

The Impact of Online Education on the Islamic Values of Female Faculty Members during the Lockdown: A Case Study in the Saudi Context

LAYLA NASSER ALZARAH*

Abstract

This research focuses on the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown-induced online education on the individual value systems within the Saudi value system embedded in Islam and Saudi culture, experienced by the faculty members of the Islamic Studies Department of a Saudi College of Education. The research reviews the pros and cons of online education, individual value systems within the broader Saudi value system, specifications of the Saudi value system and its significance in Islamic studies. The analysis of the study comprises responses from the selected female faculty members of the Saudi College of Education's Islamic Studies Department through MAXQDA codes and their relevance to the value system of each individual, highlighting reinforced, weakened and disappeared values. The study demonstrates that whereas such phenomena reinforce certain values, they also weaken several others and cause the elimination or emergence of new values. This study also demonstrates that religious, knowledge and behavioural categories of values demonstrate the strengthening, weakening and disappearance of certain values. It shows that the Saudi system of values registers the loss of several values in these three categories, including the emergence of some negative ones. The research points to the inclusion of broader population sampling within the same and different contexts to broaden the scope of the research.

Keywords

Islam, value system, education, pandemic, lockdown, Saudi Arabia.

Introduction

The centrality of the value system of an individual in a culture revolves around the dynamic value system of the cultural setting. However, some events or phenomena bring unprecedented transformations in value systems, disregarding their relevance to holistic settings or even to some sectors such as education. The COVID-19-like phenomena occur rarely. Yet they put entire value systems of individuals topsy-turvy. Pandemic lockdowns have brought transformations in the value system of the Saudi educational system in that their ripple effects are still visible

* Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, King Faisal University, Al-Ahsa, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

among the teaching community and students alike. It is because of the sudden shift of all educational activities to online settings. These effects have lingered because of the pedagogical transformation. Some researchers have already predicted the ubiquity¹ and future of this mode of teaching and learning, stressing the Darwinian adaptation of human beings to the environment.² This long-predicted educational transformation has suddenly entered our cultural settings, too, without realizing its “spatial invasion” having “swept through the barriers of time and space.”³ It is also uneven *à la* the uneven technological and digital adaptation of the Saudi cultural setting during these lockdowns where all educational and other activities came to a grinding halt following the governmental decree to initiate all higher and tertiary educational activities through distance learning/digital mode.⁴

However, distance learning through online means has its pros and cons explored long before the pandemic. Some researchers have suggested specific benefits and indicated some disadvantages⁵ with virtual attitude adaptation becoming difficult for Saudi students. This physical absence and online presence have caused several issues in the cultural arena such as barriers related to social and religious values,⁶ specifically, when it comes to holistic cultural values and their impact on

¹ Starr Roxanna Hiltz and Murray Turoff, “Education Goes Digital: The Evolution of Online Learning and the Revolution in Higher Education,” *Communications of the ACM* 48, no. 10 (2005): 59–64, <https://doi.org/10.1145/1089107.1089139>.

² Starr Hiltz, Murray Turoff, and Linda Harasim, “Development and Philosophy of the Field of Asynchronous Learning Networks,” in *The SAGE Handbook of E-learning Research*, ed. Richard Andrews and Caroline Haythornthwaite (London: Sage, 2007), 55–72, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848607859>.

³ Zāyid Hānī, “‘al-Ta‘allum ‘an Bu‘d’ fī Muwājahat ‘Curūnāfayrūs al-Mustajadd,’” *Scientific American*, March 17, 2020, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/arabic/articles/news/distance-learning-versus-covid19/>.

⁴ Saudi Press Agency (SPA), “Ta‘līq al-Dirāsah fī Jamī‘ Madāris wa Mu’assasāt al-Ta‘līm al-‘Āmm wa ‘l-Ahlī wa ‘l-Jāmi‘ī wa ‘l-Fanī fī ‘l-Mamlakah I’tibāran min Yawm Ghad al-Ithnayn wa ḥattā Ish‘ār Ākhar” (Suspending In-Class Education for all Schools and Universities across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from Monday until further Notice), March 8, 2020, <https://www.spa.gov.sa/2044433>; Thamir M. Alshammari, Ali F. Altebainawi, and Khalidah A. Alenzi, “Importance of Early Precautionary Actions in Avoiding the Spread of COVID-19: Saudi Arabia as an Example,” *Saudi Pharmaceutical Journal* 28, no. 7 (2020): 898–902, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsps.2020.05.005>.

⁵ Maryam Mirzakhani, Hossein Ashrafzadeh, and Azadeh Ashrafzadeh, “The Virtual University: Advantages and Disadvantages,” in the *Fourth International Conference on Distance Learning and Education* (IEEE, October 2010), 32–36.

⁶ Mohaned G. Abed, Reem F. Abdulbaqi, and Todd K. Shackelford, “Saudi Arabian Students’ Beliefs about and Barriers to Online Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic,” *Children* 9, no. 8 (2022): 1170, <https://doi.org/10.3390/children9081170>.

faculty members. The negativity associated with online education and the challenges it raises for teachers,⁷ too, have caused various issues under investigation. In the Saudi setting, this lockdown and consequential online education have posed many questions, such as understanding value systems in certain contexts, specifically in the Saudi context, which is the subject of this research. This research limits it to the attitude and reactions of the female faculty members of the College of Arts towards online education and its ramifications concerning their individual value systems—some have weakened, others have strengthened, and some others have disappeared.

Although several research studies have shed light on the impact of online education and its social, political, and economic ramifications, the issue of its impact on an individual's value system has not been explored so far. Effects on the value system have a direct impact on the entire social fabric and vice versa,⁸ while no such research exists to shed light on the value system and its association with beliefs, principles, and creeds that teaching communities hold due to the value system of society.⁹

It is pertinent to mention here that Saudi cultural values are pillars of the social fabric due to their strong and deep-rooted theological, economic, political, and educational foundations, while they mostly centre around the Islamic system of values with stability at the top of the prioritization.¹⁰ It was visible during the recent lockdowns. Even the simple act of turning the national flag upside down is prohibited due to its being a static value, a symbol of stability. This value makes people obey the regality as the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, venerated

⁷ Valentina B. Salakhova et al., "The Problems of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Higher Education," *Frontiers in Education* 7 (2022): 803700, <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.803700>.

⁸ Mahā' al-Fahīd and 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Naṣṣayān, "Taqwīm Muqarrar al-Ḥadīth bi 'l-Marḥalah al-Thānawiyah fī Ḍaw' Qiyam al-Ḥiwār wa 'l-Tasāmuḥ," *al-Tarbiyah* 40, no. 189 (2021): 308-65.

⁹ Fayḍ al-Qurashī, "al-Qiyam al-Mutaḍamminah fī Muqarrar al-Ḥadīth li 'l-Ṣaff al-Thālith al-Mutawassiṭ wa Madā Ta'zīz al-Muqarrar li Ḥadhihi 'l-Qiyam" (master's thesis, College of Education, Umm Al-Qura University, Mecca, KSA, 2010).

¹⁰ Michel G. Nehme, "Saudi Development Plans between Capitalist and Islamic Values," *Middle Eastern Studies* 30, no. 3 (1994): 632-45, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4283661>; Tim Niblock, "Social Structure and the Development of the Saudi Arabian Political System," in *State, Society and Economy in Saudi Arabia*, ed. Tim Niblock (London: Routledge, 1982), 31, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315727455>; Annalisa Pavan, "Higher Education in Saudi Arabia: Rooted in Heritage and Values, Aspiring to Progress," *International Research in Higher Education* 1, no. 1 (2016): 91-100, <https://doi.org/10.5430/irhe.v1n1p91>.

and divinely blessed legitimacy. Therefore, these values are rooted in each individual's value system, whether they are students or faculty members.

Value System in the Saudi Context

The Saudi system of values is unique in that it comprises both ethical and moral values with a divine dimension.¹¹ Al-Zahrānī has consulted several local scholars and concluded that the Saudi system of values has a religious aspect on which it stands. Another researcher, Mufleh Alakalbi, has defined the Saudi system of values, saying that it is a set of beliefs and perceptions that represent criteria for judging character traits and attributes of persons for social acceptance or rejection.¹² Hamid Khalil, too, has voiced a similar opinion with acceptability or rejection in the cultural context.¹³ Mohammed Alsaif's doctoral argument of adaptation almost syncs adaptation with the environment in that even if there is a question of e-government in the Saudi context, it must adapt to the cultural values and setting.¹⁴ Despite this, he has not given a well-defined perspective on the outcome of what a system of values constitutes. Yet, the conundrum lies in the fact that Saudi schools were technically, politically, and culturally unprepared for a paradigm change.¹⁵ The comments by Sultan Albugami and his colleague are interesting, which were made three years before the onset of the pandemic. They emphasized the need for training and support from the administration and Islamic teachings.¹⁶

This short review demonstrates that the Saudi context is marked by Islamic injunctions, making them part of the culture and individual values. These values constructed on Islamic foundations build a personal clarity of ontological setting due to the divine decrees ordained by

¹¹ Aḥmad al-Zahrānī, "Taqwīm Muqarrarat al-Ḥadīth fī 'l-Marḥalah al-Mutawassiṭah fī Daw' Ahdāfihā wa Mā Tafriḍuhu Qiyam al-Mujtama' al-Sa'ūdī min Mutatallibāt," *Majallat al-Tarbiyah* 3 (2012), 150-153, at 151.

¹² Mufliḥ al-Aklabī, "Dawr Manāhij al-'Ulūm al-Shar'iyah fī Ghars Qiyam al-Amn al-Fikrī wa 'l-Taqnī ladā Ṭullāb al-Marḥalah al-Thānawiyah," *Majallat Taknūlūjiyā al-Tarbiyah: Dirāsāt wa Buḥūth* (2011): 229-271, at 236.

¹³ Ḥāmid Khalīl, *al-Taqwīm al-Tarbawī bayn al-Wāqī' wa 'l-Ma'mūl* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Shaqrī li 'l-Nashr wa 'l-Tawzī', 2011).

¹⁴ Mohammed Alsaif, "Factors Affecting Citizens' Adoption of E-Government Moderated by Socio-Cultural Values in Saudi Arabia" (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2014), <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/19757623.pdf>.

¹⁵ Sultan Albugami and Vian Ahmed, "Effects of Culture and Religion on the Use of ICT in the Saudi Education System," in *Proceedings of the IRES 25th International Conference*, Istanbul, Turkey, January 24, 2016 (Istanbul: IRES, 2016), 27.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 25-27.

Allah.¹⁷ Built on Islamic foundations, the Islamic system of values is the bedrock of educational organizations and institutions in the country.

System of Values and Islamic Studies

While this system of values reinforces the values of educational institutions and faculty members, their value system reinforces it, too. Yet, in terms of Islamic education and the value system that the faculty members teaching Islamic education observe, their awareness of these values, their adherence to them, and their professional upbringing are issues that are subject to analysis when transformations occur. Two significant sources, the Qur'ān and the *sunnah* of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him) are the foundations of the system of values, dividing values into spiritual, ethical, and moral categories¹⁸ and emphasizing “faith-laden and value-laden” practices.¹⁹ The touch of these two fundamental sources emphasizes the role of education in instilling Islamic beliefs and values, creating a new system of values in educational institutions and faculty members²⁰ (that is religious and ethical). Therefore, an individual's value system leans heavily towards Islam and its moral foundations regarding adherence to the system of values.

Values in Islamic Studies Curriculum

Regarding the significance of values in Islamic education/studies curriculum, the Qur'ān stands at the top when the question of adherence to values arises. The Qur'ānic teachings play a leading role in the Saudi context and its educational system,²¹ as researchers have indicated its foundational significance.²² Moreover, the Qur'ānic values are humane but also social and realistic. They promote a complete ethical framework, becoming pillars of the Saudi culture and the objectives of the educational system.²³ Therefore, the role of Islamic education in

¹⁷ Al-Fahīd and al-Naṣṣayān, “Taqwīm Muqarrar al-Ḥadīth.”

¹⁸ Ghulam Sarwar, *Islamic Education: Its Meaning Problems and Prospects* (Dhaka: Muslim Education Trust, 2001), 29.

¹⁹ Ibid., 31.

²⁰ J. Mark Halstead, “Towards a Unified View of Islamic Education,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 6, no. 1 (1995): 25-43.

²¹ Joseph Nevo, “Religion and National Identity in Saudi Arabia,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 3 (1998): 34-53, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4283951>.

²² Md. Muddassir Quamar, *Education System in Saudi Arabia: Of Change and Reforms* (New Delhi: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 13-35, 73-102.

²³ Hayā 'Āyid, “Qiyam al-Ḥiwār fi 'l-Qur'ān al-Karīm wa Taṭbīqātuhā al-Tarbawīyah fi 'l-Urah,” *Majallat al-Baḥth al-'Ilmī fi 'l-Tarbiyah* 15 (2014): 920-22; Maḥmūd al-Sayyid Sulṭān, *al-Ahdāf al-Tarbawīyah fi Itār al-Nazariyyah al-Tarbawīyah fi 'l-Islam* (n.p.: Dār al-Ḥusām, 1981); 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mālikī, *al-Ijtijāhāt al-Tarbawīyah al-Mu'āshirah wa Taṭbīqātuhā fi Tadrīs al-Tarbiyah al-Islāmiyyah* (Dammam: Maktabat al-Mutanabbī, 2015).

instilling and transferring these values to the next generation and making them part of an individual's value system to transform individual behaviour and attitude²⁴ for assimilation and harmony is very important. The question of lockdowns resulting from COVID-19, adaptation to online teaching and learning, and consequential impact on the value systems of individual faculty members and students looms large in this background. It triggers the evaluation of how the value system of a culture works and how it becomes relevant to an individual's value system.

Methodology

Due to the multidimensionality of the phenomenon, which has multifaceted repercussions for the Saudi cultural fabric, quantitative analysis does not seem to present a good and holistic evaluation of the impact on individual values. The qualitative method, therefore, is required to explore how an individual feels his values are reinforced/strengthened or weakened or lost/disappeared. Therefore, a phenomenological approach has been adopted regarding the methodology of interviewing and then hermeneutically interpreting them with reference to the main themes of the value system.²⁵

Regarding the subjects of the research, fifteen faculty members of the College of Arts, Islamic Studies Department, were selected for interview, among which three were professors, five were assistant professors, and seven were lecturers with Saudi, Egyptian, and Syrian backgrounds, speaking Arabic with slight regional variations. They belong to different specializations such as *fiqh* (Islamic law), *tafsīr* (Qur'ānic exegesis), *ḥadīth*, Islamic culture, theology, and distance education, with everyone having some know-how of using digital technology for teaching and learning. The selection criteria were based on service and expertise in online teaching, with a specific ratio of senior and junior faculty members.

²⁴ Muḥammed al-Asbānī, *al-Manhaj al-Madrasī al-Mu'āṣir bayn al-Naẓariyyah wa 'l-Taṭbīq* (Alexandria: Mu'assasat Hawras al-Duwalīyyah, 2010).

²⁵ John. W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009); John. W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2013), 209-11; Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 11; Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2011), 65-66.

Data Collection

The field study required data collection through personal and individualized interviews which took place in the 2021 academic year in Saudi Arabia. A one-on-one Zoom meeting with good recording and transcription was arranged where a face-to-face interview was impossible. The specific questions required in the qualitative approach design to collect data²⁶ were posed to the faculty members with their approval for the recording and subsequent transcription for interpretation and evaluation to maintain data integrity. The main objective of the Zoom interviews was to bridge the distance gap due to recurrent lockdowns and record their opinions about values, individual experiences, attitudes, and priorities, which were impossible to record through other means or assess through quantitative methods.

Moreover, to keep the participants at ease, they were informed about the nature of the study, its purpose and its significance to the Saudi educational context. It was ensured that the participants' privacy was fully protected as a fundamental right, as is the norm in such research. The participants were also informed about their free and consensual participation, with the right to withdraw or even request exclusion from the study before the publication of the research.

The standards of precision and dependability have been strictly adhered to for the credibility of results.²⁷ Four aspects of the criteria for maintaining integrity were observed at each step: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.²⁸ Similar to other such research, the interview style raised several issues for the researcher and interviewees.²⁹ These issues were addressed through mock interviews with colleagues to meet the integrity criteria and increase the reliability of the research. Regarding analysis, the research has achieved transferability by quoting the exact words of the subjects to support the results. The responses have been compared and contrasted to view similarities and differences. For this, the rule of a minimum of 12 participants with a 30-minute interview was adopted.³⁰ The interview

²⁶ Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*; John. W. Willis, *Qualitative Research Methods in Education and Educational Technology* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2008).

²⁷ Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1985).

²⁸ Hibah Aladsani and Ahlam Mohammed Al Abdullatif, "Factors Influencing the Academic Use of Social Network Sites among University Instructors: A Qualitative Approach," *Scientific Journal of King Faisal University, Humanities & Management Sciences* 23, no. 1 (2022): 49-58.

²⁹ David E. Gray, *Doing Research in the Real World* (n.p.: Sage, 2014).

³⁰ Ibid.

questions were slightly altered for each interviewee to obtain results for confirmability with repetition of the key points for further confirmation and reliability in analytical results.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The interviewees were asked the following questions:

1. What values observed by the faculty members of the Department of Islamic Studies, positive or negative, were strengthened in online education during the COVID-19 period?
2. What values observed by the faculty members of the Department of Islamic Studies, positive or negative, were weakened in online education during the COVID-19 period?
3. What values observed by the faculty members of the Department of Islamic Studies, positive or negative, were eliminated/lost in online education during the COVID-19 period?

To analyse data and organize it into understandable coding, MAXQDA was utilized due to its viability for the phenomenon study.³¹ Four major themes regarding values emerged through the analysis of the responses to these questions. Value coding was applied to reflect the values, attitudes, and beliefs, which the participants demonstrated in their responses.³² These include values about one's self, attitude, thinking, and feeling about oneself or some other persons or ideas or things, and belief as part of the system that includes value and knowledge about oneself and others such as "experiences, opinions, prejudices, morals and other interpretative perceptions of the social world."³³ The coding information shows these three themes and their sub-categories as follows:

- A. Coding information: Three themes of values have been titled Theme 1, Theme 2, and Theme 3, each with sub-themes.

Theme 1 included information on "strengthened or emerging values" with the following three sub-themes:

- 1.1. Religious values
- 1.2. Knowledge values
- 1.3. Behavioural values

Theme 2 included information on "weakened values," with the following three sub-themes:

³¹ Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 65-66.

³² Johnny Saldana, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2021), 110-12.

³³ *Ibid.*, 111.

- 2.1. Religious values
- 2.2. Knowledge values
- 2.3. Behavioural values

Theme 3 included information on “lost values,” with the following three sub-themes:

- 3.1. Religious values
- 3.2. Knowledge values
- 3.3. Behavioural values

- B. Factors and Causes
- C. Sorting and assembling the codes according to Step A
- D. Defining and labelling the main themes and sub-themes
- E. Summarizing and presenting the main themes and sub-themes in tables for better understanding.

Data analysis was done in two phases. The first phase involves an open coding of the data and putting these codes in a table as shown below. There are a total of 87 codes as follows:

1. Importance of time	2. Teaching technology	3. Self-development
4. Making alternatives	5. Communication	6. Flexible working
7. Honesty	8. Keeness to know	9. Crisis management
10. Reducing subject matter	11. Assessment	12. Leniency
13. Appreciating science	14. Follow-up	15. Anxiety and stress
16. Leniency in scientific content	17. Neglecting office hours	18. Proficiency
19. Listening	20. Help and generosity	21. Volunteering
22. Time	23. Information delivery	24. Lenient education
25. Trust	26. Justice	27. Lack of justice
28. Seeking and appreciating	29. Love of knowledge	30. Omitting parts of the

knowledge		curriculum
31. Mercy	32. Video recording without interaction	33. Honesty
34. Unfaithfulness in receiving knowledge	35. Interacting with students	36. Logging in to the lecture
37. Short in content	38. Finding alternatives to solutions	39. Assessment
40. Making justifications	41. Sincerity	42. Informing knowledge
43. Academic integrity	44. Quality work	45. Commitment to content
46. Lying	47. Proficiency of work	48. Guiding behavior
49. Achievement	50. Stress and anxiety	51. Cheating
52. Forgiveness	53. Exchange of information	54. Forbearing
55. Cooperation	56. Volunteering	57. Success
58. Tolerance	59. Neglect	60. Giving
61. Good planning	62. Accepting Allah's command	63. Flexibility
64. Direct communication	65. Face reading	66. Cooperation
67. Dealing with students	68. Commitment	69. Responsibility
70. Leadership	71. Self-censorship	72. Respect
73. Inability to keep up electronically	74. Control of emotions	75. Generous grading
76. Compassion	77. Lack of confidence	78. Self-education

79. Writing and reading	80. Students' poor concentration	81. Self-reliance
82. Fear of Allah	83. Sincerity	84. Mistrust
85. Sensory communication		

Table 1: Codes

Then, axial coding of the open symbols was done as follows:

Axial Symbols	Axial Category	Axial Symbols	Axial Category	Axial Symbols	Axial Category
Fear of Allah	Religious values	Reading and writing skills	Knowledge values	Importance of time	Behavioural values
		Lack of student follow-up		Self-development	
		Improper assessment		Technology education	
Self-control		Not grading exams		Finding alternatives	
		Course progress		Good planning	
		Poor discussion		Flexibility	
Mercy		Appreciating knowledge		Self-reliance	
		Cutting-down curriculum			
		Technological development			
Justice		Love of knowledge		Stress and anxiety	
	Seeking and appreciating knowledge				
Cooperation	Leadership	Self-			

Axial Symbols	Axial Category	Axial Symbols	Axial Category	Axial Symbols	Axial Category
		Forgiveness and pardon		knowledge	
Helping & generosity		Affection		Taking responsibility	
		Perfection			
Commitment		Volunteering		Emotion control	
		Student guidance			
Honesty		Achievement		Problem-solving	
		Scientific integrity			
Respect		Quality work		Fostering relationships	
		Interest in knowledge			
Patience		Omitting parts of the curriculum		Communication	
		Lenient education			
Accepting Allah's command		Recording a video of the lecture		Flexible interaction	
		Neglecting office hours			
Tolerance, kindness, and forbearing		Tolerance with students		Listening	
		Interaction with students			

Table 2: Axial Coding of Categories

Results and Discussion

Analysis of the data collected through interviews shows the following values strengthened, weakened or disappeared. The factors and causes have been listed in the fourth column, as shown in Table 3.

1. Strengthened or emerged values	2. Weakened values	3. Lost values	4. Factors and causes
1.1. Religious values	2.1. Religious values	3.1. Religious values	4.1. Measures taken during the Corona pandemic and a large number of reports and tasks
1.2. Knowledge values	2.2. Knowledge values	3.2. Knowledge values	4.2. Personal life of the two age groups (elderly with experience and younger with less experience).
1.3. Behavioral values	2.3. Behavioral values	3.3. Behavioral values	

Table 3: Themes and Sub-Themes

Theme 1 “Strengthened or Emerged Values”

Under this category, religious values represent values that the faculty members expressed they had gained during the online education. However, some were negative in nature, as the explanation of these values later demonstrates. They are subcategorised as follows.

Religious Values

This set of values emerged among the faculty members engaged in their online teaching activity. These include fear of God and self-censorship. For example, in response to the question, one of them said, “My anxiety and fear of Allah increased. I became more observant of myself when explaining.” Another reported, “The commitment to lectures increased to be delivered comprehensively.” A third one stated, “I felt that no one watches me but Allah. I have become more careful because I feel that Allah watches me, even though there was no human control by the administrative authority.” All these three responses comprise roughly twenty per cent of participants having gained these two religious values. This shows their faith in God, while another participant stated that she had experienced this certainty in her faith, reporting in her own words, “In fact, I intended to take a leave due to a personal circumstance, as I am not residing in the same area of my work. The decision to suspend face-to-face study and transformation to distance education prevented this decision.” This shows that the religious value gained during this period has positivity.

Social values also went under transformation during this period. One social value, cooperation, though related to religious code, appeared among the faculty members. One of them stated, "This experience was an opportunity to cooperate and share teaching and technological experiences and practices in using the distance education system." Another social value was mental and emotional relationships. It means that faculty members started feeling an emotional connection with each other. One of the participants reported, "This experience allowed me to have effective communication with a mental and emotional connection with some colleagues, and interaction with colleagues regardless of their personalities and circumstances."

It also shows that the faculty members extended full cooperation, which was never imagined during classroom teaching. One of the faculty members reported that she was always eager to "cooperate to solve the problems she faced while logging in the lecture because of the technical problem." Another participant added, "Giving was the most prominent value accompanying cooperation. The faculty members strived to complete the educational process, simplify the information, and communicate information in the simplest and easiest means." During data analysis, it transpired that even senior faculty members underwent this experience and were eager to extend communication and cooperation to meet students halfway.

Some other social values also appeared among the faculty members, including forbearing, neglect, and pardoning. Some faculty members demonstrated these social values during their interview, while one reported, "We learnt forbearing, forgiving, and neglect in the discussion in meetings with colleagues, trying to accomplish the task. However, we may encounter fear, anxiety, and tension of losing control." Although the faculty members have inculcated some social values, they are somewhat hesitant about expressing negative social values such as tension and anxiety, while they are sure about the neglect they cultivated during this activity.

Knowledge Values

The distance education adopted during the COVID-19 period also impacted knowledge values. A set of these values, such as technical skills and digital technology know-how, emerged among the faculty members. Eighty per cent of faculty members interviewed confirmed that they learnt technical skills in handling digital devices such as the Blackboard system and its attendant tasks such as electronic tests, question-making tasks, course management, assignment handling, and student communication. However, a participant stated, "I mastered activating

the blackboard system in uploading assignments, activating forums, and creating some quizzes.” Another participant added, “It was a nice experience that I enjoyed developing my technical knowledge.” A third participant stated, “I was keen to learn more about the issue of computers and asked colleagues who are competent in using the computer.” The fourth participant mentioned, “Using electronics and programs is obligatory as the Department of Islamic Studies mostly depends on dictation method in the subjects presented.” And still another stated that “The perception of computers or mobile devices has changed from being sources of entertainment and correspondence only.” This shows how online education led faculty members to adopt a new knowledge value, which was either slow to adopt or negligible among faculty members before this adaptation.

Behavioural Values

The pandemic resulting in the lockdown also caused the faculty members to acquire a set of behavioural values and skills. These include management, crisis handling, trying alternatives, making decisions, learning and training, scientific research, self-learning and self-development. A brief analysis of the statements of the faculty members demonstrates this adoption. For example, a faculty member stated, “As a faculty member, I used to enter a lecture at least a quarter of an hour ahead because I was afraid of running short of time.” Another participant said, “Good time management in the crisis was one of the most important experiences we acquired.” A third member said, “Facing fears of the unknown was a positive point that made me self-reliant. I learnt how to use distance education, of which I had no experience before.” These three responses show the faculty members learned to adjust time, manage classroom fear, and be self-dependent and reliant during difficult circumstances.

Calculation shows that twenty-five per cent of faculty members demonstrated positive signs, such as overcoming fear—a source of anxiety in the classroom. For example, a participant stated, “I have become more competent in using the Blackboard system through research, questioning, and self-training.” This shows that earlier, she either did not try or was not learning as fast as she learnt during online education. Two other participants also mentioned having learnt research skills and doing practical research. It means that by saving time and managing other tasks, they have found free time to do research and join online courses to enhance their research skills. This learning of a set of positive knowledge values boosted their productivity.

Yet, they also got a range of negative values. The participants expressed the tension and anxiety they underwent during this online education spell they adopted in lockdowns. For example, one faculty member stated, "I have become more anxious and afraid of not finding an explanation for the students online." Another participant said, "We have become more anxious and tense as we try to finish the course, integrate assignment and test grades, or give students free grades." A third participant added, "Surely, we encountered tension and anxiety, which caused a loss of control." This new adoption caused tension and anxiety, which was mostly related to managing online courses and completing them on time.

Theme 2: "Weakened Values"

Further analysis of the data demonstrates that several faculty members have expressed a weakening of several values and their adherence to those values did not display the same commitment as they used to before the pandemic, or before they started online teaching. However, some of them presented justifications in self-defence as is done in such cases. Some of these values are given under each sub-theme as follows.

Religious Values

Sixty per cent of the participants stated that they did not adhere to the same commitment to their responsibilities in online teaching as they used to demonstrate before the onset of the pandemic. This education transformation bred lethargy and laziness in some participants, specifically, when it came to instructions from the management to show resilience and flexibility towards students during lockdown periods. Some faculty members said they used social media to send content to the students. For example, one faculty member stated, "Distance education affected the value of commitment. Some colleagues manifested negligence in adhering to the dates of lectures, abbreviating the scientific material inappropriately, or tolerance in the assessment of assignments due to the conditions of distance education." A cursory glance at the profiles of the participants shows that most newly recruited or having short service demonstrated lethargic behaviour during educational activities.

Knowledge Values

It has been observed following data analysis that two knowledge values weakened among the participants during this adoption of online education. These two were love and appreciation of science. For example, one participant stated, "Some colleagues, and sometimes I, tolerated handling the material when running short of time." It shows that the participant did not appreciate technology, handling her online teaching issues in a short time. However, another was the opposite of

self-learning. One of the faculty members stated that she found a positive relationship between self-learning and knowledge. It is because she found herself less appreciating knowledge, which impacted her self-learning. Another participant reported that an important knowledge value, i.e., reading and writing lost imperceptibly. She stated, "Using paper books and pens declined despite being the most important tools of science, which affected (the skill of handwriting). The faculty's interest in reading and writing declined, and the research papers submitted by students were not read or corrected accurately, which worsened the problem of correct writing and reading." It was because the new tools were underused during lockdown online teaching activities. The faculty members mostly used to type and read PDF documents.

Behavioural Values

Several faculty members expressed dismay over the declining behavioural values they used to observe in face-to-face teaching. Eighty-five per cent of faculty members said they were disappointed over lukewarm students' responses to their homework and class participation. A faculty member stated about this value, "It is one of the most important values that we lost. This affected the delivery of education appropriately due to the lack of student interaction in the discussion." Another said, "The educational process became one way."

Contradictory to this declining sensory communication, another participant reported exhaustive and exhausting communication during this period of online education. It was done through social media, causing privacy concerns among the faculty members. One of the faculty members stated, "Communication and dialogue were strong, and values were fostered in attitudes but (distance education) was completely different because it weakened them and relied on listening, if possible." Another participant reported weakening of role model, stating, "The concept of a role model has become incomplete because of being only verbal." The online media do not show the full personality and behaviour of the teacher, making students not take teachers as their role models.

Some participants also reported weakening of love and tenderness. One stated, "A bond of love is established between a faculty member and students in face-to-face interaction, which was affected in distance education as students experienced the faculty member's voice without any facial expression that could have motivated spiritual and psychological closeness. Online education has deprived education of feelings of affection and love." It was due to the loss of the proximity that the students used to experience in classrooms and face-to-face

teaching activities. Although some faculty members do not cover their faces during online teaching, it is not the same as in classroom teaching.

Some behavioural values associated with academic activities also started gradually declining and weakening. It included student follow-up, office hour neglect, and recording of lectures and content to dispatch to the students. A faculty member complained, "Self-censorship or academic integrity declined. I relied on recording lectures after contradictory briefings and decisions, which often call for flexibility and tolerance with students." It shows that even the faculty members did not stay loyal to their commitments and became relaxed in student follow-up due to relaxation in managerial directives about leniency towards students in the new educational environment.

However, it is also noted that some responses quote the opposite about cooperation, commitment, and academic integrity. Four per cent of faculty members reported weakening of these values as they have short service duration, leading them to create inappropriate abbreviations during lectures. Another faculty member stated, "I cannot abide by the time of the lecture because I have children. I sometimes changed the lecture date or recorded and shared the lecture with students." A third participant reported, "The students no longer have an excuse for not completing their assignment due to their circumstances because they are now at home and free to study." The relaxation in these values could be attributed to the ignorance of the new digital environment.

Theme 3: "Lost Values"

Like all other qualitative data, this data was fraught with contradictions and inconsistencies. Some participants felt frustrated in asking questions in such a nagging way. For example, one faculty member asked, "How do you ask this undesirable or rude question." Some participants demonstrate that these values have not disappeared. Rather, they have just weakened due to the prevalent situation, invoking the saying of the Prophet (peace be on him), "Allah has forgiven my nation for mistakes and forgetfulness, and what they are forced to do." Moreover, the participant justified her response by saying that lockdown has multidimensionality in causing a decline in various values. Yet, some have indicated that some values of the Islamic system have disappeared, including religious, knowledge and behavioural ones.

Religious Values

Several faculty members have expressed reservations about the loss of religious values. However, thirty per cent of them have stated that they have lost trust in the grades of students due to instructions from the top to be lenient toward them. The remote contact with the students also

marred the credibility of the system. A faculty member pointed this out, saying, “The students refuse to participate orally and use writing only. If they answer, you cannot ensure that answers are not cheated.” This response shows the loss of trust. Another participant said, “Examinations are meaningless in distance education because of the lack of credibility.” Some participants stated that they think it is unfair to evaluate students equally, as most were involved in outright cheating by sharing answers or pretending that they attended lectures. This also led to a lack of transparency and accuracy. Even the most serious and intelligent students got lazy. For example, a faculty member indicated it, saying, “The serious and lazy students were equal due to the emergent circumstances and briefings giving students grades and taking into account their circumstances.”

Knowledge Values

Surprisingly, no faculty member, in any way, reported a loss of any knowledge value. The appreciation of knowledge and its dissemination won the approval of forty per cent of faculty members. They pointed out the lack of appreciation. The faculty members also tolerated academic content dissemination and its ways in the existing circumstances. For example, a faculty member stated, “The appreciation of knowledge was lost on both sides, and some members tolerated the issue because of distance education.”

Behavioural Values

Only two behavioural values were mentioned as lost. The first was the quality, and the second was the mastery. For example, a faculty member stated, “Because of the many concessions made by the faculty member, the heavy pressures of the senior management, and the large number of reports required from the faculty member, we were frustrated and lost the mastery of work.” However, such situations arise in the initial stages of every activity and are generally fixed with time.

Factors and Causes

Regarding factors causing the weakening and loss of values, the analysis demonstrates that the pandemic has caused the emergence of several values, as given in the table below:

Values emerged due to	Values Weakened due to
Professional loyalty	Lack of technology knowledge
Work ethics	Fear of dealing with technology
Testing oneself	Anxiety and stress affect their giving
Self-appreciation	Young age

Breaking work routine	
Monitoring values	
Academic identity	
Academic Integrity	
Age	

Table 4: Factors and Causes

The pandemic has caused some values to change shape or emerge as new ones. The factors responsible for these values are professional loyalty, work ethics, testing oneself, self-appreciation, breaking work routine, monitoring, academic identity, integrity and age. These factors have reinforced and strengthened the existing values and have had little impact on them. On the other hand, some factors weakened some values. These factors were lack of expertise, fear of how to use digital technology, anxiety, stress and age factor.

For example, age has impacted the weakening of values due to a lack of experience in using digital tools and online pedagogical activities. The same goes for the lack of professional skills in online teaching, as the sudden lockdown did not leave room for management authorities to take appropriate measures and prepare relevant standard operating procedures. Meanwhile, a lack of experience in handling digital devices contributed to eliminating some values and weakening others. For example, some values, such as the article abbreviation of giving brief instructions instead of giving comprehensive pedagogical output have also emerged in this arena. Furthermore, faculty members relied heavily on PowerPoint presentations instead of giving live lectures and detailed face-to-face question-answer sessions. Also, poor handling of work pressure, recalling and memory issues, and random time-table changes were also transformed into norms and values. Despite the emergence of these bad values, they did not become permanent following the opening of the occasional lockdowns and normality in the situation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Concluding the argument of the impact of pandemic-induced lockdown on educational and pedagogical activities and norms, it could be stated that these lockdowns and resultant online education have transformed the value system of the faculty members, specifically those engaged in regular online teaching. It impacted the value system of the whole structure as the qualitative analysis of the interview data demonstrates. Online educational activities affect an individual's value system in three ways: They reinforce or strengthen some values, weaken others, and

eliminate some others. However, one negative impact was the emergence of some bad values though for a transitory period. Among the eighty-five codes drawn from the analysis of the interview data, three main themes emerged: religious values, knowledge values, and behavioural values.

Further analysis through axial coding of categories demonstrates that where the faculty members realized the strengthening of some values due to online teaching, they also experienced the weakening of some other values. For example, fear of God, self-censorship, cooperation, mental and emotional relationships, and some social values such as neglect and pardoning in the religious category were strengthened. Similarly, the knowledge category shows strengthening of learning technical skills, learning blackboard systems, course and online pedagogical management, including adaptation to new pedagogical situations and activities. In the behavioural category, the faculty members experienced reinforcement in skills such as time management, crisis handling, finding alternatives, decision making, self-learning and self-development.

Similarly, the interview analysis shows the decline and elimination of some values in the same theme. For example, the analysis of responses demonstrates that commitment to responsibility in teaching activities, flexibility in grading, love and appreciation of technical know-how and digital progress, reading and writing, honesty, love, tenderness, cooperation, and academic integrity witnessed a considerable decline. With this decline, some values also disappeared altogether. For example, leniency led to the loss of credibility due to cheating, which is the loss of a religious value, while among knowledge and behavioural values, data analysis points out the loss of appreciation and dissemination of knowledge and determination to improve quality and mastery. Several factors are responsible for strengthening or weakening these values, including professional loyalty and work ethics with a lack of technology and fear of technology at the top in both strengthening and weakening of values.

However, this short and limited analysis opens avenues for further research about the impact on other faculty members in high schools, colleges, and universities and the disappearance of positive values, specifically those that contribute to positivity in the cultural fabric of Saudi Arabia.

As for the recommendations, educational management authorities should note the following important points. Any phenomenological transformation, whatever happening may cause it, has repercussions on

education, educational activities, and all stakeholders. Therefore, early predictions and impacts on education and stakeholders must be with guidelines for organizations and individuals about how to respond. There must be fast-track guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOPs) in place for swift management response to such happenings. Guidelines and SOPs prepared for such happenings must consider the individual value system and its significance in and about the system of values. These documents must consider impacts and likely repercussions in case such guidelines and SOPs are invoked due to pandemic-like emergencies.

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