

Libyan TV-Based Distance Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Suggestions for Improvement

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Abstract

As soon as COVID-19 was confirmed a global pandemic, schools and universities around the world were forced to shift to distance learning to maintain social distancing. Likewise, the Libyan Ministry of Education aimed at mitigating the impact of COVID-19 and found alternatives to in-person lessons through recording and broadcasting lessons on television on Libyan TV channels. Current literature review shows that literature on TV-based distance education during a pandemic in the Libyan context is non-existent. Thus, the present study aimed to address this shortcoming by exploring the distance education committee's challenges. The exploratory mixed methods design was chosen as the design of the study. The context of the study is the *General Center for Training and Education Development*. The participants were 6 managers and 27 teachers. Data were collected through observations, focus group discussion, and questionnaires. The results showed that the participants encountered administrative management and leadership, personal, educational, and technical and logistical. The participants suggested providing technical support and training courses for

teachers on all distance education programs, along with other suggestions. It is expected that the findings would provide the educational TV committee with suggestions for improvement and encourage researchers to conduct further research.

Keywords: COVID-19; Educational Television; Libyan Distance Education; Television-Based Distance Education; TV-Based Distance Education Challenges.

التعليم عن بعد عبر التلفزيون الليبي في فترة جائحة كورونا: تحديات ومقترحات للتحسين

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ملخص البحث بالعربية

بمجرد التأكيد على أن كوفيد-19 وباء، اضطرت المدارس والجامعات حول العالم الى التحول للتعليم عن بعد للحفاظ على التباعد الاجتماعي. هدفت وزارة التعليم الليبية الى التخفيف من تأثير كوفيد-19 على التقدم التعليمي للمتعلمين كمثيلاتها حول العالم. ووجدت الوزارة بدائل للدروس في الفصل الدراسي من خلال تسجيل الدروس وبثها على التلفزيون في القنوات التلفزيونية الليبية. تشير مراجعتنا للدراسات السابقة الى ندرة الدراسات التي تتناول استخدام التلفزيون في التعليم عن بعد في أوقات الجائحة وخاصة في السياق الليبي. عليه هدفت هذه الدراسة الى تناول هذا القصور باستقراء آراء لجنة التعليم عن بعد باستخدام التلفزيون عن التحديات التي واجهتهم ومقترحاتهم للتطوير. تم تصميم الدراسة بالتصميم الاستكشافي المتتابع في البحث المندمج بهدف جمع البيانات النوعية والكمية للحصول على صورة دقيقة ومفصلة لآراء أعضاء اللجنة. وقد شارك في البحث 6 مديرين و 27 معلم. تم جمع البيانات من خلال الملاحظة ومجموعة نقاش مركزة والاستبانة. وأظهرت النتائج أن المشاركين واجهوا تحديات إدارية وشخصية وتعليمية وفنية ولوجستية. تضمنت اقتراحات المشاركين كطرق للتغلب على تلك التحديات تقديم الدعم الفني والمعدات المطلوبة وتقديم دورات تدريبية للمعلمين على جميع البرامج المستخدمة في التعليم عن بعد مع مقترحات أخرى. نتوقع أن توفر نتائجنا لمديري البرامج التلفزيونية التعليمية والمعلمين أفكارًا للتحسين وتشجع الباحثين على إجراء المزيد من الاختبارات الجديدة عن التلفزيون التعليمي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: كوفيد-19؛ التلفزيون التربوي؛ التعليم الليبي عن بعد؛ التعليم عن بعد القائم على التلفزيون؛ تحديات التعليم عن بعد القائم على التلفزيون.

1. Introduction

The biggest disruption to education that happened in 2020 was because of the spread of coronavirus known as COVID-19. Countries around the world were forced to school suspension as soon as the World Health Organization verified the COVID-19 a global pandemic (UNESCO, 2021). As a result, most schools and universities around the world were forced to shift to distance education.

Like other countries around the world, the Libyan Ministry of Education (MoE) decided to find alternatives to in-person classes to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on learners' educational progress and ensure social distancing for learners' safety. Thus, the ministry launched the TV-based distance education program to ensure the continuity of learners' education. A committee of managers and teachers were responsible of preparing, recording, and broadcasting lessons to Libyan primary, middle, and secondary school students to ensure the continuity of education. In this paper, the researchers discuss the results of the study that investigated the TV-based distance education committee's challenges and their suggestions for future improvements. The researchers anticipate that determining the challenges and specifying the suggestions would encourage the educational TV committee for future improvements and inspire researchers to conduct further research.

1.1 Research problem

As mentioned earlier, the spread of COVID-19 around the world forced countries to enforce mandatory quarantine, which lead ministries of education of many countries confirm schools closure to reduce the spread of infections. In-person classroom education was interrupted as schools were fully closed and then partially closed during the period between March 2020 and February 2021 (UNICEF, 2021).

UNESCO urged countries around the world to assure the continuity of education during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis (UNESCO, 2020). Countries around the world

turned to online learning, radio, television, and texting through phones to provide “access to remote learning” (World Bank, 2021). As a response, the Libyan Ministry of Education set up the TV-based distance education program that was led by the *Distance Learning Committee* of the Ministry of Education (Reliefweb, 2020). The ministry’s aim was to reach a larger number of students given the fact that television is found in most of the Libyan homes and to help students without computers and internet access to continue their study. Because of the digital divide in the Libyan culture, as access to technology varies between Libyan students (Rhema, & Miliszewska, 2012), TV-based distance education ensures the continuity of education and reaches larger number of students at “a lower cost and be more user-friendly than computers” (Santos, Vale, & Meloni, 2006, p. S1J-2). TV-based distance education also reduces the Libyan students’ risk of falling behind in their education.

As a positive and urgent action, the committee of TV-based *Distance Learning* was formed. The committee included managers and teachers who were responsible of preparing, recording, and broadcasting lessons to Libyan primary, middle, and secondary school students to ensure the continuity of education. Accordingly, in mid-March 2020, the Libyan distance learning committee started recording and broadcasting lessons on television on Libyan TV channels and electronic platforms. Four channels broadcasted the educational programs: Salam TV (قناة سلام الليبية), Libya Alahrar (قناة ليبيا الأحرار), Libya Alwataniya (قناة ليبيا الوطنية), and Libya Panorama (قناة ليبيا بانوراما).

The lessons were broadcasted either live or as recorded lessons. Libya Alahrar and Libya Alwataniya channels were responsible of broadcasting the lessons that are devoted to the preparatory and secondary certificate students. Salam TV was devoted to broadcast lessons to primary school students. Libya Panorama was devoted to broadcast lessons to 7th and 8th grade students. Libya Alwataniya was devoted to broadcast lessons to secondary school students. The lessons were broadcasted for four

hours in the mornings every day. After the holy month of Ramadan, the ministry had its own educational channel that temporarily broadcasted the lessons on Libya Sport TV (قناة ليبيا الرياضية) (General Center for Training and Education Development, 2020b).

All the preparations and recordings were done using the resources that were made available in the *General Center for Training and Education Development*. The first lessons were broadcasted on the 18th of March, 2020 (General Center for Training and Education Development, 2020b). Since Libya had problems with electricity services because of the long hours of power cuts, the recorded lessons were also shared through YouTube and another platform that was led by the ministry.

Since the whole experience of preparing and broadcasting of the lessons on TV was out of a sudden as a response to the immediate schools closure, the committee who lead this program faced several challenges, especially during power cuts. Moreover, there is a need to identify the challenges that TV-based distance education committee faced and specify the ways by which they can overcome such challenges in future similar programs. Thus, this study was conducted to identify those challenges to improve the program's efficiency in delivering lessons that are aired through television.

1.2 Research questions

This study aimed to explore the Libyan TV-based distance education committee member's views on the challenges they faced during the preparation and broadcast of the lessons and their suggestions on how to overcome such challenges in similar future projects. Two research questions were raised to achieve this aim, which are:

1. What challenges did the Libyan TV-based distance education committee face during the preparation and broadcast of the lessons?
2. How can the Libyan TV-based distance education committee overcome such challenges for future improvements?

1.3 Research objectives

In this study, the researchers sought to contribute to research on TV-based distance education challenges in the Libyan context. The researchers intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. Determine the challenges the Libyan TV-based distance education committee faced during the preparation and broadcast of the lessons.
2. Identify ways by which the Libyan TV-based distance education committee can overcome and eliminate those challenges in the future projects.

1.4 Review of literature

Distance education, also known as distance learning, refers to education that is provided to learners who are not required to be physically present at their schools or universities. Saykili (2018) conducted a critical comparison of earlier definitions of distance education and provided a new definition that took all the pitfalls he discussed in his argument into consideration. Saykili (2018) defined distance education as:

a form of education which brings together the physically-distant learner(s) and the facilitator(s) of the learning activity around planned and structured learning experiences via various two or multi-way mediated media channels that allow interactions between/among learners, facilitators as well as between learners' and educational resources (p. 5).

Distance education firstly emerged as education by correspondence and then, over time, new forms emerged with the use of telegraph, radio, television, and online learning after the spread of computer-based communication technologies (Delmac, 2020). As there are different types of distance education, this research focuses on TV-based distance education.

Television is considered as one of the televisual models of distance education (Burns, 2011). TV-based or television-based distance education, also known as educational TV, is the use of television to broadcast educational content. It has been used to provide “high-quality content” to students as well as to pre-service and in-service teachers (Burns, 2011, p. 32). It can be considered as the best type of technology that offers students with “equal opportunities” for learning (Saglik & Ozturk, 2001, p. 74).

Because of its “tremendous reach,” television has become the most “familiar and engaging visual medium” (Burns, 2011, p. 32). Since its inclusion as an educational medium, television has been playing a “unique role” in distance education because of “its distinctive delivery, presentational, and control characteristics” (Bates, 1988, p. 213). TV-based distance education provided by the British Open University and the second language programs produced by TV Ontario have shown the effectiveness of such programs in achieving their educational goals (Bates, 1988; Moeller, 1996).

Television broadcast has been used as an educational content delivery medium in many countries for years now. Countries, such as South Africa, Mexico, and China, have been using TV to expand educational opportunities, to reach out of school youth, to save the problem of teacher shortage, and to ensure the continuity of education during a crisis (Ivala, 2004; Rhema & Miliszewska, 2012). Since it is considered as a low-cost alternative education, TV-based distance education was chosen as an alternative to conventional education delivery (Ivala, 2004). Researchers assured the significance of developing TV-based distance education programs, especially for developing countries as such programs provide wide and fair educational opportunities for students in remote areas and post-crisis countries (Moeller, 1996; Ivala, 2004; Rhema & Miliszewska, 2012). Using TV-based distance education as one of the “solutions is a powerful way to bridge the digital divide in the education sector and reach the most marginalised learners” (UNESCO, 2020).

An example of a successful TV-based distance education is found in Mexico, which is known as Telesecundaria. Telesecundaria has been in operation since 1968 broadcasted by Mexico’s Ministry of Public Education for secondary and high school students to serve rural communities (Calderoni, 1998). It is considered as “an innovative and well-managed program, geared to the poor” (Castro, Wolff & García, 1999, p. 29). Telesecundaria “offers the same curriculum found in traditional schools” through lessons as “televised segments” that are broadcasted twice a day, student-led self-study by using “specifically-designed textbooks”, and teacher-led discussions (Calderoni, 1998, p. 2).

Television is also used as a medium for distance education during virus outbreaks as TV was used to deliver lessons to students as a response to schools closure. For instance, in 2014, the Ebola virus hit Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone that lead to school system shut down to eliminate the spread of the virus (World Vision, 2015). To minimize the impact of schools closure on students’ education, Sierra Leone’s Ministry of Education provided educational programs on the national television and 41 community radio stations (World Vision, 2015). Correspondingly, as a response to schools closure during the COVID-19 viral outbreak, many countries turned to television to ensure the continuity of education and to provide access to education for all students. For instance, in Mozambique, students follow the Telescola television programs transmitted by the national TV station TVM every day (Faurelle, 2020). Similarly, in Turkey, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) decided to use two forms of distance education to ensure the continuity of education via its online platform-EBA and the national television channel TRT (Ozer, 2020). Taking into account the Turkish students’ digital competence level differences, three different Turkish channels were responsible for broadcasting programs for primary, early secondary, and secondary school students to ensure fair educational assess to all students (Ozer, 2020; Yucesoy-Ozkan, *et al.*, 2020). The Turkish students were able to

determine the time of their courses by following the schedule that was available and by having same content broadcasted twice a day (Yucesoy-Ozkan, et al., 2020).

1.4.1 Previous studies

Research on the challenges that those who are involved in the production and broadcast of TV-based educational programs face seems to be scarce as most of the current studies were concerned with online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Only two studies were relevant to this study's objectives, which were conducted in Germany and Turkey.

Misra (2010) conducted a study that aimed analyze the TV broadcasting in Germany from different perspectives, among which were the existing challenges. In his paper, Misra discussed four challenges that were in program production, popularity and usability, legal issues, and internet broadcasting. He suggested that countries who are broadcasting lessons through TV should consider Germany's "key adoptable policies" which he identified as program production policies, program promotion policies, and program dissemination practices (p. 9).

In his study, Osmanoglu (2020) explored the views of Turkish social studies teachers on TV-based distance learning that was applied in Turkey during COVID-19 pandemic. He interviewed 10 social studies teachers using the snowball sampling method. The findings showed that the social studies teachers' opinions on educational television in general were positive. They thought that the training settings and the presenting teachers were accurately chosen and that the plan of the lesson flow was well-prepared. There was dissatisfaction with how the teachers gave their presentations by looking at a paper or the screen.

Even though broadcasting lessons through TV is not a new practice in Libya (General Center for Training and Education Development, 2020b), research on TV-based distance education in the Libyan context can be considered as non-existent. It

seems that the two studies tackled the challenges from different perspectives and there is a need for a study that investigates the views of the managers and teachers who were involved in the process of teaching and recording of the televised lessons. Thus, the current study fills a gap and contributes to the existing literature in other contexts by exploring the Libyan TV-based distance education committee's views on the challenges they faced during the preparation and broadcast of the lessons and their suggestions to overcome such challenges in similar future projects.

2. Methodology

This exploratory sequential mixed methods study aimed to explore the challenges faced by the Libyan TV-based distance education committee during the preparation and broadcast of the lessons on the Libyan TV channels. This design was chosen to facilitate triangulation and gather a more detailed and accurate data on the committee's challenges and their suggestions on how to avoid them for future improvements. Through this design, data collection and analysis were in three phases: initial qualitative data collection and analysis phase, followed with the quantitative data collection and analysis phase, and ended with the phase of linking the two strands of data (Pardede, 2018). The results from the first phase were used to build the second stage of the research design, i.e., the questionnaire.

2.1 Context of the study.

The context of the study is the *General Center for Training and Education Development* located in Tripoli, Libya. The center that was established in 2006 is concerned with improving the quality of education as well as raising the level of performance of teachers, educational inspectors, administrators, technicians, and all those who are involved in education. Thus, one of the responsibilities of the center was the TV-based distance education program.

2.2 The participants

The target population of this research was the TV-based distance education committee that consisted of the managers, schoolteachers, educational inspectors, faculty members, teacher trainers, and experts. In this paper, all the schoolteachers, educational inspectors, faculty members, teacher trainers, and experts will be called as teachers as they are the ones who delivered the lessons.

The participants were 6 managers and 27 teachers. The managers were the head of the committee, two observational and mentoring supervisors, and 3 committee members who didn't specify their exact roles. The teachers were 12 schoolteachers, 6 educational inspectors, 4 faculty members, 2 teacher trainers, 1 educational expert, 1 Arabic language expert, and 1 Head of the Fine Arts department. The researchers themselves were part of this project and took part in the study as observers.

2.3 Data collection

Data were gathered through observation, focus group discussion, and questionnaires. Data collection and analysis procedures began by gathering qualitative data collection through observations and then focus group discussions. Observation gave the researchers the chance to gather data through their “direct contact in the setting” (Mertens, 2010, p. 370). “Participant as observer” type of observation was the role of the researchers to “gain insider views and subjective data” (Creswell, 2013, p. 167) because they were taking part of the TV-based distance education lessons. Focus group discussions are considered as “group interviews” in which researchers rely on interactions (Mertens, 2010). This interaction showed the researchers the type of challenges the committee faced and helped in designing the questionnaire questions.

The following stage was gathering the quantitative data through questionnaires that were designed according to the results of the qualitative data analysis. Two types of the questionnaires were designed: managers' questionnaire and teachers'

questionnaire. Both questionnaires were checked for content validity by three teacher-educators from the Faculty of Education Tripoli. Taking into account all the suggestions and changes, the final form of the questionnaire included four categories: demographic information, the committee's challenges, the committee's suggestions, and the committee's evaluation of the experience. The challenges category included a section for close-ended questions and another for the open-ended question. The suggestions category included an open-ended question. The reliability of the questionnaire was 0.80, which is good. The questionnaires were designed in Arabic using Google Forms. They were distributed through emails and the committee's group on Viber from 28/12/ 2020 to 15/1/2021.

2.4 Data analysis.

As this study is designed as qualitative-dominant mixed methods, iterative sequential mixed analysis was utilized. As mentioned earlier, data analysis was in three phases. The analysis procedure began with initial qualitative data analysis, followed with the quantitative data analysis, and ended integrating and linking all the analyzed data.

The qualitative data analysis began with a line-by-line reading and memoing and a thematic inductive approach (Coffy & Atkinson, 1996). The quantitative data was analyzed using the Arab Processor in Social Statistics (APSS). In the final phase, the analysis was done to combine and integrate the qualitative and quantitative results to be presented as the study findings, which are discussed in the following sections in narrative thematic order.

3. Results

To investigate the challenges the Libyan TV-based distance education committee faced while they prepared and broadcasted the lessons and their suggestions on overcoming such challenges for future improvements, two research questions were

raised. Data analysis indicated that there was an overall satisfaction among the managers regarding the experience of preparing and broadcasting of the lessons. However, the teachers' views varied as 73.10% of the teachers had positive views regarding the experience of preparing and broadcasting the lessons, whereas 18.5 percent of them were neutral. Only two of the teachers had negative views about the experience as they showed dissatisfaction by choosing "Totally dissatisfied". When the committee members were asked to evaluate their performance in the experience of recording and broadcasting of the educational lessons, most of the managers were satisfied whereas 77.7% of the teachers were satisfied with their performance. Five of the teachers were not satisfied (18.5%). Only one manager and one teacher chose to be neutral. Teachers' dissatisfaction might be a result of the fact that the experience of standing in front of the camera and delivering lessons was the first-time experience for seven of the teachers.

Data analysis revealed that the Libyan TV-based distance education committee faced five types of challenges: administrative, personal, educational, technical and logistical, and management and leadership challenges. Data analysis uncovered eight suggestions that were proposed by the committee members. The following sections include a discussion of the findings.

3.1 TV-based distance education committee's challenges.

The first research question enquired about the Libyan TV-based distance education committee's challenges that they faced while they prepared and broadcasted the lessons. Data showed that the TV-based distance education committee encountered administrative, management and leadership challenges, personal challenges,

educational challenges, and technical and logistical challenges, which are briefly discussed in the following sections.

3.1.1 Administrative, management and leadership challenges.

Data analysis showed that the administrative challenges the committee faced are the availability of resources and the lack of training courses. Nearly 83% of the managers and nearly 60% of the teachers reported lack of the required resources as the main challenge that affected the progress of the work. One teacher mentioned the limited number of cameras and camera men as one major challenge that had an impact on the progress of the work and some teachers had to wait for their turn. Another challenge that was reported by the teachers is the lack of training courses as more than sixty-five percent of the teachers admitted that not providing training courses on the programs they used during the preparation and broadcast of the lessons impacted their proficiency in getting the work done.

Time management issues were reported by managers and teachers. The unexpected absences of the teachers caused some management issues as in some days the managers had to fill gaps in live broadcast hours because of the unexpected absence. Teachers reported that the managers sometimes had to make sudden changes in the recording timetable to accommodate certain teachers circumstances, which affected some other teachers timetable. In addition, some teachers reported that there were issues in managing effective communication without giving specific details.

3.1.2 Personal challenges.

Data analysis showed lack of experience as the main personal challenge. Teachers reported being inexperienced in distance education programs, in preparing the PowerPoint (PPT) slides, and in standing in front of the cameras as their personal challenges. Forty-five percent of the teachers reported that they lacked experience in distance education programs whereas thirty-three percent of them reported not having

any challenges with such programs. Five percent of the teachers chose not to be specific by choosing being “neutral”. With regard to challenges in using PPT, 58.12% of the teachers reported not finding preparing PPT slides as challenging unlike 36.10% of them who reported finding the preparation of the PPT slides as challenging. Finally, more than half of the teachers found standing in front of the cameras challenging. Only 28.16% of the teachers reported not finding standing in front of the cameras as challenging.

3.1.3 Educational challenges.

Lack of direct interaction with students, absence of feedback giving opportunities, absence of diversity in teaching methods, amount of work compared to in-class teaching, and reducing the teachers’ role to delivering lessons only were the educational challenges that were reported by the teachers and the managers. Teachers complained of not having the opportunity for students and teachers to directly interact with each other. This absence of interaction resulted in having no opportunities for teachers to follow up on students’ work and to give them feedback. The teachers also considered the absence of diversity in teaching methods and approached as most of them followed the same method, which is preparing PPT slides and giving explanations or writing on the white board/smart board while explaining the lesson. In addition, they regarded this way of teaching as a drawback as it reduced their roles to lesson delivery. Finally, nearly all the teachers complained from the amount of work they have done compared to the traditional way of teaching.

3.1.4 Technical and logistical challenges.

Data analysis revealed some technical and logistical challenges, which are summarized as frequent power cuts and internet connection issues. Managers and teachers were unanimous in that low speed and quality of internet connection and the outage that usually lasts more than 3 hours were the regular daily challenges that

affected their work and progress. One teacher stated that work on preparing PPT slides usually gets interrupted because of the sudden and continuous power cuts. The researchers themselves faced this challenge that affected the quality of some of the PPT slides that are used to explain the lessons.

3.2 TV-based distance education committee's suggestions.

The second research question explored the Libyan TV-based distance education committee's suggestions on how to overcome the challenges with the aim of improving similar future projects. Accordingly, an open-ended question was included to the questionnaire to encourage the participants propose their suggestions. Data revealed ten suggestions, which are discussed in the following sections.

3.2.1 Provide training courses.

All teachers and managers assured the significance of training courses to the success of future similar projects and urged for providing training courses on programs that are required in distance education. The MoE should provide a wide range for training programs and courses, such as lesson delivery skills in TV-based distance education, communication skills, and technological training.

3.2.2 Build trust with students, parents, and communities.

Most of the teachers suggested building trust by maintaining contact with students, parents, and school communities. They also suggested advertising about the program regularly to raise awareness about the program and build trust. In addition, they suggested showing the students, parents, and school communities that the program cares about their opinions and that the program is for them and therefore their suggestions are respectfully welcomed.

3.2.3 Offer learning resources that match the curriculum

All teachers suggested offering learning resources that match the curriculum to students find more relevant activities. They suggested selecting the resources that meet the students need and facilitate learning. They asserted that the program should provide students with essential activities that would bring the classroom home.

3.2.4 Provide the necessary equipment and sources.

Most of the teachers assured the significance of providing the needed tools to perform effectively. They necessitated providing the devices, equipment, and the resources that are needed to deliver a successful lesson and then broadcast a successful educational program.

3.2.5 Have a well-thought plan and broadcasting schedule.

More than half of the teachers suggested having a well-thought plan for preparing and recording the videos. They also suggested having a well-thought broadcasting schedule as the complained from the unorganized recording and broadcasting schedules. A well-thought and articulated strategy will lead to more organized work and therefore high-quality videos.

3.2.6 Have enough time for preparation.

Nearly all teachers complained about not having enough time for preparation as they had to prepare their content and videos in a specific and limited time frame. They suggested having enough time for content and video preparation in future projects. They believed that the more time the teachers spend in planning and preparing the content of the videos, the better the results will be as they can achieve producing high quality work.

3.2.7 Form committees to review videos before broadcasting them.

Most of the managers suggested forming committees to review the pre-recorded lessons before they are broadcasted to ensure the quality of the content and the videos. Forming quality assurance committees that include specialists and experts to review content and video quality will eliminate the chances of making mistakes or broadcasting low quality videos.

3.2.8 Devote specific educational TV channels led by the Libyan MoE.

All teachers suggested devoting specific educational TV channels to broadcast the lessons that should be led by the Libyan Ministry of Education. They also suggested having three different channels that should be dedicated for primary, middle, and secondary school students so that they can follow their lessons easily. Finally, they suggested that the channels should broadcast lessons 24 hours all weekdays so that students who have missed lessons because of power cuts have opportunities to watch them.

3.2.9 Activate the educational platform and provide chances for interaction.

Most of the managers and teachers suggested creating an educational platform that would give schoolteachers and students alike access to resources and give them the chance for personalized learning that is similar to classroom learning. They also suggested creating these platforms for giving the students chances for interaction. They also suggested using the available applications, such as Google Forms, to gather students' inquiries and respond to them.

3.2.10 Establish specific and clear criteria for choosing the volunteering teachers.

Half of the managers suggested establishing specific and clear criteria for choosing the volunteering teachers. They encouraged the MoE to develop a teacher

volunteer recruitment plan with specified standards that are made public by being published on the ministry's page.

4. Discussion

In this study, the researchers sought to determine the challenges the Libyan TV-based distance education committee faced while they prepared and broadcasted the lessons. The committee faced administrative management and leadership, personal, educational, and technical and logistical challenges. The results are not surprising. These challenges were a result of the sudden shift into distance education through television while the country is going through power cuts crisis during the viral outbreak of COVID-19. The findings show that even though the managers and teachers faced those challenges, they were satisfied with the whole experience and their own contributions in the success of the program as individuals. The problem the researchers faced is that they were not able to locate more than 2 studies that investigated the type of challenges those who are involved in TV-based distance education encounter. So, it was difficult to relate and compare this study's findings to other research findings.

Data also showed that limited funding and resources is not just a Libyan challenge, as Misra (2010) discussed the limited funds for the German educational TV and stated that it “continues to decline” (p. 8) and compares it to Switzerland because that latter expanded funds to school TV Programs. Thus, MoE should take into consideration providing increasing its funds and resources for the future of TV-based distance education programs.

Teachers reported one of the disadvantages of TV-based distance education in that it lacks interaction. Interaction is vital for learning as learning happens through students' participation. Teachers also reported having no opportunity for students to ask questions and for teachers to give feedback as other disadvantages of the TV-based distance education. Thus, in future TV-based distance education programs, the Libyan

MoE should consider the three types of interaction in distance education, which Moore (1989, 2013) identified as student-to-content interaction, student-to-student interaction, and student-to-teacher interaction.

Successful *student-to-content interaction*, which is self-learning with materials, can be achieved by providing specifically designed materials or textbooks that accompany the broadcasted lessons to facilitate learning (Calderoni, 1998). When it comes to student-to-student interaction, there are mixed findings. In some studies, findings showed that students preferred interaction with their course instructors. Student-to-teacher interaction was acknowledged as the most beneficial interaction whereas student-to-student interaction was considered as minimally important (Kelsey and D'souza, 2004; Chapman and Henderson, 2010). Moore, Warner, and Jones (2016) found that all the graduate students did not support student-to-student interaction in distance education classes. However, it seems vital to provide TV-based distance education students with opportunities for student-student interaction through online group discussions, via social media, or a ministry-led platform as some students might enjoy online discussion and benefit from them (Cukurbasi & Kiyici, 2018). Student engagement can also be achieved by using applications that allow students to send questions, such as Google Forms. The ministry could also have a mobile number(s) so that students text their questions or inquiries. Another option is in having online teacher-student discussion where students can get direct feedback on their work or questions. Finally, as the teachers complained that their role was limited to content delivering, having chances of interaction and feedback giving will minimize such feelings.

The study also aimed to identify the committee's suggestions on overcoming such challenges for future improvements. Taking into account all the suggestions that were proposed by the TV-based distance education committee members who took part in this study will definitely bring the program forward to a more successful educational

experiences for students. TV-based distance education is not new in the Libyan context (General Center for Training and Education Development, 2020b) and might be a viable alternative during war or a pandemic crisis (Ivala, 2004; Rhema & Miliszewska, 2012). The TV-based distance education program's success in the future depends on several improvements among which: broadcasting lessons on channels led by the Libyan MoE, giving detailed timetables that are shared to students in advance, advertising the program more often so that students and parents understand the goals of such program and benefit from it. Finally, the Libyan MoE, more specifically, the Distance Learning Committee, should consider other countries' experiences, especially those countries that have been offering TV-based distance education for years. This will not only give the chance to learn from other countries experiences, but also to improve the Libyan policies regarding distance learning.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In this paper, the researchers discussed the results of an exploratory sequential mixed methods. They investigated the challenges faced by the Libyan TV-based distance education committee and their suggestions for avoiding the mentioned challenges for future improvements. Even though the participants showed their satisfaction with the whole experience of preparing, recording, and broadcasting of the lessons, the managers and teachers reported that they faced the previously mentioned challenges because of the sudden involvement with such project without having enough time for preparation. The researchers believe that identifying the challenges and following the suggestions will help the distance Learning Committee in improving future similar programs.

To the best of the researchers' knowledge, there has been no study conducted on the challenges the managers and teachers who are involved in preparing, recording, and broadcasting of the lessons. Thus, the main limitation of the study is the availability of relevant literature. There were so limited studies with direct relevance to the

challenges encountered by those who are involved in TV-based distance education. This is considered as a limitation as the basis for literature review is understanding and citing prior research to reach and understanding of the investigated problem and identify the gap and how the study contributes to fill it.

Future research might explore the students' and parents' awareness of the significance of TV-based distance education to ensure the continuity of education during a pandemic crisis. It might also investigate the Libyan students' access to educational television programs. Interested researchers might also investigate the problems the students encounter while studying through TV-based distance education. Finally, as this study's participants included those who were involved in the program itself, future research might examine the schoolteachers' and educational inspectors' views and attitudes towards TV-based distance education.

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