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**THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DISTANCE  
LEARNING**

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**Research Article**

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**Abstract:**

Because of the development and technology, learners and teachers shift from the traditional way of education to the modern one. This later involves studying from home without going or being at school or university. The modern style of education has advantages and disadvantages. In case of disadvantages we have to suggest solutions for enhancing distance learning.

**Key words:** Distance Learning, Advantages, Disadvantages, Suggestions.

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## Introduction

Nowadays learners can study without going to universities. This means that learning studying and qualify in a given issue online without being at school. According to Ryan, 1997 "the majority of distance education today takes place using the Internet, now readily accessible for the vast majority of students whether in their own homes or at facilities such as local libraries". Distance learning can be with television, DVD, teleconferencing without forgetting the Internet. Also we can define it as teaching and learning demanding application of many technological request. This kind of education must be flexible and fair.

This type of teaching based on providing learners courses without being physically present at classroom. (Miller, 1993, p. 68) added: "a process to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance, both"

The university of London was the first to offer distance education degrees in 1858, this means that this field is not new. It has a historical evolution through time.

This study shows some advantages and disadvantages of distance teaching. Also it contains some suggestions and recommendations for teacher's performance in the future occasions. In order to do so some questions are raised in the very beginning of this research.

- Does distance learning cover learner's needs? Are learners satisfied during learning using this type of education?

- What can we suggest for teachers to enhance teaching and make it successful?

This research first contains definitions and historical notions, study's findings and recommendations and suggestions.

### 1.Distance learning:

Distance learning means: "a way of studying in which you do not attend a school college, or university but study from where you live, usually being taught and given work to do over the internet: They offer advanced degrees or professional certification through distance learning"

Technology has been widely developed, that's why everything has changed. For instance, learning is no longer related to school and university. students can learn without being physically at classroom.

(Casarotti, 2002, p. 37): "The basic definition of distance learning considers that the teacher and the students are separate in the spatial dimension and that this distance is filled by using technological resources"

Websters and Hackley defined it as a kind of teaching which involves the executing data, calculating and transmissions technology applications in many places.

### 2.History of distance learning:

In spite of the lately technological evolution, distance education was utilized since more than one century ago. But they do not use modern automation for learning.

Researches shows that this kind of education is not new. For the first time it has been appeared in London in 1858, they used to offer distance learning degrees. After that in 1892 exactly in the USA William Rainey Harper developed the concept of extended education and encouraged correspondence school courses to further promote education at Columbia University.

Distance learning course utilized first and second age transmission technologies. The first generation (1850s to 1960) consisted of printing radio and television. The second one (1960-1985) distance learning courses used multiple technologies without automations like audiocassettes, television, fax and print..etc. After that era teachers use mixed-media approach to enrich distance education technologies by sending e-mails in the form of texts, audio-visuals, broadcast radio and television to learners.

### 3.Distance learning's theories:

Garrison(1985), and Aydemir, Ozkeskin, and Akkurt (2015) classified technological evolution of previous and distance education under three generations: Writing, meeting, computer. In the other hand Anderson and Dron (2011) classed them as: Mass media, conferencing, and networking.

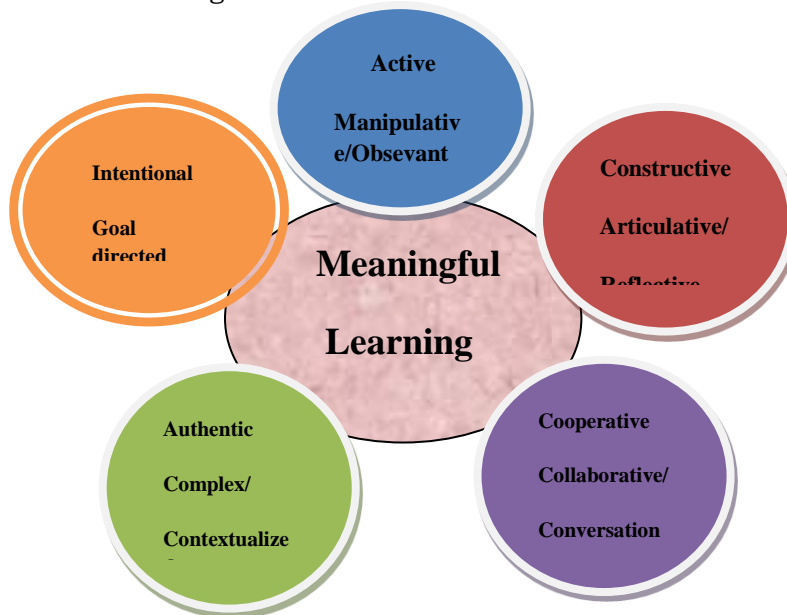
Another researchers called Gunawardena and McIsaac (2003) saw that it's not fair to equal audio-video and data system to integrated telecommunication systems.

"Anderson considered a number of theories and models but focused on the well-respected work of Bransford Brown, and coking(1999) who posited that effective learning

environments are framed within the convergence of four overlapping lenses: community-centeredness, knowledge-centeredness, and assessment-centeredness. These lenses provides the foundation framework for Anderson's approach to building online education theory, as he examined in detail the characteristics and facilities that the Internet provides with regards to each of the four lenses. Second, he noted that the Internet had evolved from a text-based environment to one in which all forms of media are supported and readily available. He also accurately commented that the Internet's hyperlink capacity is most compatible with the way human knowledge is stored and accessed". In this regard he referred to the extensively examined the importance of interaction in all forms of learning and referred to a mostly distance education theorists such as (Holmberg, 1989), Moore and Kearsley (1996), and Garrison and Shale (1990). "The essence of interaction among students, teachers, and content is well understood and is referenced in many theories of education, especially constructivism (Piccia, 2017)".

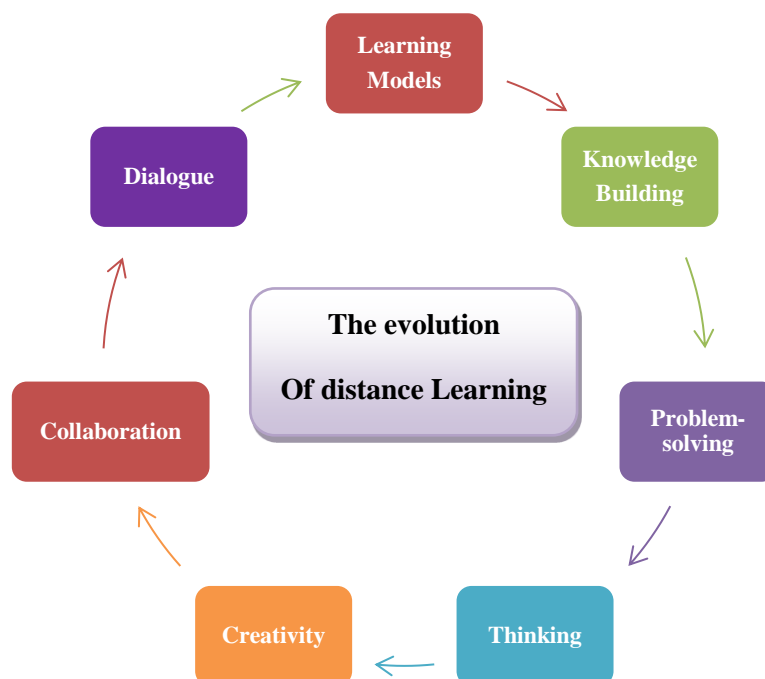
It was shown that facebook helps in achieving academic success. In addition to that autonomy can do an effective role for enhancing self-education." (Zimmerman, p. 202) explains that learner autonomy or learner independence is a major contribution to success in e-learning environments in which learners are responsible for their own learning". Also Lynch and Dembo (2004) considered that autonomy is a major element in successful online distance learning.

Schema about learning and the online Environment:



**Figure1. Theories of learning and the Online Environment**

This schema shows the relation between education and collaboration to enhance both distance learning and teaching. Also it contains the main factors to reach goals of good education.

**Schema about the evolution of distance learning:****Figure2.The evolution of distance learning**

Distance education, in one hand helps learners communicating, creating, thinking and working in collaboration. In the other hand develops teacher's performance, creativity and thinking.

**Goals should teachers know to enhance Distance learning:**

Teacher must master distance learning equipment and online technologies in order to develop his or her educational methods, i.e. to develop his or her knowledge and abilities in the field of new distance learning technologies in such a way as to enhance his or her teaching methods and procedures:

- Mastering an editing process for the production of pedagogical materials;
- The educational structure of a course;
- The correct publishing of the general and the specific goals;
- The difference between the Approach by Aims (A.B.A) and the Competence-based Approach(C.B.A);
- The mastering of the various pedagogical methods;
- The adoption of different types of assessment;
- The evaluation of an online learning system;
- The organisation of cooperative work;
- The use of the Moodle platform.

**Advantages of distance learning:**

No matter where you live, today's rapidly changing world has made it quite difficult for some people to achieve the educational goals they want. You will agree that not everyone has the opportunity to pursue higher education on a campus. If you are one of them, don't just take advantage of the privileges that come with knowledge, online learning is an excellent option. At present, distance education is not as well known as on-site learning. But you can't argue that distance learning, due to its versatility and other benefits, is gaining popularity in much of the world. Indeed, even recent statistics have revealed that the number of registrations for online learning has risen dramatically. If you are thinking about signing up for distance learning, here are some advantages you should be familiar with:

- Achieving a degree online
- Distance learning provides more mobility and flexibility:

It is clear that recent developments in online media have delivered a wealth of benefits to people. One of them is distance education; you can easily follow and complete the courses you want, no matter what part of the world you live in. Numerous resources are readily available to help you achieve your job fast. All you need is a PC and an Internet connection. In this case, distance learning can help you set your study timetable at your own convenience.

Since you will not have to be present physically in class, distance learning lets you plan your study time at your convenience. In contrast to university or college, distance education allows you to select the subjects you want to take on any given day. In addition, you can also receive course materials and directions at any time, allowing you to complete your training at your own pace.

**- Studying and saving money:**

For the majority of employed learners, it is quite difficult to manage their studies and work at the same time. As a consequence, you may have paused or stopped your education. This is not the case with distance learning; it enables full-time working professionals to have a flexible study schedule so that they can learn and earn money at the same time. No matter what time of day you want to study after 12 o'clock, in the afternoon or in the early morning, distance learning allows you to take courses at any time of the day.

**- No borders**

One of the big attractions of e-learning is that there is no need to travel to an academic institution. This means that you are not linked by geography; thanks to distance learning, you can take the course of your choosing anywhere in the world.

**Disadvantages of distance learning:**

**No social interaction:**

Learners will often be studying alone and so they feel isolated and miss the social physical interaction that comes with attending a traditional classroom. Working alone at night caused many complexities and depressing experiences.

Difficulty staying in contact with instructors:

If learners ever have trouble with assignments, or questions about a lecture while in traditional class it's generally quite simple to talk to the instructor before or after class or schedule meetings online at a different time.

**Complicated technology:**

Learners need to invest in arrange of equipment including computer, webcam, and stable internet connection. In case of any software or hardware malfunction, the class session will come to a standstill, something that can interrupt the learning process. Moreover, the complicated nature of the technology used in distance learning only limits online education to students who are computer and tech savvy.

Job markets do not accept online degrees:

Learner might get a degree but that is not going to be recognized by private companies in the job market and the same problem in government jobs.

No direct social contact:

Students frequently study alone and thus feel isolated and lack the physical social interaction that comes with attending a regular class. Working alone in the early hours leads to many complexities and depressing situations.

**Difficulty staying in touch with teachers:**

If students have issues with assignments or questions about a traditional course, it is generally fairly easy to talk to the instructor before or after class or to schedule meetings online at another time.

**Complex technology:**

Learners must invest in equipment such as a computer, a webcam and a stable Internet connection. If the software or hardware malfunctions, the class session will shut down, which can stop the teaching progress. Furthermore, the complicated nature of the technology involved in distance learning restricts online learning to students who are computer and technology literate.

**Labour markets do not support online diplomas:**

The student may get a diploma, but it will not be accepted by private firms in the labour market, and the same issue arises for public jobs.

### 3. Method of research:

Research was done at Mostaganem university in Algeria and around 30 questionnaires were distributed to teachers who were not equal in their sex 20 were females the rest were males. After that, questionnaires re- collected, analyzed and some findings were concluded from this study.

#### 3.1 The most important questions in the questionnaire:

The usage of online media to share courses for learners:

Response	Participants	Percentage
Few	12	40 %
Average	09	30 %
Much	09	30%
Total	30	100%

Table01.Using online media to share courses

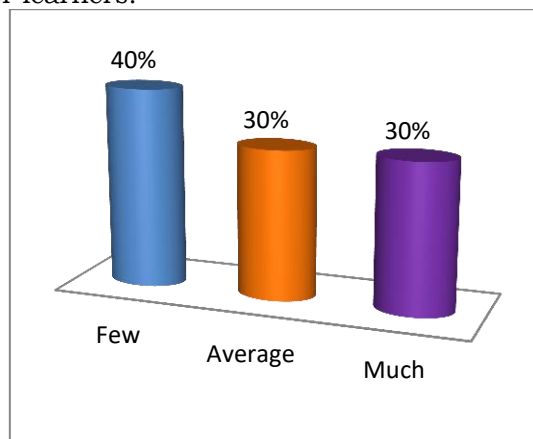


Figure1.Using online media to share courses

- Statistics shows that few of learners use online media with (40%), some of them do not use it very much (30%) the others use it much.

**Question04:** How do you evaluate student's interaction through online media and platforms?

Response	Participants	Percentage
Weak	06	20%
Average	18	60%
Good	06	20%
Total	30	100%

Table4.Learners interaction through online media

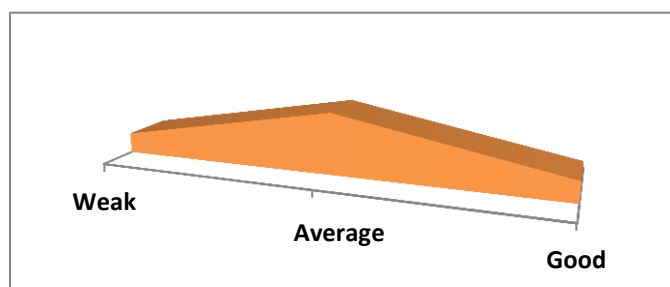


Table4.Learners interaction through online media

- According to statistics learners interact on online media weakly (20%), the majority of them interact but not good (60%)and the rest do interact perfectly.

**Question05:** What kind of barriers face learners through online media and platforms?

Response	Participants	Percentage
Technical	09	20%

Communicative	12	40%
Cognitive	09	20%
Total	30	100%

Table5.learner's barrier while online learning

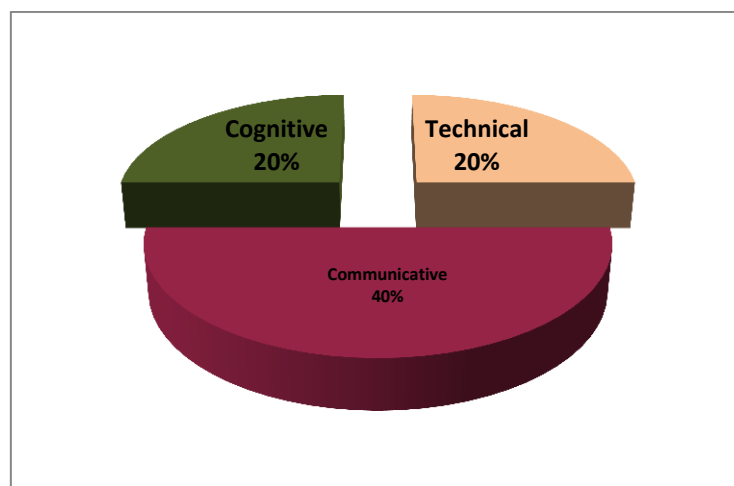


Figure5.learner's barrier

#### while online learning

- Statistics shows that communicative's barriers are the major problems learners face during online learning with (40 %), than both cognitive and technical obstacles are less noticed with (20 %).

In the sixth question research shows that both, teachers and learners must have training in order to master all the tools of learning, the online media and the use of the platforms to progress education and fulfill better results.

The objectives of the research were achieved through interviews and surveys, in addition to the positive and negative implications of online education for students in Algerian universities from the point of view of teachers were identified. At the same time, the researcher also identified some recommendations to overcome the problems of online education provided by universities. Thus, Algerian college can offer more effective and efficient education.

#### 4. Recommendations and Conclusion:

In spite of its disadvantages, distance learning provides a great advantage for students who are striving to have more options and to learn with more comfort. The greatest benefit of this kind of learning is that it gives access to various learning resources on a low budget. Simply put, distance learning may be the best choice for working class students.

The future possibilities of distance education are limitless. It is clear that distance education programmes and courses are here to stay and will increase in the future, but there are still many uncertain issues to be clarified and explored. Although distance learning can be at least as effective as traditional classroom teaching in some situations, it has not been claimed that e-learning can replace traditional classroom teaching. Like any educational programme, distance learning has a host of advantages and disadvantages. Before enrolling in any distance learning programme, learners should ensure that they carefully consider these points to ensure that they are receiving an education that meets their personal needs, strengths and career goals.

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