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REVITALIZING THE EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE POST-
PANDEMIC: AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGES AND
ISSUES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract:

This study focuses on teaching and learning (T&L) comprehension, examining the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education. Due to the pandemic, especially COVID-19, the study analyzes online sources, identifying significant impacts, such as the shift to online T&L during the Movement Control Order (PKP) enforced by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) and Ministry of Higher Education (KPT). Post-pandemic, the study explores knowledge dissemination methods in educational institutions following the termination of movement control orders in early 2022. This paper addresses several issues, including (i) educational institution preparedness to facilitate the T&L process, (ii) the role of face-to-face education in nurturing students' soft skills, (iii) the recovery of the teaching and learning system post-pandemic, and (iv) the advantages and disadvantages of digital learning. The research findings reveal that efforts to restructure the handling of T&L have been carried out extensively, following the recommendations of the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) at the national level and the World Health Organization (WHO) at the international level. Additionally, educational institutions at various levels have offered various educational alternatives and facilities to

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ensure the continuity of education and the production of high-quality graduates poised to contribute to various sectors with the potential to revitalize the nation's economy post-Movement Control Order (PKP) since 2020. The research results indicate that in the post-pandemic era, face-to-face education is demanded by the community, as it is perceived as the most effective method for imparting knowledge and honing an individual's soft skills. Recommendations focus on addressing student absenteeism during home-based T&L (PdPR) for post-pandemic T&L recovery, allowing students to revisit subjects as preparation for assessments. The Ministry of Education introduced online learning during the Movement Control Order (PKP), with an evaluation of digital media's effectiveness and shortcomings. This evaluation is crucial for rapid improvements in the post-pandemic education system, assessing digital learning's effectiveness as an alternative method.

Keywords:

Post-Pandemic, Teaching, And Learning (T&L), Soft Skills, Digital Learning, Face-To-Face Learning

Introduction

The background study of this research centers on an in-depth exploration of teaching and learning (T&L), focusing on its comprehension and examining the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the educational framework. Against the backdrop of the pandemic, particularly the impact of COVID-19, the study critically analyzes online sources. It sheds light on significant consequences, notably the shift towards online T&L prompted by the Movement Control Order (PKP) enforced by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) and Ministry of Higher Education (KPT). Subsequently, the research investigates knowledge dissemination approaches in educational institutions, addressing various aspects, including institutional readiness, the role of face-to-face education, post-pandemic T&L recovery, and the assessment of digital learning's advantages and disadvantages.

Issue 1: Educational Institution Preparedness to Facilitate the T&L Process,

Institutional Preparedness as a Catalyst for the Teaching and Learning Process Educational institutions play a pivotal role as the education sector gradually returns to face-to-face operations following the post-pandemic relaxation measures announced by the government in early 2022 (Othman, Mokhtar, & Esa, 2022a). Previously, during the wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the imposition of movement restrictions, both domestically and internationally, had a profound impact on the education sector. Early childhood education, primary, secondary, higher education, public and private, international, vocational, and special education, were all conducted entirely online using various applications (Mokhtar et al., 2021). Practical activities were even carried out through video sharing, depriving students of the opportunity to apply their skills practically. This presents a significant challenge and a loss, as students miss out on valuable hands-on experience that can be applied in their future careers.

The phased reopening of educational institutions requires the implementation of standard operating procedures (SOP) to ensure the smooth execution of the Teaching and Learning (T&L) process while maintaining a safe environmental health standard. The term "catalyst" underscores the essential role institutions must play in this regard because without the necessary facilities, knowledgeable educators, and cooperative staff, the opportunities for effective T&L would be limited (Tobi et al., 2021).

In the post-pandemic era, students and learners must undergo various changes in how T&L is executed to ensure they do not fall behind in receiving educational input and can excel in assessments (Ealangov & Jamaludin, 2022). This is particularly pertinent in higher education institutions, where numerous courses require practical knowledge and the assessment of practical skills. In the age of digitalization, educational institutions must transition and ensure that students can adapt to the changes brought about by the Ministry of Education (KPM) and the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT) during the Covid-19 pandemic (Abdillah & Musa, 2021). Academic achievement within the classroom is influenced by teaching methods, whereas an improvement in academic performance during online classes is influenced by internet accessibility, parental support, and the motivation to explore new knowledge using a 21st-century educational approach involving technology (Mohd Shukri & Md Yunus, 2021). Moreover, there is a need to emphasize the welfare and comfort of international students and students with disabilities, whether they are pursuing their education online or in person. Furthermore, an assessment of the effectiveness of e-learning is required to address the challenges and issues faced by various educational institutions in producing high-quality graduates. It is undeniable that the main issues and challenges faced by teachers in implementing e-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic are technology literacy skills, internet access, and parental readiness for e-learning (Abu Bakar & Mohamad Nasri, 2021).

Issue 2: The Role of Face-to-Face Education in Nurturing Students' Soft Skills,

Face-to-Face Education as a Driver of Student Soft Skills The passage of time has brought the world into an endemic phase after successfully managing the Covid-19 pandemic, which had afflicted the globe for several years, claiming millions of lives worldwide. Endemic refers to a condition in which a country faces a high daily incidence of cases over an extended period (Ahmad, 2021). During the endemic phase, the education sector, just like other economic sectors, must reopen in compliance with the regulations established by the Ministry of Health Malaysia (KKM) to control the spread of infectious diseases. Consequently, the issue of soft skills, which refer to the abilities possessed by students, takes center stage. Soft skills primarily encompass students' generic skills and their mastery of various other elements such as technical skills, generic skills, entrepreneurial skills, and critical thinking skills (Zulkifeli, Mohd Ishar & Abdul Hamid, 2022). The mastery of soft skills is emphasized throughout a student's academic journey, as it greatly assists them in securing employment. Soft skills can be considered as a set of skills that graduates should possess before entering a more challenging job market (Ramzy Rameshan & Hamzah, 2022). By mastering soft skills, graduates gain a competitive advantage and can market themselves effectively to potential employers compared to candidates lacking soft skills.

The mastery of soft skills can be enhanced through participation in extracurricular activities, sports, games, and community activities organized by both schools and external parties. These activities enable students to acquire various skills, such as leadership, problem-solving, and decision-making skills, and provide them with a wealth of both positive and negative experiences that contribute to their personal growth and development (Sidik, Awang & Ahmad, 2018). Typically, face-to-face learning is a critical factor in fostering soft skills in students and plays a significant role in producing high-quality graduates with strong soft skills. It is evident that face-to-face education can help improve students' mastery of soft skills, which are highly valued and evaluated by future employers. The mastery of soft skills instills confidence in employers when selecting suitable candidates who can perform their job responsibilities without error.

Issue 3: The Recovery of The Teaching and Learning System Post-Pandemic,

Recovery of the Teaching and Learning System Post-Pandemic Following the declaration by the World Health Organization (WHO) classifying the disease as a pandemic and naming it Corona Virus Disease 2019 or Covid-19, both lifestyle norms and the Teaching and Learning (T&L) processes have evolved due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the implementation of Movement Control Orders (PKP). This is substantiated by UNESCO, which reported that more than 138 countries worldwide suspended the operations of educational institutions, while others closed certain regions (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a). Moreover, approximately 1.5 billion students from over 165 countries were unable to continue their schooling due to Covid-19 (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a). The closure of schools has had a significant impact on education, affecting nearly 80% of students worldwide, Malaysia included (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a). Nevertheless, the current situation has improved, as the pandemic has prompted the digitalization of educational materials and a futuristic educational system theme, both vital for the recovery of education, particularly in revamping the T&L system. Within this context, it is essential to recognize that teachers play the most significant role in the post-pandemic education system's recovery.

This is emphasized due to the fact that, according to the Education Act of 1996, teachers are individuals who impart knowledge to students in educational institutions and provide or develop educational materials. Clearly, teachers serve as role models for students in the learning process. However, it is undeniable that teachers must be innovative to enhance their teaching and pedagogical practices in the classroom (Mokhtar et al., 2021). As known, teachers fall under the purview of the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM). Thus, effective governance is crucial in a nation to oversee the recovery of the T&L system post-pandemic. Efficient governance ensures systematic control of all national affairs, where laws can be established and adhered to more effectively. Legislation and regulations can be enacted to control teachers to ensure the production of high-quality education and educators. It is evident that effective governance is crucial in addressing the challenges and issues in the education sector. The question remains: What steps will be proposed after reviewing various readings to revitalize the education system, and what challenges will various stakeholders face in its implementation? A holistic solution will be explored in depth.

Issue 4: The Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Learning.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Learning the Covid-19 pandemic has presented numerous challenges and difficulties to people across the globe over the course of two years. During this period, various sectors, including the economic, political, and educational fields, faced significant disruptions. Education encountered several issues, as students and educators could not physically attend schools due to the implementation of Movement Control Orders (PKP) by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) (Ationg et al., 2021). As a result, traditional teaching and learning methods were modified into a new paradigm, with digitalization serving as the primary vehicle for education. Digital learning refers to a method of acquiring educational content for online or face-to-face learning through wired or wireless networks (Aziz, 2019). The aim of digital learning is to encourage active engagement by students to achieve defined learning outcomes (Othman et al., 2021a). The digitalization of learning materials is essential in today's society. Technology now assists individuals in searching, gathering, and analyzing the information they need. For example, all educators and students use various applications for teaching and learning, such as Google Meet, Google Classroom, WhatsApp, Telegram, Microsoft Teams, and more. All these applications

necessitate technological tools like computers, tablets, and smartphones to support the learning process, ensuring that teaching and learning can be conducted systematically.

Furthermore, practical teaching strategies can be enhanced by combining current teaching methods and leveraging the advantages of digital learning to achieve teaching effectiveness (Aziz, 2019). However, during the period of digital learning, both advantages and disadvantages have been evident. All students, whether in school or higher education institutions, as well as educators, need to learn to use technology, as this mode of learning is relatively new and modern in the field of education. Most students do not understand how online learning is conducted, and many face various problems, such as financial issues and slow internet connectivity. All these issues must be addressed by the relevant authorities, as they can hinder the teaching and learning process. Digital learning differs from face-to-face learning in that face-to-face teaching allows immediate clarification of doubts or areas of confusion. In contrast, online learning may pose various challenges, as educators cannot manage all students effectively online. Digital learning has become an essential channel for technological advancement within the nation, as technology tools are indispensable for today's society.

Literature Review

The literature review delves into key issues surrounding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning (T&L). These include educational institution readiness, the significance of face-to-face education in fostering students' soft skills, the post-pandemic recovery of the T&L system, and an evaluation of the pros and cons of digital learning. Existing scholarly works and research findings in these areas form the foundation for a comprehensive exploration, providing insights into the challenges and strategies associated with each facet, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the evolving educational landscape.

Issue 1: The Preparedness of Educational Institutions as a Catalyst for the Teaching and Learning Process

Education stands as a vital social pillar, essential for nurturing an exemplary society, grounded in the National Philosophy of Education. The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic has cast a shadow over the entirety of educational institutions, where traditional classrooms have been supplanted by online classes. This shift in teaching and learning methodologies has repercussions on students' levels of mastery and academic achievements, as it is plagued by various challenges and hindrances, encompassing student motivation, internet accessibility issues, and a shortage of learning resources. The central query revolves around the academic achievements of students before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. In traditional classrooms, teachers predominantly focused on student-centered teaching and learning, often adopting a "one-to-one" approach. However, in the online teaching paradigm, instructors must align their instructional processes uniformly, irrespective of individual student aptitude. Experiences during the pandemic have revealed that student academic achievement in traditional classrooms is influenced by the teaching and learning methods employed by teachers. In contrast, the improvement in student academic levels during online classes is attributed to increased internet access, parental encouragement, and the motivation to explore new knowledge using a 21st-century educational approach involving technology (Haizah & Mohd Rusli, 2022). The delivery of educational content by teachers has also been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Educational institutions were shuttered worldwide, including in Malaysia, leading to the widespread implementation of e-learning as the most effective alternative during the pandemic.

Reference to a study of teachers' competence from the state of Perak in implementing post-Covid-19 e-learning, to explore the challenges faced by teachers in executing e-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, identifying teachers' readiness levels in implementing e-learning during the pandemic, based on gender and location of schools (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a). The study revealed that the primary issues and challenges faced by teachers in implementing e-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic revolved around the level of e-learning technology literacy skills, internet access, and parental readiness for e-learning adoption. Teacher readiness levels for e-learning, categorized by gender, were reported to be moderate, while readiness levels categorized by school location were also at a moderate level, encompassing both urban and rural areas. The study findings indicate that the challenges and issues encountered affect teachers' competence in e-learning, beyond the factor of school location. It is surmised that teachers will be more motivated to enhance their e-learning technology literacy skills if the issues and challenges related to e-learning are reduced during its implementation. Therefore, stakeholders must play a role in addressing these issues and challenges for the future of the education system in Malaysia to be on par with other advanced nations.

The spread of the Covid-19 pandemic has profoundly affected global society as a whole, reaching its peak towards the end of 2020 when nearly 4 billion people, half of the world's population, faced lockdown or movement restrictions in their homes or quarantine centers (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a). This has had extensive implications for international mobility for various purposes, including tourism, business, and education. Although all nations are expected to relax these restrictions once the situation stabilizes, the world's way of life will not return to its former state for a considerable duration. The negative impact of Covid-19 also extends to higher education, including international students who had to transition to fully online learning. The challenges faced by this group of students may have received inadequate attention, as they constitute a minority in universities. Hence, a study was conducted to gather the perspectives of international graduate students regarding their readiness and experiences in dealing with the challenges of online learning during the pandemic. The study findings indicate that while most international graduate students at USIM encountered no significant problems in adapting to online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, attention must be paid to the minority of students to prevent them from being left behind in their studies (Nik Abdullah, Ali & Muhammad Isa, 2021). The study also highlights the need to address issues related to welfare and the accessibility of facilities in universities.

Since the sudden advent of Covid-19, the pandemic has spread across the globe, impacting various sectors, including education. Malaysia, being one of the nations most affected by the pandemic, witnessed educational institutions like Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), a leading higher education institution, striving to maintain the teaching and learning process throughout (Rahman et al., 2021). To continue the learning process, educators and students have made every effort to persist, despite encountering a multitude of challenges. In addition to using online platforms like Myguru, various other methods have been employed by lecturers and students, such as social media platforms including Facebook, WhatsApp, Google Meet, Zoom, and more (Rahman et al., 2021). However, even the most sophisticated and advanced technologies sometimes fall short in providing the human touch or the interpersonal skills necessary for an effective learning experience. Therefore, the conduct exhibited by academic staff and students during online learning in this pandemic remains relevant, encompassing communication methods, pre- and post-learning attitudes, punctuality, and attentiveness. This

aspect is considered vital because, in the end, the focus will not solely be on academics, but also on morality and conduct. As a result, a balanced approach combining academics, skills, and attitudes, without sacrificing the academic component, will lead to the development of well-rounded individuals in the future.

The Higher Education Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2021-2025 and the Integrated Higher Education Entrepreneurship Guide (EIE) represent a new narrative in entrepreneurship development programs in higher education institutions (Othman et al., 2021b). The strategic framework developed is well-aligned with the need for additional skills, especially post-Covid-19. Such programs emphasize the establishment of an entrepreneurial ecosystem that synergizes entrepreneurship, academia, industry, government, and the community within the national higher education landscape. Thus, it is crucial for higher education students to be exposed to knowledge, skills, and added value in entrepreneurship, making a shift from job seekers to job creators. Educational institutions, as centers for entrepreneurial development, play a significant role in fostering an entrepreneurial environment. The government has also introduced a moratorium and a new financial management approach to inspire and educate higher education community leadership to face the challenges post-Covid-19 with greater income-generating sensitivity (Yusoff et al., 2021a; Othman et al., 2021f).

Another undeniable matter is the accessibility of teaching and learning systems for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in higher education institutions, which has gained significant attention for enhancing awareness regarding this group (Rosli, Sabri & Takril, 2022a). Awareness of the challenges faced by PWDs is pivotal in advocating for their rights and providing equal opportunities, particularly in creating awareness of the needs of PWDs in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), where the role of academic staff in HEIs remains suboptimal. This is due to a lack of teaching knowledge and required skills when dealing with PWD students at the HEI level to address the challenges and the role of educators in realizing special education at the HEI level. The number of disabilities is expected to rise; thus, it is crucial to establish more intervention programs and comprehensive discussions to increase awareness of disability within the community.

In the current challenging educational landscape, society has placed remarkably high expectations on teachers, even during the Covid-19 pandemic. Studies on teacher competence and student motivation have enabled teachers to gauge the extent to which they have implemented new standards for teaching in the new normal of remote education (Abu Bakar & Mohamad Nasri, 2021). Ongoing efforts are required to enhance teacher quality and student motivation to develop a quality education system despite the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic that has afflicted the country has led to a surge in unemployment in Malaysia. A large number of highly qualified graduates, both from higher education institutions and secondary schools, have entered the job market, but the number of job opportunities remains limited (Aziz @ Dorashid, 2020). Furthermore, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit, new graduates, particularly, struggled to find employment opportunities due to concerns about the pandemic's spread. This has spurred various coping strategies among new graduates, including enhancing skills and personal value, creating new job opportunities, being less selective about jobs, and self-promotion (Halim & Sahid, 2020). The implementation of these strategies is seen as essential for expanding the social work education sector, generating broader understanding of the unemployment issue. In effect, this not only benefits stakeholders but also aids in curbing unemployment and, indirectly, reducing poverty gaps in society.

Students' readiness for the new normal in teaching and learning (T&L) identifies the readiness levels of students for the new normal in T&L and the existing facilities affecting the implementation of T&L in the new normal (Abdillah & Musa, 2021). The transition from conventional learning to online learning has become a major concern for educational providers, especially in higher education institutions (HEIs), lecturers, and students. Therefore, education providers have identified blended learning as an alternative approach for ensuring the continuity of teaching and learning (T&L) activities during the pandemic and to address issues related to online learning. Blended learning is recognized as an effective approach during its implementation in the pandemic era. Consequently, academics recommend that blended learning be applied as an alternative approach to T&L in HEIs post-pandemic and suggest that future learning approaches be improved by integrating technology in line with the industrial revolution and digitization.

Issue 2: The Role of In-Person Education in Cultivating Students' Soft Skills

The development of well-rounded individuals who are in harmony across physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions, in accordance with the National Philosophy of Education, necessitates a specific set of skills designed to augment students' soft skills (Sidik, Awang & Ahmad, 2020). Previous research has indicated that student engagement leads to the development of these soft skills. An illustrative example can be found in the incorporation of elements of soft skills within the context of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs during practical training. These elements not only emphasize students' generic skills but also their mastery of diverse aspects, including technical skills, generic skills, entrepreneurial aptitude, and critical thinking abilities. As students represent the cornerstone of a nation's future, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that students are on the correct trajectory, such that the education and skills they acquire remain systematically relevant to the demands of employers in various occupational sectors (Kačamakovic & Lokaj, 2021).

The prevailing predicament of graduate unemployment in the current landscape is a source of significant concern, with multiple factors contributing to this issue. The implementation of programs encompassing leadership, volunteerism, and public speaking, which include elements of soft skills, can exert a substantial influence on graduates, particularly in enhancing their self-competence and employability (Ong, Peng & Azlan, 2020). The implication here is that soft skills are particularly relevant for acquisition by graduates before embarking on the more demanding realms of the workforce.

By mastering soft skills, graduates acquire an intrinsic value and are more adept at marketing themselves to prospective employers in comparison to candidates who lack these skills. Previous research anticipates that student engagement is conducive to the development of students' soft skills. A significantly strong positive correlation exists between student engagement and the acquisition of soft skills. This signifies that student involvement in classroom-based learning activities, social activities within educational institutions, and participation in extracurricular activities can enhance students' soft skills (Syed Sahil & Hassan, 2018). Consequently, it behooves educators to diversify their instructional methodologies to enhance student engagement. Moreover, students must exhibit a high level of willingness to participate in a myriad of school activities aimed at nurturing soft skills within themselves. The provision of a supportive environment is crucial for encouraging student engagement in a variety of school activities, fostering the development of soft skills. Such soft

skills should be cultivated during a student's secondary education phase, preparing them for the world of work.

Soft skills, often referred to as generic skills, have been formulated by the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT) with the aim of enhancing graduates' employability competencies. These skills encompass communication, work attitudes, teamwork, punctuality, adaptability, working under pressure, independence, and the ability to collaborate with individuals from diverse backgrounds and demographics. These dimensions are assessed during job interviews (Halim & Sahid, 2020). The module for Developing Soft Skills in Higher Education consists of eight skill episodes: communication skills, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, teamwork, continuous learning and information management, entrepreneurial skills, ethics and professional morality, and leadership skills. This module is underpinned by social, cognitive, and behaviorist learning theories (Ong, Peng & Azlan, 2020). The concept of generating soft skills through diverse intelligences and learning styles can be applied to activities that foster character development, such as curriculum and extracurricular activities. Surprisingly, generating soft skills through various intelligences and learning styles is rarely the focal point of research, with the majority of studies primarily addressing academic achievement. However, soft skills are indeed more critical in the realm of careers. Past research underscores that soft skills can be generated through various intelligences and learning styles practiced during students' learning journeys at the university level.

In line with the post-pandemic era, studio-based learning is an educational approach that accentuates the attainment of students' practical outcomes. This form of learning is centered around students, affording them the opportunity to plan and subsequently develop projects. The implementation of such projects is overseen by instructors acting as facilitators. To fortify the concept of studio-based learning, it is imperative to elevate the components related to soft skills. In this regard, it is suggested that entrepreneurship attributes have the potential to address the challenges posed by post-pandemic educational methods, emphasizing skills such as communication, planning, teamwork, and entrepreneurial traits, including resilience, diligence, industriousness, trustworthiness, and persistence, all of which should be instilled in each student. Through the amalgamation of soft skills and entrepreneurial attributes, a student-centric studio-based learning approach has been successfully implemented (Mat Daud et al., 2014). Based on studies conducted, it has been observed that the entrepreneurship-based learning method has the capacity to enhance students' soft skills and motivation. Soft skills, often referred to as 'soft skills,' are essential competencies that students must master to remain competitive as they venture into the entrepreneurial domain. Higher education institutions and universities play a pivotal role in assisting and shaping students' characters to enable them to acquire the requisite set of skills for the professional realm. The mastery of soft skills is undeniably linked to graduate employability issues that are often raised, particularly the imperative of acquiring soft skills to enhance students' problem-solving skills, adaptability, and involvement, all of which contribute to increased motivation in resolving issues (Hashim, Kee & Rahman, 2016).

Issue 3: Recovery of the Teaching and Learning System Post-Pandemic

The delivery of educational content by educators has been profoundly affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic, leading to the closure of educational institutions worldwide, including Malaysia (Bakar & Nasri, 2021). Consequently, the adoption of e-learning has emerged as the most effective alternative during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it has been implemented across

the globe. In the post-pandemic era, the competence of educators in delivering e-learning faces a host of issues and challenges. These encompass the hurdles faced by educators during the COVID-19 pandemic while implementing e-learning, the assessment of educators' readiness to conduct e-learning during the pandemic, and the evaluation of educators' preparedness for e-learning based on the geographic location of their educational institutions. The predominant issues and challenges confronting educators in e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic pertain to the levels of technological literacy skills, internet accessibility, and parental readiness for the acceptance of e-learning (Bakar & Nasri, 2021).

In general, these issues and challenges have a significant impact on the competence of educators in the realm of e-learning. It is evident that educators are more motivated to enhance their technological literacy competencies in e-learning if these challenges and issues can be mitigated during the course of e-learning. Hence, pertinent stakeholders should play an integral role in addressing these issues and challenges to ensure the future of Malaysia's education system is at par with other advanced nations.

One of the pivotal features of a professional occupation is the possession of advanced skills and expertise by individuals holding specialized degrees in particular fields. A 'professional' occupation, at its best, is one that is governed by the individual possessing the requisite qualifications and training, as opposed to being regulated by those who lack the academic qualifications and training. The development of high-quality professional skills is paramount, contributing to educators' proficiency, students' learning outcomes, and averting educator isolation and fatigue. These professional competencies must be sustained, expanded upon, and widely applied within the classroom setting, irrespective of the sporadic workshops and seminars, which often prove ineffective in imparting significant skills and knowledge to educators.

In the broader context, it is imperative that learning activities necessitate the use of online learning systems to ensure the smooth operation of education through these digital channels. This is particularly pertinent given the 21st-century learning paradigm characterized by the ubiquitous utilization of information and communication technologies across all facets of life, including learning activities (Assya'bani & Majdi, 2022).

In this milieu, educators and students grapple with a multitude of issues and challenges when engaged in online teaching and learning. Assessing the efficacy of online teaching and learning, its positive impact on students compared to face-to-face instruction, and identifying the challenges in implementing the 'new normal' in pedagogy are central concerns. Research findings underscore that digital teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges for educators during the Movement Control Order (PKP).

Furthermore, it is important to address the challenges inherent in students' readiness for these changes, such as parental involvement, access to the necessary devices and the internet. This implies that the reevaluation of educational objectives and methods has become a new challenge for both educators and students. It is beyond contention that educators play a pivotal role in boosting students' motivation to learn in the post-COVID-19 era. Research demonstrates that educators can enhance students' motivation post-COVID-19 by creating an enjoyable learning environment, fostering student participation, employing creative learning media, and leveraging digital resources. Student motivation is manifested through active engagement, high

levels of participation, enthusiasm, a strong curiosity, and a steadfast commitment to learning during classroom activities.

Issue 4: Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Learning

The global community has been severely rattled by the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), commonly known as Covid-19. The Covid-19 pandemic has had significant implications for society at large and particularly in Malaysia. Various sectors have been affected by the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, including educational institutions in Malaysia. In line with the Strategic Plan Philosophy of Malaysian Public Universities, which aims to enhance the academic reputation of these institutions on the international stage, the Ministry of Higher Education has actively promoted digital learning throughout the pandemic (Yusoff et al., 2021b).

E-Learning applications have become increasingly popular among educators as they seek to make the teaching and learning process more engaging and efficient (Amiruddin et al., 2015). Simultaneously, the use of such applications enhances the overall quality of teaching and learning in alignment with global technological advancements. In light of this, a pertinent issue arises – the introduction of e-learning applications suitable for language teaching. Examples include Quizlet.Com, GoAnimate.Com, and Hot Potatoes (Amiruddin et al., 2015). This discussion encompasses application usage details, illustrative examples, application merits, and general and language-specific functions. Consequently, the adoption of such applications fosters interactive language teaching and markedly distinguishes it from traditional pedagogical techniques.

It can be argued that these modern teaching techniques have significantly improved through the fusion of technology, in response to the recommendation of the Ministry of Higher Education in one of its Critical Agenda Projects (CAPs) (Amiruddin et al., 2015). For instance, Mobile Learning Applications have been developed based on the ADDIE model of instructional design, characterized by Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. These applications are user-friendly, making them more appealing to educators. Mobile applications have substantial potential for integration into various educational subjects (Jamaludin & Wong, 2021).

Blended learning methods, which include Learning Management Systems (LMS), e-learning, and mobile learning, have gained widespread traction in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The exploration of WhatsApp and Telegram's potential in mobile learning is seen as a complement to face-to-face teaching and the use of e-learning portals. Some students, particularly those in engineering, computer science, information technology, and biotechnology programs, are believed to be more actively engaged in discussions and information sharing compared to their traditional education counterparts (Aziz, 2019). A significant portion of students perceives mobile learning as beneficial in improving their understanding of learning outcomes, enhancing the university's image, competitiveness, and graduate employability.

From this perspective, the readiness and effectiveness of online learning have a positive impact on student interest and motivation. However, student engagement in learning activities remains variable, as not all students actively participate in the activities provided by their instructors.

This approach aims to enhance knowledge of online learning-related issues and assist students and educators in adapting to new teaching methods, ensuring educational needs are met.

In recent years, the rapid development of internet and communication technology has resulted in various interactive multimedia networks, including digital learning. The recognition of the significance of digital learning is paramount as it allows students to remain at the forefront of contemporary education. The ease of technology and motivation play crucial roles in shaping student awareness of digital learning. Therefore, it is the responsibility of educational institutions and educators to facilitate students in embracing technology and motivation in cultivating an awareness of digital learning. In essence, the use of technology media in the education system provides numerous benefits, especially for public universities, where it serves as a primary platform for teaching and learning. Moreover, it is essential to examine the extent to which students utilize and master technology as a learning aid to acquire limitless information (Abdul Rahman, Mohd Zolkifli & Ling, 2020).

Previous studies indicate that young individuals exposed to information technology are more motivated to engage in virtual sharing through social media platforms. They also tend to learn grammar and expand their vocabulary through these platforms (Abdul Rahman, Mohd Zolkifli & Ling, 2020). The advancement of technology is pivotal in ensuring that a nation remains on par with developed countries, fostering a highly knowledgeable human capital to contribute to socio-economic and educational progress.

In the teaching and learning process, instructional media plays a critical role in achieving educational goals. Teaching and learning using Instructional Media integrated with ICT and the environment have had a positive impact on students' Science process skills. E-learning or online learning is no longer just an option but a necessity since the Covid-19 pandemic. Challenges faced by teachers, students, and parents in implementing online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic suggest that the key challenges are internet access and teachers' ICT skills. Parents have faced issues related to data exhaustion and financial constraints, particularly for families in the B40 category (Abdul Rahman, Mohd Zolkifli & Ling, 2020). Consequently, the government needs to address constraints in ICT infrastructure and internet access in rural and remote areas. Educators should also prepare with adequate ICT knowledge and skills to meet current pandemic requirements. The readiness of students to engage in online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic is associated with the relationship between their fear of Covid-19 and readiness for online learning. It is found that as the fear of Covid-19 increases, students become more willing to engage in online learning, suggesting that the psychological aspect of the fear of Covid-19 significantly influences students' willingness to use online learning more seriously (Jafar, Amran & Faiz, 2020).

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach, specifically content analysis. Qualitative methodology is fundamentally reliant on observing humans in their natural settings, engaging with them in their language, and understanding their terminology (Flick, 2014). The data and information collected for this research form the primary source for systematic analysis. This study analyzed various online sources, including journal articles, books, news, and websites, to assess the multifaceted impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the field of education. The most conspicuous effect of the pandemic is that students had to engage in online teaching and

learning for the duration of the Movement Control Order (PKP) implemented by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) and the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT).

Discussion: Issues And Challenges

The ensuing discussion elucidates pivotal challenges confronting the educational domain amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges span across various domains: (i) Educational Institution Preparedness as a Catalyst for Teaching and Learning Processes, (ii) Face-to-Face Education as a Catalyst for Students' Soft Skills, (iii) Reviving Post-Pandemic Teaching and Learning System, and (iv) Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Learning. This analysis scrutinizes multifaceted hurdles encountered in each aspect, underscoring the complexities intrinsic to adapting education in the wake of unprecedented global disruptions.

Issue 1: Educational Institution Preparedness as a Catalyst for Teaching and Learning Processes

The post-pandemic era portrays a situation of consistently declining Covid-19 infection rates and low daily case counts, enabling face-to-face activities and mass gatherings following standard operating procedures (SOPs) to return to normalcy (Ealangov & Jamaludin, 2022). This change is largely attributed to the large-scale national immunization program worldwide, encouraging individuals to take two vaccine doses and booster shots to curb the spread of the Covid-19 virus from one person to another. Following the declaration of the post-pandemic period, the focus has shifted towards the methods of teaching and learning processes (TLP) to ensure that the curriculum is not further delayed and follows the synchronized schedules set by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) (Ealangov & Jamaludin, 2022).

A significant shift is observed in the transition from home-based learning (HBL) to face-to-face TLP as institutions gradually reopen their campuses for diploma, undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programs. In other words, despite the substantial impact on the education system during the two-year Movement Control Order (MCO), swift recovery is mandated in accordance with the Education Act 1996, which calls for strengthening the national education system, ensuring that the Malaysian society acquires diverse knowledge, skills, and moral values (Othman et al., 2021c). In general, education plays a vital role in realizing the nation's vision to achieve advanced social and economic standards in the future.

In the current situation, the reopening of educational institutions adheres to SOPs set by the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) to prevent disease transmission within these establishments. However, during HBL, some students were left behind due to weak internet connectivity, especially in rural areas (Mohd Shukri & Md Yunus, 2021). Institutional preparedness is, therefore, a crucial issue in the post-pandemic era, encompassing aspects such as the delivery methods adopted by educators at their respective institutions, facilities equipped with current technology, and the practice of Covid-19 prevention (Ealangov & Jamaludin, 2022).

In the post-pandemic era, we witness a diversification of instructional input delivery methods to accommodate educators' and students' flexibility in time. This is prominently practiced at the higher education level, which conducts TLP through face-to-face, hybrid, and online methods (Abdul Razak, Hassan & Shaharuddin, 2022).

Face-to-face TLP encourages teachers and students to convene in lecture halls and engage in practical activities within laboratories, sports centers, workshops, and more. In this context, lecturers and students communicate directly and realistically during the delivery and reception of instructional input. Face-to-face TLP allows educators to explain the curriculum based on the specified syllabus. This direct approach also fosters students' talents through co-curricular activities, including sports, clubs, associations, and uniformed bodies. The close link between the curriculum and extracurricular achievements aligns with the nation's aspirations as stated in the National Education Philosophy, emphasizing the continuous effort to develop individuals comprehensively, both intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and physically, based on belief and obedience to God (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a).

The following aspect includes ensuring the availability of complete and efficient facilities to create a conducive environment for smooth learning sessions within the institution. Recently, universities have prepared extensively to welcome new students after the announcement of the results of the Online University Admissions (UPU) on September 26, 2022. Residential facilities facilitate students' movement to lecture halls, faculties, sports centers, cafeterias, libraries, internet centers, workshops, laboratories, and recreational centers. It is essential to provide an adequate supply of learning devices such as computers or tablets to ensure that no student is left behind in a technology-dependent environment (Rosli, Ahmad Sabri & Takril, 2022b).

Utilities such as water and electricity should be available to facilitate daily activities in the educational institution, as they are used in laboratories and for setting up wireless internet devices. Sports facilities, including sports equipment, courts, tracks, gyms, cycling tracks, and sports galleries, should be constantly upgraded to support students' active lifestyles and unleash talents in the fields of athletics and other activities involving a large number of participants (Othman et al., 2021d).

For differently abled individuals (OKU), special facilities are provided and continuously monitored for user comfort to ensure a conducive campus life with specific seating arrangements in transportation, dedicated pathways, parking spaces, public restrooms, and elevators (Rosli, Ahmad Sabri & Takril, 2022b). Nevertheless, consistent sanitation must be implemented by the facility management to disinfect surfaces from Covid-19 pathogens, ensuring the safety, cleanliness, and health of users in the post-pandemic era.

Additionally, the Family Assistance Program in Malaysia aims to assist full-time B40 students in tertiary education, including public and private higher education institutions (IPT), Teacher Education Institutes (IPG), Matriculation, Sijil Pelajaran Tinggi Malaysia (STPM) under the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE), and ASWARA students under the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture (Bernama, 2022). Despite the digitalization of the TLP in tertiary education, the government initiative encourages more IT-savvy youth, a fundamental skill necessary for future employment in a largely online-oriented job market. Furthermore, the distribution of student devices enhances flexible learning in terms of time and location. Outside lecture hours, students can still communicate with teachers or lecturers online to improve their understanding of specific courses.

The next aspect to be addressed is the efficient and student-friendly implementation of the educational system, enabling students to manage their time and priorities effectively in their

daily lives while on campus. The system must be easily accessible with user-friendly settings to prevent confusion among users regarding course registration, assignment submissions, attendance logging, important information updates, and more. This system also simplifies interaction between lecturers and students, facilitates assignment verification, and student assessment (Rosli, Ahmad & M. Nasir, 2022).

This system also allows students to track their performance in a course, indirectly prompting them to consider their academic goals, which helps ensure high performance and the possibility of earning first-class honors in the future. The development of this system enables students to easily access and download learning materials as reference sources for self-study and exam preparation (Rosli, Ahmad & M. Nasir, 2022). The system should also have strong cybersecurity as it serves as an integrated information system to store student data during registration.

Moreover, educators can upload lecture materials in formats such as Microsoft Word or PowerPoint for student reference before or after classes. This approach enhances understanding and helps students with assignments, whether individual work or group projects. Additionally, the administration of practical and fieldwork assessments remains a fundamental part of certain courses. This practice should be maintained as practical work allows students to develop self-skills and prepare gradually for industry training when they reach their final year of study. Empowering cooperation with industrial companies and government or private sectors to enable students to conduct fieldwork and industrial training is also crucial (Alias & Md Akhir, 2022).

In the post-pandemic era, students should be encouraged to enjoy working experiences, producing high-quality graduates who can provide excellent services to organizations. This is essential as the nation needs economic recovery, especially after the closure of many businesses during the Movement Control Order (MCO) since March 18, 2020. Therefore, educational institutions play a pivotal role in producing graduates who will lead Malaysia's political, social, and economic progress through effective, controlled TLP methods, free from Covid-19 infections.

In conclusion, the post-pandemic TLP should be a stepping stone to enhance Malaysia's global reputation and restore the country's economic, social, and political conditions adversely affected by the global Covid-19 outbreak. In line with the mission of the Education Act 1996 to develop a world-class, quality education system, all crucial aspects must be considered and practiced at every level. The engagement of all stakeholders ensures that the nation's population strives to shape a prominent global player, focusing on various fields of national development. It is essential to curb absenteeism in education, as Article 12 of the Federal Constitution acknowledges the human right to receive education from early levels to lifelong learning (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a). Education is not only vital for developing the nation's educational values but also for fostering an individual's holistic development across various aspects of national development.

Issue 2: Face-to-Face Education as a Catalyst for Students' Soft Skills

It is undeniable that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the development of soft skills among students, which are said to have declined during online learning. This issue has been widely discussed among educators and has gained significant attention on social

media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram (Zulkifeli, Mohd Ishar & Abdul Hamid, 2022). Soft skills refer to the abilities and skills possessed by students in executing various tasks. These skills encompass various elements, including communication skills, leadership skills, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, the enhancement of moral values, and professional ethics, among others (Zulkifeli, Mohd Ishar & Abdul Hamid, 2022). Soft skills are typically honed through participation in social activities, co-curricular activities, sports, and games, both within and outside educational institutions (Zulkifeli, Mohd Ishar & Abdul Hamid, 2022).

However, the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has infected and claimed the lives of thousands, led to the closure of various sectors, including education, in an effort to control the spread of the infectious disease in Malaysia (Othman, Mokhtar & Pullong, 2022b). Due to the risk associated with face-to-face interactions, the government introduced online education as a means to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases, as traditional face-to-face activities were curtailed. Nevertheless, this has resulted in a decline in students' soft skills, as social activities and co-curricular events were canceled due to unavoidable constraints. In addition to closing at-risk sectors, the government also implemented Movement Control Orders (MCO) within the country, which restricted the movement of the public, rendering essential elements such as group work and direct interaction with lecturers unattainable (Othman, Mokhtar & Pullong, 2022b). Apart from excelling academically, students are also required to master soft skills to enhance their employability in the future.

The closure of educational institutions has brought about various negative impacts on students and lecturers. The shift to online learning has hindered the implementation of co-curricular activities, which encompass uniformed units, clubs, language programs, as well as sports and games. These activities are essential for the development of students' soft skills and physical fitness. A supportive environment is necessary to encourage student involvement in a variety of activities within the school, as this fosters the development of soft skills (Sidik, Awang & Ahmad, 2020). Typically, face-to-face learning plays a pivotal role in nurturing soft skills in students, and co-curricular activities constitute a significant component of this process. Co-curricular activities play a crucial role in enhancing soft skills in students by providing them with opportunities to acquire various skills, such as time management, leadership, and problem-solving (Sidik, Awang & Ahmad, 2020). Moreover, engagement in co-curricular activities strengthens relationships among students and enhances their ability to work effectively in groups, offering them diverse experiences in tackling assignments and tasks. The failure to conduct co-curricular activities has resulted in a decline in students' soft skills, causing concern among lecturers striving to produce academically excellent and well-rounded graduates.

Apart from improving students' soft skills, co-curricular activities contribute to physical fitness by engaging students in physical activities that cannot be replicated online. Additionally, social activities like awareness campaigns, community service, and social engagement are crucial for enhancing students' soft skills. Social activities provide numerous benefits, such as the opportunity to acquire a wide range of skills, instilling various moral values in students, and fostering personal growth. Activities that involve large groups of people offer valuable lessons and experiences that mature students while also strengthening social bonds and fostering new relationships within the community. Thus, students' social lives have been impacted, and they have been unable to engage in these activities due to Covid-19 restrictions (Mokhtar et al., 2022).

Social activities significantly contribute to the enhancement of students' soft skills. They enable students to develop a wide range of skills and instill important moral values. Engaging in social activities that involve a diverse group of individuals imparts valuable life lessons and experiences, fostering personal growth. These activities also serve to strengthen social bonds, forge new relationships, and deepen connections within the community (Mokhtar et al., 2022). Unfortunately, certain students residing in rural areas have faced challenges during online learning, including issues with internet connectivity. This has led to students missing out on class content and struggling to maintain focus due to various distractions, hampering their understanding of course material (Jamaludin & Wong, 2021). To address this issue, educators have provided supplementary materials in the form of slides to help students who missed online classes catch up on their studies.

Furthermore, practical training is a crucial component of university education, serving as a yardstick for assessing students' understanding of the knowledge they have acquired. This type of training is typically conducted face-to-face to facilitate instructors' evaluation of students' mastery of practical skills. However, online learning has prevented students from participating in practical training, leading to a lack of practical skill development. Proficiency in practical skills is essential for students to demonstrate their competence to potential employers, making them competitive in their job search (Ong, Peng & Azlan, 2020). Failure to complete practical training can negatively impact students' practical scores and hinder their future job search. Therefore, there is an urgent need to foster the interest of the younger generation in expanding job opportunities, especially in the construction and infrastructure development sectors, which offer promising career prospects (Mohd Shah et al., 2021a).

In conclusion, students living in this borderless world must master soft skills, as they are crucial in gaining the confidence of employers during the job search phase. Failing to acquire these skills will make students' lives more challenging, as they lack the skills and experiences necessary for success. Soft skills are now an essential component in job hunting, with several companies placing as much emphasis on these skills as on academic achievements (Ong, Peng & Azlan, 2020). Moreover, concerns have arisen regarding students' proficiency in their native language as the medium of communication in universities, as they have been unable to engage in physical communication due to Covid-19 restrictions (Yusoff et al., 2021c). Therefore, in-school application of soft skills is imperative to assist students in their future job searches.

During online learning, parents and families play a crucial role in enhancing students' soft skills by allowing students to make decisions and teaching them to be self-reliant. Society also plays a vital role in helping students acquire soft skills by educating them or allowing them to solve problems independently, thereby enabling students to master problem-solving skills. Soft skills are crucial for everyday life, and as such, students should strive to master these skills to become assets in their future career endeavors. Soft skills, such as communication, work ethics, teamwork, time management, adaptability, and the ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds, are highly valued during job interviews (Zakaria & Daud, 2021). It is evident that soft skills are of great importance and significantly impact future life.

Issue 3: Reviving Post-Pandemic Teaching and Learning System

It is common knowledge that the coronavirus, also known as Covid-19, emerged in December 2019 in Wuhan, China (Mokhtar et al., 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on human lives in diverse ways. Its most conspicuous symptoms include fever, dry

cough, and fatigue. The norms that govern lifestyle and the Teaching and Learning (T&L) processes have undergone radical transformations due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the implementation of Movement Control Orders (MCOs) (Mokhtar et al., 2021). Conventional in-person education has given way to digital education, with the aim of accommodating new norms, which prioritize physical distancing, hygiene, and safety. Online T&L continues to be the preferred mode, even post-pandemic, as instructors and students are unable to convene physically. In this context, students engaging in online T&L partake in digital learning, supplemented with technology-driven applications. Educators have explored diverse solutions to adapt online T&L effectively.

Furthermore, various technological platforms have been harnessed to ensure the quality of the education system is sustained. These include platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom, Discord, Google Classroom, and others (Mokhtar et al., 2021). It is acknowledged that online T&L may not entirely supplant traditional textbooks, but this approach has, at the very least, facilitated educators and learners in progressing without educational disruptions even amidst a pandemic. However, it should be noted that many students have faced educational gaps. This is primarily because several students lack financial resources to acquire digital tools such as computers for engaging in online learning. Moreover, some students residing in rural areas have to visit cybercafes to access the Internet whenever instructors conduct online classes. Consequently, the post-pandemic recovery of the education system needs to be prioritized to address the myriad issues and challenges confronting students.

From the perspective of educators, building their capacity and professional development is essential for a teacher's skills and students' learning outcomes (Andoh, Ompok & Sukor, 2021). Capacity building and professional development play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of teaching indirectly. One prominent challenge is the inability to carry out practical training. Practical training is pivotal for shaping the competence and professional identity of a teacher. Practical training, in this context, is an obligatory component in teacher education programs, offering students opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills and evaluate their teaching proficiency reflectively in actual classroom settings under the guidance of mentor teachers. Through systematic practical training programs, students can build, master, and consolidate their professional pedagogical knowledge to become high-quality novice teachers. In early childhood education, practical training offers early childhood educators' opportunities to apply their knowledge about child development and early childhood curriculum content. This, in turn, supports the development of pedagogical teaching skills, contributing to effective early childhood education that can address the challenges impacting the quality of teaching.

The staged implementation of these programs prioritizes the teaching and learning process, under the guidance of lecturers and mentor teachers through smart partnerships and mutual agreements between Teacher Education Institutes (IPGs) and schools (Atrup & Kodriyah, 2022). However, the implementation of home-based Teaching and Learning (PdPR) presents challenges for pre-service teachers since they were previously exposed to face-to-face T&L during their school-based teaching experience and micro-teaching in their teacher education courses. Educators or teachers face difficulties in adapting to the online T&L environment, as their experience in online teaching was limited. Building the capacity and professional development of teachers is a process of learning through various Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities throughout their career, formally or informally, to enhance their skills, expertise, knowledge, values, qualities, and characteristics relevant to 21st-century

education (Assya'bani & Majdi, 2022). With such training, teachers can think comprehensively and strategically, possess various skills and knowledge for online T&L, and indirectly stimulate creativity and innovation. Additionally, these programs allow educators to develop competence, talent, potential, and personal qualities to the extent that teachers in high-performing countries have.

Furthermore, teachers' expertise in e-learning technology is essential and should be prioritized in post-pandemic education. This is because teachers conduct online learning sessions through various e-learning platforms like Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom, and others. Thus, teachers who are not proficient in e-learning technology cannot effectively deliver lessons if they do not explore the usage of these platforms. Teachers played a crucial role in adapting e-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. During this period, many aspects were adjusted, including the method of lesson delivery by teachers. Most teachers faced challenges related to technology literacy, and their understanding of e-learning was limited. This reflects the weakness in teacher competencies, suddenly required to conduct e-learning in the midst of a pandemic. Therefore, the Ministry of Education in Malaysia should address this issue by ensuring that every teacher is prepared to implement e-learning during a pandemic (Mokhtar et al., 2021). Every teacher should be aware that the use of technology in teaching can be challenging if they were only exposed to face-to-face T&L previously. This is particularly crucial since teachers' lack of exposure to technology is significant. Additionally, the limitations teachers face in conducting online T&L relate to the lack of skills to use ICT. The existence of this gap, stemming from the difference between their teacher education courses and the practical use of ICT technologies, leads to constraints in implementing e-learning. Various technology platforms and applications have rapidly evolved over time, and educators must keep up with these technologies to effectively execute online T&L.

Furthermore, the choice of online learning models is equally important when ensuring effective student learning (Assya'bani & Majdi, 2022). The selection of the appropriate learning model must consider student conditions, nature, educational materials, and available media. This is because the failure to master the teaching model can create problems in developing an effective learning environment and communication-based learning experiences. Moreover, a low level of self-efficacy, especially in teaching strategies, can undermine student needs. Preschool teachers face challenges in conducting PDPC because of their limited ability to adapt technology effectively for communication and learning. This is primarily because many routine preschool activities or teaching are typically conducted in groups. Preschool teachers who have not undergone specialized teacher education courses, especially in early childhood education, face difficulties in applying all theoretical and practical aspects in pandemic conditions (Andoh, Ompok & Sukor, 2021). It is evident that teachers must be proactive in planning and implementing innovative teaching methods to engage the focus of preschool children and overcome the learning gaps.

In conclusion, student motivation has become a crucial aspect to ensure that the learning process and student performance are maintained effectively. This is a consequence of students having adapted to the comfort and convenience of learning at home, known as online Teaching and Learning (PdP). However, this convenience has also led to a lack of enthusiasm and motivation among students to return to the original mode of learning, which is face-to-face. Therefore, educators play a vital role in making the learning process easier and more positive for students, rekindling their enthusiasm and self-belief in face-to-face learning. Teachers

should remain open to encourage students to always remember their abilities and potential and use them to their full extent. In conclusion, all stakeholders should work together to implement education policies that focus on developing the professionalism and self-efficacy of teachers, developing technologically proficient teachers, changing the education system, and motivating student learners for the post-pandemic educational recovery.

Issue 4: Advantages And Disadvantages of Digital Learning

The advantages and disadvantages of digital learning constitute a vital issue that warrants serious consideration by all segments of society. It is imperative that society comprehends that online learning methods entail both benefits and drawbacks. In the post-Covid-19 era, as the situation related to the Covid-19 pandemic improves, with a diminishing number of Covid-19 cases, it is essential to recognize the multifaceted effects of the pandemic on various aspects of our lives. One of the sectors profoundly affected is education. The pandemic necessitated a paradigm shift in educational methods, moving from traditional face-to-face learning to online learning, spanning primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. This transformation was enacted to ensure that students continued adhering to the prescribed syllabi without interruptions. Home-based learning or "Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Rumah" (PdPR) became the *modus operandi* post-pandemic, as face-to-face teaching was disallowed by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM). PdPR was carried out through various applications, including WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Meet, Zoom, and others.

Education plays a pivotal role as it is the cornerstone for an individual's success and growth across various fields. It underpins economic and political progress, propelling nations forward through the capabilities of future generations. Furthermore, PdPR exhibits both advantages and disadvantages. It is important to note that online learning may not always be as effective in addressing students' comprehension issues when compared to traditional face-to-face instruction (Ab Rahman et al., 2021). Online learning is essential due to the utilization of applications as an educational tool, which enhances the quality of PdPR and advances technology globally. In the post-pandemic period, the pervasive use of applications for learning purposes, such as Google Meet, Zoom, and others, became a standard practice. Online learning has proven to be more engaging and efficient for students, primarily because educators can deliver lessons through videos and presentations, employing visual aids. The utilization of online learning simplifies the PdPR process and enhances students' interest in the subject matter. Nevertheless, digital learning, while convenient and timesaving, is subject to the stability of the internet connectivity used by educators, teachers, and students, which can be inconsistent.

In the contemporary era of globalization, most young generations have an innate affinity for mobile devices, as they have grown up utilizing digital applications on smartphones, laptops, iPads, and similar devices (Abdul Rahman, Mohd Zolkifli & Ling, 2020). Consequently, PdPR presents minimal challenges to students in adapting to online learning using existing applications like WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Meet, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and others (Abdul Rahman, Mohd Zolkifli & Ling, 2020). The use of applications benefits society by serving as a means of communication across different locations. Additionally, school students and higher education institutions' pupils can access knowledge instantaneously on the internet. However, some students face difficulties in using mobile devices due to economic constraints, which can be attributed to the financial disparity within their families. This limitation in the

use of mobile devices arises from the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic forced education to transition to an online format.

Online learning poses challenges for students and education as a whole. The post-Covid-19 era has brought about unique concerns and anxieties among students and education stakeholders. This is because, despite the attractive learning materials, active involvement and readiness on the part of online learners are indispensable to attain optimal outcomes. Parents must play a role in motivating their children, as students' motivation for online learning has waned (Haizah & Mohd Rusli, 2022). This decline in motivation is due to parents prioritizing their employment and household income during the Covid-19 pandemic, with insufficient focus on their children's education. Hence, parents must fulfill their responsibility in supporting their children's learning and ensuring they have the necessary resources for seamless online learning. Effective two-way communication between students and educators is challenging to establish, leading to impediments in achieving learning objectives and creating difficulties in interacting with students. These challenges need to be addressed adequately to avoid postponements in the learning process and to facilitate systematic learning.

Digital learning is pivotal for students, as it bridges the gap in adhering to the curriculum stipulated by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM). Moreover, educators can continue imparting knowledge to students, contributing to the nation's advancement in the future. Students' awareness of digital learning can be heightened by ensuring that technological facilities are adequately furnished, thereby boosting students' motivation to learn through digital learning methods in the post-Covid-19 era. Digital learning also plays a significant role in enhancing students' and educators' skills. The incorporation of digital learning in the teaching and learning process will expose educators and students to various tools and applications. All existing applications possess various functions and specific utility during the teaching and learning process. This utilization of digital learning as educational resources will equip educators and students with the latest technology to facilitate subject understanding and perpetuate learning throughout the post-Covid-19 period.

In the post-Covid-19 era, thorough monitoring of the increasing efforts in digital learning preparation is imperative. This is essential because digital learning has become integral to home-based learning or PdPR, requiring mobile devices such as smartphones, laptops, and similar tools. Adequate preparedness involving the utilization of applications such as Telegram, WhatsApp, Zoom, Google Meet, and Google Classroom is indispensable for systematic teaching and learning. The availability of mobile devices is the primary conduit for online teaching and learning. Shortages of educational equipment could pose severe issues in the post-pandemic era. This predicament cannot be underestimated by the government. Adequate digital learning readiness will facilitate online teaching and learning.

In conclusion, the Covid-19 pandemic has posed significant challenges, particularly in the education sector. This is because all schools, colleges, and universities were disallowed from conducting face-to-face teaching and were compelled to adopt online learning. Consequently, numerous challenges are encountered by educators, lecturers, and students. The government, such as the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM), must address these challenges, ensuring that internet connectivity issues in rural and remote areas are resolved to ensure consistent internet access for learning (Mustafa, 2021). For educators, lecturers, and students, it is essential to enhance their knowledge and skills in using applications as teaching and learning

resources to keep students engaged in online learning and prevent them from becoming bored. The encouragement of digital learning and technological advancements will serve as a beacon for our nation's progress and potentially set an example for others to follow.

Conclusion

The multifaceted exploration of challenges within the education sphere during the COVID-19 era underscores the imperative need for comprehensive strategies. These encompass enhancing institutional readiness for seamless T&L, recognizing the pivotal role of face-to-face education in fostering essential soft skills, navigating the nuanced landscape of post-pandemic educational recovery, and discerning the intricate dynamics surrounding the advantages and disadvantages inherent in digital learning. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, addressing these issues holistically is pivotal for fortifying the resilience and adaptability of the education system in a rapidly changing world.

Issue 1: Educational Institutions' Readiness as A Catalyst for the Teaching and Learning Process

Post-pandemic teaching and learning (T&L) must be addressed comprehensively and supported cohesively by the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) and the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MoE) to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the National Education Philosophy (NEP). The empowerment of educational institutions in ensuring the conduciveness and systematic nature of T&L amidst the changes experienced after almost two years under Movement Control Order (MCO) has had a significant impact on students from various educational levels, ranging from early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational, and special education. However, starting from this year, educational centers across the country have reopened in a holistic manner, with nearly all face-to-face activities permitted based on rational assessments by the Ministry of Health Malaysia and the National Security Council regarding the extent of disease transmission within a given community.

For the implementation of educational institutions' reopening, an efficient management system must be employed to record academic progress and co-curricular activities of students. Online-based systems facilitate students in accessing notes, completing assignments, and submitting them more conveniently. Such systems should also ensure high security standards, high functional settings, and user-friendly guidelines. Taking cues from recent developments, universities are promoting hybrid T&L to ensure the sustainability of education by encouraging dialogue between educators and students in executing T&L through a combination of face-to-face and online methods, utilizing applications like Google Meet, Zoom, and Webex (Rahman et al., 2021).

Hence, systematic, and flexible time management is imperative among students to prevent any lapses in crucial learning inputs and encourage active participation in school or university activities. Through official university websites, students can harness digital learning to complete and submit assessments. An online attendance system greatly facilitates instructors in tracking attendance patterns, minimizing truancy, which could negatively affect students' educational progress and graduation qualifications (Abdillah & Musa, 2021). Moreover, this system plays a vital role in documenting student absenteeism causes, feedback, or complaints from the university community, tracking student achievements in the curriculum and co-curriculum, and serving as a platform for university bulletins. Furthermore, educational institutions should strengthen international partnerships with foreign educational systems post-

pandemic, to diversify the learning input for courses still in their early stages within our country. Initiatives such as providing opportunities for our community to explore developments abroad can be applied back home. Post-pandemic, collaboration with foreign educational institutions can be illustrated through the reestablishment of student exchange programs, international innovation competitions, and invitations to attend specialized symposia.

In this post-pandemic era, students can easily engage in immersive learning experiences that encompass various academic, sporting, artistic, humanitarian, vocational, and spiritual aspects. The expertise from abroad can be harnessed to reduce our country's dependence on foreign expertise in particular fields, as sustaining long-term dependence on foreign expertise entails considerable financial expenditures. Post-pandemic, young individuals, especially students, should be encouraged to engage in areas that are closely aligned with our nation's development, thereby strengthening existing domains that constitute our country's treasures. For example, Professor Datuk Dr. Mohammad Shatar Sabran, the Chief Executive Officer of the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA), mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed humanity to adapt their daily lives, including work and learning processes. He emphasized Malaysia's goal to become the hub for the world's largest consortium of Micro-credentials programs under the ASAIHL Institute (AI) within the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning (ASAIHL) (Sinar Bestari, 2022).

The shift in teaching and learning methods had been under consideration since the pandemic, as face-to-face methods had been supplanted by online approaches. This shift has elevated e-learning to a pivotal role in education at every level. Most universities have mandated a three-week online learning session in each semester. For instance, Prof. Dr. M Iqbal Saripan, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic and International Affairs at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), underscored the role of the COVID-19 pandemic in accelerating and expanding online T&L implementation in both public universities (UA) and private higher education institutions (IPTS). Furthermore, the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) has introduced a blended T&L approach that combines conventional and online methods (A Rosli, 2020). Therefore, the expansion of comprehensive internet access in the country needs to be expedited to enable all students, especially those in distance education, to engage in online learning. Simultaneously, the practice of online learning systems allows the nation to increase the IT literacy of the population and facilitate basic electronic device usage, both in the workplace and for educational purposes. Higher education institutions bear a significant responsibility in producing graduates who can secure employment opportunities after completing their studies.

Nevertheless, face-to-face T&L remains essential as it enables bidirectional communication between educators and students, facilitating students' comprehension and retention of course materials during lectures. Thus, educators should provide learning materials through screen-based presentation methods like Microsoft PowerPoint for topic elucidation during lecture days. University facilities and resources should be upgraded and expanded to provide students with opportunities to conduct assessments and research specific to their coursework requirements. Continuous guidance from educators is also critical in guiding students along a path that aligns with their qualifications within the workforce. By facilitating the creation of publishable research and providing high-tech, conducive university environments, institutions of higher education can contribute to local community development and enhance their international reputation. Furthermore, educational institutions should foster close collaborations with industries to encourage students to gain internship opportunities. As a

result, students can hone skills in their chosen fields and make themselves attractive to local and international employers upon graduation, thereby reducing unemployment rates in the country.

The next recommendation pertains to the physical and mental health monitoring of students across various educational levels, with a specific focus on the physically challenged (OKU) and regular students with recurring illnesses, requiring periodic health check-ups by healthcare professionals. Trained educators in the management of OKU students should be increased to ensure their educational progress, despite the significant challenges faced during the Movement Control Order (PKP) period (Rosli, Ahmad Sabri & Takril, 2022b). Additionally, the welfare of OKU students should be prioritized by educational institutions to ease their campus life and movement, offering specialized facilities such as designated seating in transportation, dedicated pathways within university buildings, accessible restrooms, and elevators to facilitate their movement and participation in campus activities. In the post-pandemic era, educational institutions must emphasize the physical and mental health of students and faculty as a support to the nation in preventing the resurgence of coronavirus outbreaks. Good health enables the T&L process to follow the education schedule, and the theoretical and practical aspects can be undertaken by all as course assessment requirements. Knowledge about self-care should be instilled in every layer of society, especially in students, to foster active and healthy individuals committed to contributing to the nation.

Consequently, recreational activities and co-curricular activities supported by university staff or student associations are crucial for helping individuals cope with the pressures they face. Activities outside the classroom provide a necessary balance for students, ensuring they don't feel confined and offering opportunities for further exploration of course curricula. For instance, universities should encourage students to allocate time for physical exercise to alleviate stress and teach effective techniques for completing assignments promptly while maintaining quality. Moreover, universities should schedule an adequate time gap between two subjects to allow students sufficient rest and movement time between classes. Therefore, universities must provide health clinics for physical health, counseling services for mental and emotional health, and faculty mentoring programs to address learning challenges (Abdul Razak, Hassan & Shaharuddin, 2022). Students should be given opportunities to express their feelings and difficulties and receive appropriate attention and support to resolve their issues. The pandemic era has placed numerous individuals under a range of dilemmas and life pressures. Young individuals need early assistance to prevent them from being burdened by difficulties or negative thoughts throughout their full-time student life. In truth, the post-pandemic period necessitates that everyone assumes the responsibility to enhance their physical and mental health and emotional stability when dealing with the challenges encountered while pursuing success.

Issue 2: Face-to-Face Education as a Catalyst for Developing Students' Human Skills

In the current era of globalization, a mere academic degree or various diplomas and certificates, including the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM), Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM), and vocational certificates, no longer solely determine one's career trajectory. The government and private sector, instead, prioritize various aspects, chief among them being the development of human skills within individuals. Human skills focus on generic student skills and encompass the mastery of various other elements, including technical skills, generic skills, entrepreneurship skills, and critical thinking abilities. Typically, these human skills are

cultivated through social activities, co-curricular involvement, sports, games, and encouraged social interactions with a diverse set of participants.

However, in March 2019, a disease known as COVID-19, originating from Wuhan, China, spread globally, resulting in thousands of casualties (Othman, Mokhtar, & Pullong, 2022b). COVID-19 became a prevalent topic in daily news, social media, press conferences, and radio broadcasts, with the number of cases increasing rapidly each day, leading to numerous fatalities within a short time. The emergence of this infectious disease had substantial negative consequences for both the nation and its people.

In response, the government-initiated measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 and minimize fatalities by implementing Movement Control Orders (MCO). Safety measures necessitated the closure and transition of several sectors to online platforms, including the education sector and economic activities such as shopping centers, supermarkets, hair salons, among others, to mitigate overcrowding and the risk of disease transmission (Othman, Mokhtar, & Pullong, 2022b). In the post-pandemic era, various sectors, including the education sector, have reopened, promoting a new normal lifestyle characterized using face masks, regular handwashing, hand sanitizers, and other safety precautions.

The reopening of the education sector enables face-to-face learning to resume. It facilitates co-curricular activities, practical training, and voluntary activities that play a significant role in enhancing students' human skills. Therefore, the question arises: Does face-to-face education contribute to the development of human skills among students?

The cultivation of human skills in students is essential for the future of a nation, as students represent the generational torchbearers who will lead the country (Sidik, Awang, & Ahmad, 2020; Abang Muis, Hajimin, Marinsah, & Othman, 2021). To enhance students' human skills in the post-pandemic era, various group activities must be organized. These include co-curricular activities such as participation in uniformed organizations, sports, clubs, language clubs, and more. Group activities offer several benefits, including diverse experiences, skill development, and new knowledge. For example, time management skills are acquired, instilling discipline in students to adhere to designated schedules. These activities also enhance leadership, teamwork, and communication skills, whether in giving or receiving instructions within a team. Group activities improve cooperation among students when working on tasks or activities. Besides developing new skills, group activities support physical and mental well-being, something most students aspire to achieve. Additionally, group activities alleviate boredom in students, making collaborative work more engaging than individual tasks, thus reducing stress levels students often experience when completing assignments. In summary, group activities generally facilitate the development of human skills in students. This includes a wide range of skills, experiences, and lessons that can be practically applied in various tasks, ultimately contributing to improved physical health and mental acuity in students.

Moreover, face-to-face education enables activities like volunteer campaigns to be carried out at both the school and higher education levels. Volunteer campaigns, which were previously halted due to the ease of COVID-19 transmission, can be revived in the post-pandemic era with the adoption of a new lifestyle that safeguards against the spread of the virus (Othman, Mokhtar, & Pullong, 2022b). Volunteer campaigns involve collective efforts aimed at assisting disaster-stricken communities without expecting any financial or material gain. These

campaigns are integral to schools, involving all schools within a district. Students, as active participants, often engage in awareness campaigns organized within universities to aid those in need. Common activities during such campaigns include community clean-ups, assistance with disaster-stricken homes, and participation in mosque or school cleaning activities, among other endeavors.

The engagement of students in such social activities serves to impart multiple new experiences and gain new friendships. In general, these social campaigns play a significant role in furthering the development of human skills in individuals. Sidik, Awang, & Ahmad (2018) highlight the importance of an encouraging environment to promote student engagement in various school activities, fostering the development of human skills. Consequently, the reimplementation of face-to-face education enhances the execution of these social campaigns and augments the development of human skills in students. In addition to human skills development, practical training is essential, as it enables students to master practical skills required in their future jobs. These skills must be learned before graduation.

Practical skills development cannot be effectively conducted online, as instructors may not be able to offer comprehensive guidance or test students' practical skills adequately. The laboratory is the ideal setting for the assessment of practical skills due to its availability and suitability for student skill evaluation. Thus, face-to-face education is instrumental in influencing students' practical skills, as many students prefer receiving direct guidance from instructors, leading to enhanced practical skills mastery. Face-to-face practical training fosters student interest in refining their skills. Some practical tasks require group work, which improves cooperation and simplifies the completion of tasks for students. Practical skills testing is a significant milestone for students nearing graduation, as it serves as a benchmark for the understanding and mastery of skills they have acquired during their studies. Furthermore, practical skills are essential in facilitating job placement in both the public and private sectors, as companies prioritize candidates with not only academic achievements but also practical skills. Practical skills reflect an individual's ability to perform in their future job, making them highly valuable. Thus, practical training conducted face-to-face also contributes to the development of human skills in students.

In conclusion, students with high-level human skills are more appealing and can become better leaders in managing organizations and tasks. Therefore, the government must overcome the challenges to maintain face-to-face learning as a stable learning method for producing students with high human skills. In the context of Malaysia, it fosters a sense of national identity, which in turn, contributes to the collective awareness in curriculum development. Face-to-face learning plays a pivotal role in shaping excellent students because their involvement in social activities, co-curricular activities, and knowledge transfer becomes a source and reinforcement of their social skills. In addition to enhancing human skills, face-to-face learning instills values and provides various new knowledge and experiences that deepen an individual's personality and mental development. Consequently, students' participation in co-curricular activities and social activities is crucial for enhancing human skills and preparing them for the challenges of both life and their future careers.

In the career sector, emphasis is placed on human skills and strong work experience to assure organizations of an individual's competency and skills. Human skills should be constantly improved as the higher the human skills an individual possesses, the more attractive and

marketable they become to employers compared to candidates who lack these skills. The stability of the economy, national development, and society is closely intertwined with the human skills present in the future leaders of the nation.

Issue 3: Reviving the Post-Pandemic Teaching and Learning System

In accordance with the Education Act of 1996, a teacher is defined as an individual who imparts knowledge to students within an educational institution and who provides or generates instructional content. Consequently, teachers invariably serve as role models for students in the learning process (Othman et al., 2021c). However, the teaching process and educational system were severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic when the nation's school systems had to be shuttered. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic and underscored the gravity of its rapid transmission and the dire epidemic conditions. The unwelcome arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic has rendered the task of teaching students an arduous one. In this context, good governance is the linchpin to the recovery of the teaching and learning system post-pandemic. Governance, a term derived from English literature, pertains to the administration within a nation. Sound governance ensures that all affairs within a nation are managed optimally. Furthermore, laws can be enacted and adhered to more effectively by the entire populace. Consequently, efficient governance plays a critical role in addressing issues and challenges in the field of education.

Recalling the fundamental principles of the implementation of the Malaysian government's Five-Year Development Plans, which are remnants of the British colonial era in Malaya after World War II, the 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP) should emphasize the revival of the teaching and learning system post-pandemic (Othman, Mokhtar, & Esa, 2022a). This entails a focus on digitalizing education, improving educational infrastructure, and enhancing futuristic-themed educational training. To achieve a higher quality and more futuristic educational system, various devices such as laptops, smartphones, and tablets are essential for conducting virtual teaching and learning. Consequently, it has been observed that a significant number of children belonging to the B40 income group and residing in rural areas face learning deficits, particularly in the fundamental areas of reading, writing, and arithmetic due to the lack of suitable learning devices (108). Data from the Ministry of Education (KPM) has indicated that nearly 40 percent of students have encountered learning issues due to the absence of learning devices during the implementation of remote learning (Bernama, 2022). It is evident that a primary focus of the 12MP is to reduce learning deficits among children, especially those in the B40 category and rural areas, by providing the necessary facilities. Furthermore, offering incentives and making affordable, high-quality devices available to the public is essential to bridge the education gap (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a).

From another perspective, the inadequacy of digital learning in the national education system is evident through issues like poor internet access, the unaffordability of devices for learning, and a lack of digital technology skills among educators (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a). These issues hinder the consistent implementation of online learning. Thus, the 12MP should also address the provision of low-cost, high-quality internet access to the public and the enhancement of educational and leadership training. For instance, educators and aspiring teachers in teacher training institutions and public university education faculties should receive training in digital talents and skills for teaching. In essence, a conducive schooling environment and teacher training are essential to ensure effective learning sessions. Moreover,

supplementary programs like the Supplementary Food Program (Rancangan Makanan Tambahan, RMT) are crucial for child development (Othman, Mokhtar & Esa, 2022a).

From a different perspective, digital transformation is the gradual process of leveraging existing digital technology. Digital transformation gradually alters the pre-existing learning process, making it more effective and efficient. Consequently, digital transformation presents significant opportunities and challenges in the field of education. As such, the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (SKMM), in its previous nomenclature, has introduced digital etiquette to ensure that the behavior of students and learners is safeguarded in the process of digital transformation (Assya'bani & Majdi, 2022). Moreover, digital transformation in education enables seamless knowledge transfer. The existence of webinars allows borderless knowledge transfer through online platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, Google Classroom, Kahoot, Quizizz, and others. Clearly, with digital transformation, the revival of the teaching and learning process post-pandemic is a realizable goal (Assya'bani & Majdi, 2022).

Viewed from another angle, adaptation to new norms is also a crucial element in the revival of the teaching and learning process post-pandemic. As is widely known, each community has its own norms that are practiced within its social framework. The term "norms" derives from the Latin word meaning rules or regulations that have become expected behaviors to be adhered to by every member of the community. In other words, norms are social regulations, whether formed consciously or unconsciously, about various aspects of life, thereby becoming habits and acknowledged as conforming to established rules. The COVID-19 pandemic brought about changes in society's norms, necessitating adaptation to the new norms for the continuity of life. Therefore, teachers, students, and learners must make efforts to adapt to the new norms for emotional stability and physical well-being, ensuring the continuation of the teaching and learning process post-pandemic. This is essential as discomfort with new and unfamiliar situations could lead to depression and emotional issues brought about by uncertainty. In essence, by adjusting to new norms, the revival of the teaching and learning process post-pandemic can be realized. When explored further, the Teacher Competency Test (Uji Kompetensi Guru, UKG) should be conducted periodically to ensure that teachers remain current in their competencies (Assya'bani & Majdi, 2022). Unearthing the potential of educators and aspiring educators in the use of technology is crucial for guaranteeing the post-pandemic teaching and learning system's revival. Consequently, teachers and prospective educators should equip themselves with technology skills that evolve over time. All stakeholders should pool their resources and invest their time to contribute to the revival of the post-pandemic education system.

From yet another perspective, the existence of quality education for all segments of society is crucial in the revival of the teaching and learning process post-pandemic. This is not only applicable to school students or those with disabilities but also to marginalized groups. To achieve this goal, the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) should provide equitable educational services and expand various types of scholarships, especially for financially disadvantaged students. The system should be restructured to address the issue of education gaps. Simultaneously, teachers' readiness for e-learning is vital to ensure that the revival of the teaching and learning process post-pandemic is carried out smoothly and effectively.

In this context, parents' readiness to accept e-learning is vital to ensure cooperation in the revival process. With parental support, educators will be more motivated to enhance their e-learning technology literacy. Undeniably, the vital role of parents is transformative and self-acclimating from the first year of a student's university studies, serving as a vehicle for the academic performance of the students (Othman et al., 2021e; Mohd Shah et al., 2021b). Consequently, issues and challenges can be minimized during e-learning. In conclusion, all stakeholders play a crucial role in resolving these issues and challenges to ensure the revival of the post-pandemic education system in Malaysia, which can rival other advanced nations.

Issue 4: The Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Learning.

In the post-pandemic educational landscape, teaching and learning (T&L) assume a pivotal role. This is because students at all levels, from primary and secondary schools to institutions of higher education, are now expected to continue their education through online means. The transition to online T&L is an endeavor that concerns various stakeholders, including the government, parents, and students, primarily due to the abrupt shift in pedagogical paradigms brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic over the course of two years. The implementation of Movement Control Orders (PKP) by the Malaysian government was, at the time, the most suitable method to curb the escalating spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the PKP, the only feasible approach to conduct T&L was online instruction. This strategic move, as dictated by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM), aimed to ensure the systematic progression of the academic curriculum and the prevention of disruptions to the learning process, including graduation ceremonies. Thus, it falls upon the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) to remain vigilant in preserving the systematic conduct of T&L post-pandemic. Over the two years that were heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, students were compelled to adapt to this new form of remote learning, employing applications such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Meet, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and more (Abdul Rahman, Mohd Zolkifli & Ling, 2020).

Furthermore, online learning necessitates the cultivation of essential learning skills among all students, spanning from primary to secondary school and into the higher education spectrum. E-learning has now become a lifelong learning modality. Students must adapt to the altered landscape, undertaking the onus of seeking information, engaging in self-directed learning, and submitting assignments as assigned by their teachers or lecturers. A sense of autonomy is paramount, allowing students to manage their time effectively during online T&L sessions. Traditional schedules, heretofore provided by schools or higher education institutions, are not made available any longer, as online T&L characterizes the instructional modality amid the COVID-19 pandemic (Jamaludin & Wong, 2021). In this regard, it becomes imperative for students to apportion their time judiciously to attend to their academic obligations. Parents assume a crucial role during this period, as students engage in online learning from the confines of their homes. Parents must provide guidance to their children in fulfilling the tasks assigned by their teachers or lecturers, ensuring that motivation remains undeterred.

In order to ensure the effective execution of online T&L in the post-pandemic phase, the government must proactively address the challenges that confront this modality. For instance, there are students who lack access to the requisite technological resources to engage effectively in online learning. Disparities in familial financial situations compound the issue, differentiating between relatively affluent households and those belonging to the B40 socioeconomic category. Financially disadvantaged families find themselves bearing a heavy

burden, unable to provide their children with technological essentials, such as laptops, smartphones, or tablets, to support online learning. Consequently, the government should facilitate applications for technological aid to B40 households, ensuring that they receive the technological support necessary for remote learning (Abdul Rahman, Mohd Zolkifli & Ling, 2020). Technological resources play a pivotal role in the execution of T&L during the post-pandemic phase of COVID-19. Throughout the period of online T&L, internet stability becomes another factor influencing the systematic execution of the learning process. Students residing in less developed areas, such as rural regions and villages, often face the issue of unstable internet connectivity. This lack of connectivity adversely affects the students' ability to follow their teachers or lecturers during online classes. Consequently, the government must collaborate with telecommunications providers to address the issue of unstable internet accessibility, ensuring a stable digital learning environment. Furthermore, the government stands as a central authority in crafting a fresh academic curriculum, accommodating the tenets of online T&L to ensure its effective and systematic implementation. The government should proactively offer support to those who encounter difficulties in pursuing online learning, especially pertaining to digital deficits and internet instability.

Moreover, the utilization of digital learning in the sphere of teaching and learning (T&L) represents a sophisticated communication paradigm that embraces the employment of advanced technology. Educators select various applications to serve as teaching aids, including Google Meet, Zoom, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and others. Educators must also exhibit competence in technology use to ensure the seamless delivery of instruction and the dissemination of accurate information to all students (Haizah & Mohd Rusli, 2022). The provisioning of digital infrastructure and digital learning has not only revolutionized teaching but has become the very core of pedagogy, especially during the post-pandemic era. In the current context, students must prioritize technological literacy, as this is an integral component of their daily lives. Furthermore, these digital platforms have emerged as indispensable tools for effective T&L, facilitating the acquisition of relevant and up-to-date information, including current events. Applications like WhatsApp, YouTube, and Facebook, indeed, have transformed into significant online platforms that bear considerable implications for the digitalization of teaching. The government should strive to expand digital access to all members of society. The Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) has introduced a dedicated educational channel known as Didik TV KPM (Berita Harian, 2021). This educational channel is poised to substitute conventional face-to-face learning post-pandemic, as television is a medium accessible to the general populace for everyday use.

The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated a global shift towards a new way of life. Various sectors, including economics, social dynamics, politics, and education, have been profoundly impacted. All educators, students, and parents have had to adapt to the transition in teaching and learning methods, moving from face-to-face interaction to an online modality devised by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) during the COVID-19 pandemic. This transition has posed numerous challenges to educators, students, and parents, given that the approach was a novelty when first introduced. However, the digitalization of teaching and learning (T&L) does harbor certain advantages. It serves as a dynamic platform for both educators and students to embrace novel technologies, keeping motivation levels high (Jafar, Amran & Faiz, 2020).

In conclusion, all stakeholders must join forces to confront and address the challenges posed by this new norm. Everyone carries a specific responsibility in their respective domains.

Collective action is required to navigate these challenges, building a more advanced nation where the burdens of society are shared equally. Through collaboration, we can bravely confront and resolve the issues wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the hope that the virus will eventually be eradicated from our lives. Thus, we can look forward to living in a state of peace and contentment, free from the anxieties and fears associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

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