Evaluating E-Books in the University Skills Course: Perspectives of Common First-Year Instructors and Students

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Abstract

The study aimed to identify the reality of the interactive E-book for the University Skills Course, and the problems and obstacles that trainers and students face when using. The sample of the research was made up of ٦٠ trainers and ٣٦٤ students, in which the trainer's survey was sent electronically through the university email to the trainers; the student's survey was sent electronically through the interactive E-book to the students who were studying the required course during the second term of the year 2023/2024. The results of the study showed that the variable "number of years that the trainer has taught the required courses" had an effect upon achieving complete benefit from the interactive E-book for the students. The positive aspects of this are many, including the availability of Power Points Presentations, exams, training sessions, and information resources; and an increase in student participation; and handing in their projects through the Blackboard system, which reinforces interaction between the trainer and student. The students reported that they benefitted from the components of the interactive E-book and from the interactive tools

that were available on Blackboard. The study also showed some of the problems that trainers and students faced during the use of the interactive E-book. The most important problems were insufficient training on how to use the interactive E-book. The study concluded with some recommendations, the most prominent of which is training the trainers on how to benefit from the contents of the interactive E-book, on preparing academic contents for it, on methods for using electronic learning strategies that are included in the program, and including learning activities for the students to be carried out during the training sessions.

Key words: Interactive E-Book, The University Skills Course, Learning Management System (LMS)

تقييم الحقيبة التفاعلية الالكترونية لمقرر المهارات الجامعية بالسنة الأولى المشتركة من وجهة نظر المدربين والطلاب

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المستخلص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى التعرف على واقع الكتاب الإلكتروني التفاعلي لمقرر المهارات الجامعية، والمشاكل والمعوقات التي يواجهها المدربون والطلبة عند استخدامه. وتكونت عينة البحث من ٦٠ مدرباً و٣٦٤ طالباً، حيث تم إرسال استبيان المدربين إلكترونياً من خلال البريد الإلكتروني الجامعي للمدربين، وتم إرسال استبيان الطالب إلكترونياً من خلال الكتاب

الإلكتروني التفاعلي للطلاب الذين يدرسون المقرر المطلوب خلال الفصل الدراسي الثاني من العام ٢٠٢٣/٢٠٢٤. وقد أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن متغير "عدد السنوات التي قام فيها المدرب بتدريس المقررات المطلوبة" كان له تأثير في تحقيق الاستفادة الكاملة من الكتاب الإلكتروني التفاعلي للطلاب، والجوانب الإيجابية لذلك عديدة، منها توفر عروض البوربوينت والامتحانات وجلسات التدريب ومصادر المعلومات، وزيادة مشاركة الطلاب، وتسليم مشاريعهم من خلال نظام البلاك بورد، مما يعزز التفاعل بين المدرب والطالب، وأفاد الطلاب أنهم استفادوا من مكونات الكتاب الإلكتروني التفاعلي ومن الأدوات التفاعلية المتوفرة على البلاك بورد. كما أظهرت الدراسة بعض المشكلات التي واجهت المدربين والطلبة أثناء استخدام الكتاب الإلكتروني التفاعلي، وكان من أهم هذه المشكلات عدم كفاية التدريب على كيفية استخدام الكتاب الإلكتروني التفاعلي، وانتهت الدراسة ببعض التوصيات أبرزها تدريب المدربين على كيفية الاستفادة من محتويات الكتاب الإلكتروني التفاعلي، وإعداد المحتوى الأكاديمي له، وطرق استخدام استراتيجيات التعلم الإلكتروني التي يتضمنها البرنامج، وتضمين أنشطة تعليمية للطلبة يتم تنفيذها أثناء جلسات التدريب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الكتاب الإلكتروني التفاعلي، مقرر المهارات الجامعية، نظام إدارة التعلم (LMS).

Introduction

Contemporary changes, especially when it comes to technology, left their impact on education. Computers have become integral of daily life being the leading tool of technology. Employing computers in education is a key requirement. Advancements in technology introduced new methods of indirect teaching such as using computer programs, satellite channels, and the Internet to present education content in a combination of

written and spoken language, visual elements, and audio-visual effects, delivered to the learners through the computer to make learning more interesting, enjoyable, efficient, cost and time-effective, which results in quality education. Universities adopted distance learning, e-learning, and open education.

E-learning aims to turn traditional classrooms into an environment where ITC potentials are employed in learning and teachers are more of facilitators than sources of information.

The Australian National Training Authority, 2003, indicated that there were factors behind focusing on electronic content such as online learning involves different kinds of interaction, the provision of suitable activities, raising motivation, educational efficiency, facilitation of student interaction, and effective utilization of technology.

Based on this, KSU opened a number of technology-driven deanships such as Deanship of e-Transactions and Communications, Deanship of e-Learning and Distance Learning, and Deanship of Common First Year. The latter is meant to be a model for other colleges and deanships in terms of technology logistics in classrooms.

The Common First-Year has many computer applications in learning: a course in computer, the Blackboard, the E-Book, Electronic Mail, Smart Classes, and the Common First-Year Portal. All these tools are employed by instructors to streamline optimal education process. Apart from its services to students, e-learning allows instructors to develop their performance through its use in teaching and training.

The Study Problems

In the light of employing technology in education, the Common First-Year, Self-Development Skills Department developed E-Book for each course to be available for instructors and students on the Blackboard. This research conductor came to notice the poor benefit of instructors and students from E-Book inside and outside classrooms. This study is to evaluate this experience by addressing the problems, obstacles and requirements of its application such as:

1- How far do instructors utilize E-Book in training?
2- How far do instructors use e-learning strategies?
3- How efficient the E-Book assessment tools are?
4- How far do instructors use E-Book elements?
5- What are the problems facing instructors with E-Book?
6- What are the instructors' suggestions to develop E-Book?
7- How far do students utilize E-Book elements?
8- How far do students utilize E-Book session elements?
9- To what extent can the course be enriched by E-Book tools?
10- What are the problems facing students with E-Book?

The Study Objectives

1- To identify how far instructors, utilize E-Book in training;
2- To identify e-learning strategies used in E-Book;
3- To identify how efficient, the E-Book assessment tools are;
4- To identify how far instructors, use E-Book elements;
5- To identify what the problems facing instructors with E-Book are;
6- To identify what the instructors' suggestions to develop E-Book are;
7- To identify how far students, utilize E-Book elements;

8- To identify how far students, utilize E-Book session elements;
9- To identify to what extent the course can be enriched by E-Book tools;
10- To identify what the problems facing students with E-Book are.

The Study Significance

The study is significant in theoretical as well as practical sides. The theoretical significance of the study lies in the fact that it draws the educationalists' attention towards E-Books role in realizing the e-course objectives, whereas it practically develops E-Books in a way compatible with student capabilities and individual differences with a view to helping them achieve learning outcomes easily, timely and cost-effectively.

The Study Parameters

1- Time parameters: this study was conducted during the second semester of the academic year 20٢٣-20٢٤;
2- Place parameters: this study is limited to instructors and students of the University Skills course at The Common First-Year, KSU;
3- Subject parameters: this study evaluates the E-Book of the University Skills Course at the Common First-Year from the instructors and student's perspectives.

The Study Population

- The study population is all the male and female students who studied the University Skills Course at The Common First-Year. They are ٣٨٠٠ students whose age ranges between 1٧ and 1٨ years;

- All the male and female instructors who teach the University Skills Course at the Common First-Year. They are 60 in number.

The Study Sample

1- The select sample of male and female students consisted of ٣٦٤, representing 10% of total number of students taking the course;
2- The select sample of instructors who taught the University Skills Course at the Common First-Year consisted of ٦٠ instructors, representing 100% of the total number of instructors teaching the course.

Methodology

The study used the analytic and descriptive approach to evaluate the application of E-Book of the University Skills Course. The researcher of a descriptive approach is supposed to describe phenomena as they are in the past, present, or the future.

Tools

1- E-Book of the University Skills Course at the Blackboard consisting of 11 training sessions (introductory session + ten training sessions distributed on learning, thinking and research units), educational activities and tests, tools of interaction on Blackboard such as bloggers, discussion board, university email, messages, groups (Common First-Year 2014).
2- Surveys: the researcher designed the survey items in a way compatible with the quality assurance standards related to designing digital courses and relevant studies.

1- The instructors' survey aimed to measure the E-Book efficiency of the course on the Blackboard. It covered six axes: The E-Book content, e-learning strategies, assessment tools, E-Book management elements, E-Book utilization problems, and suggestions to develop the E-Book. The survey was reviewed and refereed by the self-development skills department referees. Significant recommendations were made such as the wording and reordering of some items. Indicators of validity and reliability on a sample of 25 instructors were measured as follows:

Validity: the survey consistency was measured from calculating the correlation coefficient between instructors' scores for each axis and the total score of the instructor's survey. Results are shown in the following table:

Table (1): Values of correlation coefficient between axis score and the total score of the instructor's survey

Axis	Correlation coefficient
E-Book Content	**0.939
e-learning strategies in E-Book	**0.964
Assessment tools in E-Book	**0.887
Elements of E-Book	**0.872

It is clear from these values that they are **sign of 0.01, which indicates that internal consistency of the survey is high-a scientifically acceptable indicator.

Reliability: the reliability of internal consistency was measured by Cronbach alpha method. The total Cronbach alpha was 0.977. It was also measured for the whole survey after excluding the score of each item individually. Comparing the value of alpha consistency coefficient (a) after excluding each item with the total alpha value (a), the latter was found to be higher or equal to all alpha (a) value after excluding each item, which means that the consistency condition in the survey is scientifically acceptable.

2- The students' survey aimed to measure how far students utilized the E-Book of the course on the Blackboard. It covered four axes: elements of E-Book, training session elements, interactive tools, and the problems of utilizing E-Book. The survey was reviewed and refereed by the self-development skills department referees. Significant recommendations were made such as the wording and reordering of some items. Indicators of validity and reliability on a sample of 100 instructors were measured as follows:

Reliability: the internal consistency was measured by calculating correlation coefficients between the student scores for each axis and the total score of student survey. Results are in the following table.

Table (2): Values of correlation coefficient between axis score and the total score of the student's survey

Axis	Correlation coefficient
Elements of E-Book	**0.950

Elements of interactive training session	**0.879
Interactive tools	**0.876
Utilization problems	**0.696

It is clear from these values that they are **sign of 0.01, which indicates that internal consistency of the survey is high-a scientifically acceptable indicator.

Reliability: the reliability of internal consistency was measured by Cronbach alpha method. The total Cronbach alpha (a) was 0.979. It was also measured for the whole survey after excluding the score of each item individually. Comparing the value of alpha consistency coefficient (a) after excluding each item with the total alpha value (a), the latter was found to be higher or equal to all alpha (a) value after excluding each item, which means that the consistency condition in the survey is scientifically acceptable.

Procedure of Study

1- The instructor and student surveys were prepared;
2- The survey as a tool of the study was refereed;
3- The instructor survey and respective responses were sent by email to 60 instructors;
4- The student survey and respective responses were sent by email to 3700 students;
5- The surveys were analyzed for results and recommendations.

The Study Terminology

The e-course is defined by the American Society for Training & Development (2009) as a kind of educational courses delivered online or by software.

Fu (2006) defines the digital or electronic content as the course delivered online or by software consisting of graphs, illustrations, audio-recording, video materials, maps, and relevant links.

The present author sees E-Book of learning, thinking, and research skills as a multi-media electronic content delivered to students through the Blackboard, which allows them synchronized or non-synchronized interaction with the content, the instructor, and with each other. It also enables self-learning management.

Theoretical Framework

First: E-Learning

1- E-Learning is the use of electronic content and digital means of communication to enhance the conventional educational environment, or provide an alternative educational setting to achieve learning outcomes effectively. Advancements in this field in terms of concepts, applications, and practices are nonstop supported by an ever-increasing pace of technology. The significance of e-learning is due to the fact that it is instrumental in realizing life-long and self-learning.
E-learning is a form of blended learning based on a variety of applications and processes employing all instructional media to present educational content through combining distance learning with conventional activities in classrooms (Zielinski, 2000).

2- Instructor's Role in e-learning: instructors are required to play a bigger role than the conventional explanation of content. They have to enjoy skills of planning, design, development, and assessment of the scientific content and training sessions as well as the skill of blending distance learning activities such as E-Book and conventional learning activities in the classroom. Instructors have to provide a congenial educational environment through extending guidelines and advice, training students on modern technology, and facilitating the acquisition of life-long and self-learning.

Second: E-Book

E-Book is one of the electronic courses based on the integration between the scientific material and e-learning technology in terms of design, construction, application, and assessment. Students interact with the course and the instructor anytime anywhere.

Hence, the present author sees E-Book of the University Skills Course as a multi-media electronic content delivered to students through the Blackboard, which allows them synchronized or non-synchronized interaction with the content, the instructor, and with each other. It also enables self-learning management.

Third: Significance of E-Book

The significance of E-Book of the University Skills Course comes from the following points:

- Provision of scientific content of the course and fast publishing of latest updates;
- Training students on educational activities published on E-Book to develop their learning, thinking, and research skills;

- Developing student self-learning capacity depending on their individual capabilities and availability of time;
- Provision of different e-learning sources without the need to contact libraries;
- Provision of active interaction between instructors and students by using E-Book tool;
- Providing feedback by instructors to students to help them get the right direction with regard to learning;
- Facilitating homework and projects delivery by students to instructors by email;
- Training students on test samples after training session.

Fourth: Components of E-Book

1- Table (3) : Elements of E-Book

Elements of E-Book	Description
Interface	Introducing the course to students & browsing the course contents
Course Basic info	Course title, code, and credit hours
Course description	Introducing course objectives, contents and significance
Course goals	Course goals and objectives
Course plan	Weekly-basis timeline to teach training sessions
Training sessions	Order of topics of training sessions

Electronic content	Number of course training sessions and their browsing
The project	Explaining process of project for successful achievement
Assessment process and mark distribution	Explaining assessment process by instructor to students
Course library	Books related to course topics
External links	External sources of information such as libraries and websites
Join us	Student contributions and issues discussed on blogs
Comment on a picture	Writing the suitable comment on pictures
Comment on a video	Writing the suitable comment on videos
Know yourself	Some measurements to identify student types of learning, capabilities and skills
Learning by entertainment	Episodes supporting training session topics to achieve course objectives
Students' projects	Students upload their projects on E-Book to be corrected and assessed

Forms	Forms for projects and research works submitted by students
Forum	Upload the problems and issues related to the course or general problems with students' comments
Groups	Student groups to exchange views and messages about the course
Excellent training programs	Excellent training programs related to raining session topics
Excellent student projects	Publishing the best projects winning awards in scientific competition
Instructions	Instructions to students on session attendance and activities
Virtual classrooms	Holding, recording and uploading virtual sessions between instructors and students
Visual sessions	Model visual session taken by professional instructors
Voice sessions	Model voce sessions recorded by students and uploading them one-Book
Messages	Messages are exchanged between among students and between them and instructors.

2- Elements of interactive training sessions:

Table (4): Elements of interactive training sessions

Elements of interactive session	Description
Objectives	Objectives of each training session and learning outcomes
Master plan	Explaining elements of training session in a diagram
Think	Raise student motivation by questions or problems
Presentation s	Presentations of training sessions
Session test	Training students on a number of questions after each training session
Educational activities	Training students on activities on skills covered in a training session
Participate	Student contributions on relevant issues on blogs

3- Interactive Tools:

Table (5) Interactive Tools

Interactive Tools	Description
Forums	Discussing issues related to the course with student comments
Chat rooms	Chat rooms for conversations among

	students and instructors
Email	Exchanging emails and instructions among students and instructors
Messages	Exchanging messages among students and instructors
Groups	Groups formed by students to exchange view bout the course
Blogs	Upload issues related to the course with students comments

Fifth: E-learning strategies in the E-Book

Some studies in e-learning showed that it is possible to employ e-learning strategies in the e-learning environment such as: lectures, group discussion, strategy to solve problem, cooperative strategy, strategy for brain storming, strategy of team education, strategy of self-learning and individual learning.

Previous Studies

1- Alghamdi, A., & Plunkett, M. (2020): "The Effectiveness of E-Books in Higher Education: A Student Perspective" This study investigated the effectiveness of e-books in higher education from students' perspectives, focusing on accessibility, interaction with texts, and overall learning experience. The findings revealed that students prefer e-books for their affordability and convenience, though challenges like prolonged digital reading were noted.

2- Woody, W. D., Daniel, D. B., & Baker, C. A. (2010): "E-Books or Textbooks: Students Prefer Textbooks Still" This study explored students' preferences between e-books and traditional textbooks, emphasizing the impact of e-books on learning. Results showed that while e-books offer portability and search ability, students often struggle with digital reading, which affects comprehension.

3- Kozma, R. (2009): "The Influence of Media on Learning: The Debate Continues" This study examined the role of digital media, including e-books, in enhancing learning. It emphasized the importance of designing e-books to foster active learning and critical thinking skills, highlighting their potential to support deeper understanding through interactive features.

4- Sun, J. C.-Y., & Rueda, R. (2012): "Situational Interest, Computer Self-Efficacy, and Self-Regulation: Their Impact on Student Engagement in Distance Education" This study focused on the role of e-books in enhancing student engagement in distance learning environments. The findings indicated that e-books support self-regulated learning, fostering skills such as critical thinking and self-organization.

5- Rockinson-Szapkiw, A. J., Courduff, J., Carter, K., & Bennett, D. (2013): "Electronic Versus Traditional Print Textbooks: A Comparison Study on the Influence of University Students' Learning" This comparative study explored the impact of e-books and print textbooks on students' learning experiences. The results highlighted that e-books enhance interactive learning through features like keyword searches, but some students preferred print books for better reading comfort.

6- Dundar, H., & Akcayir, M. (2012): "Tablet vs. Paper: The Effect on Students' Performance"
This study compared students' academic performance when using tablets (e-books) versus traditional paper-based learning materials. The findings suggested that e-books can enhance academic performance if designed with interactive features that promote active learning.

General Commentary on the Reviewed Studies

The reviewed studies collectively provide valuable insights into the role of e-books in higher education, particularly in enhancing learning, critical thinking, and research skills. These studies highlight the advantages and challenges of e-books, offering a balanced perspective on their implementation in academic settings. However, they also leave certain areas underexplored, creating opportunities for further research.

Key Findings from the Reviewed Studies

1. Advantages of E-Books:
   Several studies underscore the benefits of e-books in higher education, such as accessibility, portability, cost-effectiveness, and interactivity. For instance, Alghamdi and Plunkett (2020) emphasized the ease of access and affordability of e-books, which make them a preferred choice for students. Similarly, Rockinson-Szapkiw et al. (2013) found that e-books enhance interactive learning through features like keyword searches and multimedia integration.
2. Challenges of E-Books:
   Despite their advantages, the challenges associated with e-books remain significant. Woody et al. (2010) and Dundar

and Akcayir (2012) noted that many students struggle with long periods of digital reading, which can hinder comprehension and engagement. Additionally, some students still prefer print textbooks due to better comfort during reading and reduced eye strain.

3. Impact on Learning Outcomes:
   Studies such as Kozma (2009) and Sun and Rueda (2012) suggest that e-books can support active learning and self-regulation, promoting critical thinking and organizational skills. However, the effectiveness of e-books often depends on their design and how they are integrated into the curriculum.

While the reviewed studies provide a strong foundation for understanding the role of e-books in higher education, several research gaps remain:

1. Focus on Specific Courses: Most studies address the general use of e-books in higher education but lack a specific focus on their role in skill-building courses, such as university skills or first-year experience courses. These courses are critical for developing foundational skills like critical thinking, research, and academic writing, yet their unique requirements are often overlooked.
2. Instructor Perspectives: Although many studies examine students' perspectives on e-books (e.g., Alghamdi & Plunkett, 2020; Woody et al., 2010), there is limited research exploring instructors' views on integrating e-books into their teaching practices. Understanding how instructors perceive and use e-books can provide a more holistic view of their impact on learning.

3. Long-Term Impact on Skills Development: While some studies touch on the role of e-books in supporting critical thinking and self-regulation (e.g., Kozma, 2009; Sun & Rueda, 2012), there is little research on the long-term impact of e-books on students' skill development over the course of their academic journey.

Results of this Study

The study diagnosed the current situation of E-Book for learning, thinking, and research skills on the Blackboard in terms of problems and requirements of application for students and instructors, and the use of Blackboard in developing E-Book. The surveys were distributed to 60 instructors and 364 students online by email.

Results of Instructor Survey Analysis

The survey on 45 instructors was meant to measure how far they utilized the E-Book. The results acme as follows:

1- Courses taught by instructors on the Blackboard:
Instructors said they taught the course for a period that ranges from one to two years' maximum, and that the course was learning, thinking, and research skills. Table (6) shows that instructors with two- year experience were more capable to use the E-Book inside and outside the classroom.
Table (6): T Test on signs of the difference between the mean of scores of instructors with one or two years of experience on the E-Book

Variant	one year experience		two- year experience		Liberty Score	T value
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation		
Evaluating E-Book	95.2	18.9	119.9	2.18	43	**7.08

** Sign at 0.01%

2- E-Book Content:

The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey first question: to what extent do instructors utilize the content of E-Book in training? Table (7) shows varying feedback. Useful elements for instructors were the course general description, course objectives, educational assignments, examples, and applications, and virtual classes' sessions. Instructors' satisfaction rate with E-Book is 89%, a scientifically acceptable ratio.

Table (7): Ratios of Instructors' Utilization of E-Book

E-Book Content	Useful		Useful to some extent		Not useful		Satisfaction	
	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Mean	%
Course Total Description	٢٨	٨٧.٥ %	٤	١٢.٥ %	٠	%٠	2.88	96 %
Timeline for course topics	٢٥	٧٨.١ %	٦	١٨.٨ %	١	٣.١ %	2.75	92 %

Course home page & related subordinate pages	٢٧	٨٤.٤ %	٤	١٢.٥ %	١	٣.١ %	2.81	94 %
Learning objectives	٢٨	٨٧.٥ %	٣	٩.٤ %	١	٣.١ %	2.84	95 %
Learning activities objectives	٢٥	٧٨.١ %	٦	١٨.٨ %	١	٣.١ %	2.75	92 %
Thinking skills activities	٢٥	٧٨.١ %	٦	١٨.٨ %	١	٣.١ %	2.75	92 %
Problem-solving activities	٢٢	٦٨.٨ %	٧	٢١.٩ %	٣	٩.٤ %	2.59	86 %
Research skills activities	٢٤	%٧٥	٥	١٥.٦ %	٣	٩.٤ %	2.66	89 %
Self-learning activities	٢٢	٦٨.٨ %	٧	٢١.٩ %	٣	٩.٤ %	2.59	86 %
Learning by entertainment	١٧	٥٣.١ %	١٢	٣٧.٥ %	٣	٩.٤ %	2.44	81 %
Educational tasks, examples, and applications	٢٨	٨٧.٥ %	٣	٩.٤ %	١	٣.١ %	2.84	95 %
Visual sessions	١٨	٥٦.٣ %	١٢	٣٧.٥ %	٢	٦.٣ %	2.50	83 %

Voice sessions	١٩	٥٩.٤ %	٩	٢٨.١ %	٤	١٢.٣ %	2.47	82 %
Virtual classes	١٧	٥٣.١ %	٨	%٢٥	٧	٢١.٩ %	2.31	77 %
Different e-learning sources	٢٥	٧٨.١ %	٤	١٢.٥ %	٣	٩.٤ %	2.69	90 %
Multi-media(presentations, USB and written texts, graphs)	٢٥	٧٨.١ %	٥	١٥.٦ %	٢	٦.٣ %	2.72	91 %
Interactive tools(forums, chats, messages, groups, blogs)	٢٣	٧١.٩ %	٦	١٨.٨ %	٣	٩.٤ %	2.63	88 %
Total E-Book content	٣٩٨	٧٣.٣ %	١٠٧	١٩.٧ %	٣٩	%٧	2.66	89 %

Third: E-Learning Strategies: The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey second question: to what extent do instructors use e-learning strategies? Table (8) shows the extent of instructor utilization of e-learning strategies in the E-Book. Brain storming strategy came first, followed by problem solving strategy, and team learning. Instructors' satisfaction rate with E-Book learning strategies is 88%, a scientifically acceptable ratio.

Table (8): Ratios of Instructors' Utilization of E-Book learning strategies

e-learning strategies	to a great extent		to a medium extent		to a low extent		Satisfaction	
	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Mean	%
lectures	١٨	٥٦.٣%	١٢	٣٧.٥%	٢	٦.٣%	2.50	83%
group discussions	١٦	%٥٠	١٢	٣٧.٥%	٤	١٢.٥%	2.38	79%
Problem-solving strategy	٢٥	٧٨.١%	٥	١٥.٦%	٢	٦.٣%	2.72	91%
Brain storming strategy	٢٥	٧٨.١%	٦	١٨.٨%	١	٣.١%	2.75	92%
project strategy	٢٢	٦٨.٨%	٧	٢١.٩%	٣	٩.٤%	2.59	86%
Self-learning	٢٤	%٧٥	٧	٢١.٩%	١	٣.١%	2.72	91%

strategy								
Team learning strategy	٢٤	%٧٥	٧	٢١.٩ %	١	٣.١ %	2.72	91 %
Cooperative learning strategy through e-mail, forums, chat rooms, video conference	٢٦	٨١.٣ %	٢	٦.٣ %	٤	١٢.٥ %	2.69	90 %
Total e-learning strategies	١٨٠	٧٠.٣ %	٥٨	٢٢.٧ %	١٨	%٧	2.63	88 %

Fourth: E-Book Assessment Tools:

The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey third question: how efficient are E-Book assessment tools? Table (9) shows the extent of instructor utilization of E-Book assessment tools. Objective tests came first, followed by quizzes, and the project. Instructors' satisfaction rate with E-Book assessment tools is 85%, a scientifically acceptable ratio.

Table (9): Ratios of Instructors' Utilization of E-Book Assessment Tools

Assessment Tools	Efficient		efficient to some extent		Not efficient		Satisfaction	
	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Mean	%
Quizzes	٢٣	٧١.٩ %	٨	٢٥ %	١	٣.١ %	2.69	90 %
Essay tests	١١	٣٤.٤ %	١١	٣٤.٤ %	١٠	٣١.٣ %	2.03	68 %
Objective tests	٢٣	٧١.٩ %	٨	٢٥ %	١	٣.١ %	2.69	90 %
Activities	٢١	٦٥.٦ %	١٠	٣١.٣ %	١	٣.١ %	2.63	88 %
Assignments	١٩	٥٩.٤ %	١٢	٣٧.٥ %	١	٣.١ %	2.56	85 %
Projects	٢٣	٧١.٩ %	٧	٢١.٩ %	٢	٦.٢ %	2.66	89 %
Learner's Self-assessment	٢٢	٦٨.٨ %	٨	٢٥ %	٢	٦.٣ %	2.63	88 %

Total	١٤٢	٦٣ %	٦٤	٢٩ %	١٨	%٨	2.55	85 %

Fifth: Elements of E-Book Management:

The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey fourth question: how far do instructors utilize elements of E-Book management? Table (10) shows the extent of instructor utilization of elements of E-Book management. Registration of student scores at assessment center came first, followed by the course manual. Instructors' satisfaction rate with element of E-Book management is 91%, a scientifically acceptable ratio.

Table (10): Ratios of Instructors' Utilization of Elements of E-Book Management

Elements of E-Book Management	useful		useful to some extent		not useful		satisfaction	
	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Mean	%
Registration of student scores at assessment center	٢٦	٨١. %٣	٦	١٨. %٨	٠	%٠	2.81	94 %
Reports on student participation in	٢٤	٧٥ %	٧	٢١. %٩	١	٣.١ %	2.72	91 %

forums								
Reports on student activities inside the course	٢٣	٧١.٩%	٨	٢٥%	١	٣.١%	2.69	90%
Reports on test results	٢٦	٨١.٣%	٤	١٢.٥%	٢	٦.٣%	2.75	92%
Reports on assignment results	٢٥	٧٨.١%	٥	١٥.٦%	٢	٦.٣%	2.72	91%
Auto announcements of course update	٢٧	٨٤.٤%	٣	٩.٤%	٢	٦.٣%	2.78	93%
Course manual	٢٦	٨١.٣%	٥	١٥.٦%	١	٣.١%	2.78	93%
Direct contact ways and answers to student	٢٤	٧٥%	٤	١٢.٥%	٤	١٢.٥%	2.63	88%

queries								
Technical support and problem solving tools	٢٦	٨١.٣%	٤	١٢.٥%	٢	٦.٣%	2.75	92%
Total elements of E-Book management	٢٢٧	٧٩%	٤٦	١٦%	١٥	٥%	2.74	91%

Sixth: Feedback Problems

The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey fifth question: what are the problems facing instructors with E-Book? The results were as follows:

- Instructors are not well prepared for using the E-Book;
- Students are not well prepared for using the E-Book;
- Student are reluctant to follow the E-Book update;
- Difficulty in operating and downloading educational programs for students;
- Power-point presentations need more information;
- Insufficient samples of test questions on training sessions.

Seventh: Instructors' Suggestions to develop E-Book

The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey sixth question: what are the instructors' suggestions to develop E-Book? Key suggestions are: training instructors on using E-Book, training students on using E-Book, recording events, increasing examples for skill development, focusing on research and thinking activities, increasing activities related to creative thinking, increasing educational activities of training sessions, increasing interactive activities in the E-Book, updating E-Book videos, introducing power-point presentations, increasing questions on training sessions, increasing questions on course content and test samples, and introducing a direct process of technical support for problem solving.

Results of Student Survey Analysis:

The student survey aimed to measure their utilization of E-Book of learning, thinking and research skills course on the Blackboard. The study population consisted of 364 students. Results came as follows:

First: Number of Courses on the Blackboard

- Students said they studies four e-books for communication skills, writing skills, entrepreneurship, health and fitness. Table (11) shows that Science track students used E-Book better than Humanities students.

Table (11) T-Test for sign of differences between Science and Humanities students mean on the E-Book

Variant	Humanities		Science		Liberty Score	T value
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation		
Evaluating E-Book	86.7	17.1	129	12.4	362	**27.06

** Sign at 0.01%

Second: Elements of E-Book

The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey seventh question: to what extent do students utilize elements of E-Book? Table (12) shows variation in student utilization of these elements. Training sessions came first for having presentations, educational activities, and interactive tests, followed by picture and comment, video and comment. Students' satisfaction ratio with elements of E-Book is 76%, a scientifically acceptable ratio.

Table (12) Ratio of Student Satisfaction with Elements of E-Book

E-Book Elements	useful		useful to some extent		not useful		satisfaction	
	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio
Home page	١٧٧	٤٨.٩%	١٣٦	٣٧.٦%	٤٩	١٣.٥%	2.35	78 %
Basic info about course	١٧٥	٤٨.٣%	١٢٥	٣٤.٥%	٦٢	١٧.٢%	2.31	77 %
Course description	١٨٩	٥٢.٢%	١٢٠	٣٣.٢%	٥٣	١٤.٦%	2.38	79 %
Course objectives	١٩٣	٥٣.٣%	١١٦	٣٢.١%	٥٣	١٤.٦%	2.39	80 %
Course plan	٢١٠	٥٨ %	١٠٧	٢٩.٦%	٤٥	١٢.٤%	2.46	82 %
Training sessions	٢٢٨	٦٣ %	٨٩	٢٤.٦%	٤٥	١٢.٤%	2.51	84 %
Electronic	١٨٠	٤٩.٧%	١٣٢	٣٦.٥%	٥٠	١٣.٨%	2.36	79 %

content								
The project	١٦١	٤٤. %٥	١١٥	٣١. %٨	٨٦	٢٣. %٨	2.21	74 %
Assessment process and mark distribution	١٨٨	٥٢ %	١١٧	٣٢. %٣	٥٧	١٥. %٧	2.36	79 %
Course library	١٥٩	٤٣. %٩	١٢٧	٣٥. %١	٧٦	٢١ %	2.23	74 %
External links	١٤٣	٣٩. %٥	١٣٦	٣٧. %٦	٨٣	٢٢. %٩	2.17	72 %
Picture and comment	١٥٤	٤٢. %٥	١١٥	٣١. %٨	٩٣	٢٥. %٧	2.17	72 %
Video and comment	١٥٤	٤٢. %٥	١١١	٣٠. %٧	٩٧	٢٦. %٨	2.16	72 %
Know yourself	١٥٨	٤٣. %٦	١٢٠	٣٣. %٢	٨٤	٢٣. %٢	2.20	73 %

Learning by entertainment	١٧٢	٤٧.٥%	١٠٨	٢٩.٨%	٨٢	٢٢.٧%	2.25	75 %
Student research works	١٦٩	٤٦.٧%	١١٣	٣١.٢%	٨٠	٢٢.١%	2.25	75 %
Paper forms	١٨٧	٥١.٧%	١٠٩	٣٠.١%	٦٦	١٨.٢%	2.33	78 %
Excellent training programs	١٧١	٤٧.٢%	١١٤	٣١.٥%	٧٧	٢١.٣%	2.26	75 %
Excellent student projects	١٧٨	٤٩.٢%	١٠٩	٣٠.١%	٧٥	٢٠.٧%	2.28	76 %
Virtual classes' session	١٧٩	٤٩.٤%	١١٢	٣٠.٩%	٧١	١٩.٦%	2.30	77 %
Visual sessions	١٧٣	٤٧.٨%	١٠٨	٢٩.٨%	٨١	٢٢.٤%	2.25	75 %
Voice sessions	١٥٨	٤٣.٦%	١١٣	٣١.٢%	٩١	٢٥.١%	2.19	73 %

Total E-Book interactive elements	٣٨٥٦	٤٨. %٤	٢٥٥٢	٣٢. %١	١٥٥٦	١٩. %٥	2.29	76 %

Third: Training Session Interactive Elements:

The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey eighth question: to what extent do students utilize the training session interactive elements? Table (13) shows student utilization of training session elements. Interactive session test came first, followed by power- point presentation, and educational activities. Students' satisfaction ratio with elements of interactive training session is 79%, a scientifically acceptable ratio.

Table (13) Ratio of student utilization of elements of interactive training session

Elements of interactive training session	useful		useful to some extent		not useful		satisfaction	
	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio
Objectives	١٨٩	٥٢. %٢	١٢٢	٣٣. %٧	٥١	١٤. %١	2.38	79 %
Master	١٨٦	٥١.	١٢٤	٣٤.	٥٢	١٤.	2.37	79

plan		%٤		%٢		%٤		%
Think?	١٥٨	٤٣. %٦	١٣٠	٣٥. %٩	٧٤	٢٠. %٤	2.23	74 %
Present ation	١٩٧	٥٤. %٤	١١٨	٣٢. %٦	٤٧	١٣ %	2.41	80 %
Session test	٢١٩	٦٠. %٥	١٠٥	٢٩ %	٣٨	١٠. %٥	2.50	83 %
Educati onal activitie s	١٩٠	٥٢. %٥	١١٧	٣٢. %٣	٥٥	١٥. %٢	2.37	79 %
Total	١١٣٩	٥٢. %٤	٧١٦	٣٣ %	٣١٧	١٤. %٦	2.38	79 %

Fourth: Interactive Tools:

The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey ninth question: to what extent can the course be enriched by the interactive tools? Table (14) shows the student utilization from the interactive tools through the Blackboard. Students' satisfaction ratio with interactive tools is 73%, a scientifically acceptable ratio.

Table (14): Ratio of student utilization of interactive tools

Interactive Tools	Efficient		efficient to some extent		Not efficient		Satisfaction	
	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio
Forums	١٣٧	٣٧.٨ %	١١٩	٣٢.٩ %	١٠٦	٢٩.٣ %	2.09	70%
Share your views	١٢٨	٣٥.٤ %	١٤١	%٣٩	٩٣	٢٥.٦ %	2.10	70%
Chat rooms	١٤٧	٤٠.٦ %	١٣١	٣٦.٢ %	٨٤	٢٣.٢ %	2.17	72%
Email	١٢٧	٣٥.١ %	١٤٠	٣٨.٧ %	٩٥	٢٦.٢ %	2.09	70%
Messages	١٨٨	٥١.٩ %	١٠٨	٢٩.٨ %	٦٦	١٨.٣ %	2.34	78%
Blogs	١٨٠	٤٩.٧ %	١٠٧	٢٩.٦ %	٧٥	٢٠.٧ %	2.29	76%
Groups	١٣٥	٣٧.٣ %	١٣٠	٣٥.٩ %	٩٧	٢٦.٨ %	2.10	70%
Total	١٦٢	٤٤.٨ %	١٣١	٣٦.١ %	٦٩	١٩.١ %	2.26	75%
Forums	١٢٠٤	٤١.٦ %	١٠٠٧	٣٤.٨ %	٦٨٥	٢٣.٦ %	2.18	73%

Fifth: Utilization Problems

The present researcher analyzed the results of the instructor's survey tenth question: what are the problems facing student with E-Book? Table (15) shows these problems. The ratio of student consensus on the existence of these problems is 72% in the following order:

- Lack of mid-term exam samples;
- Lack of final exam samples;
- No way to know student scores;
- Long time taken in downloading sources and files;
- No update of instructions;
- Deadline of project delivery on the blackboard;
- Lack of following –up course website by some instructors;
- No interaction with course instructor;
- No assessment of forum comments;
- Frequent technical problems.

Table (15) Ratio of student feedback on the problems facing E-Book

Problems	available		available to some extent		not available		consensus	
	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio	Frequency	Ratio
Long time in downlo	١٥٢	٤٢ %	١٣٥	٣٧.٥%	٧٥	٢٠.٨%	2.21	74 %

ading sources and files								
Deadline of project delivery on the blackboard	١٥٠	٤١. ٪٤	١٣٨	٣٨. ٪٢	٧٤	٢٠. ٪٤	2.21	74 %
No signboard	١٤٥	٤٠. ٪١	١٣٨	٣٨. ٪١	٧٩	٢١. ٪٨	2.18	73 %
No update of instructions	١٥١	٤١. ٪٧	١٢٩	٣٥. ٪٦	٨٢	٢٢. ٪٧	2.19	73 %
Lack of following –up course website by some instructors	١٤٠	٣٨. ٪٧	١٣٣	٣٦. ٪٧	٨٩	٢٤. ٪٦	2.14	71 %

No interaction with course instructor	١٤٠	٣٨.٧%	١٢٦	٣٤.٨%	٩٦	٢٦.٥%	2.12	71 %
Lack of session exam questions	١٤٩	٤١.٢%	١٢٦	٣٤.٨%	٨٧	٢٤ %	2.17	72 %
Lack of mid-term exam samples	١٦٤	٤٥.٣%	١١١	٣٠.٧%	٨٧	٢٤ %	2.21	74 %
Lack of final exam samples	١٦٤	٤٥.٣%	١١٣	٣١.٢%	٨٥	٢٣.٥%	2.22	74 %
No way to know student scores	١٥٤	٤٢.٣%	١٠٧	٢٩.٦%	١٠١	٢٧.٩%	2.15	72 %
No assessm	١٣٩	٣٨.٤%	١٣٣	٣٦.٧%	٩٠	٢٤.٩%	2.14	71 %

ent of forum comments								
Frequent technical problems	١٣٧	٣٧. ٨%	١٣٩	٣٨. ٤%	٨٦	٢٣. ٨%	2.14	71 %
Total	١٧٨٥	٤١ %	١٥٢٨	٣٥. ٢%	١٠٣١	٢٣. ٨%	2.17	72 %

Results' Discussion

After examining the learning, thinking, and research skills E-Book on the Blackboard in terms of problems facing utilization, the study came out with the following results:

First: E-Book Current Status

1- The number of experience years left its impact on the instructors' utilization of the E-Book in terms of activating interactive tools such as forums, discussion board, email, messages, blogs, groups, and virtual sessions;
2- Blended learning and training in smart classes is synchronized and non- synchronized where conventional training is available side by side with the E-Book. This weakened the utilization of the E-Book and required extra effort on the part of instructors;

3- Instructors referred to some positive aspects of the E-Book such as the presentations, tests, training sessions, resources of information, increase in student participation, and online delivery of projects;
4- Science track students are more qualified to use the E-Book than their Humanities counterparts. Training sessions are required for Humanities students;
5- Students said they used all E-Book elements in self-learning as well as interactive tools on the Blackboard.

Second: Problems facing students and instructors with E-Book:

1- Instructors mentioned some problems such as insufficient training for them and for students, the students' reluctance to follow E-Book updates, difficulty in downloading and operating educational programs, lack of information in the presentations, and lack of exam questions on training sessions;
2- Students mentioned some problems such as insufficient test samples for the mid-term and final exams, no access for scores, difficulty in downloading some files for mega size, lack of updated instructions, deadline of project delivery, lack of follow-up on the part of instructors with regards to course website, lack of interaction with course instructor, no assessment for participations at forums, and frequent technical problems.

Third: Instructors' suggestions to develop the E-Book

Instructors suggested more training on E-Book for them and for students, registration of participations and activities, more samples for better command of skills, attention to activities related to research and thinking, introducing activities to creative thinking,

more exposure of scientific material, increasing educational activities inside training sessions, increasing interactive activities in the E-Book, updating videos, introducing activities to presentations with time distribution for each element, increasing questions following training sessions, increasing questions for the course content, increasing exam samples, increasing the training session time, and introducing a process of technical support on line.

Conclusion

This study evaluated the effectiveness of e-books in the University Skills Course and analyzed the perspectives of first-year instructors and students. The findings provide valuable insights into the current utilization, benefits, and challenges associated with the use of e-books in educational settings, particularly through the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS). While the e-book for the University Skills Course has shown promising potential in improving learning, thinking, and research skills, its effectiveness is influenced by the level of training, the quality of content, and the availability of technical support. Addressing the identified challenges and implementing the recommended improvements can significantly enhance the educational value of e-books and ensure better integration into university curricula.

Key Findings

1- Instructors' Perspectives:

- Instructors with two years of experience showed a significantly higher ability to utilize e-books effectively inside and outside the classroom compared to those with one year of experience.

- The content of the e-book was deemed highly useful, with elements such as course descriptions, objectives, educational assignments, and virtual sessions receiving an 89% satisfaction rate.
- E-learning strategies, such as brainstorming, problem-solving, and team learning, were highly utilized and achieved an 88% satisfaction rate.
- Assessment tools, including quizzes, objective tests, and projects, were considered efficient, with an overall satisfaction rate of 85%.
- E-book management elements, such as reports on student performance and technical support, received a high satisfaction rate of 91%.
- Challenges for instructors included insufficient training on using the e-book, lack of sufficient test question samples, and the need for more interactive activities and updated content.

2- Students' Perspectives:

- Science track students demonstrated better utilization of e-books compared to Humanities students, with significant differences in their performance.
- Students reported satisfaction with various elements of the e-book, such as training sessions, course plans, and interactive tools, achieving a 76% overall satisfaction rate.
- Interactive training session elements, such as session tests and PowerPoint presentations, were highly valued, with a satisfaction rate of 79%.

- Students identified several issues, including the lack of mid-term and final exam samples, long download times, insufficient updates to instructions, and limited interaction with instructors.
- Technical problems and inconsistent follow-up by instructors also posted significant barriers to effective e-book utilization.

Study Recommendations

1- Develop Training Programs for Using Interactive E-Books: Design comprehensive training programs for both instructors and students to maximize the benefits of interactive e-books, focusing on enhancing their skills in using e-learning tools.
2- Enhance the Design of Interactive E-Books: Improve the content of interactive e-books by incorporating more diverse learning activities and providing clear instructional materials to facilitate their use.
3- Analyze Factors Affecting E-Book Utilization: Investigate the impact of factors such as instructors' teaching experience, students' technical backgrounds, and the availability of technical support on effective use of interactive e-books.
4- Strengthen Interaction Strategies Between Instructors and Students: Propose instructional strategies that enhance engagement between instructors and students through e-book tools and Learning Management Systems (LMS), such as Blackboard.

Study Suggestions

1- Preparing a study to measure the impact of e-Books on cognitive and skill learning outcomes for the Common First Year students;

2- Preparing a study to measure the impact of e-Books on the Common First-Year students' orientations;
3- Preparing a study to evaluate E-Books at the self-development skills department to identify their compliance with quality standards.
4- Investigating the role of e-books in specific skill-building courses, such as university skills courses, to determine their effectiveness in enhancing critical thinking, research, and academic writing.
5- Exploring instructors' perspectives on using e-books in course design, delivery, and assessment.
6- Examining cultural and contextual factors that influence the adoption of e-books in diverse educational settings.
7- Conducting longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of e-books on students' academic and professional skill development.

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