Eurasian Journal of Educational Research 95 (2021) 1-16

Eurasian Journal of Educational Research
www.ejer.com.tr

Investigating the Attitudes and Practices of ELT Teachers in UTASA towards Professional Development for Online Learning*

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:
Received: 10 December 2020
Received in revised form: 17 March 2021
Accepted: 10 May 2021
DOI: 10.14689/ejer.2021.95.1

Keywords
COVID-19, CPD, ELT, Online Teaching, UTASA

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Due to the emergent COVID situation, the teachers of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences- Al- Musanna, Oman (UTASA) had to abruptly switch over to online teaching platforms like Microsoft Teams. They encountered unexpected challenges. This research study aimed to survey the opinions of ELT teachers in UTASA to cope up with such an unanticipated mode of study. The specific objective of this study was to investigate the attitudes and practices of ELT Teachers in UTASA towards professional development during emergency situations like the COVID-19. **Research Methods:** This study adopted a quantitative research design to reach the intended population in the University of Technology and Applied Sciences- Al- Musanna, Oman (UTASA). A questionnaire tool, Attitude and Practices Scale for Professional Development, was prepared for this study to elicit information about participants' attitudes and practices of towards professional development for online learning. **Findings:** The results of the study found no remarkable consistency in the surveyed teachers' thoughts and reflections regarding their attitudes. While some opted for more CPD opportunities, others believed that significant administrative challenges- including time and workload- were the hindrance. **Implications for Research and Practice:** The abrupt shift to online teaching showed that teachers in UTASA needed professional development as a few teachers faced challenges to cope with such changes. The continuous professional development (CPD) therefore would therefore benefit ELT teachers in such abrupt transitions of the teaching mode. CPD courses would also open new horizons for the ELT teachers and take them a step ahead of merely learning about teaching methodology.

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Introduction

The global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has proved how the world is interconnected as a global village. It is believed that after the COVID era, 'epistemological consequences' shall yield on higher education by empowering bio-digital science and knowledge (Barnett, 2020). To prove this point, several researches have stressed upon the need to integrate technology into Teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD), which has been recognized as a process of keeping a track of learning and development of teachers and documenting their skills, knowledge and experience as they acquire them through formal and informal methods, more often while they teach, akin to on-the-job training. The adoption of online teaching methods at the outset impacted students' performance in both summative and formative assessment and posed further challenges in learning. From the ELT teacher's point of view, too, there were some exceptional challenges faced by a few of them in in utilizing the online teaching platforms. These exceptional situations are worth investigating because the majority of educational institutions and teachers are underprepared for the surprising changes and challenges encountered as this emergency remote teaching is far different from regular online learning (Hodges, 2020, March 27).

This paper aims to survey and investigate the attitude and practices adopted by the ELT teachers to address the challenges of online teaching posed by the COVID situation. It also attempted to diagnose the attitudes of the UTASA leadership in providing CPD in ELT as a proactive measure to cope up with the 21st-century teaching challenges (during and after COVID-19). The study also recommends to open horizons and wider scopes for emphasizing and expanding CPD for UTASA teachers while recommending other suitable issues for further research. One of the limitations of this study was that it confined to the teachers' perspective sand did not study those of students and leaders. The significance of this study lies in the fact that it would reveal the extent to which ELT teachers are trained in online teaching and whether they require any in-service training or CPD to deliver their classes effectively. The practical implications include the valuable feedback conveyed to the administration to tackle such concerns and act accordingly. The findings of this research would also benefit higher educational institutions (HEIs) who could include CPD in their teaching improvement and professional development plans, both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Statement of the Problem

Having been confronted with the COVID-19 pandemic, a majority of educational institutions including at tertiary education level had to adapt to online mode of teaching whilst achieving the same learning outcomes (Hashmi et al., 2021; Jena, 2020). Online mode of teaching was a kind of mandate of the pandemic to most ELT Teachers at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences- Al- Musanna, Oman (UTASA). Though acquiring online teaching skills was a part of CPD, it still proved an exceptional and challenging experience for many of them. As ELT teachers, they had

although attended short-term refresher training courses offering them hands-on training in online teaching, and therefore they could grasp a little how to utilize MS Teams as the formal medium of instruction in the UTASA. The process was not so simple nor free from constraints and resistance. This situation was rightly a milestone in the evolution of CPD and required innovation in facilitating and providing online training to faculty to cope up with the 21st century challenges (Al-Habsi, 2021).

Setting learning outcomes in face-to-face ELT is different when online mode is adopted in pedagogical situations (Castle et al., 2010) because instructional approaches need to be adjusted or introduced accordingly (Atmojo et al., 2020). In the COVID situation, therefore, the real challenge with UTASA ELT teachers has been to achieve the same learning outcomes without any change in the teaching methodologies, assessment tasks and assessment criteria as is used to be prior to shifting to online teaching. It is also imperative that a few teachers attain professional development and skills to match with the challenges of the new times. A need was therefore felt to survey the ELT teacher's attitudes and practices towards professional development for online learning in UTASA. This study will fill this gap.

Literature Review

Technological communication has enabled online instruction or distant teaching by introducing adapting interactive systems and numerous online applications (Moore et al., 2011). Before initiating any online courses, instructional designers and academic leaders need to consider some important factors in order to achieve the intended learning outcomes. These factors include "structure of course delivery, teacher-student communication, appropriate assignments and activities that are conducive to online learning, and effective use of online resources …which accommodate student learning styles" (Richmond et al., 2005). This cannot be mastered unless teachers are trained proficiently to utilize online teaching besides their pedagogical theories in their subject to shift their traditional practices into technological practices efficiently. How teachers perceive themselves while shifting from face-to-face to Online and Blended Learning (OBL) is the biggest challenge (Christina et al., 2016).

Such a sudden and abrupt switchover to online teaching also affects ELT teaching as online parameters, protocols and even expectations are different from onsite teaching. Shifting from face-to-face to online teaching, therefore, needs to be planned thoroughly in advance; however, this was not the case during this transition due to COVID-19 emergency where many educational institutions globally had to stop abruptly their physical face-to-face education without adequate prior preparations (UNESCO, 2020, March 24). It was a situation like being between the hammer and the anvil, and ELT teachers had to comply with the decisions taken by their educational institutional leadership. In such a situation, the need was to seek the best practices of CPD and avail any opportunities therein (Williamson et al., 2020).

When the pandemic drove in, the educators in Oman accepted the need to incorporate E-learning into teaching but a few were still doubtful about the assessment

and comparability of standards of face-to-face teaching compared to online (Demiray, 2010). Higher education institutions in Oman were officially encouraged to utilize technology (e.g., Moodle) besides regular face-to-face mode (Syahrin, 2020). E-learning was introduced a quite long time ago as a part of teaching practice at UTASA, therefore, in the current situation, teachers immediately viewed the use of E-learning as complementary. They knew that instructional design and pedagogy in any academic institution play a vital role in establishing a teaching and learning environment (Anderson, 2008). Therefore, it was a vital period for them to implement e-learning modes fully in the Omani HEIs and also simultaneously provide an evidence of their capability and skills to use the technological devices with full ease and autonomy (Hart et al., 2019).

Prior to the COVID outbreak, the Sultanate of Oman Educational Council had put a long-term plan called "The National Strategy for Education 2040" which aimed to prepare highly qualified undergraduates to compete with international standards by regulating education closely and overcoming challenges effectively (Slimi, 2020). Recently, the Economist Intelligence Unit (2020) of the Omani government questioned whether HEIs in Oman were delivering education in proper channels and methodologies ideal for students and their guardians. This question was echoed in an investigational study (Saini et al., 2019), which concluded that Omani HEIs were not highly equipped with technological infrastructure despite the availably of new technical devices. They also found that both teachers and students were willing to utilize online tutoring, but the leadership was not providing necessary incentives and facilities.

Syahrin (2020), too, found that the adopted strategies to provide online teaching were although in line with students' expectations, but students preferred individual work. Being passive recipients, students were against online group work and thus a few students expected ELT teachers to be more creative in online teaching (Syahrin, 2020). Despite the availability of CPD for a few ELT teachers, delivering online teaching requires adoption and implementation of some basic strategies (Philipsen et al., 2019). In other words, an institution may provide CPD for the target teachers, but several other factors need to be considered before and after the conduct of online teaching.

The CPD for ELT teachers has been researched intensively, approached differently and defined diversely (Evans, 2014). CPD is defined as "the process whereby people's professionalism may be considered to be enhanced, with a degree of permanence that exceeds transitoriness" (Evans, 2014). Christina et al. (2016) assert that the CPD in the current scenario should be approached properly to achieve 'professionalism' because shifting from face-to-face to online teaching needs more than mere online uploading of the course material. They believed that sudden shifts can lead teachers to perceive themselves differently and disturb their professional identities and characters. This shift does not only affect their self-perception but also can change attitudes and practices towards their profession that can lead them to change their pedagogy (Redmond, 2011).

Wolf (2006) argues that it is not good to assume that teachers who are successful in face-to-face mode can similarly perform well when they shift to online teaching. This is due to many factors such as lack of structured support and the state-of-the-art infrastructure in many educational institutions nor can they provide systematic training to teachers on how to utilize technology properly to create interactive online learning and teaching (Archambault et al., 2016). Teachers therefore need to work beyond their work hours during the pandemic in order to equip themselves with the skills to use the online tools to deliver a comprehensible class (Rapanta et al., 2020).

Method

Research design

The study used a quantitative research design. utilizing a questionnaire related to teachers' online teaching experiences in the previous semester (Semester one) and the current one (Semester two). A three-point Likert scale was utilized for this closed study.

Research Sample

The research sample was identified using a purposive sampling method. A sample of seventy-five (75) teachers of the English Language Center in UTASA, Al- Musanna, Oman was identified. However, the responses were received form only 50 teachers. Hence, the sample size was 50 respondents.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Respondents were approached through an online questionnaire The questionnaire comprised 30 questions (28 closed-ended and 2 open-ended questions). The items were measured through a three-point Likert scale. Out of the seventy-five (75) questionnaires mailed, only 52 were returned by the respondents. However, two of them were incomplete, so they were discarded.

Data Analysis

Statistical calculations were made utilizing the SPSS program, version 25. The mathematical averages were calculated in order to determine the standard deviations practices of ELT teachers in UTASA towards professional development for online learning. Cronbach Alpha and Pearson Correlation Coefficient for measuring the validity of the items of the instrument were also carried out. Insights were driven from R.C. Gardner et al. (1985) R. C Gardner (2004) International Attitude Test Battery which contains quantitative surveys on language attitudes. In developing the instrument of this study, various other instruments used in previous and similar studies (Almahmoud, 2012; Denman, 2014) were referred. Eventually, Attitude and Practices Scale for Professional Development was finally prepared for this study to elicit information about participants' attitudes and practices of towards professional development for online learning.

Results

Demographic characteristics

The questionnaire comprised three questions related to the participants' gender, highest qualification and years of experience to elicit their demographic information. The responses of the demographic questions are illustrated in Table 1:

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Gender (n=50)		
Male	32	64%
Female	18	36%
Highest qualification (n=50)		
Bachelor's	4	8%
Master	38	76%
PhD	8	16%
Years in ELT Experience (n=50)		
Less than 10 years	17	34%
10 to 20 years	22	44%
More than 20 years	11	22%

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Validity and reliability are two fundamental criteria for evaluating the quality and veracity of research instruments. While validity estimates the robustness of a research tool, the extent to which the results can be generalized, the reliability ensures consistency of the research data and their findings (Dörnyei, 2007). The questionnaire was field-tested by distributing to a sample of 12 respondents who shared similar characteristics with the study participants. This pilot attempt was to make sure the comprehensibility and feasibility of the questions. The generated data was subjected to exploratory factor analysis for conceptual and theoretical validation, while Cronbach alpha method was employed to examine its reliability.

Component Factor analysis and correlation

The Component factor analysis (CFA) was used in this study to reduce the questionnaire items (Bartholomew et al., 2011) and to determine the extent to which responses to the items of the questionnaire draft are linked to attitude and ELT practices and justify the concepts that are designed to measure (Phakiti et al., 2018). Along with CFA, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity are also recommended to verify the adequacy of the sample size and to ascertain that there is at least one significant correlation between two items respectively. These two

preconditions are necessary to verify before a factor analysis is considered valid (Yong et al., 2013).

All the questionnaire scales had values higher than the set KMO benchmark of 0.5 and p values less than the Bartlett's test of sphericity benchmark of 0.05 (see Table 2). The CFA was set at 0.60 which implies that any items that failed to meet this benchmark should be expunged from the questionnaire list. Six items had failed to meet this benchmark and they were subsequently deleted to get the final 28-item list. The reliability estimate was also measured with Nunally criterion of 0.70. All the items returned reliability alpha scores higher than the Nunally criterion. The KMO test of sampling adequacy, Bartlett's test of sphericity and Cronbach alpha results for the items in Attitude and Practices Scale for Professional Development are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Psychometric Properties of Questionnaire Instrument

Scale/ tool	**Items Deleted**	**Items Retained**	**KMO (benchmark = 0.5)**	**Bartlett's Test (p<0.05)**	**Cronbach Alpha (Nunally Criterion = 0.7)**
Attitude and Practices Scale for Professional Development	6	28	0.686	X2 =527.116 p = 0.000	0.728

The reliability coefficient value listed for all 28 instrument items was measured using the Pearson as a whole (Table 3)

Table 3

Reliability Coefficient Value

Scale/ tool	**No. of Items**	**Pearson Coefficient**	**Cronbach Alpha Coefficient**
Attitude and Practices Scale for Professional Development	28	0.86	0.728

Table (3) clarifies that the value and coefficient of total reliability are <0.7, showing that the study tool has a high degree of reliability. These values make it suitable for its application to the study sample and confidence in its results.

Descriptive statistics

The 28 items of the research tool were divided into five (5) themes determined by the review of the previous literature. These themes included (i) Teachers' attitude and ELT practices (7 items) (ii) Reflection on teachers' online teaching performance (6 items) (iii) Teacher's reflection on the shift towards online teaching (5 items) (iv) Teachers' preparation to cope with online teaching (5 items) and (v) Teachers' future aspirations (5 items). The descriptive statistics of each theme and its items are listed in 5 parts.

Part One of the questionnaire dealt with the attitude of the respondents towards their current semester performance. The questionnaire items of Part 1 (Q. No 1 to 7) related to teachers' attitude towards the current semester performance are listed in Table 4 along with their arithmetic means, standard deviations, and *v*alidation test for research instrument, correlations and significance.

Table 4

Teachers' Attitude Towards the Current Semester Performance

No.	Item	Mean	Standard deviation	Correlations	Sig. (2-tailed)
1.	I am in favour of online teaching next semester.	3.18	.988	.525	.000
2.	I perform better with face-to-face teaching.	3.63	.856	.542	.000
3.	I can handle technical issues properly during online instruction.	3.53	.880	.518	.000
4.	The administration facilitated the online teaching.	3.40	.869	.580	.000
5.	The UTASA administration reduced my duties during online teaching.	3.60	.788	.620	.000
6.	I have improved my teaching strategy compared to the previous semester	3.50	.786	.576	.000
7.	Online teaching is more tedious.	3.46	.790	.512	.000

Table 4 shows that the correlation scores of 7 items are <0.5 which indicates that each item is valid. The arithmetic means of items ranged from (3.18) to (3.63) and the standard deviation <0.7, which suggests that all have a high degree of attitude for professional development. This also confirms that the respondents have appropriate motivation to improve their professional skills.

Part Two of the questionnaire dealt with Teachers' reflection on their online teaching performance. The questionnaire items of Part 2 (Q. No 8 to 13) indicate

reflections of teachers toward their online performance. Table 5 presents statistically these reflections as evidence of their commitments. Table 5 shows that the correlation scores of 6 items are <0.5 which indicates that each item is valid. The arithmetic means of items ranged from (3.10) to (3.43) and the standard deviation <0.7, which suggests that all have a high degree of agreement to efforts and activities being done to improve their performance.

Table 5

Teac\Hers' Reflection on Their Online Teaching Performance

No.	Item	Mean	Standard deviation	Correlations	Sig. (2-tailed)
8.	Positive about my last semester experience.	3.11	.788	.512	.000
9.	Simplified assignments are given to students.	3.23	.756	.562	.000
10.	Lowered my expectation about student work quality.	3.43	.780	.579	.000
11.	Able to involve my students actively.	3.10	.769	.780	.000
12.	Ran individual consultation for students.	3.24	.780	.650	.000
13.	Happy about my students' final performance	3.26	.760	.690	.000

Part Three of the questionnaire dealt with the attitude of the respondents towards their current semester performance.

Table 6

Teacher's Reflection on the Shift Towards Online Teaching

No.	Item	Mean	Standard deviation	Correlations	Sig. (2-tailed)
14.	Had smooth transition from face-to-face to online teaching	3.28	.881	.575	.000
15.	Was reluctant to teach online.	3.83	.889	.554	.000
16.	Am aware of how-to best support students online.	3.88	.717	.535	.000
17.	Received enough technological support for online teaching.	3.48	.765	.565	.000
18.	Received pedagogical support on how to teach better online.	3.56	.782	.550	.000

The questionnaire items of Part 3 (Q. No 14 to 18) related to Teacher's reflection on the shift towards online teaching are listed in Table 6 along with their arithmetic means, standard deviations, and *v*alidation test for research instrument, correlations, and significance.

Table 6 shows that the correlation scores of 5 items are <0.5 which indicates that each item is valid. The arithmetic means of items ranged from (3.28) to (3.88) and the standard deviation <0.7, which suggests that all have a high degree of adaptability towards shift towards online teaching. This also confirms that respondents have a high level of academic compatibility.

Part Four of the questionnaire dealt with the Teachers' preparation to cope with online teaching. The questionnaire items of Part 4 (Q. No 19 to 23) related to Teachers' preparation to cope with online teaching in Table 7 in the form of their arithmetic means, standard deviations, and *v*alidation test for research instrument, correlations and significance.

Table 7

Teachers' Preparation to Cope with Online Teaching

No.	Item	Mean	Standard deviation	Correlations	Sig. (2-tailed)
19.	Attended training run by UTASA.	3.08	.768	.511	.000
20.	Attended webinars outside UTASA.	3.16	.758	.642	.000
21.	Am keen to attend webinars.	3.23	.790	.678	.000
22.	Accessed training materials on how to move online teaching.	3.14	.769	.628	.000
23.	Improved my professional development during online teaching.	3.56	.728	.720	.000

Table 7 shows that the correlation scores of 5 items are <0.5 which indicates that each item is valid. The arithmetic means of items ranged from (3.08) to (3.56) and the standard deviation <0.7, which suggests that all have a high degree of preparedness to cope up with online learning. This also confirms that the respondents have the prerequisite educational qualifications which contributes to their ability to show confidence in accepting challenges.

Part Five of the questionnaire dealt with the Teachers' future aspirations. The questionnaire items of Part 5 (Q. No 24 to 28) related to Teachers' future aspirations

are listed in Table 8 supported by their arithmetic means, standard deviations, and *v*alidation test for research instrument, correlations, and significance.

Table 8 shows that the correlation scores of 5 items are <0.5 which indicates that each item is valid. The arithmetic means of items ranged from (3.80) to (3.98) and the standard deviation <0.7, which suggests that all have a high degree of attitude for professional development. This also confirms that the respondents are appropriately conscious about their future aspirations and hold ambitions to enhance their performance in a scientific way.

Table 8

Teachers' Future Aspirations

No.	Item	Mean	Standard deviation	Correlations	Sig. (2-tailed)
24.	Hope to have more training to teach online.	3.98	.976	.585	.000
25.	Am happy to present professional development activities.	3.83	.966	.570	.000
26.	Am ready to attend self-sponsored courses.	3.93	.988	.598	.000
27.	Wish to have less workload but more activities for professional development.	3.90	.900	.578	.000
28.	Believe online webinars will be more popular.	3.80	.970	.680	.000

Discussion

Having analyzed the findings in the previous section, this section discusses all the parts of the questionnaire to find significance of the responses.

UTASA's current semester performance

As a first impression, the findings reveal that several surveyed teachers could handle technical issues very well; however, they were not happy with the technical support facilities of UTASA's administration to conduct online classes. This led the more experienced teachers to believe that they could perform better in face-to-face ELT. This is evident of the fact that three-quarters of all respondents had a big challenge whilst perceiving themselves negatively towards online and blended learning. This is consistent with the findings of Christina et al. (2016). A majority of respondents disagreed that administration reduced their duties due to online teaching, two-thirds of them admitted that they could improve their teaching strategies. Several respondents including three PhD holders did not have a priority or exemption to run CPD to peers; therefore, they offered a few suggestions to UTASA administration in the open question. They suggested lowering the teaching load and reducing the time of online lessons, so that teachers can rely more on the self-learning materials and

resources to develop. Two-thirds of teachers found online teaching more tedious because they work beyond their work hours (Rapanta et al., 2020). Finally, more than half of the respondents were not in favor of online teaching next semester due to the current restrictive practices of UTASA's administration.

Reflection on teachers' Online Performance

Although more than half of respondents expressed their disagreement with UTASA's administrative trends in graph one, still two-thirds of them were happy about their individual performance. According to some respondents, they had to simplify the assignments given to students and run individual consultations with some. As been suggested by Richmond et al. (2005), the biggest concern in online teaching should be for course delivery to adapt online course design more than a mere consideration of individual student needs. Thus, about half of the respondents showed an interest in running individual consultations with students and involve them actively. At the same time, they had to lower their expectations about students' work in order to simplify the assignments given to students. However, the primary concern was only three BA, but non-Ph.D. holders who agreed on the ability to involve their students actively. Another concern is that less than a quarter of the teachers with a minority of BA holders are happy about their student's final performance.

Reflection on Shifting to Online

Having taught online over the last two semesters using MS Teams, respondents provided their reflection on the shifting to online, on the role of the administration; and on their students. This part also discussed their attitude about their performance. More than half of respondents received enough online technical support when needed and were also aware of how to support their students online. However, only a third of the respondents had received pedagogical support, and hence they were reluctant to teach online. Eventually, it was evident that only a quarter had a smooth transition to the online teaching mode. This can be due to the lack of CPD, as explained by Christina et al. (2016), because they surely encountered unexpected changes and challenges Hodges (2020, March 27).

Coping with Emergency Teaching

Teachers had to adapt to this sudden shift from face-to-face to online in accordance with decisions taken by their administration (Williamson et al., 2020). As revealed in the findings, around half of the teachers improved poorly professionally during online teaching as they had never accessed online training materials nor were keen to attend webinars. Although a majority attended training sessions run by UTASA, only a few teachers rated these sessions as excellent. This could be probably due to the lack of the needed incentives and facilities in Omani HEIs (Saini et al., 2019).

Future Aspirations

It is interesting to note that more than 80% of the respondents in Omani HEIs hope to attend more training courses. These courses are formally encouraged to develop professionally along with the need for a greater utilization of technology (Hart et al.,

2019). While three-quarters of total respondents (n=50) believe that online webinars will be more popular, only about a third of them are willing to present or attend any self-sponsored courses. On the contrary, they wish to have less work before joining any CPD course. When they are asked regarding improving themselves during and after this period, they came up with the following suggestions. First, teachers do not have much room to consider personal improvement unless the program is aligned with online teaching methods. Second, UTASA teachers should continue online blended learning and improve their ability to engage students online. Teachers also need to focus more on CPD by integrating technology in teaching and sharing experiences. For example, they can utilize breaks to improve professionally by accessing sessions or YouTube for self-assessment and self-improvement.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

This study has demonstrated the attitudes and reflections of the UTASA ELT teachers towards online blended teaching practices after they were forced to adapt to emergency online teaching mode for the second semester. This sudden shift to adopt virtual platforms to teach ELT has revealed significant findings related to attitude and perception of the UTASA administration, teachers and facilitators. The first part of the findings affirms that the UTASA administration has fairly facilitated online teaching and provided internal support to handle technical issues. However, teachers expect the administration to liaise with teachers for CPD by providing more vacancies and facilitate to accomplish departmental goals and objectives. This factor is essential during such processes of transition over to a professional mode as it increases teachers' motivation and psychological satisfaction (Santisi et al., 2018).

The questionnaire comprised two open questions in which respondents were first asked whether they would like to give any suggestions to UTASA administration to improve teacher performance; second question asked their opinion about how teachers should improve during and after this period of online teaching. Several suggestions were given to the UTASA administration to improve ELT teacher's performance. It was also pointed out by respondents that the outcomes, materials and expectations were not adjusted at all for the program to be successful and for teachers to feel confident. They could deliver an online program; believing that everything should be more aligned especially after one complete year in this situation. It was also suggested that the administrators in UTASA should focus on teaching duties given to teachers and providing more research opportunities instead of other matters like non-teaching loads. They can also allow teachers to work online from home ensuring a stable Internet connection. Finally, the time for online lessons should also be reduced to give short input sessions followed by assigned work to students for independent learning.

Although the respondents showed some dissimilarities in their views due to their qualifications (e.g., BA holders involve with students more actively), there is no clear impact of the influence of their years of experience. However, it cannot be assumed that more years of experience lead to higher quality practices or less experienced

teachers have better teaching results (Graham et al., 2020). This aspect can be studied in future research using direct observation of classrooms in UTASA. Direct observation of classrooms is a helpful mode to evaluate teacher's concerns and address their challenges. Future research can also focus on members of the administrative bodies like deans, principals and office staff to compare their attitudes in comparison with teachers' concerns and suggestions.

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