



Advantages of e-learning in light of the Corona pandemic
A field study on a sample of students from the University of Algiers 3
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Abstract:

Through this study, the researcher is trying to highlight the advantages and characteristics of distance education in light of the Corona pandemic, and the extent to which students are in harmony with this new technology in acquiring academic knowledge and skills, which was imposed by the Corona pandemic and was a unique experience of its kind in the Algerian University,

Therefore, we will try to shed light on distance education and its impact on the completion of curricula, educational programs and university achievement by applying the descriptive survey method to a sample of students of the Faculty of Media and Communication Sciences at the University of Algiers 3 with the use of the questionnaire tool We reached a number of results, the most important of which are: that the students are very satisfied and in harmony with distance education techniques, which enabled them to acquire knowledge in comfortable and modern ways, and this was reflected positively on their academic results, and a large percentage of students were able to reconcile between study and employment.

Keywords: Corona pandemic, distance education, academic achievement, knowledge acquisition, university compatibility .

I. INTRODUCTION

The Corona pandemic imposed on the world exceptional circumstances that changed the conduct of all economic, social, cultural, religious, sports and educational activities.

Perhaps the education sector is one of the most sensitive and important sectors in human life as it is directly linked to all other sectors, and the Corona pandemic was a golden opportunity to move to the stage of employing new media and communication in the field of university education and benefiting from its interactive advantages that serve the professor and student at the same time. It enables them to perform their university duties and obligations to the fullest and comfortably, as distance education is a widespread activity in developed countries before the Corona pandemic. In the higher education and scientific research sector.

Accordingly, we will try, through this study, to answer the following essential question: **What are the advantages of distance education at the Algerian University in light of the Corona pandemic?**

In order to answer this fundamental question, we will break it down into a number of sub-questions as follows:

- What are the forms and manifestations of distance education in the Faculty of Information and Communication Sciences at the University of Algiers 3?
- What are the means used in the distance education process at the Faculty of Information and Communication Sciences at the University of Algiers 3?
- What are the implications of distance education on the academic achievement of students of the Faculty of Information and Communication Sciences at the University of Algiers 3?
- What are the implications of distance education on the university compatibility of students of the Faculty of Information and Communication Sciences at the University of Algiers 3?

The importance of this study is highlighted in the following:

- Distance education at the Algerian University is considered one of the new educational phenomena, and it is considered an additional entry point for monitoring developments in the field of transferring and acquiring knowledge and promoting higher education and scientific research.
- The study is considered a contribution to the discussion of a very important topic that has not been adequately discussed and analyzed in scientific studies.
- The study is a reference in building the foundations of distance education in order to make good use of the interactive advantages of new media in the field of higher education in its various pedagogical and scientific activities.

There is an abundance of studies in Arabic and English that dealt with the subject of e-learning and the technologies and tools used in it. The studies will be presented according to the study axes.

-The reality of the e-learning experience in the field of information and library studies:

Many studies have attempted to monitor the experience of e-learning in the field of information studies, including the study of Islam et al. (2011), which explored e-learning programs in the field of libraries and information around the world; The study examined the websites of 370 library and information programs around the world based on the list on the American Library Association website to explore the extent to which e-learning is applied in library and information schools. The results of the study showed that 85 of the sample schools (23%) use e-learning systems in the teaching process and that this style of education is mainly used to overcome geographical and time barriers. The study also revealed that Blackboard (25.89%) is the most widely used platform. It is followed by Web CT platform (10.59%) of the total number of schools that rely on e-learning.

The study also revealed that 86% of the programs offered in the electronic format and in the distance learning style were provided by the asynchronous education system, which provides greater flexibility in the educational process. While the study of Al-Zalabani (2012) reported that the use of modern technologies for distance education and e-learning is the most consistent with the educational tasks entrusted with the specialization of libraries and information

The study indicated the advantages of applying distance learning and e-learning programs in teaching library sciences.

-Al-Sharif's study (2014) aimed to identify the reality of information technology used in education such as "the Internet, e-mail services, e-learning systems, video and audio conferences, and others" in the departments of libraries and information in the state of Khartoum, in addition to knowing the most commonly used and unused information technologies. The faculty members accepted those departments, to know the obstacles and obstacles that prevent their use and to study the possibility of overcoming them, as it tries to determine the basic requirements for the use of information technologies in education in those departments.

Among the findings of the study: that the most used information technologies in the libraries and information departments in Khartoum state universities, and from the viewpoint of the faculty members, were in the following sequence: the Internet, e-mail, then computer education.

Azmi (2014) also presented the e-learning website of the Department of Libraries and Information at Imam Muhammad bin Saud University, being the first e-learning website in this specialization in the Arab world.

The study indicated that the website was created to be an e-learning system for postgraduate students in an experimental stage, in preparation for generalizing the experience to all academic levels. The department used an open Moodle system. The system was implemented in the 2005/2004 academic year. It was used as a support for lectures in the classroom, and the system had a great role, no less than the role of lectures in the classroom.

In the same curriculum, Majanja (2020) study was conducted in South Africa on 79 faculty members in library specialization in eight African universities. The study concluded that specialists in the field there have not been left behind in e-learning, and that most of them feel completely confident about their self-efficacy in this type of teaching.

The results also showed that faculty members employed a variety of e-learning management systems, however, the study found that there is a shortage of technological resources supporting the e-learning process in the universities under study. While Mustafa et al. (2021) study sheds light on the issues faced by students and the factors that have a significant impact on the online learning experience in six private universities in Pakistan.

The results showed that the teaching, professional behavior, planning and instructional methodology of the courses were positively related to online learning.

First: General concepts about distance learning e-learning techniques

1. The concept of e-learning (distance)

E-learning is one of the means that supports the educational process and transforms it from the stage of indoctrination to the stage of creativity, interaction and skill development, and it combines all electronic forms of teaching and learning, using the latest methods in the fields of education, publishing and entertainment by adopting computers, their storage media and their networks. The rapid shifts in the field of technology have led to the emergence of new patterns of learning and teaching, which further consolidated the concept of individual or self-education

Where the learner continues his learning according to his energy, ability, speed of learning and according to his previous experience and skills. E-learning is one of these advanced patterns of so-called distance learning in general, and computer-based education in particular.

Where e-learning depends mainly on computers and networks in the transfer of knowledge and skills. Its applications include web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration. The content of the lessons is presented via the Internet, audio tapes, videos and CDs.(Mamoun , 2018)

E-Learning is an interactive system of education that is provided to the learner using communication and information technologies, and depends on an integrated digital electronic environment that presents courses via electronic networks, provides ways of guidance and direction, organizes exams as well as manages and evaluates resources and processes.(Hermawan , 2021)

The importance of e-learning lies in solving the problem of the knowledge explosion and the increasing demand for education and expanding opportunities for admission to education, in addition to enabling the training and education of workers without leaving their jobs and contributing to breaking psychological barriers between the teacher and the learner as well as

satisfying the needs and characteristics of the learner while raising the return on investment by reducing the cost education.

1.1E-Learning Features:

The characteristics of e-learning can be summarized in the fact that it provides, through computers and its networks, digital multimedia content (written or spoken texts, sound effects, graphics, still or moving images, video clips) so that these media are integrated with each other to achieve specific educational goals. E-learning, as it provides a number of services or tasks related to the teaching and learning management process, as it is less expensive compared to traditional education. It also helps the learner to acquire his knowledge by himself, thus achieving interactiveness in the learning process (the learner's interaction with the teacher, with the content, with colleagues, with the institution educational, with programs and applications) being available, i.e. the ability to access it at any time and from anywhere.

-Advantages of E-learning

1. Saves time and money

One of the most obvious advantages of e-learning is that you can save time and money. You can manage your schedule and take online courses at your most convenient time, whether early in the morning, late afternoon, or evening. You save money, too, because you don't have to pay for transportation or worry about eating on the go.

2. Better retention

E-learning makes use of different platforms like Pedagogue, which provides interactive content. Also, you can share your thoughts and opinions with others. The more engaging the lessons, the more students can remember the information.

3. Personalized learning

You can choose your learning path and study at your own pace. You become more motivated and invested in the course.

4. Cost-effective

Students aren't the only ones that can save money in e-learning. Many educational institutions save money through this set-up because there's no need to use a physical classroom, which translates to reduced monetary spending.

5. Environment-friendly

E-learning is also more environmentally friendly because it doesn't contribute to the pollution brought about by paper production.

- Disadvantages of E-learning

1. Lacks social interaction

E-learning is one of the causes of social isolation because you don't see your teachers and classmates face-to-face anymore. Interaction is very limited to none.

2. Inaccessible to others

Consider yourself lucky if you're located in an area where the internet connection is fast and stable. Unfortunately, some have very limited access to the internet. They have to go to internet cafes or use public Wi-Fis which is very inconvenient.

3. Cheating is unavoidable

E-learning includes assessment, just like in a regular classroom setting. However, there are no teachers or proctors to watch over you during exams. It's easy for online students to share answers knowing there's nobody watching.

4. Requires self-motivation and proper time management skills

You're basically on your own in e-learning. You have to motivate yourself to study hard, take down notes, and gather more information. You should also manage your time well by learning how to juggle studying while doing other things like household chores or earning money part-time.

5. Focuses more on theory

You'll spend most of your time listening to podcasts, watching videos, and looking at slide presentations. There's no hand-on experience like conducting experiments.

It's the most modern way of learning that requires only a gadget and internet access. However, it's not for everybody. Being aware of the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning can help you decide whether this is for you or not.

1.2 E-Learning types :

Simultaneous E-Learning:

Synchronous e-learning, which is education on the air or live broadcast, which requires the learners to be present at the same time in front of computers, to conduct discussion and conversation between the learners themselves, and between them and the teacher, and this discussion takes place through various e-learning tools, namely: Whiteboard - virtual classrooms - conferences via (video, audio) - chat rooms.

- ✓ The learner receives immediate feedback.
- ✓ Cost reduction.
- ✓ Forgetting to go to the study site.
- ✓ His need for modern equipment and a good network.

Asynchronous E-Learning:

Asynchronous e-Learning is indirect education, which does not require the presence of learners at the same time, as the learner can obtain the study according to the appropriate times and with the effort he wishes to provide. Uses tools such as e-mail, the web, mailing lists, discussion groups, FTP, and CDs.

- ✓ The learner gets to study according to the appropriate times for him.
- ✓ Receiving education according to the effort that the learner wishes to provide.
- ✓ Being able to re-study the material and refer to it electronically as needed.
- ✓ The learner does not receive immediate feedback from the teacher.
- ✓ It leads to introversion in education because it isolates it

2. Moodle platform concept:

Moodle, formerly known as MOOCH, is the idea and development of computer scientist Martin Dojimas from Curtin University Perth, Western Australia. Moodle developed and released its first version on August 20, 2002.

Moodle's philosophy is that knowledge is built in the learner's mind through the information provided to him. The role of the teacher is to create a pedagogical environment that makes the learner (the recipient) build his knowledge through his experiences and qualifications.

This philosophy differs from traditional education, where the teacher chooses what should be presented and what the learner should know.(Al-Ajlan , 2008)

The user interface of the Moodle platform is available in a large number of international languages, including English, French, Italian, German and Spanish, and it is also partially available in Arabic, as some items are provided in Arabic when choosing the Arabic language on the site.

The Moodle platform allows universities and schools to conduct exams for students electronically. Teachers can give grades electronically and quickly immediately after students have submitted electronic exams. Moodle also allows sharing lectures, information, and databases for schools and universities, and sharing everything related to exam procedures and student affairs electronically, and students can easily access them.

3. School (university) compatibility:

School adjustment or school adjustment is considered one of the most important concepts in educational psychology, as it is believed that there is a close relationship between school adjustment on the one hand and academic achievement and psychological and mental safety of students on the other hand.

Educational institutions seek to achieve school compatibility through a set of educational strategies and methods, which we will learn about in the coming paragraphs, in addition to the impact of school compatibility on academic achievement and children's adaptation to the school environment.(Ali ,2021)

School compatibility is the extent to which the student accepts the school and the academic atmosphere with all its educational process, fellowships, activities and relationship with the teaching and administrative staff of the educational institution in which he attends.

The concept of school compatibility is not limited to the school only, but there are adults who suffer from academic incompatibility with the university, functional incompatibility in the work environment, or incompatibility between one role and another, such as the functional and educational role, for example.

Several reasons lead to school incompatibility, and similar cases of incompatibility, including being bullied at school, or that the educational institution is below the student's expectations or abilities, or that those in charge of teaching use unpleasant intimidating methods, all of which leads to a situation of school incompatibility.

The issue of school incompatibility must be resolved before it escalates and affects the child's educational path and the extent to which he comprehends his lessons and benefits from the educational process he is supposed to engage in. (Hazeri ,2015)

II. Methods and Materials:

The methodology used in this study is to use methodological methods imposed by the importance of the study and its general objective, as it was imposed by the treatment, discussion and then analysis of the subject of distance education, which calls for the necessity of choosing the appropriate research method and tools that the problem raises, namely:

The survey method, "which is considered one of the most prominent methodological methods in the field of media studies, which represents an organized scientific effort to obtain data and information about the phenomenon or a group of phenomena under study" ⁱ

It is also useful from this methodological method in studying the problem and its dismantling into its hierarchical elements, in order to reach useful connotations.

Based on this, the researcher resorted to the use of analysis and interpretation, to draw logical conclusions in order to answer the questions of the study.

Through this study, we wanted to know the dialectical relationship that links the new media and communication with teaching and learning at the university and academic achievement.

As for the tools used, the researcher presented the research contributions related to the concept of distance e-learning, in terms of concept, characteristics, features, and forms based on the questions of the study, using the questionnaire and observation tool, then scrutiny and analysis to extract the results.

The study sample consists of 50 students from the Faculty of Information and Communication Sciences at the University of Algiers 3 who represent the research community that has benefited for nearly three years from the advantages and applications of e-learning at a distance, a period that is sufficient to highlight the added advantage of this new technology in university education in Algeria.

Second: The practical aspect of the study:**1. Displaying the data and numbers of the tables:****Table No. 01: The forms and manifestations of e-learning that the researched students are exposed to**

Appearance / Shape	<u>Number</u>	percentage %
Take lessons online	27	54
Participation in virtual meetings	3	6
Completing research and sending it over the network	15	30
Coordination between colleagues and teachers over the network	5	10
Take exams remotely	0	0
Total	50	100

We note through the results of Table No. (01) that there is a multiplicity of forms and manifestations of e-learning that the respondents are exposed to, however there is a clear discrepancy in the percentages where we find that the majority of students (54%) see that the most important form of distance education is receiving lessons On-line, which is the basis on which e-learning platforms are built, and it is the most prominent element in the educational process at the university level, which leads to indoctrination of curricula and the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and its delivery to students in the simplest ways.

While 30% of the surveyed students believe that e-learning platforms facilitate the process of completing and sending university research, which constitutes an important part of the evaluation process with regard to directed work that students were unable to embody in presence at the height of the Corona pandemic, which imposed a comprehensive home quarantine.

While 10% of the surveyed students use electronic educational platforms and other social networks to coordinate between their fellow students, professors, and the university's administrative staff and to exchange information, directions and various advertisements that organize the educational and pedagogical process.

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While we find that 6% of the surveyed students employ e-learning platforms to participate in virtual seminars and forums through interactive software and applications that facilitate the participation process with minimal effort.

While we find that the percentage of students who take exams remotely is non-existent, and this is because the Algerian University has not yet reached this point of employing e-

learning techniques. In times when the pandemic was known to be difficult to control and out of control.

Table No. (02): The means used in the distance e-learning process by the surveyed students

the means	<u>Number</u>	percentage %
the smartphone	23	46
electronic board	15	30
Laptop	8	16
PC	4	8
total	50	100

It is clear from the table that the majority of the surveyed students (46%) use the smartphone in the process of remote e-learning, thanks to the distinguished services provided by the smartphone. It is an easy-to-use device that is available to a large number of users, especially the students category.

It combines the feature of writing text and capturing audio, image and video with ease and smoothness.

30% of the surveyed students prefer to use the tablet, which has almost the same characteristics as a smartphone, but with a larger size, On the other hand, 16% of the surveyed students use the laptop in the e-learning process due to its ease of use, carrying and transferring, and it has almost the same characteristics as a personal computer, but with a limited battery life, and this is what constitutes an obstacle to the public using this device.

While about 8% of the sample depend on the personal computer because it is characterized by its large screen size and high storage capacity, it is not related to the battery life, unlike the rest of the devices, and it also contains an operating system and software that help the student in the process of learning and acquiring knowledge.

Table No. (03): The opinion of the researched students about e-learning

Students' opinion	Number	percentage %
User-friendly interactive platforms	16	32
The total incompatibility of the media and communication sciences major with e-learning	6	12
E-learning makes it easy for us to balance work and study	14	28
Academic achievement improved due to regular access to lectures and lessons	14	28
the total	50	100

We note through the results of Table No. (03) above that the students surveyed look positively at e-learning through various platforms, as 32% of students find that the e-learning platforms provided by the university are interactive and easy to use platforms that enable them to achieve the learning process in easier ways than the other methods. traditional

In this regard, 28% of the surveyed students confirm that the process of e-learning remotely in light of the Corona pandemic is easy for them to reconcile between job and study, especially since a large proportion of students are employed in private and public sectors and are pursuing their university studies at the same time. One of the problems and obstacles that made the working student incompatible academically and functionally.

In the same percentage, i.e. 28% of the surveyed students believe that e-learning has contributed positively to improving students' academic achievement, and this is due to the availability of lessons and lectures in an organized manner via the digital platform, which made it easier for students to prepare for exams and review more comfortably than the traditional methods of education that preceded the Corona pandemic, where students find it difficult to get lessons, especially if they do not attend the lectures in the amphitheater

While 12% of the students surveyed believe that e-learning does not fully comply with all standards of media and communication sciences, especially those standards that require attendance, field practice and practical application.

III. Results and discussion :

- Although it is a humanitarian catastrophe and a pandemic that has affected all sectors of life, it has been beneficial to the higher education sector in Algeria, as the Corona pandemic can be considered the main factor in accelerating the process of transition from traditional education to e-learning at the Algerian university, which was very late before the pandemic. The rest of the world, which is using electronic platforms as a new means to complete the process of teaching and learning in various school and university levels
- There are many forms and manifestations of e-learning that students are exposed to, most notably obtaining online lessons and lectures, completing research and sending them over the network within the framework of directed work, coordination between fellow students, professors and administrative staff, in addition to participating in virtual seminars and forums, especially for graduate students.
- There are many new means and media used by the research students to browse the e-learning platforms in light of the Corona pandemic, especially the smartphone, which is characterized by ease and flexibility of use, in addition to the electronic tablet, laptop and personal computer.
- The researched students look positively at e-learning technologies in light of the Corona pandemic, as they are interactive and easy-to-use platforms, and this technology made it easier for working students to reconcile between study and employment,
- Also, e-learning contributed to raising the level of academic achievement due to the availability of lessons and lectures in an organized manner, while some students find that e-learning techniques do not fully correspond to the specialization of media and communication sciences, especially in the field and practical part of this specialization.

IV. Conclusion:

The Corona pandemic, despite being a humanitarian disaster, is a golden opportunity that developed the higher education sector in Algeria and moved it to the stage of distance e-learning, which should continue beyond the pandemic as a contemporary education method in line with the technological developments of new media in various areas of life.

Today, the Algerian University of students and university professors has adapted to a large extent with e-learning techniques, and this has been positively reflected on the conduct of lessons and exams at the height of the pandemic and for three consecutive years.

After this experience, the Algerian university is moving towards fully adopting e-learning technologies in the future because of their positive effects on academic achievement, university compatibility, and the combination of job and study for international students, all of which are positive indicators that suggest the success of the e-learning experience.

Finally, we offer a set of recommendations as follows:

- The necessity of increasing students' technological awareness and training them on the optimal use of distance education tools and software in order to achieve the best educational outcomes. Urging faculty members at the College of Media and Communication Sciences to use different educational tools to ensure their ability to deliver the scientific material well to students, given that e-learning has become an imperative in light of the Corona pandemic and beyond.
 - That the College of Media and Communication Sciences formulate new regulations and rules that comply with the requirements of the current period and to ensure the unification of educational practices in light of the teaching members' use of various e-learning software to avoid placing students under psychological and mental pressure.
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- The necessity of preparing extensive studies on e-learning in libraries and information departments in the Arab world to identify current experiences and benefit from them in developing an organized framework for e-learning in the specialty of libraries and information.

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