The Strategy of Applying e-learning within (30) days in the Iraqi Ministry of Education in Light of the Corona Pandemic and the Deterioration of the Economic Situation for the Academic Year (2019-2020) and the Extent to which this Strategy can be Applied in the Future for Similar Cases[1]

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of the Corona epidemic in all countries of the world has paralyzed almost all human activities, including the education sector, and the countries of the world are in trouble with the high number of injuries and deaths, including Iraq, in addition to the drop in global oil prices, which is the main source of national income in Iraq. As we are on the cusp of a new academic year, we must find solutions to continue the educational process, and to reduce the presence of large numbers of students in the classroom, in compliance with the directives of the Ministry of Health, in addition to taking into account the financial aspect of the Ministry of Education. This proposed project for e-learning achieves the desired goals of the study, first, dividing roles and tasks between the Ministry of Education and the general directorates of education and schools, and secondly, producing an electronic platform for the Iraqi Ministry of Education in record time, and third: it does not cost the Ministry of Education large sums of money.

Keywords: *E-Learning; group sharing; The role of the Ministry of Education; The role of the general directorates of education; The role of schools.*

INTRODUCTION:

In view of the current conditions that the countries of the world in general and our country in particular are going through from the outbreak of the Corona epidemic, and with the daily increase in cases of infection in all governorates of Iraq, and pursuant to the recommendations and advice of the World Health Committee and the Iraqi Ministry of Health not to mix between people and social distancing between them to avoid contracting the disease. This led to the closure of schools and the cessation of education, in the interest of the Ministry of Education for the safety of students, students and their families on the one hand, and the educational cadres on the other hand. The Ministry of Education had to find an alternative to traditional education, which is e-learning, in order to continue the educational process without interruption and to complete the curricula at all educational levels, and this requires To develop quick and urgent solutions for the production of the electronic project.

Research Problem:

The use of traditional education helps to spread the Corona epidemic among students and educational staff, and therefore solutions must be found that limit the spread of the epidemic and at the same time continue education without interruption, and the best solution is to use e-learning. But can the Ministry of Education complete the e-learning project within a maximum period of (30) days only in order to complete the curriculum for the second semester of the academic year (2019-2020) and what is the strategy that can be followed to complete this project and is it possible to rely on a specific party to complete it or not? Relying on more than one party, and what is the role of the Ministry of Education and the General Directorates of Education and Schools to implement the e-learning project, in addition to that. Is it possible to generalize this experience for similar cases in the future?

Search Goal:

The research aims to continue education without interruption and to prevent the spread of the Corona epidemic in schools at the lowest possible financial cost, taking into account the deterioration of the economic situation that Iraq is going through due to the drop in oil prices, which constitute the largest percentage that supplies the state budget. And how to manage the crisis by the Ministry of Education and to define the roles and duties assigned to the general directorates of education and schools on the one hand and the Ministry of Education on the other hand to produce positive results that help to overcome the ordeal, and work to benefit from this method of education if education is exposed to the same conditions in the future.

Research Hypothesis:

The research starts with the hypothesis that the use of e-learning limits the spread of the Corona epidemic because it reduces the number of students in the classroom and allows school administrations to work with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health regarding social distancing. The collective participation in the project and the distribution of roles among educational institutions helps to produce a more accurate and faster e-learning project.

Research Importance :

It is hoped that the research will help educational decision-makers and educational planners in planning to overcome the obstacle of the Corona pandemic and the continuation of the educational process. It is available during (24) hours and all days of the week and holidays, and its use is not hindered by time or place, as the student can study at any time he wants, day and night and in any place, and e-learning does not need school classes, so the student can study while he is in his home, in addition to that it allows The student has to look at the lecture several times in order to understand the scientific material. And by using e-learning, we ensure that there is no mixing between students and the spread of the Corona epidemic, and to prevent the educational process from stopping by producing the e-learning project at the lowest possible material costs and time, and the possibility of applying it at any time when the country is exposed to a health problem that affects the progress of the educational process, whether at the present time or in the future.

Research Methodology :

The scientific research was based on the analytical and descriptive approach.

THE SECOND TOPIC: THE NATURE OF E-LEARNING

First - The Internet and The Reasons for its Use in Education.

The Internet is one of the technologies that can be used in education because of its many advantages as it is a huge network of computers connected to each other and spread all over the world. There are many definitions for it, including (a global system that connects a group of computers to a single network) and it can also be defined as (the global network based on the connection of computers with each other, which facilitates the process of communication and information exchange between individuals in different places) (Qatait, 2011, 100).

Second: The concept of e-learning:

E-learning is a type of learning in which the recipient relies on the use of electronic media in communication, receiving information, acquiring knowledge and skills, and communication between the student and the professor on the one hand and the educational institution on the other, by presenting the curricula in the form of (written or spoken texts, sound effects , graphics, still or animated images, video) so that these media are integrated with each other to achieve educational goals. It is an interactive system that provides guidance and ways to guide and organize tests. It is one of the methods that support the educational process and transfer it to the stage of creativity and skill development after it was in the stage of indoctrination, and e-learning combines all electronic forms of the teaching and learning process. (Al-Musawi, 2021, 1).

E-learning can be defined as (providing training and educational programs through a variety of electronic media, including CDs and DVDs) and the Internet, in a synchronous or asynchronous manner and by adopting the principle of self-learning). (Ali et al., 2009, 3)

Third: The advantages of e-learning. (Al-Mallah, 2010, 74):

1.   Provide educational opportunities that are rich in information and meaningful.
2.   Developing students' skills in the long run by spreading the culture of self-education and training and developing and improving students' capabilities with the least cost and effort.
3.   Providing the opportunity to learn anywhere and at any time.
4.   Equality in distributing opportunities among students in the educational process and enabling students to express their ideas and search for information and facts in ways that are more effective than what is followed in the traditional classroom.
5.   Reducing the administrative burden of the curricula by utilizing electronic tools and means to deliver information and assignments to students and evaluate their performance.
6.   Using different, diverse, and more accurate and fair methods in evaluating students' performance
7.   Enabling students to receive scientific materials in a manner that suits their abilities, using visual, audio and reading methods.

Fourth: Types of e-learning. (Abdul Raouf, 2014, 128):

1.   Education using the computer: The computer and its software are used in education, including private teaching software and simulation and training programs. It allows the learner to interact with the educational content without interacting with the teacher or colleagues.
2.   Network-based education: This type of education is used in providing educational content by employing one of the networks, and it usually provides the opportunity for active interaction with the content and with the teacher, and association, synchronously or asynchronously, and its types are as follows:
    A.   Education that relies on local networks: in which the local network (LAN) is employed to provide educational content to the learner and allows him to interact in time or asynchronously with the teacher and his colleagues.
    B.   Learning based on the World Wide Web (Web): In this type of education, the network is employed in providing educational content and gives it timely and asynchronous interaction with the teacher and his peers.
3.   Education that relies on the Internet: in which the Internet, its applications and tools are employed (website, dialogue rooms, e-mail and newsgroup) to present the educational curriculum and provide opportunities for synchronous or asynchronous interaction with the teacher and peers.
4.   Digital education: It is the education that uses the means of information technology and digital communications, including computers and their networks, cable television networks, and satellite broadcasting.
5.   Distance education: It is education that uses all educational media, traditional such as printed materials, radio, tape recorders and television, or non-traditional (modern) such as computers, software, networks, satellite channels and mobile phones.

Fifth: Some international and Arab experiences in the field of e-learning:

There are a number of countries in the developed and developing world that have distinguished experiences in the field of applying different technology in the field of e-learning, and the following are some of these experiences.

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1. **British experience:**

The method of producing lessons through the design team (Course-Team) applied by British schools is one of the most common methods, and it is done by assigning a team for one or more subjects consisting of subject experts, instructional designers and technology producers. Lessons and curricula, in which education designers participate in defining the specifications of those curricula and lessons along with subject matter experts. The team usually consists of (9) to (11) members, including (5-7) specialists in the content of the curriculum and a specialist in educational technology, as well as a specialist in evaluation, an editor, and a secretary. An academic expert is appointed as the head of the team. The team is fully responsible for the production of lessons, preceded by consultative meetings. These meetings result in defining study topics and how to address them, identifying one or two professors for each class, and then reviewing and analyzing, validating study units, approving plans, approving educational materials (multimedia, programs, video). ...etc) and transferring it to the study material production center, followed by converting the educational material into editing, and finally approving it again after artistic production. (Al-Makhdoub, 14, 2013)

2. **The American experience:**

Work teams consisting of subject matter experts, a media expert, and a communications expert are formed, and they conduct preliminary discussions, then the subject matter experts design the lessons (practically) and carry out the internal formative follow-up for them, and the role of the external assessor comes to monitor the process periodically, and after discussions and consultations, he performs the test and implements the overall evaluation.

From this stage, the study materials are designed until an introductory draft is prepared to be submitted to an expert for preliminary review.

When the study materials are prepared, they are tested for the first time on a group of students. The external evaluator and the design team survey the students' opinions and impressions of the curricula and discuss their views, followed by a questionnaire regarding the effectiveness of the method of interaction between the teacher and the student. After taking into account the opinions of experts in the curriculum, it is prepared as a whole, taking into account the effectiveness of the study material, the appropriateness of its content, and the amount of time required to collect the materials and prepare the curricula. (Al-Makhdoob, 14, 2013)

3. **The Jordanian experience:**

In 2002, the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Jordan adopted a national policy for e-learning in coordination with the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Information Technology by establishing a national knowledge network, in which information and communication technology was used as a basis for the transition to the e-learning system, which depends on developing the ability of self-learning and critical thinking as an alternative to The traditional education system, which relies mainly on indoctrination by the teacher. In order for the experiment to succeed, it required the provision of means, methods, and equipment for e-learning to more than (3000) schools distributed in all governorates of the Kingdom. Providing students with information on educational curricula and taking advantage of modern technologies to reach a knowledge society by increasing the number of targeted schools. (Salami, 2016, 30).

THE THIRD TOPIC: A STRATEGY FOR APPLYING E-LEARNING IN LIGHT OF THE CORONA PANDEMIC AND THE DETERIORATION OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

The use of e-learning as synonymous education through electronic devices (hands, laptops and desktops) needs to provide the necessary funds to finance the project and provide electronic devices for all students because education is free as stated by the Ministry of Education Law (No. 22 of 2011) and since the impact of price fluctuations Oil affects the general budget in Iraq, as it shows a new reality in front of the financial authorities represented in the decline in the flexibility of financial policies in it to varying degrees. The rise in oil prices leads to an increase in public revenues on the one hand, which in turn affects the pace of economic activity and the decline in oil prices leads to a decline Public revenues, due to their dependence on oil revenues, at a rate that may reach (92%) of total public revenues, and this requires Iraq to follow certain financial policies to adapt and adapt to the new reality that is emerging on the global scene. (Al-Anbari, 2019, 3)

Table (1): The impact of oil price fluctuations on the public budget

the year	general revenue	oil revenues	Percentage of oil revenues from public revenues	Overhead	Average price per barrel of oil barrels / dollar
2010	70.178.223.000.000	52.119.260.000.000	%74	70.134.201.000.000	75
2011	108.807.392.000.000	82.989.500.000.000	%76	78.757.666.000.000	105
2012	113.840.076.000.000	94.020.470.000.000	%82	105.127.556.000.000	106
2013	113.840.076.000.000	89.170.720.000.000	%78	119.127.556.000.000	102
2014	105.387.000.000.000	97.072.400.000.000	%92.1	113.473.600.000.000	96
2015	66.470.300.000.000	51.312.600.000.000	%77.2	70.397.500.000.000	49
2016	54.409.270.000.000	44.267.060.000000	%81.4	67.067.430.000.000	40
2017	77.470.335.900.000	68.066.900.000.000	%84.1	75.490.100.000.000	52
2018	106.569.800.000.000	95.600.000.000.000	%89.7	80.873.200.000.000	69
2019	107.483.586.000.000	78.500.000.000.000	% 73	111.700.000.000.000	61
2020	63.199.689.000.000	33.920.000.000.000	%53.6	124.500.000.000.000	38

The table was prepared by the researcher based on the statistics of the Central Bank for several years.

We note from Table (1) that there is a direct relationship between public revenues and oil revenues. The higher the oil revenues, the higher the state's general revenues, which in turn increases with the increase in oil prices, due to the dependence of the Iraqi state budget on oil revenues (one-sided economy), as we notice when prices drop Oil at a rate of ((38 dollars) in the year (2020) due to the spread of the Corona pandemic, a semi-deep cessation of economic life, and a decrease in global demand for oil, which led to a significant decrease in Iraqi oil revenues and a decrease in the state's general revenues. In contrast, we see an increase in public expenditures for the same year and a large deficit among public revenues And public expenditures, which necessitated the state to borrow internally and externally to finance operational expenses, so that the state could not deliver the salaries of employees on time and was delayed for more than ten days.So, a mechanism must be found to implement the e-learning project at the lowest possible cost.

First. The factors that must be provided for the success of the e-learning project:

There are important factors that must be focused on in applying the experience of e-learning and the Ministry of Education, so that an electronic platform can be completed with the capabilities currently available and in record time.

1.   Collective participation:

Countries that are exposed to natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes and epidemics mobilize all their human energies and technological equipment and work day and night to control the disaster and restore stability and normal life. And since we are going through difficult circumstances represented by the spread of the Corona epidemic and the almost complete cessation of life activities, including education, students' attendance in schools was suspended to prevent the spread of the epidemic, and it became necessary to find an alternative to the continuation of the educational process, which is electronic education, but it is useless to rely on the Ministry of Education on one side only (Educational TV) In the work of the e-learning project, efforts must be combined with the participation of all the general directorates of education in the work of such a project. Dividing the work and assigning specific tasks to each general directorate of education facilitates the production process with the means and equipment available in each directorate. The division of work in the project reduces the difficulty of its establishment. It increases the quality of the work produced. Collective participation means that process in which work is divided among those concerned with it and contribute to its implementation and evaluation. (Ghoneim, 2005, 168)

Work is being done to form sub-committees in each general directorate of education selected to participate in the electronic project, and each directorate is assigned to produce one academic stage, as shown in the table below.

 Table (2) shows that all the selected general directorates of education are assigned to one stage of study that will only be completed. This enhances the ability of each directorate to produce its work in the best possible way by using all the technological means available to it in less than (30) days.

table (2)
The general directorates of education participating in the e-learning project for the primary and secondary levels

No.	General Directorate of Education	The academic stage to be completed electronically
1	Basra	The first primary
2	Maysan	The second is primary
3	Dhi Qar	Third primary
4	Qadisiyah	Fourth primary
5	Wasit	Fifth primary
6	Double	sixth grade
7	The honorable Najaf	The first is average
8	Holy Karbala	The second is average
9	Babylon	The third is average
10	The third Karkh	The fourth middle school in all its branches
11	The second Karkh	The fifth middle school in all its branches
12	The first Karkh	The sixth preparatory school in all its branches

The table was prepared by the researcher based on the General Directorates of Education

As for vocational education, there are several departments (industrial, agricultural, commercial, applied arts, computer and information technology, and nursing). It is possible to seek the assistance of more than one General Directorate of Education who are not participating in Table (2) to produce electronic curricula, as in the table below.

Table (3): General Directorates of Education participating in e-learning for vocational education departments.

No.	Vocational preparatory stages			Section	Directorate
1	sixth industry	Fifth industry	Fourth is industry	Industry	First Rusafa
2	sixth Cultivation	Fifth Cultivation	Fourth ,cultivation	Agriculture	Second Rusafa
3	sixth trade	Fifth trade	Fourth trade	commerce	Third Rusafa
4	sixth Applied Arts	Fifth Applied Arts	Fourth Applied Arts	Applied Arts	Diyala
5	sixth Computer and Information Technologies	Fifth Computer and Information Technologies	Fourth computer and information technology	Computer and information technologies	Kirkuk
6	sixth Nursing	Fifth Nursing	Fourth Nursing	nursing	Salahaddin

The table was prepared by the researcher based on the General Directorates of Education.

2. The time factor:

It is very difficult to entrust the e-learning project to only one party (educational television), as this needs a long time that may last for months or more than a year, and we are in a struggle with time because we live in exceptional circumstances due to the spread of this epidemic and because of it all schools were closed in The middle of the academic year (2019-2021). That is, taking into account the time factor is important in these difficult circumstances, and we need an administration that produces a project for us in the shortest possible time (no more than one month only), so that the academic year continues without stopping for a long period and the rest of the curriculum is completed for all academic levels. And if the situation was normal and the educational process proceeded smoothly without problems, then educational television could be used to prepare the curricula electronically, especially since it possesses modern equipment and cameras that are better than what is available in the general directorates of education and with an open time until the completion of the curricula in the best way. That is, the time factor means, procedurally, the method used to invest time in achieving educational activities that are carried out by those concerned with high efficiency, and it is measured by the degree that it obtains from the speed of completing the required tasks. (Amin, 2011, 153).

3.   Decision making and implementation follow-up:

In order to activate the e-learning project, a decision must be made and start working with it as soon as possible and follow up on the implementation of each general directorate of education according to the duties entrusted to it. The study found that managers in charge of projects are more inclined to adopt a holistic approach in strategic decision-making, and this led to better organized performance indicators. There is a limited number of organizations that perform less when examining the decision-making process. The strategy in which the researcher found that it is far from adopting the holistic approach in making strategic decisions. (Al-Ghalibi, 2012, 92).

Second: Mechanism for implementing the proposed e-learning project.

To activate e-learning, quick steps must be taken in order to enable students to keep pace with the academic year, and to divide the roles and tasks assigned to each of the following:

1.   The role of the Ministry of Education:

A. Formation of a higher committee from the general directorates (curricula, supervision, preparation and training, evaluation and examinations, planning, etc.), whose role is to supervise the work of the general directorates of education and provide advice and advice.

B.   Assigning the computer department in the Ministry of Education / General Directorate of Planning to create an electronic platform that will be installed on the selected websites in which the completed academic lectures will be downloaded successively. And the work of an interface for e-learning, as shown in the table below.

Table (4): E-learning interface according to the academic levels and subjects for the primary and secondary levels

No.	primary stages	intermediate stages	Preparatory stages
1	The first primary	The first is average	Fourth year
2	Second primary	The second is average	Fifth is my life
3	Third primary	The third is average	The fifth is practical
4	Fourth primary	-	The sixth is alive
5	Fifth primary	-	The sixth is applied
6	sixth grade	-	-

Table prepared by the researcher.

When choosing any academic stage from elementary school upwards, the study subjects appear, and when choosing any academic subject, the subject chapters appear from the first semester, then the next to the last semester, and when choosing any academic semester, the lectures appear successively.

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As for vocational education, the e-learning interface for vocational prep can be as follows.

Table (5): E-learning interface according to the academic levels and subjects for the primary and secondary levels.

NO.	Section	Stages of preparing the study		
1	Industry	Fourth is industry	Fifth industry	sixth industry
2	Agriculture	Fourth, cultivation	Fifth Cultivation	sixth Cultivation
3	commerce	Fourth trade	Fifth trade	sixth trade
4	Applied Arts	Fourth Applied Arts	Fifth Applied Arts	sixth Applied Arts
5	Computer and information technologies	Fourth computer and information technology	Fifth Computer and Information Technologies	sixth Computer and Information Technologies
6	nursing	Fourth Nursing	Fifth Nursing	sixth Nursing

The table was prepared by the researcher based on the vocational education departments.

With regard to Islamic schools and institutes of fine arts, they can be given the authority to create electronic lectures similar to the previous models, due to the small number of them compared to the education mentioned above.

C.   Instructing the General Directorates of Education in Baghdad and the selected governorates (except for the Kurdistan Region) to form committees from its affiliated departments (supervision, preparation, training, exams, etc.) that take it upon themselves to identify the best teachers and teachers for the academic stages assigned to their work by the General Directorate of Education.

D.   After the General Directorates of Education send the lectures, they are reviewed by the formed ministerial committee for approval and official approval if they are valid for publication.

E.   After being approved by the Ministry, the lectures are downloaded for all academic levels by the Computer Department of the General Directorate of Educational Planning by purchasing a package on the Internet or on social networking sites.

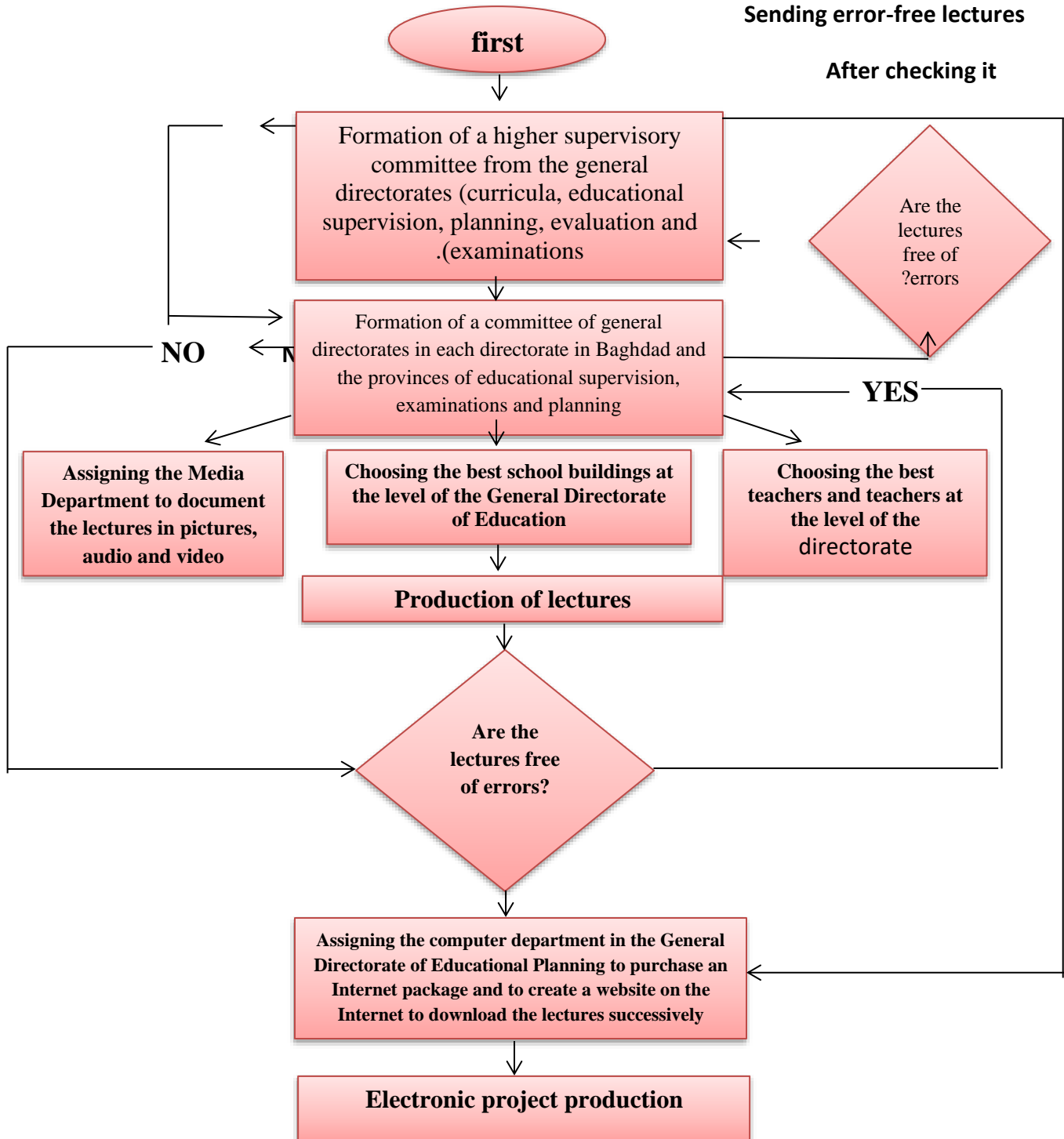### 2.   The role of the general directorates of education:\

A.   In compliance with the ministerial order to form a committee from the General Directorates of Education that takes upon itself the selection of the best professors who have scientific competence and the ability to deliver lectures in the stages entrusted to them by the General Directorate of Education, whether they are (primary, secondary, vocational).

B.   Assigning the teachers who specialize in the various academic subjects who have been selected responsible for preparing lectures, especially the required chapters of the academic subjects. And creating groups on social networking sites to agree on the dates of the lectures and the semesters assigned to them.

C.   Choosing exemplary schools that have advanced means of illustration such as smart boards, data show, maps and other devices used in presenting the lecture.

D.   The media department in all the general directorates of education is entrusted with documenting audio and video lectures. (video)

E.   The content of the lectures is reviewed by the directorate's committee, which is formed according to the specialization, to examine its content from the scientific, theological and technical aspects. Is it valid for publication or does it need modification? If it needs modification, it is reformulated again and mistakes are avoided in order to appear in the best condition.

F.   The lectures shall be submitted to the Ministry of Education to be presented to the ministerial committee formed in this regard, to be audited for the second time and approved and officially approved if they are free from scientific and technical errors.

G.   After being approved by the Ministry, the lectures for all subjects and stages will be downloaded on the previously established electronic platform on the Internet.

3. The role of the school:

A. Full commitment to the official working hours by the teaching staff in the school and giving lectures to students who do not have electronic devices, after the decrease in the number of students coming to the school due to the use of many students for e-learning and adherence to the directives of the Iraqi Ministry of Health inside the classroom and the school yard.

B. Providing assistance, guidance and addressing obstacles to students using e-learning with regard to school curricula when needed.

C. Giving weekly homework to e-learning students through the school's Facebook website, or by calling parents, or including weekly homework on the school notice board.

D. Conducting exams inside the school by dividing the academic stages into two parts, for example the first, second and third grades on a specific day, followed by the fourth, fifth and sixth grades on the next day. Or by dividing the day into, for example, the exam starts at (8:30 am) for certain stages and ends (10:30). morning) and the second meal starts at (11 am) and ends at (1 pm).

E. After the end of the Corona pandemic, God willing, all students will return to their school seats again, so that the school can play its role as before.

Figure (1) below shows the division of labor and cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the General Directorates of Education in Baghdad and the provinces, except for the Kurdistan Region, for the production of the project and the stages of its implementation.

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Form (1): Stages of implementing the proposed e-learning project in the Iraqi Ministry of Education

Sending error-free lectures

After checking it

first

Formation of a higher supervisory committee from the general directorates (curricula, educational supervision, planning, evaluation and examinations).

Are the lectures free of errors?

NO

Formation of a committee of general directorates in each directorate in Baghdad and the provinces of educational supervision, examinations and planning

YES

Assigning the Media Department to document the lectures in pictures, audio and video

Choosing the best school buildings at the level of the General Directorate of Education

Choosing the best teachers and teachers at the level of the directorate

Production of lectures

Are the lectures free of errors?

Assigning the computer department in the General Directorate of Educational Planning to purchase an Internet package and to create a website on the Internet to download the lectures successively

Electronic project production

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Third. Advantages of the proposed e-learning project:

1. There is no need to go to school and only lectures on the electronic device to reduce mixing between students.
2. Reducing the number of students coming to schools who do not have electronic devices in their homes, which helps school administrations to control the classroom by distancing each other.
3. The student can repeat the lecture once, twice, three times...etc until the lecture is fully understood.
4. The student was able to receive the scientific material in a palatable and acceptable manner through a visual, audio and read method that they liked.
5. The student chooses the time and place in which he watches the lecture, and this feature differs from what educational television offers.
6. The use of advanced technologies helps to deliver information in the shortest time, least effort and greater benefit.
7. Achieving justice in educational opportunities and reducing individual differences. Schools that have efficient teaching staff have good educational outcomes, and vice versa.
8. Reducing the phenomenon of private lessons, because those who deliver electronic lectures are the best teachers in the subject at the level of the Directorate of Education, without the financial cost and trouble of going to the lecture venue.
9. Improving and developing the scientific competence of the educational and teaching staff in their field of specialization by drawing attention to the lectures delivered by the best elected teachers at the level of their directorates, as it is more like training courses for teachers and teachers.
10. Reducing school costs such as bags, school clothes, stationery, and transportation lines to and from school, especially as we live in difficult economic conditions due to this pandemic and the drop in global oil prices, which led to the cessation of many business and craft owners from work and a decrease in their income.
11. There is no need to subscribe to the Internet and suffice with it when downloading the lectures only on the computer or keeping the lectures on CDs or DVDs, so that the subscription fees do not burden the families of the students.

THE FOURTH TOPIC: OBSTACLES TO THE APPLICATION OF E-LEARNING IN IRAQ AND APPROPRIATE SOLUTIONS

There are many obstacles facing the application of e-learning in Iraq, and they can be classified into:

First: Technological obstacles:

1. Websites are exposed to the risk of being hacked at any time, which makes the e-learning website vulnerable. (Ali, et al, 2009, 9)
2. Lack of maintenance and repair centers for electronic devices, especially in remote areas far from cities. (Aish, 2016, 2).
3. Iraq witnesses frequent interruptions to the Internet from time to time, as happened in October of the year (2019) when the October Revolution broke out and the period that followed, or the weakness of the Internet network from time to time throughout Iraq. (Al-Rubaie, 2019, 1).

Second: Economic factors:

The report issued by the Central Statistical Organization showed that the total population in Iraq reached nearly (40) million people, and in contrast, the poverty rate in Iraq for the year (2020) reached (25%), meaning that the number of poor people in Iraq reached (10). Approximately millions of people (Central Statistical Organization, 2021 statistics, annual reports) and this large percentage leads to:

1. The inability of some Iraqi families to provide the smart devices needed for e-learning for their students, such as computers and smart devices.
2. The inability of some Iraqi families to subscribe to the Internet and pay monthly fees.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education, the General Directorate of Educational Planning, the number of pupils and students in all the different educational stages and in all governorates except for the Kurdistan Region for the year (2020) was as in the following table:

Table (6)
Statistics of the number of pupils and students in the school stages (primary, secondary and vocational) for the academic year (2019-2020)

NO.	school grade	Girls numbers	Boys numbers	School numbers	total summation
1	Primary	2967305	3263804	15837	6231109
2	secondary	1352785	1631363	7081	2984148
3	vocational	12646	37957	314	50603
4	total summation	4332736	4933124	23232	9265860

Table: Prepared by the researcher based on the data of the Ministry of Education

There was (9,265,860) pupils and students, and if we take into account that the poverty rate reached (25%) of the population in Iraq who cannot provide electronic devices for their children in schools By multiplying the total number of pupils and students by (25%), the result is approximately (2,316,465) pupils and students, meaning that large numbers of students' parents cannot provide electronic devices for their students when applying e-learning.

Third: Social factors:

There are many opinion polls and questionnaires about the application of e-learning in light of the Corona pandemic, including an opinion poll conducted on a sample of parents, educational staff and students in Basra Governorate regarding e-learning, and many questions were asked, including.

table (7)
An opinion poll about e-learning in Iraq for a segment of students, their parents and teachers

NO.	Questions	no	Yes	between (yes, no)
1	Is e-learning effective?	21%	5%	%74
2	Is e-learning fair in assessing the scientific level of students?	61%	39%	-
2	Is it possible to continue e-learning as a supportive method for traditional education?	56%	44%	-

The table was prepared by the researcher based on the opinion poll (Najm, 2020, 3).

We note from table (7) that there is a percentage (21%) of parents, teachers and students who believe that e-learning is not effective, compared to (5%) who believe that it is effective, and the largest percentage (74%) is between the two. Regarding the question about whether e-learning is fair in assessing the academic level of students, the answer was (61%), unfair to students, while a group of the sample amounting to (39%) thinks that it is fair, meaning that the largest percentage of the opinion poll considers it unreliable because it is unfair In assessing the scientific level of the student. Regarding the opinion of the sample about the possibility of continuing e-learning in the future after the end of the Corona pandemic as a method of education that supports traditional education, the largest percentage, which amounts to (56%), does not wish. As for the percentage of approval, it reached (44%) of the sample. We conclude from that the following points:

1. The lack of belief of parents of students applying for e-learning in its competence and ability, and in the emergence of a conscious and educated generation with a distinguished scientific level, in their belief that traditional education is the only way to learn.

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2. Some teachers' lack of belief in the importance of e-learning and their unwillingness to adopt it, due to reasons that may be somewhat realistic, including lack of confidence in all the information available on the Internet.
3. Sometimes there is a lack of confidence in the student himself. When he is given an electronic device and the Internet, he does not adhere to his lessons and follow them without restrictions or supervision from his guardian. It is possible that there are students who pursue their pleasure and entertainment instead of teaching them.
4. A large percentage believes that e-learning is unfair in determining the scientific level of students
5. There are a lot of those interested in education who believe that the e-learning system in its current form leads to the learner's sense of isolation, the absence of feelings, and a lack of sense of community and interaction with individuals. (Abdul Raouf, 2014, 228)

Second: Appropriate solutions to face the obstacles of e-learning.

1.   Technological solutions:
A.   Providing a wide area of space available on the Internet and expanding the field of wireless communication.
B.   Extending Internet networks in areas far from the center of cities, villages and rural areas.
C.   Improving the quality and speed of the Internet used, which is supposed to be commensurate with the cost of its wages.
D.   Avoiding interruptions in the Internet for any reason, because it will be at the expense of the educational process.
E.   Engage vocational high school students in training courses for maintenance and repair of electronic devices that are idle from use in education, at reasonable prices, and these courses qualify them in the future to open repair and maintenance workshops. (Abdul Raouf, 2014, 182-183)

2.   Economic solutions:

Project financing can be used to provide needy, poor and limited-income students if their parents are unable to do so, using the following solutions:

A.   A deal to purchase electronic devices was concluded between the Ministry of Education and an international company that produces electronic devices with specifications that are determined in advance, and it was agreed that payment would be made on credit.
B.   Seeking help from international organizations concerned with education and childhood, UNESCO, UNICEF and others, in providing a helping hand by providing electronic devices for the poor and the needy.
C.   Seeking help from local organizations, holy shrines, and donations from charitable owners.

3.   Social solutions:

A. Activating the role of media with satellite channels on the importance of e-learning at this critical stage, as it is the only way through which the curricula for all educational levels can be completed.
B. Educating and educating students that electronic devices are intended for studying, perusing the school curricula and keeping pace with them, and not to be used for games and entertainment.
C. Educating parents and educational cadres of the importance of keeping pace with technological developments and developed countries in the education sector, according to the Davos Education Quality Index, which uses e-learning, such as (Japan, South Korea, Qatar and Canada). (Al-Ahmari, 2015, 170-171).

CONCLUSIONS:

1. I agree with the hypothesis that the use of e-learning limits the spread of the Corona epidemic because there is no need for pupils and students to be present in the classroom and it allows school administrations to work with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health in social distancing, and that group participation and the distribution of roles helps to produce a more accurate and faster e-learning project. .
2. Through e-learning, it is possible to continue education and not stop due to the Corona epidemic in all the different educational levels, because it is the only way to sustain the educational process in light of the Corona pandemic.
3. Relying on the educational television department in the work of e-learning needs a long time that may take a year or more, and we are in dire need to produce this project as quickly as possible to complete the curricula.

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4. Through this strategy, it is possible to produce e-learning in a record period of no more than (30) days only, through the participation of the selected directorates of education, the distribution of tasks to them, and the production of e-learning with the least possible time and effort.
5. The electronic lectures are checked more than once to be free of errors, the first by the chosen teaching staff when the professor assigned to deliver the lecture, the second by the Committee of the General Directorate of Education, and the third when approved and given official status by the Ministry Committee.
6. This proposed strategy does not need to spend money to produce e-learning and suffices to provide its participants with letters of thanks and appreciation for their participation in the success of the e-project, especially as we are going through a financial crisis due to the drop in oil prices, which is the main sector that supplies the state budget with financial resources.

Recommendations:

1. The necessity of the participation of all the general directorates of education after excluding the general directorates of education in the governorates that have been subjected to sabotage in the infrastructure by the elements of the terrorist ISIS.
2. Relying on the general directorates that have good infrastructure of model schools, qualified educational cadres, modern teaching aids, and a distinguished media cadre that qualify them to perform their duties properly.
3. The work in the e-learning project is divided equally among all the elected general directorates of education to achieve collective participation and reduce the burden of its completion in the event that the project is assigned to a specific party (educational television) because the division of work will help transform it into small tasks that will be easier for the general directorates of education to accomplish. Accurately and in record time.

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