



● Online ISSN: 3041-8909  
March 2024 Volume 3, Issue 1

THIS ARTICLE IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT  
<https://elt.cfu.ac.ir>

**Journal Of English Language and Literature Teaching**  
a biquarterly publication to be a source for researchers and applied linguists



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**SWOT Analysis of English Online Teaching in Iran during Covid-19  
Pandemic: The Cases of High Schools and Language Institutes**

*Meisam Moghadam*<sup>1\*</sup>, *Farhad Baziar*, *Rasoul Hajizadeh*

Faculty of science, Fasa University, Fasa, Iran

English Department, Islamic Azad University, Fasa Branch, Fasa, Iran

**ABSTRACT**

**Keywords:**

SWOT analysis, language teaching, online teaching, covid-19

**Corresponding author:**

[moghaddam.m@fasau.ac.ir](mailto:moghaddam.m@fasau.ac.ir)

This study examined online teaching in Iranian high schools and institutes during the COVID-19 pandemic using SWOT analysis to assess its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A sequential mixed-methods design was used, with data collected via an open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews for triangulation. Participants included 25 Iranian EFL teachers, 25 students, and 10 staff members from various high schools and institutes in Fars Province. Results showed teachers viewed online learning as an educational advantage, while students highlighted its limitations. Staff recognized potential threats to online education. The study concluded that the pandemic exposed weaknesses in the educational system, emphasizing the need for adaptation and considering the crisis an opportunity for improvement.

ISSN (Online): [3041-8909](https://doi.org/10.22034/jelt.2024.15905.1088)

DOI: [10.22034/jelt.2024.15905.1088](https://doi.org/10.22034/jelt.2024.15905.1088)

Received: 2023-07-18  
Reviewed: 2023-08-13  
Accepted: 2023-08-24  
Pages: 144 to 176

**Citation (APA):** Moghadam, M., Baziar, F., & Hajizadeh, R. (2024). The SWOT Analysis of English Online Teaching in Iran During Covid-19 Pandemic: The Cases of High Schools and Language Institutes. *JELT Journal | Farhangian University*, 3(1), 144-176  
doi: 10.22034/jelt.2024.15905.1088



## Introduction

Before the global spread of COVID-19 (the coronavirus), offering electronic education by schools, institutes, and universities was not compulsory (Perveen, 2016); however, with the outbreak of the pandemic, a mandatory global shift from traditional face-to-face language classes to online learning classes was inevitable. Due to the negative consequences of COVID-19, all educational settings, including high schools and institutes, were required to teach students how to use online electronic classes. Accordingly, instructors were asked to use different educational platforms, such as Adobe Connect, Big Blue Bottom, or social media applications such as Telegram, WhatsApp, or YouTube.

Similarly, evaluating the efficacy of online learning and guaranteeing its quality has become essential in recent times. Since a few years ago, various studies, including those by Al-Syaidh et al. (2015) and Pervin (2016), have extensively studied and tested online teaching and learning models and their impact on students' educational uptake. The COVID-19 pandemic inspired the use of online teaching within the last year.

Moreover, evaluating and ensuring the effectiveness of online teaching and learning can provide valuable insights for future educational planning. This can be achieved through various research scenarios, one of which can be realised through strategic planning.

As a result of changes and developing conflicts in various fields around the world, strategic planning has gained much importance. Strategic planning refers to the art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that are helpful for an organization to reach its goals (Ifediora et al., 2014). Strategic planning consists of analyses, findings, and practices conducted by an organization to generate and maintain advantages. A strategic plan includes a program planning instrument that provides a framework to enhance and develop program actions, decrease weaknesses, and develop the program for future attainment (Ifediora et al. 2014). SWOT analysis is a tool for strategic planning that collects information and divides it into two categories: internal information (strengths and weaknesses) and external data (opportunities and threats) (Ifediora et al. 2014). SWOT refers to strengths, weaknesses,

opportunities, and threats. Given that online teaching in Iranian institutes and high schools is a recent phenomenon, SWOT analysis can lead to promising and enlightening findings.

However, although online teaching and learning have attracted the attention of researchers in higher education, the number of studies on them, particularly in Iran, is scant. More particularly, despite the advantages of SWOT analysis for improving any system, the researcher found no SWOT analysis of online English teaching in Iran during the COVID-19 pandemic in high schools and private institutes. Online education has just become mandatory in different educational places, including high schools and institutes. Therefore, a SWOT analysis of this issue was worth investigating so that the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of such a system would be revealed.

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study can be fruitful for EFL/ESL language learners, teachers, program designers, and policy manufacturers in implementing virtual learning within the learning courses. The study's results may motivate EFL lecturers to incorporate virtual exploitation learning, which was not initially considered an academic tool (Millard, 2010), as an additional resource both within and outside of the classroom. In Iran, many faculties and language institutes do not have language laboratories; thus, the combination of online learning and EFL teaching and learning may offer extra resources for the college systems to assist EFL learners in observing English skills by interacting with individuals, particularly with native English speakers. Given the increasing use of online teaching in academic environments worldwide, such a study is worthy of being conducted.

Furthermore, conducting such a study may yield valuable results and make essential contributions to the increased popularity and applicability of online teaching. Moreover, the results may be helpful for many stakeholders in the field, including learners, teachers, teacher educators, etc., by revealing the potential benefits of online English teaching. Further, this research helps EFL teachers, learners, and policymakers gain more data about the current state of online education in Iran during the COVID-19 pandemic in high schools and private institutes. Furthermore, this study contributes to

the English teaching database. Furthermore, this study may bridge a gap in the existing literature. Furthermore, this study reduced the research gap in SWOT analysis. Furthermore, considering the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the study aimed to enhance online instruction in Iranian high schools and institutes by identifying the vulnerabilities and threats associated with this system.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This investigation used a SWOT analysis to examine online teaching in Iranian high schools and institutes during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the following objectives in mind: a) examining the strengths of online teaching; b) examining the weaknesses of online teaching; c) examining the opportunities for online teaching; and d) examining the threats during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Research Questions**

In line with the research objectives mentioned above, the subsequent research questions are posed.

**RQ1.** What is the overall evaluation of online teaching in high schools and institutes in Iran during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?

**RQ2.** How is the overall evaluation of online teaching different in high schools and institutes in Iran during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?

### **Literature Review:**

The SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) model, a common tool in the business world, could be beneficial for academics. It assesses both external and internal factors to identify an institution's fundamental strengths and weaknesses, particularly in relation to current opportunities and threats. Employing this model can assure the strengths and spot areas for advancement. (Ifediora et al., 2014)

In this framework, strengths address the internal attributes that are beneficial to organizations to achieve future accomplishments and purposes. Weaknesses are internal attributes that are harmful to the organization's ability to achieve future

accomplishments and purposes. In addition, opportunities include the external factors that help the organization achieve future accomplishments or purposes. Furthermore, threats are external factors that may prevent an organization from achieving future goals and objectives.

Albelbisi, Al-Adwan, and Habibi (2022) investigated the acceptance of MOOCs in Malaysian universities in terms of SWOT elements perceived by learners. The quantitative research method was used, and descriptive data related to satisfaction, perceived service quality, and attitude toward the use of MOOCs were collected from the second-year undergraduate students at five universities in Malaysia. The positive results of this study indicate that students in Malaysian universities are highly interested and willing to accept MOOCs, which facilitate wider access to high-quality higher education provision. However, the weaknesses and threats faced by learners when using MOOCs include a lack of learner skills and experience, as well as the heavy workloads associated with MOOCs.

Wang, Wu, Muhedaner, and Maihemuti (2022) evaluated the SWOT factors of shifting from traditional learning to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The SWOT analysis has been used to construct 16 types of internal and external evaluation factors, as well as 4 types of improvement strategies for assessing online education.

Employing a qualitative research methodology with a descriptive approach, Aisyi and Zulkarnain (2020) aimed to determine the marketing strategy of Baitul Qur'an educational institutions. The authors utilized the EFE, IFE, and IE matrix in conjunction with the SWOT method. The results of the Baitul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School evaluation, which was based on internal and external analysis obtained from the SWOT analysis, resulted in an alternative strategy of S-O (Strength-Opportunity). We then reprocess the SWOT analysis results using the QSPM (quantitative strategic planning matrix) method, which identifies priority strategies among various alternative strategies and aids in selecting a preferred strategy. The priority strategy in this study is to optimize the use of digital marketing and other marketing technologies to support the development of Islamic boarding schools in a wider area.

In 2020, Dampson, Addai-Mununkum, Apau, and Bentil used explanatory sequential mixed methods to look into how users of the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) Learning Management Systems (LMS) felt about it using SWOT analysis. The study used questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were analyzed using means and standard deviations, independent sample t-tests, and ANOVA. The qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The study revealed that people perceive UEW LMS to possess elements of weaknesses and threats, in addition to strengths and opportunities. The study also found that LMS users differ in their perceptions of SWOT based on students' age. The students, however, did not differ significantly in their perceptions of SWOT based on gender.

Yuliana, Ahyani, and Kesumawati (2021) aimed to determine and describe the SWOT analysis and implementation of e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic at state vocational high schools. Data was collected using a questionnaire and documentation, and the SWOT model was used to analyze it. The study found that the best things about state vocational schools in Ogan Komering Ulu Regency are basic skills, high student interest, and motivation, along with diploma-level teacher education, which means that student achievement at the implementation of e-learning is very satisfying. Meanwhile, the weakness is that the students' ability to understand e-learning questions is still not optimal. The opportunity for e-learning implementation lies in the full support of the local government. The threat is that the government's curriculum frequently changes.

Employing a non-experimental descriptive study, Rezaie Rajanin and Chalak (2021) aimed to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of English teaching pages on Instagram. Twelve English teaching pages were observed because of their high number of followers, and ten active Instagram users were interviewed. The interpretative approach, frequency, and percentage were used to analyze the data. Employing the results of this study, administrators of English teaching pages can take a forward step to make their pages more beneficial and effective in the process of English teaching.

Based on the phenomenological research method and the SWOT framework, Ustabulut (2021) investigated distance education practices using the data collected from 48 instructors teaching Turkish as a foreign language in different regions of Turkey. The data were analyzed using content analysis and descriptive analysis techniques. The results showed that the strength of teaching Turkish was "flexibility in time and place," which was also regarded as an opportunity. The weakest aspect appeared to be "technical problems," while the instructors rated "lack of the classroom environment" as the biggest threat.

Tavazoei and Razmjoo (2021) attempted to evaluate the curriculum specified for TEFL students in Farhangian universities using SWOT analysis. Seven professors of Farhangian University in Mazandaran participated in this study to share their perspectives regarding the curriculum's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The findings of this study clearly demonstrated that this program suffers more from weaknesses, and there are opportunities that might act as compensation for weaknesses and threats. The significant weakness of this curriculum, as elaborated by participants, was the misplacement of courses without any observation of necessary content knowledge and pre-requisites.

Hassaskhah (2016) used SWOT analysis to identify and prioritize gaps in the current e-TEFL curriculum at one of Iran's state universities. In order to collect the required data, a SWOT questionnaire was administered to 50 students and 15 instructors or experts. The results led to ten major statements for each part of the SWOT. In addition, the scores of the external and internal factors (2.32 and 2.74, respectively) indicated that although e-TEFL has had a certain degree of success at this university, there are still a number of significant areas in need of improvement.

### **Methodology:**

#### **Research Design**

In line with the objectives of the study, a sequential mixed-approach design was used, accumulating the required data through an open-ended questionnaire in the first stage. In the second step, a semi-structured interview was administered for data triangulation. Both quantitative and qualitative phases of the study were conducted, while the

qualitative phase followed the quantitative phase. Both are of paramount importance, and none of the stages prioritizes the other.

## **Participants**

The study's participants were selected from three groups who were directly involved in the process of online teaching, and their views were very informative. The first group consisted of 25 Iranian EFL teachers (15 males and 10 females) who taught in high schools and language institutes in various cities in Fars Province. They were selected through purposive sampling from among those who had experience teaching through e-learning platforms within the last few years. They were native Persian speakers who had earned their B.A. or M.A. degrees in various English majors, and were between the ages of 30 and 45. Their teaching experience ranged from 3 to 20 years.

The second group consisted of 25 students studying English in language institutes and high schools in different cities in Fars Province (15 males and 10 males). They spoke Persian as the first language, ranging from 16 to 18 years old, and were selected through purposive sampling because all learners had the experience of being taught through online teaching. They were also informed that participation in the study was voluntary.

The final group included 10 (five males and five females) staff members, including the manager and the managing educational directors of the high schools and institutes, selected through purposive sampling since they were familiar with online learning and teaching facilities, atmosphere, and context. They had 5 to 17 years of work experience. Their education degrees were B.A. and M.A. in different fields of study.

## **Instruments**

### ***Open-ended questionnaire***

An open-ended questionnaire was adapted and used to collect the data, originally developed by Hassaskhah (2016) to do a SWOT analysis. In the original questionnaire, respondents were asked to write five statements on each component of the SWOT analysis of the e-TEFL. However, the researcher adapted it to make it appropriate for



the purpose of the study by designing the questionnaire with 28 items based on three Likert scales (agree, somewhat agree, disagree) for the components of the SWOT analysis about online English teaching in Iran during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were checked by inter-rater reliability and expert judgment, respectively.

### *Semi-structured interview*

To triangulate data, the researcher used a semi-structured interview as a complementary instrument for data collection in order to get a deep interpretation and explore the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of online teaching in Iranian high schools and language institutes. The interview was conducted online through WhatsApp. Each participant was interviewed individually. All interviews were recorded. Interviews lasted 30–45 minutes. It should be noted here that the questions were translated into Persian, the participants' native language, to avoid any ambiguity. It consisted of ten items. The interview was conducted in Persian and translated into English before transcribing it. It should be noted that nine participants (three from each group) were voluntarily interviewed because it was not practical for the researcher to interview all of them.

### **Data Collection**

The present study was carried out in three distinct phases: a pilot study, a quantitative phase of study, and a qualitative phase of study. The timeline for the data collection procedure is summarized in Table 3.1, followed by a detailed description of each phase.

**Table 1:** *Timeline for data collection procedure*

Pilot Study	•	Piloting the Questionnaire
	•	Piloting the Interview
Quantitative Phase	•	Selecting the Participants
	•	Distributing the Questionnaire by either email or in-person
	•	Analyzing the data both descriptively and inferentially
Qualitative Phase	•	Selecting the Interviewees
	•	Administrating the Online Interview
	•	Analyzing the Data Qualitatively

One of the most important parts of designing and evaluating a questionnaire is "piloting," because it allows for the detection of unforeseeable minute points and problems with the main study's instruments. Regarding this point, the researcher

designed a pilot study, whose important purpose was to allocate the time limit and find out the weaknesses of the research instruments to be eradicated in their final versions. In the pilot study, the participants had similar features to those in the main study.

The data collection for this study started with selecting the sample from the target population. The researcher then contacted the participants through social networks to introduce himself, explain the goals of his study, and kindly ask them to participate in it. In addition, they were ensured that their anonymity was observed and that the confidentiality of their private information was respected. Next, the participants were kindly asked to fill out the questionnaire and return it to the researcher through WhatsApp. Then, nine participants were voluntarily selected to answer interview questions through WhatsApp. In addition, the interviews were done in Persian. A team of five EFL university professors confirmed the questions from the interview. All interview data was audio-recorded with the consent of the participants. We then transcribed the recorded data from the interviews verbatim for analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

To analyze the data, first, the researcher read the answers to the open-ended questionnaire and the transcribed interviews several times to qualitatively analyze their content. To this end, the frequency, mean, and standard deviations of the data were calculated. For the qualitative data, thematic analysis was utilized. All the data obtained was transcribed and codified. Coding means developing concepts from raw data. A systematic guideline for data coding was adapted from Ary et al. (2014). In addition, according to the guidelines by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), the interviews were analyzed. In fact, the gathered information from interviews was transcribed, and the themes and subthemes were identified and codified by the researcher. This process was executed using an exploratory theme-based approach. This approach provided a good guideline for identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes in the raw data by which the researcher described and categorized details of the data. To assess the questionnaire's reliability, inter-rater reliability was used and reported. Moreover, the validity of the questionnaire and the interview was checked through expert judgment. To validate the results obtained from interviews, the researcher provided direct quotations from interviewees in the process of reporting the results of content analysis.

In other words, the researcher showed interviewees some parts of the analyzed interviews to see if their perceptions were the same with the extracted themes.

## Results and Discussion

To address the research questions, first, the descriptive statistics of the questionnaires for three groups of the participants were calculated and reported, separately. Table 4.1 presents the results for the teachers.

Table 2. Strengths of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers (N=25)

Strength of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Accessing anywhere, anytime	25	100	0	0	0	0	2.89	1
Saves time	22	88	2	8	1	4	2.52	5
Saves money	17	68	4	16	4	16	2.11	10
Distant learning is possible	22	88	2	8	1	4	2.87	3
Promotes retention of learning	21	84	1	4	3	12	2.62	4
Reduces cost	19	76	3	12	3	12	2.25	8
Sharing screens online	20	80	2	8	3	12	2.29	7
Less distraction	15	60	6	24	4	16	2.06	12
More focused learning	18	72	4	16	3	12	2.17	9
Convenient and flexible	19	76	3	12	3	12	2.09	11
More efficient than traditional	23	92	1	4	1	4	2.88	2
Interesting	20	80	2	8	3	12	2.35	6
<b>Overall Mean</b>			<b>2.51</b>					

Table 4.1 presents the strengths of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers. All of the teachers agreed that accessibility anywhere, anytime (100%) was the main strength of online learning, followed by efficiency compared to the traditional approaches (92%), the possibility of distant learning (88%), saving time (88%), promoting retention of learning (84%), interesting (80%), Sharing screens online (80%), reducing cost (76%), Convenient and flexible (76%), more focused learning (72%), saving money (68%); and less distraction (60%). Overall major strengths of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers include accessibility anywhere, anytime (M=2.89; Rank=1), its efficiency compared to the traditional approaches (M=2.88; Rank=2), the possibility of distant learning (M=2.87; Rank=3), promoting retention of learning (M=2.62; Rank=4), saving time (M=2.52; Rank=5), interesting (M=2.35;

Rank=6), Sharing screens online (M=2.29; Rank=7), reducing cost (M=2.25; Rank=8), more focused learning (M=2.17; Rank=9), saving money (M=2.11; Rank=10); Convenient and flexible (M=2.09; Rank=11), and less distraction (M=2.06; Rank=12).

According to Table 4.2, most of the Iranian EFL teachers agreed that the main weaknesses of online learning its dependability on network connection (96%), dependability on electricity (92%), lack of transparency in assessment (80%), not being a substitute for classroom teaching (76%), hindering social life (72%), students' inattentiveness (68%), chaos with large groups (56%), impossibility to check every student (52%), and limited assessment and feedback (72%). Actually, the overall analysis showed that Iranian EFL teachers agreed online learning cannot substitute regular classroom teaching (M=2.88; Rank=1). Most of the teachers also declared that being heavily dependent on electricity (M=2.81; Rank=2) is another weakness of online learning. For Iranian EFL teachers, students' inattentiveness (M=2.77; Rank=3), impossibility to check all students (M=2.74; Rank=4), limited assessment and feedback (M=2.72; Rank 5), being dependent on network connection (M=2.67; Rank=6), lack of transparency in assessment (M=2.65; Rank=7), hindering social life (M=2.64; Rank=8), and chaos with large groups (M=2.19; Rank=9).

**Table 3:** Weaknesses of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers (N=25)

Weakness of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
dependent on network connection	24	96	1	4	0	0	2.67	6
dependent on electricity	23	92	0	0	2	8	2.81	2
the student may not be attentive	17	68	2	8	6	24	2.77	3
teacher can't have check all	13	52	5	20	7	28	2.74	4
can't substitute classroom teaching	19	76	2	8	4	16	2.88	1
creates chaos with large groups	14	56	7	28	4	16	2.19	9
lack of transparency in assessment	20	80	4	16	1	4	2.65	7
assessment and feedback are limited	11	44	2	8	12	48	2.72	5
hinders social life	18	72	1	4	6	24	2.64	8
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.08</b>	

In addition to the strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers were calculated and reported in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Opportunities of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers (N=25)

Opportunities of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
best suited option during lockdown.	22	88	1	4	2	8	2.87	1
Provides one platform to connect students and teachers from faraway places	19	76	5	20	1	4	2.05	4
Frequent meetings	23	92	1	4	1	4	2.66	2
Gives an opportunity to student to contact teachers as and when need arises	16	64	3	12	6	24	2.47	3
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.78</b>	

As presented in Table 4.3, most of the Iranian EFL teachers believed that through online learning both teachers and students can hold frequent meetings (92%). In addition, they argued that online learning can be best-suited option during lockdown (88%). Moreover, they perceived that online learning might provide one platform to connect students and teachers from faraway places (76%). Additionally, the results indicated that online learning can give an opportunity to students to contact teachers as and when need arises (64%). Overall analysis of the opportunities of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers revealed that the teachers agreed that online learning is the best teaching and learning alternative during the lockdown as the main opportunity of the online learning (M=2.87; Rank=1). Providing frequent meetings is another opportunity perceived by Iranian EFL teachers (M=2.66; Rank=2). The participants also maintained that online learning provides an opportunity to student to contact teachers as and when need arises (M=2.47; Rank=3), and provides one platform to connect students and teachers from faraway places (M=2.05; Rank=4).

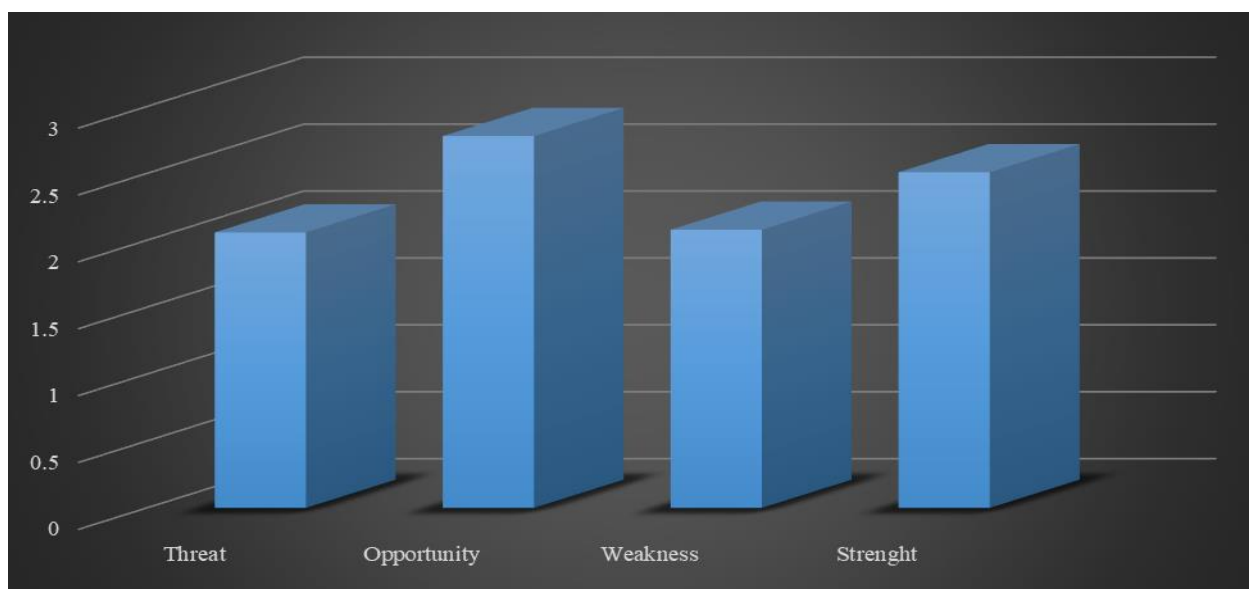
Finally, the threats of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers were gathered. The results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Threats of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers (N=25)

Threats of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Risk of cybercrime	10	40	6	24	9	36	2.09	4
May affect private life	22	88	2	8	1	4	2.39	3
Affect our eyes and overall health	14	56	5	20	6	24	2.78	1
Makes students lethargic	18	72	4	16	3	12	2.44	2
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.06</b>	

As shown in Table 4.4, the threats of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers include affecting private life (88%), making students lethargic (72%), affecting overall students' health (56%), and having the risk of cybercrime (40%). General analysis of the EFL teachers' responses indicated that the main threat of online learning by Iranian EFL teachers were affecting overall students' health ( $M=2.78$ ; Rank=1), making students lethargic ( $M=2.44$ ; Rank=2), affecting private life ( $M=2.39$ ; Rank=3), and having the risk of cybercrime ( $M=2.09$ ; Rank=4).

Figure 1 shows the analyses of the strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT) of online learning as perceived by the Iranian EFL teachers. It showed that teachers perceived opportunities of online learning for their education with a highest mean score of ( $M=2.78$ ).



**Figure 4.5:** *SWOT of online learning as perceived by the Iranian EFL teachers*

In addition to Iranian teachers' perceptions on online learning, the results for the students were also calculated. Table 4.4 reports the data obtained from the students' questionnaires.

**Table 6:** Strengths of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL students (N=25)

Strength of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Accessing anywhere, anytime	18	72	4	16	3	12	2.22	10
Saves time	22	88	2	8	1	4	2.45	6
Saves money	25	100	0	0	0	0	2.77	3
Distant learning is possible	18	72	4	16	3	12	2.23	9
Promotes retention of learning	21	84	1	4	3	12	2.62	4
Reduces cost	19	73	3	12	3	12	2.55	5
Sharing screens online	19	76	3	12	3	12	2.99	1
Less distraction	15	60	6	24	4	16	2.15	12
More focused learning	19	75	3	12	3	12	2.33	8
Convenient and flexible	14	56	7	28	4	16	2.19	11
More efficient than traditional	23	92	1	4	1	4	2.88	2
Interesting	21	84	2	8	3	12	2.35	7
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.89</b>	

Table 6 presents the strengths of online learning expressed by Iranian EFL students. Most of the students agreed that online learning leads to saving money (100%), efficiency than traditional (92%), saving time (88%), promoting retention of learning (84%), interesting (84%), Sharing screens online (76%), more focused learning (75%), reducing cost (73%), the possibility of distant learning (72%), Accessing anywhere, anytime (72%) and less distraction (%60). Actually, general major strengths of online learning perceived by Iranian EFL students consisted of Sharing screens online (M=2.99; Rank=1), its efficiency compared to the traditional approaches (M=2.88; Rank=2), saving money (M=2.77; Rank=3); promoting retention of learning (M=2.62; Rank=4), reducing cost (M=2.55; Rank=5), saving time (M=2.45; Rank=6), interesting (M=2.35; Rank=7), more focused learning (M=2.33; Rank=8), possibility of distant learning (M=2.23; Rank=9), accessibility anywhere, anytime (M=2.22; Rank=10), Convenient and flexible (M=2.19; Rank=11), and Less distraction (M=2.15; Rank=12).

Moreover, the students' perceptions for weaknesses of online learning are analyzed and shown in Table 7.

**Table 7:** Weaknesses of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL students (N=25)

Weakness of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
dependent on network connection	18	72	1	4	6	24	2.35	5
dependent on electricity	11	44	2	8	12	48	2.46	3
the student may not be attentive	24	96	1	4	0	0	2.13	7
teacher can't have check all	13	52	5	20	7	28	2.78	1
can't substitute classroom teaching	19	76	2	8	4	16	2.71	2
creates chaos with large groups	24	96	1	4	0	0	2.05	9
lack of transparency in assessment	20	80	4	16	1	4	2.08	8
assessment and feedback are limited	11	44	2	8	12	48	2.18	6
hinders social life	9	36	9	36	7	28	2.37	4
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.92</b>	

As depicted in Table 7, most of the Iranian EFL students agreed that the main weaknesses of online learning include students' inattentiveness (96%), chaos with large groups (96%), lack of transparency in assessment (80%), not being a substitute for classroom teaching (76%), its dependability on network connection (72%), impossibility to check every student (52%), dependability on electricity (44%), limited assessment and feedback (44%), and hindering social life (36%). The overall analysis showed that Iranian EFL students maintained that via online learning it is not possible for the teacher to check all students (M=2.78; Rank=1), and it cannot substitute regular classroom teaching (M=2.71; Rank=2). Most of the students also argued that being heavily dependent on electricity (M=2.46; Rank=3) is another weakness of online learning. For Iranian EFL students, hindering social life (M=2.37; Rank=4), being dependent on network connection (M=2.35; Rank=5), limited assessment and feedback (M=2.18; Rank=6), students' inattentiveness (M=2.13; Rank=7), lack of transparency in assessment (M=2.08; Rank=8), and chaos with large groups (M=2.05; Rank=9).

Along with strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL students were calculated and reported in Table 4.7.



**Table 8:** Opportunities of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL students (N=25)

Opportunities of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
best suited option during lockdown.	18	72	3	12	4	16	2.05	4
Provides one platform to connect students and teachers from faraway places	24	96	1	4	0	0	2.65	3
Frequent meetings	15	60	3	12	7	28	2.79	2
Gives an opportunity to student to contact teachers as and when need arises	17	68	5	20	3	12	2.81	1
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.13</b>	

As shown in Table 8, most of the Iranian EFL students maintained that online learning might provide one platform to connect students and teachers from faraway places (96%), online learning can give an opportunity to students to contact teachers as and when need arises (68%), best-suited option during lockdown (72%), and can hold frequent meetings (60%). Overall analysis of the opportunities of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL students showed that the students agreed that online learning provides an opportunity to student to contact teachers as and when need arises (M=2.81; Rank=1). Additionally, providing frequent meetings is another opportunity perceived by Iranian EFL teachers (M=2.79; Rank=2). Providing one platform to connect students and teachers from faraway places (M=2.65; Rank=3), and considering the online learning as the best teaching and learning alternative during the lockdown (M=2.05; Rank=4) were also the main opportunities of the online learning.

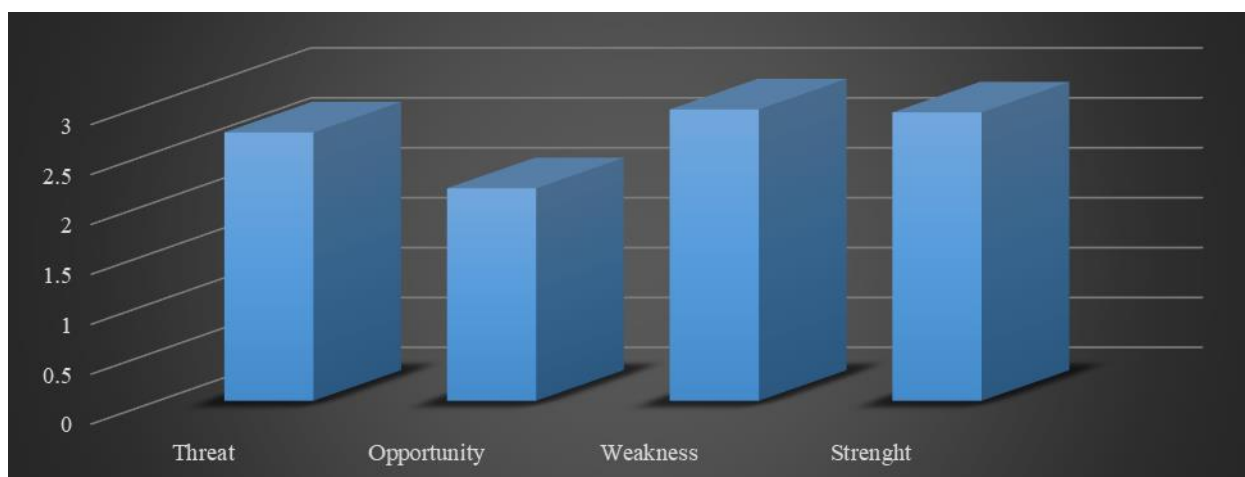
Further, the threats of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL students were gathered. The results are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9:** Threats of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL students (N=25)

Threats of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Risk of cybercrime	14	56	5	20	6	24	2.22	2
May affect private life	20	80	3	12	2	8	2.48	1
Affect our eyes and overall health	14	56	5	20	6	24	2.19	3
Makes students lethargic	15	60	3	12	7	28	2.09	4
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.69</b>	

As presented in Table 4.8, the threats of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL student are affecting private life (80%), making students lethargic (60%), affecting overall students' health (56%), and having the risk of cybercrime (56%). The analysis of the EFL students' questionnaires indicated that the main threat of online learning by Iranian EFL students were affecting private life ( $M=2.48$ ; Rank=1), having the risk of cybercrime ( $M=2.22$ ; Rank=2), affecting overall students' health ( $M=2.19$ ; Rank=3), making students lethargic ( $M=2.09$ ; Rank=4).

In addition, Figure 2 illustrates the analyses of the strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT) of online learning by the Iranian EFL students, indicating that Iranian EFL students' weaknesses of online learning for their education with a highest mean score of ( $M=2.92$ ).



**Figure 2:** *SWOT of online learning as perceived by the Iranian EFL students*

Finally, the results obtained from the staffs' data were gathered and presented. Table 10 shows the results.

**Table 10:** Strengths of online learning as perceived by Iranian Staffs (N=25)

Strength of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Accessing anywhere, anytime	19	76	3	12	3	12	2.89	1
Saves time	15	60	6	24	4	16	2.53	8
Saves money	17	68	4	16	4	16	2.72	4
Distant learning is possible	22	88	2	8	1	4	2.09	12
Promotes retention of learning	21	84	1	4	3	12	2.88	2
Reduces cost	22	88	2	8	1	4	2.57	6
Sharing screens online	20	80	2	8	3	12	2.19	11
Less distraction	14	56	5	20	6	24	2.32	10
More focused learning	20	80	3	12	2	8	2.55	7
Convenient and flexible	17	68	4	16	4	16	2.67	5
More efficient than traditional	23	92	1	4	1	4	2.87	3
Interesting	22	88	2	8	1	4	2.33	9
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.42</b>	

Table 10 illustrates the strengths of online learning by Iranian EFL staffs. Most of the staffs agreed that efficiency compared to the traditional approaches (92%), and the possibility of distant learning (88%), reducing cost (88%), and interesting (88%) were the main strengths of online learning, followed by promoting retention of learning (84%), Sharing screens online (80%), more focused learning (80%), accessibility anywhere, anytime (76%), saving money (68%); Convenient and flexible (68%), saving time (60%), and less distraction (56%). Then, overall major strengths of online learning by Iranian staffs consist of accessibility anywhere, anytime (M=2.89; Rank=1), promoting retention of learning (M=2.88; Rank=2) its efficiency compared to the traditional approaches (M=2.87; Rank=3), saving money (M=2.72; Rank=4), Convenient and flexible (M=2.67; Rank=5), reducing cost (M=2.57; Rank=6), more focused learning (M=2.55; Rank=7), saving money (M=2.53; Rank=8); interesting (M=2.33; Rank=9), less distraction (M=2.32; Rank=10), Sharing screens online (M=2.19; Rank=11), and the possibility of distant learning (M=2.09; Rank=12). Moreover, the weaknesses of online learning by Iranian EFL staffs were calculated.

**Table 11: Weaknesses of online learning as perceived by Iranian Staffs (N=25)**

Weakness of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
dependent on network connection	19	76	5	20	1	4	2.61	4
dependent on electricity	24	96	1	4	0	0	2.44	6
the student may not be attentive	15	60	3	12	7	28	2.27	9
teacher can't have check all	17	68	5	20	3	12	2.88	1
can't substitute classroom teaching	20	80	3	12	2	8	2.38	7
creates chaos with large groups	17	68	4	16	4	16	2.29	8
lack of transparency in assessment	23	92	1	4	1	4	2.77	2
assessment and feedback are limited	11	44	2	8	12	48	2.46	5
hinders social life	18	72	3	12	4	16	2.73	3
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.39</b>	

According to Table 12, most of the Iranian staffs pointed out that the main weaknesses of online learning include dependability on electricity (96%), lack of transparency in assessment (92%), being a substitute for classroom teaching (80%), its dependability on network connection (76%), hindering social life (72%), impossibility to check every student (68%), chaos with large groups (68%), students' inattentiveness (60%), and limited assessment and feedback (44%). The overall analysis indicated that Iranian staffs agreed by online learning teachers cannot check all students (M=2.88; Rank=1), lack of transparency in assessment (M=2.77; Rank=2), hindering social life (M=2.64; Rank=3), being dependent on network connection (M=2.61; Rank=4), limited assessment and feedback (M=2.46; Rank 5), being heavily dependent on electricity (M=2.44; Rank=6), not being a substitute regular classroom teaching (M=2.38; Rank=7), chaos with large groups (M=2.29; Rank=8), and students' inattentiveness (M=2.27; Rank=9).

Additionally, the opportunities of online learning by Iranian staffs were calculated and reported in Table 13.

**Table 13:** *Opportunities of online learning as perceived by Iranian staffs*  
(N=25)

Opportunities of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
best suited option during lockdown.	13	52	5	20	7	28	2.19	4
Provides one platform to connect students and teachers from faraway places	21	84	4	16	0	0	2.81	1
Frequent meetings	11	44	6	24	8	32	2.65	2
Gives an opportunity to student to contact teachers as and when need arises	10	40	10	40	5	20	2.33	3
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.04</b>	

As seen in Table 13, most of the Iranian staffs believed that online learning might provide one platform to connect students and teachers from faraway places (84%). In addition, they argued that online learning is best-suited option during lockdown (52%), and through online learning both teachers and students can hold frequent meetings (44%). Moreover, online learning can give an opportunity to students to contact teachers as and when need arises (40%). Overall analysis of the opportunities of online learning by Iranian staffs indicated they agreed that online learning provides an opportunity to student to contact teachers as and when need arises (M=2.81; Rank=1), providing frequent meetings (M=2.65; Rank=2), giving an opportunity to student to contact teachers as and when need arises (M=2.33; Rank=3), and being best teaching and learning alternative during the lockdown (M=2.19; Rank=4).

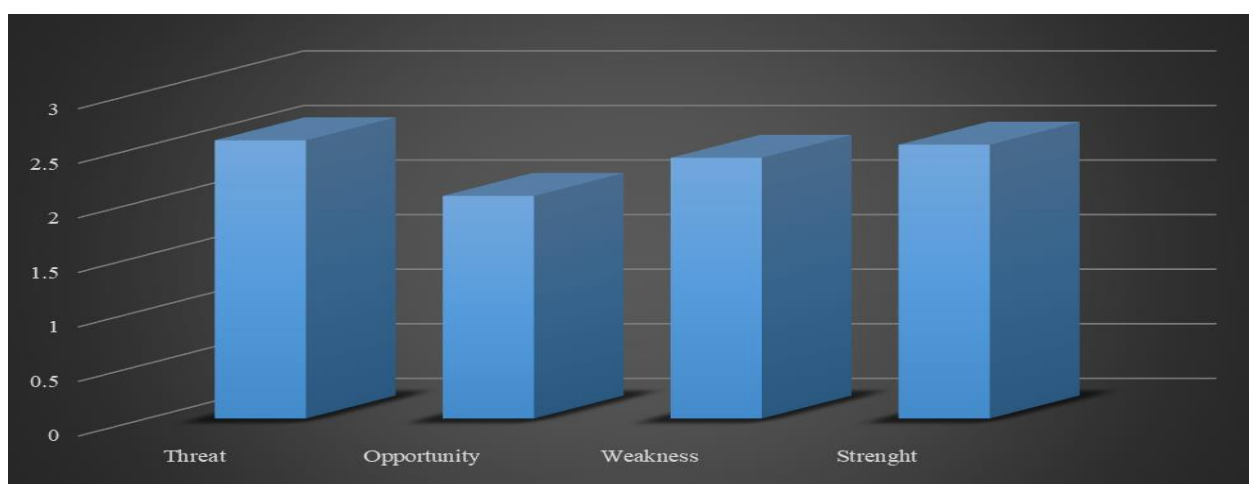
Finally, the threats of online learning as perceived by Iranian staffs were gathered. The results are presented in Table 14.

**Table 14:** *Threats of online learning as perceived by Iranian EFL staffs (N=25)*

Threats of Online Learning	Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Mean*	Rank
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Risk of cybercrime	14	56	5	20	6	24	2.56	3
May affect private life	11	44	2	8	12	48	2.34	4
Affect our eyes and overall health	17	68	5	20	3	12	2.87	2
Makes students lethargic	10	40	6	24	9	36	2.93	1
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>2.55</b>	

As shown in Table 4.12, the threats of online learning declared Iranian staffs include affecting overall students' health (68%), having the risk of cybercrime (56%), affecting private life (44%), and making students lethargic (40%). General analysis of Iranian staffs revealed that the main threats of online learning were making students lethargic (M=2.93; Rank=1), affecting overall students' health (M=2.87; Rank=2), having the risk of cybercrime (M=2.56; Rank=3), and affecting private life (M=2.34; Rank=4).

Eventually, Figure 3 shows SWOT of online learning as perceived by the Iranian staffs. It indicated that staffs perceived threats of online learning for their education with a highest mean score of (M=2.55).

**Figure 3:** *SWOT of online learning as perceived by the Iranian staffs*

**Results gleaned from the qualitative phase (interview)**

The examination of the interviews demonstrated that most of the participants asserted that the application of the online education system brought about the different reactions and images of the scholars and educators of English studies in Iranian high schools and universities. One of the participants asserted that:

*"In my opinion, online coursework is acceptable so that the scholars are at home training on something, just an impediment if there is coursework but the lecture/discussion time does not exist. Moreover, network and internet allocations are not available to us to get. In accumulation, some investigators are just less able to articulate well because over the internet, and occasionally the network is aggravating for them".*

In expansion, the participants contended that it was apparent that they fully advocated the online teaching system as an instrument to assist scholars in learning exceeding the standard model, such as face to face in class. They also contended that students are trained to get used to working Internet-based and paperless with an exhilarating online language-learning environment. They also argued that Iranian teachers and researchers would achieve new vocabulary and information and technology domains. When they graduate in the future, they will no longer experience hardships using the highest applications in education and teaching. They extremely appreciated the lecture online. Nonetheless, the concern is with Internet access. The issue is the availability of Internet networks and the financial capability of some researchers. As one of the scholars stated:

*"The financial necessity is one restriction of online application. In extra, there is no installation to supply or exemplify the material. Scholars sense it as a very problematic thing to comprehend the material and instruction of lectures".*

Moreover, the participants considered that individual tasks are more reasonable to maintain distance in online education physically. Nonetheless, the investigation of this group is done online but is not practical due to speaking indirectly, for illustration, face to face. Besides, most of them adopted a positive attitude concerning the scholars' assumptions. They defined online instruction as an excellent

self-learning tool for several explanations. For example, they considered online teaching range was proper, practical, and connected to their daily lives.

Similarly, when the participants transmitted their concepts and experiences, they also mentioned that online teaching content was appropriate for their current level. Most interviewees stated that they did not encounter any problems with online teaching. However, some of them shared the difficulties and problems when using online education. They argued that generated the most significant problem from the technical infrastructure characteristic. Some indicated that the system did not work for every web reader. Thus, the circumstances concerned the implementation of the researchers and the instructors. According to the interviewees, technical concerns of online instruction may influence the success of self-learning for the participants. Similarly, they suggested that self-learning may evolve another hardship for the participants to follow the weekly schedule regularly. In expansion, they contended that we discussed online instruction worldwide, and we too determined to try that out. Nonetheless, scientists showed the crisis of the time limit that arrives with online education; we have learned to deal with that too. In reaction to any facility, such as a workshop for training online technology, the investigators suggested that only a few educational compromises took care of the online training technology to manage any concerns that may come up during online education. One of the investigators asserted that:

*"In our institute, we are all learning from each other and discovering ways of employing technology to improve learning and change the dynamics of the class thoroughly."*

The participants had distinct personal beliefs concerning the practical contents of online education as an initiative. They deliberated on several parts of online instruction. The outcomes of the interviewees suggested that most of them preferred the effectiveness of online instruction for words and reading, speaking, listening, besides for writing and grammar. When learning more vocabulary, the reading understanding would enrich simultaneously. They also noted the helpfulness of the articulation function. They can be due to the genuineness of the materials delivered by online education. The comprehensive examination of the interviews demonstrated that most of them had positive images of employing online education programs in EFL contexts. The



developments also demonstrated that they approvingly perceived the usefulness of practicing and enhancing their language skills, specifically listening skills. They also relatively perceived online education effectiveness for practicing other skills like speaking and pronunciation. So means that the online teaching program allowed learners to mimic words and phrases that they may be shy or not convinced adequately to say under normal circumstances. One of them said:

*"Online education program is suitable for rehearsing my speaking and pronunciation skills since I do not have other English speakers to practice speaking English. Nonetheless, I cannot contend in discussion with it".*

Further, the scholars' assumption of online education effectiveness for reading skills was heightened. This determination was conducted on how EFL investigators could recognize words phrases, string them into sentences, and read them to enhance their reading skills. One respondent stated how practical and challenging online education program was:

*"The reading textbooks in the online teaching program are reasonable; it is attractive and contesting at the same time because the words in the passages are occasionally at my level or beyond my existing level of data. Nonetheless, I sometimes do not understand the context of the passage".*

Nonetheless, the researchers argued that the writing skill had a below lowest advancement via online education. What could account for this may be students' incapability to involve the writing proficiency to form appropriate articles in such context. They also sensed the grammar description as either inadequate or unclear and straightforward enough in online teaching programs. One of them believed:

*"The program is useful for sweetening other English language skills but not writing and grammar data because there is error modification feedback. Occasionally, I do not know which part of the sentence is ungrammatical, so I become disconnected."*

The learner interviewees were also concerned about their issues during the online teaching program. One of them suggested that:

*"I like the online education program because it is convenient and satisfying. The range is also easy to understand, and I can use it anytime as I prefer but not when the internet association is down".*

Another respondent also commented:

*“The program is perfect and easy for learning English, specifically because it contains tips and stunts to enhance my English language. Nevertheless, if the internet connection is poor, moving to the following address is demanding”.*

The pupils perceived that pursuing the program was not demanding. They may be because the learners were technologically professional in pursuing the program. An interviewee answered:

*“What drives online education easy to use is that I can forget any action of my choice since I am not obliged to obey the activities systematically. I periodically select an exercise I enjoy if I find the present one uninteresting, problematic, or too easy to do”.*

Another concern with online teaching activities is that most researchers see the answer keys before the tasks. The determinations also demonstrated that the trainees often conferred the answer key when they illustrated an activity wrong. This determination sustains learners' inconsistency due to the hardship level of the task or students' English language proficiency. Similarly, most researchers claimed that their English reading understanding, vocabulary, phrases, slang, and idioms enhanced, and online teaching facilitated reading articles and paragraphs easier than previously. They also suggested that learning English via online education could strengthen their listening and writing proficiency. In sum, the interviewees suggested that the COVID-19 pandemic illustrated the shortcomings of the online educational system. One of the participants discussed:

*“The teachers look at it as a threat, do not do anything, do not take it seriously, and let go of it. This will destroy everything. The second option is to look at it as an opportunity and learn from it”.*

In sum, the analysis of the interviews presented main themes for SWOT. Table 4.3 shows the themes.

**Table 15:** *The main themes related to SWOT obtained from the interviews*

	<i>External Factors</i>		<i>Internal Factors</i>	
	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Themes	<i>Adaptiveness, History tracking, Flexible schedule, Social Networking</i>	<i>Technical Infrastructure Pace of technical changes suitable online curriculum</i>	Accessibility Self-paced learning Friendly environment	Low Internet Speed Low quality of system Inefficient applications

## Discussion

The present study investigated the comprehensive assessment of online teaching in high schools and institutes in Iran during the COVID-19 pandemic, examining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from the perspectives of educators, students, and administrators using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The first research query explored the overall assessment of online teaching in these educational settings during the pandemic, focusing on its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The findings revealed that Iranian EFL teachers perceived opportunities for online learning as a significant advantage, while EFL students highlighted weaknesses. Additionally, staff members considered threats in the context of online learning. These results are consistent with the observations of Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2020) and other researchers who have emphasized the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in the field of education, including the need for adaptation to new teaching methods and unfamiliarity with technology (Maggio et al., 2018). This unexpected situation has provided an opportunity to reconsider and reform preparation and schooling, presenting advantages such as easy access to classes from anywhere at any time, synchronous and asynchronous interactions with peers, immediate feedback on assessments and students' progress, and flexibility that traditional educational systems lack (Alves et al., 2017). It is a new path that should be embraced.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the second research inquiry examined the disparities in the overall assessment of online teaching in high schools and institutes in Iran. The results indicated that the primary elements, such as the opportunities for online teaching in high schools and institutes, were rated the highest. Additionally, Iranian staff members mentioned the dangers associated with online teaching. Based on these findings, it is contended that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the

inadequacies of our educational system, necessitating adaptation to new conditions and presenting an opportunity for reform. Participants expressed their belief in a 'new normal', a term coined and utilized by Flores and Swennen (2020), signifying the need to accept and wisely adjust to the conditions brought about by COVID-19 and to transform the threats and challenges into opportunities. Participants viewed this period as an opportunity to critically examine educational systems, identifying their weaknesses and strengths and reforming them if they were not functioning effectively. Some participants suggested that it could be an opportunity for innovation and skill development. They added that the COVID-19 pandemic had transformed some teachers into more aware and astute educators as they innovated and created new methods that facilitated teaching and learning. According to Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenge for the well-being of communities, but it should be regarded as an opportunity for online educational and instructional settings. As the findings revealed, there was a shift from anomaly to congruence, characterized by technology integration, teacher training, identity (re)construction, and formative assessment. We can consider and designate the shift as an opportunity because it enables us to bridge the gap and reach points of agreement, i.e., harmony and/or congruence. According to Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2020), COVID-19 has provided us with the opportunity to reconsider and reform preparation and schooling. It is a new path that we should embrace.

At the outset, as previously noted, there was a significant amount of unpredictability and uncertainty, and the learners involved were unsure about what actions to take. Factors such as the unsuitability and insufficiency of available online teaching platforms, the digital illiteracy of both learners and educators, limited access to high-speed internet and poor connectivity, high costs and internet disruptions, the limited purchasing power of some individuals, learners' and teachers' lack of motivation and reluctance to participate in online classes, reduced interaction and engagement in online classes, and inadequate class management by teachers were some of the factors contributing to the prevailing uncertainties. Several of these factors have been discussed in earlier studies. For instance, previous research has highlighted issues such as the poor online teaching infrastructure and knowledge gaps among learners and teachers (Zhang et al., 2020), the resistance of some teachers and faculty members to embrace new

teaching methodologies, and their lack of proficiency in utilizing technology (Huber & Helm, 2020; O'Brien et al., 2020; Maggio et al., 2018). This study also demonstrated that the COVID-19 pandemic presented an obligatory opportunity for teachers to readily accept, engage with, and adapt to the current state of education in general and language teacher education in particular, which is predominantly online. Their acceptance, engagement, and adaptation may lead to the construction and reconstruction of their professional identities. In other words, teachers invented and reinvented their identities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This aligns with the assertion put forth and emphasized by Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2020), Dvir and Schatz-Oppenheimer (2020), and Kumaravadivelu (2012), who argue that teachers need to adjust their beliefs, values, and inclinations to transform and critically examine their teaching selves. Additionally, the need for attitudinal shifts and adaptation to online teaching and its practicality is put forth and emphasized by Ahmady et al. (2020), König et al. (2020), Liguori & Winkler (2020), and Maggio et al. (2018).

### **Conclusions and Implications**

The current study examined the overall evaluation of online teaching in high schools and institutes in Iran during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from the viewpoints of teachers, learners, and administrators, both qualitatively and quantitatively. The results showed Iranian EFL teachers perceived *the opportunities* of online learning for their education as a significant advantage for online learning. Conversely, the results revealed that Iranian EFL students emphasized the drawbacks of online learning for their educational purposes. However, the findings revealed that staff considered threats to online learning in education. Based on the results, it is argued that the COVID-19 pandemic revealed that our educational system is not strong enough, and it needs to adapt itself to new conditions and consider the pandemic as an opportunity.

With respect to the implications, it should be noted that most participants showed positive perceptions of the integration of affective online teaching in education. However, some of the participants were not cognizant of the effectiveness of integrating online teaching. Thus, students ought to be given training in technology. Instructors should participate in online communities to discuss their teaching concepts and

challenges. Online discussion teams and communities provide a fantastic opportunity for academics to have access to data about teaching and their skill development. The final implication is directed at syllabus designers. The next generation of academic ELT textbooks should meet the desires of EFL teachers and incorporate their data on online teaching into the textbook content. Furthermore, material developers should be aware of the significance of online teaching in order to provide EFL learners and academics with the most up-to-date teaching data.

**References:**

Ahmady, S., Shahbazi, S., & Heidari, M. (2020). Letter to the editor: Transition to virtual learning during the Coronavirus disease–2019 crisis in Iran: Opportunity or challenge? *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*, 14(3), 1-2.

Aisyi, G. R. & Zulkarnain, L. (2020). Swot Analysis in An Educational Institution (Case Study: Baitul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School, Depok), *Jurnal Ekonomi dan Perbankan Syariah*, 8(1), 85- 101.

Albelbisi, N. A., AL-Adwan, A. S., Habibi, A. (2022). Swot Analysis on Acceptance of Mooc Malaysian Higher Education: The Learners' Perspective. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education-TOJDE*, 23(1).

Al-Syaidh, N., Masa'deh, R., & Al-Zu'bi, Z. (2014). Transformational leadership and its impact on the effectiveness of employees' behavior in the public and private Jordanian hospitals. *Jordan Journal of Business Administration*, 11(1), 23-57.

Alves, P., Miranda, L., & Morais, C. (2017). The influence of virtual learning environments in students' performance. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(3), 517-527. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.050325>

Chen, L., Zhang, R., & Liu, C. (2014). Listening strategy use and influential factors in Web-based computer assisted language learning. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 30(3), 207-219.

Dampson, D. G., Addai-Mununkum, R., Apau, S. K., & Bentil, J. (2020). COVID-19 and Online Learning: A SWOT Analysis of Users' Perspectives on Learning Management System of University of Education, Winneba, Ghana, *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19(9), 382-401.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Hyler, M. E. (2020). Preparing educators for the time of COVID and beyond. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 457-465. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.181696>

Dvir, N., & Schatz-Oppenheimer, O. (2020). Novice teachers in a changing reality. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 639-656. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821360>

Flores, M. A., & Swennen, A. (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on teacher education. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 453-456. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1824253>

Hassaskhah, J. (2016). A SWOT analysis of e- TEFL curriculum: A case study. *Iranian Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 5(1), 114-132.

Hassaskhah, J. (2016). A SWOT Analysis of e-TEFL Curriculum: A Case Study. *Iranian Journal of English for Academic Purposes (IJEAP)*, 5(1), 114-132.

Huber, S. G., & Helm. C. (2020). COVID-19 and schooling: Evaluation, assessment, and accountability in times of crises—reacting quickly to explore key issues for policy, practice, and research with the school barometer. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Accountability*, 32, 237–270. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-020-09322-y>.

Ifediora, C., Idoko, O., & Nzekwe, J. (2014). Organization’s stability and productivity: the role of SWOT analysis an acronym for strength, weakness, opportunities and threat. *International Journal of Innovative and Applied Research*, 2(9), 23-32.

König, J., Jäger-Biela, D. J., & Glutsch, N. (2020). Adapting to online teaching during COVID-19 school closure: Teacher education and teacher competence effects among early career teachers in Germany. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 608-622. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1809650>

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). *Language teacher education for a global society*. Taylor & Francis.

Liguori, E., & Winkler, C. (2020). From offline to online: Challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurship education following the COVID-19 pandemic. *Entrepreneurship Education and Pedagogy*, 3(4), 346-51. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2515127420916738>.

Maggio, L. A., Daley, B. J., Pratt, D. D., & Torre, D. M. (2018). Honoring thyself in the transition to online teaching. *Academic Medicine*, 93(8), 1129-1134. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000002285>

O’Brien, W., Adamakis, M., O’ Brien, N., Onofre, M., Martins, J., Dania, A., Makopoulou, K., Herold, F., Ng, K., & Costa, J. (2020). Implications for European physical education teacher education during the COVID-19 pandemic: A cross-institutional SWOT analysis. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 503-522. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1823963>



Perveen, A. (2016). Synchronous and asynchronous e-language learning: A case study of virtual university of Pakistan. *Open Praxis*, 8(1), 21-39.

Rezaie Rajanin, F. & Chalak, A. (2021). A SWOT Analysis of Instagram English Teaching Pages, *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Translation Studies*, 6(3), 25-44.

Tavazoei, M., & Razmjoo, S.A. (2021). A SWOT analysis of Farhangian university TEFL program. *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 13(2), 19-32.

Ustabulut, M. Y. (2021). SWOT Analysis for the Distance Education Process of Lecturers Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language, *Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research*, 16(1), 139-152.

Wang, H., Wu, J., Muhedaner, M. & Maihemuti, S. (2022). College Students Online Education Evaluation Through SWOT Analysis During COVID-19, *IEEE Access*, 10, 88371-88385.

Yuliana, D., Ahyani, N., & Kesumawati, N. (2021). Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, volume 565, *Proceedings of the International Conference on Education Universitas PGRI Palembang (INCoEPP 2021)*

Zhang, W., Wang, Y., Yang, L., & Wang, C. H. (2020). Suspending classes without stopping learning: China's education emergency management policy in the COVID-10 outbreak. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 13(58), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm13030055>