mode of learning. It is also recommended that teachers not withdraw from the online learning environment but remain present with their learners by providing support for incorporating technology to achieve instructional goals. Timing is also an influential factor. COVID-19 has made online learning and the use of Blackboard inevitable. This raises new concerns about learners' readiness to adapt to technology. Further comparable studies are needed to explore the influence of time and preferences on learners' self-efficacy beliefs in the online context.

As in many other studies, this research divided Saudi learners into two groups: those with high perceived self-efficacy and those with low perceived self-efficacy. Particular care should be given to those with low self-efficacy to help them boost their confidence. Teachers must identify the various strategies and techniques used in online environments to achieve this goal.

Though it has been proven to contribute to students' academic performance and success, self-efficacy in the digital learning context requires further investigations and deeper scrutiny, especially under the unprecedented conditions of school closures during COVID-19. Instructing learners to employ a mode of learning they do not prefer proved to be a failure. Stakeholders in the education sector should attempt to predict unprecedented circumstances and prepare learners to make adjustments. This lays the path for more research to be conducted concerning the correlation between self-efficacy, choices of learning modes, and learner preferences. Such studies may proceed with the hypothesis that, if learners are allowed to select a mode of education, they will have a higher sense of self-efficacy and, thus, experience better learning outcomes.

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Appendices

Appendix A

The Student's questionnaire

Dear students, this questionnaire has as objective to explore your self- efficacy beliefs towards online learning with a particular focus on blackboard. Kindly make sure to complete all items even if you feel that some are redundant. This may require 20-30 minutes of your time.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Instructions: Kindly tick the right number on the scale (1. Not sure at all to 7. Perfectly sure) that best reflects your belief about each of the statements in the table below.

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The level of task difficulty							
1. The blackboard is an easy way to learn the English language							
2. I view the use of Blackboard as a challenging task to master the English language							
3. I work hard to learn how to perform a task via blackboard							
4. I persist longer when I am instructed to perform a difficult task via blackboard							
5. The more difficult the task is the more engaged I become							
The strength of the belief in the ability to perform the task							
6. With the move to online learning, it is still easy for me to learn the English language							
7. Using blackboard, I still believe I have the ability to concentrate on what I do and complete it							
8. I believe with better knowledge of technology; I will manage learning the language via blackboard.							
9. I always see myself able to perform difficult tasks via blackboard							
10. I have the necessary skills to use blackboard to learn English and other subjects							
Generality of the task to similar tasks within the field of study							
11. For other subjects or university programs, I find blackboard a suitable online learning tool.							
12. As far as I am concerned, I would very likely advise others to use blackboard as an effective learning platform							
13. I feel I can manage to learn the language via blackboard better than my peers							
14. If a task is difficult to accomplish during the blackboard sessions with the teacher, I am sure I can find a strategy to perform it otherwise.							
15. Generally speaking, I am perfectly ready to use blackboard to learn the English language and other subjects							

Appendix B

The Semi- Structured Interview

1. Can you provide a definition of the self- efficacy concept?
2. Does blackboard learning make any difference in the learning process of English?
3. How does the urgent transition affect the learning process of English?
4. How does the urgent transition to online learning affect your beliefs in performing the tasks successfully?
5. What do you think the prospects of using blackboard learning on your performance in the English language are?
6. What do you think the threats of using blackboard online learning are?
7. To what extent do you feel you are a technology expert? How does this affect your capabilities to learn online?
8. To what extent do you feel technology competence affects your sense of self- efficacy?
9. What factors do you think are the most influential on self your self- efficacy beliefs in online learning?
10. What factors do you think are less likely to affect your sense of self- efficacy?