The Impact Of Distance Learning On EFL Learners' Performance

The Case of First Year Master Students At" Salhi Ahmed " University Center Of Naama

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Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages as a Partial Fulfilment of the requirement for **the degree of Master in Linguistics**

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Dedication

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Companionate.

Thankfully, I dedicate this work to:

*My dear dad **Laredje**and my beloved mom **Djouher**who had supported me to be the person I am.*

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Abstract

In such an era when information and communication technology is rapidly developing, the internet becomes the mainstay that changes the whole educational programs. The rapid advance of computers and platforms allow the ministry of higher education applying distance learning at universities; almost every university in Algeria has some kind of distance education regardless of the different subjects taught. This leads both teachers and learners paying attention to its effectiveness and benefits. Online learning follows the principle of autonomous learning, flexibility in time and space, independent decision- making, and shifting the teachers' role from instructors to facilitators. The present study aims at investigating the impact of distance learning upon learners' performance. To construct this work, a case study was conducted at Salhi Ahmed University Center in Naama where the master one students and teachers of the English language were selected as the sample population. The researchers chose the questionnaire as a research instrument to collect data in which one is directed to teachers and the other is distributed to students. The data collected were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings of the study showed that the e-learning allows both students and learners to do better by making them working in flexible manner, independently at their own pace.Theydid however, express dissatisfaction at the lack of training on the ICT tools, and other different factors related to the use of the e-learning programs. Therefore, it was recommended to work more better by adopting new effective methods to promote the productivity and the effectiveness of online learning in the future.

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List of Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols

CD: Compact Disc

CMS: Course Management System

E-book: Electronic Book

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

E-learning: Electronic Learning

ICC: International Council for Correspondence Education

ICDE: International Council for Distance Education

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

Moodle: Modular Object- Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment

N: Number

PC: Personal Computer

PDF: Portable Document Format

PHD: Doctor of Philosophy

Q: Question

UCN: University Center- Naama

Zoom:Zet Object Orientation Model

%: Percent

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

The rapid advance of information technology in the last few decades affect many fields of concern including education. Almost everything today becomes electronic and the processes of teaching and learning have been shifted from the traditional way (in class) to be a remote learning (online education).

Furthermore, after the pandemic COVID 19, all the Algerian universities adopt the implementation of distance education to allow students learn anytime and anywhere in a flexible manner, using different e-platforms such as: Zoom Meeting, Google Classroom, Moodle and so on.

Despite the fact that online learning is beneficial for both instructors and learners, they still face many challenges to deal with. Thus, it is very important to have a good and a complete understanding about its effectiveness. The majority could not determine whether the implementation of this educational program is useful or not; since their experiences in distance education vary according to different circumstances. Thus, the present research is an attempt to investigate the impact of online learning upon learners' performance. First, it seeks to describe both teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the use of distance education. In addition, it tries to find out the main difficulties that the EFL learners encounter, and how it can be improved to have a better educational future.

In order to have a reliable answer to the problem statement, the researchers introduced the following research questions:

- 1.To what extent is online learning effective?
- 2.What are the biggest challenges faced by both tutors and learners when learning remotely in university center of Naama ?
- 3.How to improve the quality of online learning in the future?

The above-mentioned questions, led the researchers to propose the following hypotheses:

- 1. EFL learners believe to some extent that online learning is an effective method, it offers flexibility, self-reliance, time saving, and motivation.

- 2. Online learning could not be appropriately use at university center-Naama, because both students and teachers face many troubles such as; internet flow, lack of training, and difficulties in evaluating students.

- 3. Both teachers and learners should receive better equipment and better training on the different ICT tools for an advanced education in the future.

To find out to what extent the hypotheses are true, the researchers designed case study research with the English teachers and master one (01) students at the English department of Salhi Ahmed University center. For the data collection and procedure, the researchers depend on the use of two questionnaires; one is directed to teachers while the other for learners. Thus, the results will be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

To carry out this dissertation, the present work is divided into two (02) chapters; the first chapter includes a theoretical overview of distance learning and its aspects including its history, definition, types, tools, goals, advantages and disadvantages. It includes also a description of the students' and the teachers' role in online learning, and tries to highlight the e-learning culture in the blended classroom.

However, the second chapter includes the research design and methodology. It includes a description about the research instruments and gives information about the respondents' profile, research procedures and the different methods of data analysis. At the end, it discusses the most important results. It includes also some suggestions to improve the quality of online learning in the Algerian universities. These recommendations are given in accordance with the obtained results.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

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1.1. Introduction

Distance learning is a new educational planning that has been adopted in the last few years in most universities. It provides the opportunity for both teachers and learners to learn in a flexible way at their own pace; as well as it is considered as a good method for improving the academic performance of students because it offers flexibility. This chapter concerns an overview about some aspects related to online learning. It provides the history of distance education, its definition, types, goals, and tools. In addition, this chapter also includes a presentation of the major advantages and disadvantages of the e-learning. Moreover, it highlights the role of instructors and learners when studying online without ignoring to mention a small description of the e-learning culture in the blended classroom.

1.2. Historical Overview About Distance Learning

Distance learning is not a new phenomenon even if the term is quite recent (Moore cited in Bunker 2003). The early distance education appeared for the first time in Chicago University of the United States by William Rainy Harper who has been called the father of American distance education and considered as the first president of Chicago University. He offered instruction in Hebrew language by mail in 1800's (Vincent 1900). The process of education that could be taken anytime and anywhere were adopted in the early of the 20th century by correspondence learning as one of the first forms of distance education.

According to Holmberg (1995) correspondence teaching and learning refer to the combination of teaching process and communication in writing by means of self-instructional texts and correspondence between students and tutors. By the development of computer technology, a new media emerged to replace the written words in which the term of correspondence education has been also replaced to be known as "independent study", "home study", and "distance education".

Distance education became famous in 1982 when its name had been changed from International Council for Correspondence Education (ICCE) tobenamed as International Council for Distance Education (ICDE).

In the 1920's the majority of universities adopted the use of radio programs into learning and the instructional activities were supported by TV programs in 1930's(Zvacek:2004). the last decades become known by the revolution computer technologies, internet and another developed tools.

1.3. The History of Distance Learning in Algeria

Algeria faced many challenges after the independence in many fields, including politic, economic, social and cultural levels. From this view, huge importance to education has been given. There appeared the idea of founding an academic center to universalize education through correspondence, to be presented for learners who wanted to learn by the use of different tools for instance: radio, television, and some printed documents, regardless of age, time and place.

The national center for education had been established in May 1969, its primary aim is to provide education by correspondence. The center gave the opportunity for many citizens to carry on their studies by the use of various educational methods such as: audio-visual documents.

In September 30,2001 the national center of correspondence education was transferred to be known as *" The National Office of Distance Education"* depending on the use of modern technology to develop its tasks.

The University of Continuous Formation is another example of distance learning in Algeria which had been established in 1990, it allows education for those who did not carry on their studies as a cause of different circumstances; in which this kind of university depends on the use of blended learning (hybrid learning), by the combination of both conventional classes (traditional classes) and the use of ICT tools (Information and Communications Technology).

After that, many universities adopted the presentation of courses through university websites (online learning). In December 2019 there were the spread of COVID19 Virus that affected all fields including education, it leads to the closure of all schools and universities in which the first and the last solution to carry on studies

was the useof E-learning depending on different applications including: Google Classroom, Zoom Meeting, Moodle and so forth.

1.4. DefinitionofDistance Education

There is no single definition for the term distance learning, however the common point in the following presented definitions refers to the physical separation of both instructors and learners in terms of place and sometimes time.

In 1972, Moore defines it as: **'the family of instructional methods in which the teaching behaviors are apart from the learning behaviors"** (Moore1976: cited in Moore 1991).

Keegan proposes a definition of distance education with the following basic characteristics:

1- The separation of teachers and learners during the learning process.

2-The influence of an educational organization both in planning and preparation of learning materials and the provision of students support devices.

3-The use of technical media-print, audio, video or computer to unit teacher and learner to carry the content of courses.

4-The provision of two-way communication by which students may benefit from and even initiate dialogues.

5-The permanent absence of the learning group throughout the length of the learning process, so that people are usually taught as individuals rather than in groups, with the possibility of occasional meeting either face to face or by electronic means for both didactic and socialization purposes. (Keegan, 1993, p.04).

The last definition is presented by Shelly, when he defines distance education as: **'An educational system in which learners can study in flexible manner in their own time and place of their choice and without requiring face to face contact with the teacher".**(Shelly,2000, p. 16. Cited in Nedjah , 2010)

Distance learning is an educational field thatrefers to the separation of both students and teachers either by time or place or both. It focuses on the use of technological tools and software programs for the delivery of lessons to help students learn in flexible manner at their own pace.

It is important to mention that distance learning is also known as e-learning, or online learning. It is described as a form of education which emphasizes the idea that both teachers and students are geographically and physically separated. Thus, in this research work, the researchers use the different terms of distance learning, e-learning and online learning interchangeably.

1.5. Types of Online Learning

There are two major types of online learning that can be presented as follow:

1.5.1. Asynchronous Online learning

The asynchronous learning is a type of online learning. It allows students to study independently depending on their own schedule within a certain type frame. the leaner can access and complete lectures, readings, homework and other learning materials at any time. Asynchronous online class means that learners do not always need to be online at the same time as their instructor or classmates. Asynchronous learning can include:

a-Watching pre-recorded lectures.

b- Participating in an online discussion forum.

c- Emailing with classmates when completing a team project.

The asynchronous learning has gained popularity since the Covid-19 pandemic, it provides:

-**Flexibility:** Students can work and learn in their own schedule because, there are no set classes to tend.

-Self-based: Students can learn at their own pace taking their time to fully grasp new concepts and become more familiar with key lesson.

-**Review:** Learners can return to the past lessons to review something they might have missed.

1.5.2. Synchronous Online Learning

Synchronous learning is a type of online learning in which the instructor and the students engage with course content with each other at the same time and from different locations. It means that although the students will be learning remotely, they will virtually attend class sessions each week. A synchronous learning does not always take the form of live video lecture or an instructor-led discussion. However, students also will lead discussions themselves and give presentations to the rest of the class.

1.6. Tools of Online Learning

The e-learning is a method that can be used either in classroom as a blended learning between the traditional way and the electronic way of teaching, or distance learning. There are many electronic means that can be used. The electronic devices like computers, smart phones, internet and e- book can help people access a large variety of e-learning options and platforms.

1.6.1. Computer:

Is a tool that helps both teachers and students in education. There are different types of software methods like training and practice software, special education software, speech processing software, and Super Media software. (Guessar,2020, p.75).

1.6.2. Internet:

A global computer network where the users have access to all the fields of life and services, including the educational process particularity, and there are so many internet services that help in the educational process like email service, information transfer protocol (Al Mabrik,2002). The internet offered a variety of opportunities that help the

researchers and the educationalist to explore practical and theoretical pathways in pedagogy and curriculum designs (Almalki,2011, p.05).

1.6.3. E-book:

Is a new method, information is displayed in a form of integrated book, with its images, movements, audio conferences. This information can be copied on CDs and then browsing them using computers.

1.7. The Online Learning Platforms

Course management systems CMS or online management system OMS are platforms provided by the technology to facilitate learning, including language learning. These platforms can help learners to communicate with teachers and get access to lectures in form of handouts or videos. In addition, these platforms can help teachers to provide their students with lessons, activities and tests. There are two types of these electronic platforms: The first one is commercial and should be paid to get access to it like Blackboard. The second one is free and all learners and teachers may use it like Moodle, Zoom and Google classroom.

1.7.1. Moodle

The term **''Moodle''** is an acronym for *"Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic LearningEnvironment"*, is a free software learning management system providing a platform for e-learning to facilitate online education. It is a safe system for teachers to communicate with their learners. As stated by Jeong**: "Moodle combines all instructional strategies and tools in one space, and can be effective in promoting learner autonomy, as well as in supporting learner-centered learning environments".** (Jeong.2017. pp.4847). It was seen by scholars that Moodle has the ability to be affective for language learning.

1.7.2. Zoom

The term **"Zoom"** stands for *"Zet Object Orientation Model"*. Is an online communication platform, it is one of the leading conferencing software apps. It allows people to make phone calls, or to participate in video conference meeting. It enables

users to virtually interact with co-workers when in personal meeting are not possible. Zoom is considered as a part of synchronous learning to develop the students' thinking skills, and problem solving. Through Zoom students receive the essential feedback on their work from their teachers which can decrease the anxiety levels. (As cited in Ayoub.2019, pp. 131 132). According to Chen and Lee (2011), during the Zoom session, students may ask questions to help them structure their sentences or do their assignments before posting them.

1.7.3. Google Classroom

Is also very powerful platform. It is an application that encourages self-learning. It is one of the platforms used as a mean for keeping learners and teachers in contact, it is successfully used in the education environment and allows teachers to create a class and grade students 'work, share documents and communications (Ghounane,2020. p.29). Online learning platforms such as Google classroom provide flexibility in scheduling, eliminate travel expenses and can reach out to anyone who has access to it.

1.8. The goals of E-learning

E-learning like any educational method, has so many goals and objectives to achieve to be an effective and practical method. Francis (2018) listed some of the major goals:

a- E-learning is a huge and expanding platform, it enhances the quality of teaching and learning. Thus, it is important to know how to manage it and access to the resources.

b- The use of e-learning improves the effectiveness and the efficiency; it has proved to be as effective as traditional methods.

c-It improves time flexibility and user accessibility to involve students in the learning process.

Guessar(2020) in her article listed some more goals of e-learning:

a-Preparing a generation of educators and learners capable of dealing with technology.

b-Presenting education in a standard form.

c-Encouraging communication between the scientific educational systems as communication between teachers and students, university and the surrounding environment.

1.9. Teachers' and Learners' Role in the E-learning Environment

The integration of information and communication technologies in the process of both teaching and learning, lead to the change in the whole educational organizations in which the role of instructors and learners has been affected and changed.

1.9.1. Teachers' Role

There have been several roles for teachers that can be summarized as follow:

a- Teacher as an Instructor:

The teacher tries to facilitate the learning process to help learners.

b-Teacher as a Model:

Refers to the use of computers and software programs as learners are encouraged to do.

c- Teacher as Critic:

The role of the teacher is to help learners to choose the appropriate software programs.

d- Teacher as a Coach:

The teacher tries to facilitate the learning process to help learners.

1.9.2. Students' Role

Students in e-learning environment are characterized by a certain maturity that demonstrates their independence (Holmberg, 1995).

The responsibility of students in e-learning is to manage their learning process concerning time and place to learn. Students also need to become self-reliant and active searchers for the information in which this helps them to improve their levels.

According to Pallo& Pratt (2007): **''The role of students appears to completely depend on:**

a-The pedagogical approach used in classroom.

b-The role played by the teacher.

c- The classroom peers''.

All in all, the role of students in the online education depends more on motivation, self-reliance, self -regulation, and the good management of place and time.

1.10. The E-learning Culture in the Blended Classroom

Most university students consider the process of traditional teaching (face-to-face) as being passive, because it is not helpful in collaborative learning and it does not allow teachers to implement the 21st century skills.

According to students, the current classroom climate is not motivating or supportive, as a result; their attendance becomes less and sometimes they choose not even to participate. The causes behind these perceptions are related to the development of modern technologies that changes the students' attitudes and behaviors, in which teachers are now forced to shift their learning process.

Such a suitable method refers to ''Blended Learning' 'As Garrison et all 2008 stated: **'the need to provide more engaged learning is at the core of interest inblended learning''** (p.100). Blended learning also refers to as ''Hybrid Learning''. Garrison and Kanuka (2004) defined blended learning as: **''the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences''** (p.96).

The key assumptions of blended learning design are:

-Thoughtfully integrating face-to-face and online learning.

-Fundamentally rethinking the course design to optimize students' engagement.

-Restructuring and replacing traditional class contact hours.

It could be shown that the combination of both the latest technologies and conventional learning is needed to achieve a truly competitive e-learning environment, it will be through the blending phase having a diverse learning atmosphere for students regardless their place and culture.

1.11. Advantages and Disadvantages of E-learning

E-learning can be considered as compulsory and not extra option, since it plays an important role in facilitating learning and teaching. (Dhawan, 2020).

There are many advantages associated with the development of e-learning. It offers flexibility in use without the need for traveling to attend classes. Learners in online learning can access courses at anytime and anywhere.

In addition to the direct communication with teachers, other forms of messaging and chatting are also added. The use of e-learning also provides a wide range of options for sharing information and documents of different formats.

Additionally, e-learning is also different from the traditional one; in which in the conventional learning the teacher is the primary and the last source of knowledge, while by the use of the modern education platforms students can obtain data from various sources which leads to the development of education by making students relying on themselves.

 Last and not least, adopting e-learning helps to eliminate the use of paper and physical attendance which is generally cost-effective for some students who live far from universities.

However, despite the different advantages of distance learning, students face several challenges and troubles in its use. Not all students can be taught virtually, and not all students can use online learning. Therefore, the most noticeable drawbacks of it refers to the lack of interaction, it is also considered as less effective method of teaching/learning due to the absence of face-to-face interactions. The lack of the personal interaction is not happening between colleagues but also between instructors and learners (Islam Bear and Slack, 2015).

In fact, concerning students who need to be motivated, they may find online learning as less effective method, in which some students also are unable to use the different ICT tools and some of them cannot learn independently because they put all their emphasis on the teachers' role in the classroom.

Other point which is worth to be highlighted is that students need always the two-way communication, they need the attention of their teachers during lessons in the

time that the eye contact is generally absent and usually limited; so that learners cannot even raise their hands for asking questions or acquiring.

1.12. Conclusion

This theoretical chapter has focused on presenting a general view concerning distance learning and its implementation from the first beginning. It had explained the historical backgroundof distance education ingeneral and in Algeria in particular. It has presented different definitions of it by different scholars. It has highlighted also its types, tools and some advantages and drawbacks, without ignoring the role of both instructors and learners in the online learning environment.

After summarizing the essential points of online learning in this theoretical chapter, the researchers of this study move to introduce a new chapter which contains the practical side that includes the main challenges, possibilities, and attitudes of both teachers and learners towards the use of online learning programs.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH DESIGN, RESULTS

AND RECOMMENDATION

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2.7 Results and Discussion
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2.1. Introduction

The second chapterof thisresearchworkisdevoted to an explanation of the researchmethodology and design focusing on data collection and analysis.It describes the two questionnaires, the sample of each questionnaire. It denotes the detailedanalysis of the collected data and gives a discussion of the main findings. Taking into consideration the obtained results.This chapter aims at providing some recommendations that would help teachers and learners improve the quality of online learning in the future and suggestions for further research.

2.2. Research Objective

The e-learning system is new teaching/learning method in the Algerian universities. Thus, this research is done with the aim of investigating the background knowledge of both students and teachers about the e-learning, also pinpointing the difficulties and obstacles faced by teachers and students while using the e-learning to suggest solutions of how they can be overcome.

2.3. The Sample Population

The target population of this research is mainly teachers and students in the English department atSalhi Ahmed University Center -Naama. The sample includes 40 students chosen randomly from Master 01 level. As for teachers, 09 teachers of different professional qualifications and years of experience in teaching different modules.

2.3.1 Students' Profile

The students involved in this study were master one level at Salhi Ahmed University Center -Naama. They were forty (40), thirty-nine (39) female, and one(01) male aged between twenty (20) to twenty-four (24) years old.

2.3.2 Teachers' Profile

The teachers involved in this study were nine (09) EFL teachers, six (06) of them are females, and three (03) are males. They were randomly selected, most of the

teachers (06 teachers) were given paper- based questionnaire and the rest (03 teachers) received an electronic version of it. All of the selectedteachers had experienced electronic learning so they are aware about this teaching method.

2.4. Research Instruments

The data of this research paper was collected using questionnaires. The students' questionnaire was distributed in classes. The same goes for the teachers' questionnaire. These questionnaires were made to collect the needed data about their opinions towards online learning, how did they cope with new teaching/ learning system, and to what extent is the online learning effective. Also, to pin the biggest hurdles faced by teachers and students while using e-learning.

2.4.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is generally regarded as a document composed of a limited number of questions or other forms of items considered specially to ask for information, for the aim to explain and test research problems. Nunan(1992:231) states that: **''A questionnaire is an instrument for the collection of data, usually in written form consisting of open and/ or closed questions and other probed requiring a response from the subject''**. Teachers' questionnaire contains 13 questions divided into three sections. This questionnaire aims at gathering all the needed information about the effects of online learning on students' performance. It includes several types of questions, which are factual questions, close- ended questions, multiple choice questions and open-ended questions. The close-ended questions limit the respondents to a finite set of answers which are (yes) or (no). The multiple-choice questions provide several answers from which the respondents have to choose the appropriate one for them. The open-ended questions give the respondent the opportunity to answer freely without any limit.

Part 1: Teacher's profile. Three questions (3) were designed to collect personal information about participants. The information they were asked to give are about gender, educational qualifications, and their teaching experience.

Part2: Teacher's attitudes towards online learning.Eight (08) questions were directed to collect a quantitative data. The researchers use closed questions in which the participants are asked to put a cross (x) on the appropriate response.

Part 3: The impact of online learning on learners' performance /Comments and suggestions. Two (02) questions were designed forqualitative analysis; one is directed to list the main obstacles of using online learning, whilein the second statement the participants were encouraged to share their comments and suggestions briefly to improve working from home.

As for students' questionnaire, itcontains also 13 questions divided into three parts.

Part 1: Students' profile. It includes two (02) questions directed to determine demographic characteristics of the respondents including their age and gender.

Part 2: Students' attitudes towards using online learning. Eight (08) questions were designed to collect a quantitative data in which the researchers used a multiple-choice format where the participants are asked to choose the appropriate response according to them.

Part 3: The impact of online learning on students' performance/ Comments and suggestions. Three (03) questions were designed; two (02) open- ended questions were asked for the qualitative analysis including the positive and the negative aspects of online learning, and how can the quality of online learning be improved in the future. As for the third question, researchers chose a rating scale question in which the participants are asked to read the question and select from a range of options that are scaled between two extremes '' Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, strongly disagree".

2.5. Data Analysis Method

To analyze the questionnaires, the researchers chose a mixture of data analysis methods which are quantitative and qualitative data analysis. In this respect, Cresswell (2012) stresses that, **"The use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches will**

 Provide more complete understanding of the research problem than either approach alone''. (p.527). Using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods help the researcher to obtain better results.

2.5.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data analysis is used to generalize results from the given sample. The quantitative approach requires methods of data collection that results in numerical information which are then analyzed using statistical methods (Doryei,2007).

2.5.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative approach to research is contrasted with the quantitative one. It is used to describe human behavior. It includes the use of data collection methods that offer non-numerical data that are then examined through no-statistical procedures (Dornyei,2007).

2.6. Statistical Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Here is the presentation of the statistical analysis concerning teachers' questionnaire.

 Section one: Background information

This section contains some personal questions to collect data concerning teachers' gender, qualification, and their teaching experience.
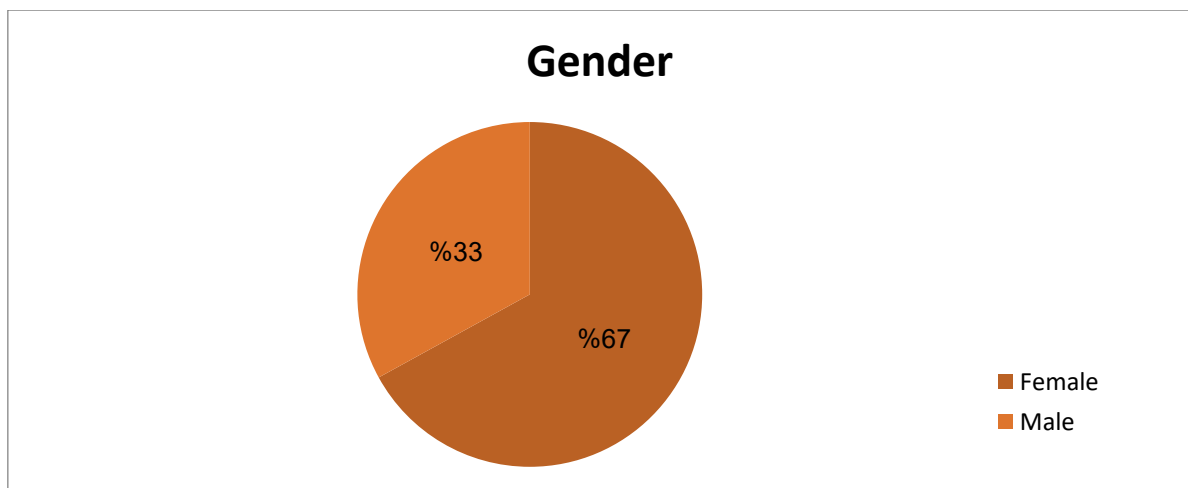
Q1: Gender

Figure 2.1: Teachers' Gender.

9 Teachers out of 9 answered the question about the gender. The results present that the majority of teachers are females (6teachers) and that they represent 67% of the whole sample, which means that they are 6 out of 9. However, the minority are males with 33% which means 3 male teachers out of 9.

Q2: Educational Qualifications
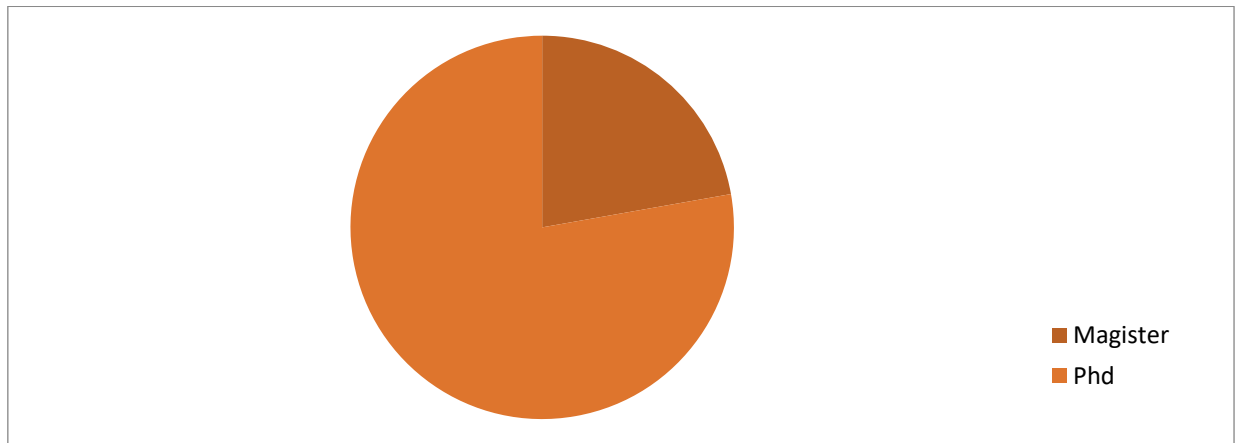
Figure2.2: Teachers' Educational Qualifications

As it is shown in figure 2, all teachers have answered the educational qualification question. There are 6 teachers holding PHD degree and they represent 78% of the whole sample. The rest 3 teachers are Magister holders and they represent 22%.

Q3: Teaching experience

The presented table below, contains different teaching experiences of the University teachers.

Table 2.1. University Teaching Experience.

Options	N	%
1year	1	11%
6years	2	23%
7years	2	22%
10 years	1	11%
13years	1	11%
15years	2	22%

As it is mentioned in the table, the sample contains different teaching experiences. As a result, this is expected to provide richer results for this research

Section two: Teachers attitudes towards online learning:

This section contains a set of questions to collect data for having a clear idea about teachers' attitudes towards online learning.

Q1: Did you have any experience of teaching through distance education?

Ventes

■ YES
■ NO
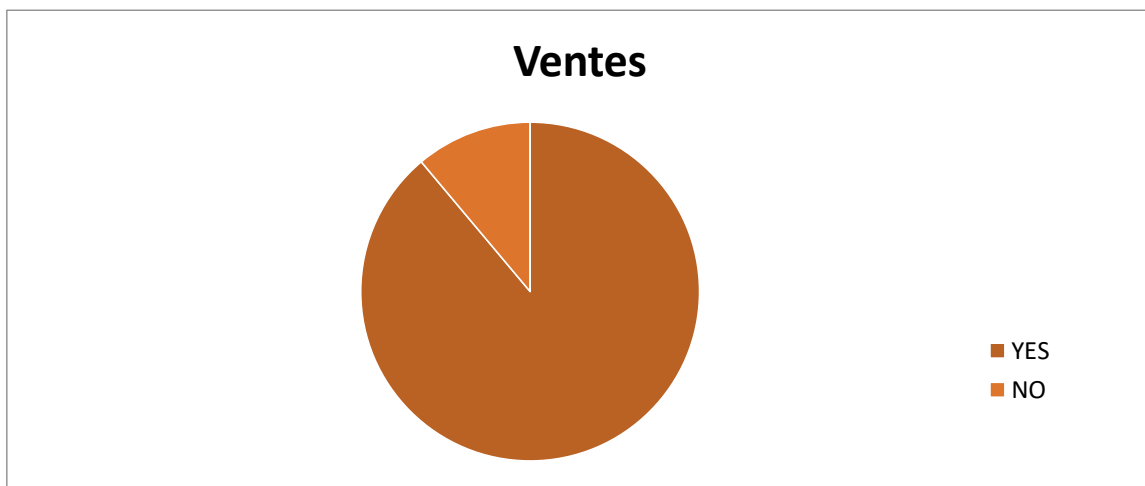
Figure 2.3: Teachers' Experience inOnlineLearning

The results exhibit that the majority of teachers (89%) have experienced teaching through distance education. As for the rest, 11% shared no experience in online learning.

Q2: have you found online teaching different compared with teaching in a physical classroom?
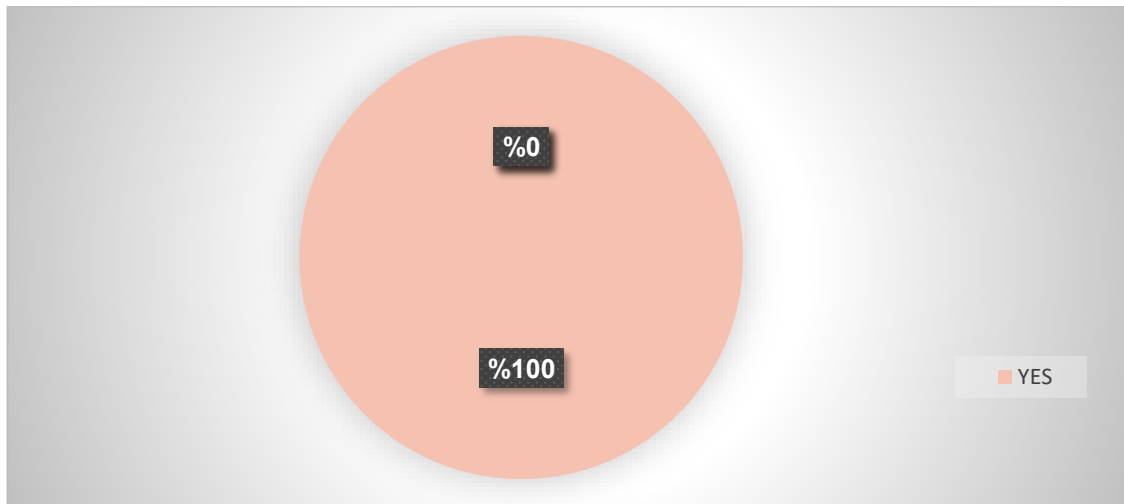
Figure 2.4: Online Classes Compared toRegularClasses.

The results obtained, demonstrate that all teachers (100%) affirmed that online classes are totally different from regular classes.

Q3: Are you satisfied with the different platforms you are using for online teaching?
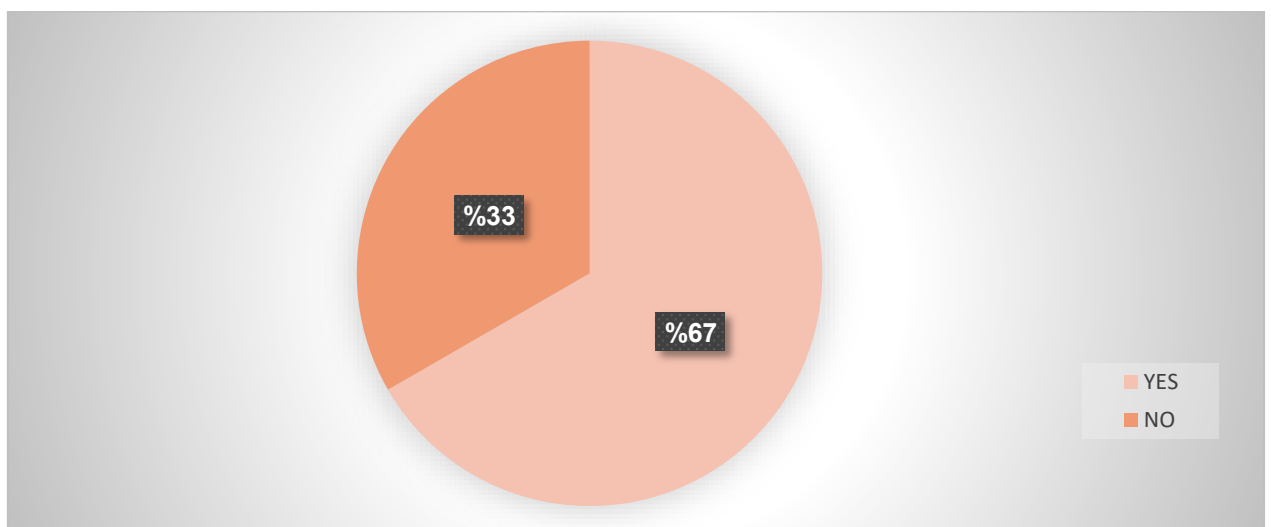
Figure 2.5: Teachers' Satisfaction Towards Online Platforms

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From the above pie chart, one can notice that the majority of the teachers 6 out of 9 that represent 67 % are satisfied with the different platforms they are using for online teaching while the rest of the teachers 33% are not.

Q4: what tools have you already used for either the preparation or delivery of remote learning?
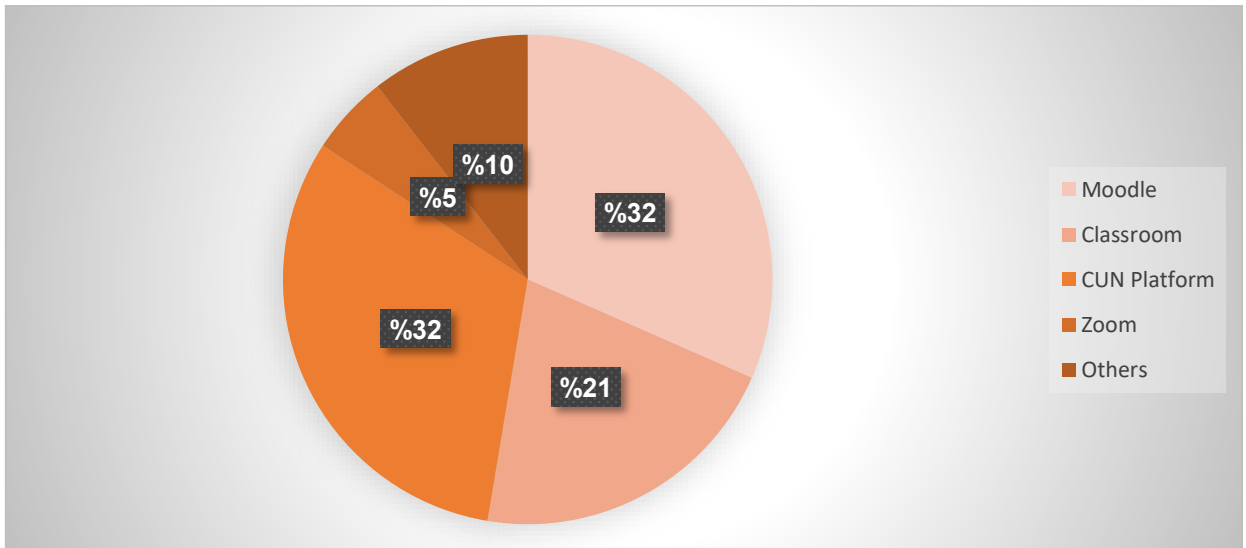
Figure 2.6: The Different Tools Used in Remote Learning.

As it is shown in figure 6, teachers in this sample tend to use both Moodle and UCN platform, in which they represent 32% of each platform. (21%) from the participants use the classroom platform. While only one teacher who represents the percentage of (5%) shared his experience on Zoom Meeting. For the rest opened question, they mentioned their teaching experience through e-mails and social media especially Facebook.

Q5: Do you see that UCN platform is enough for online learning?
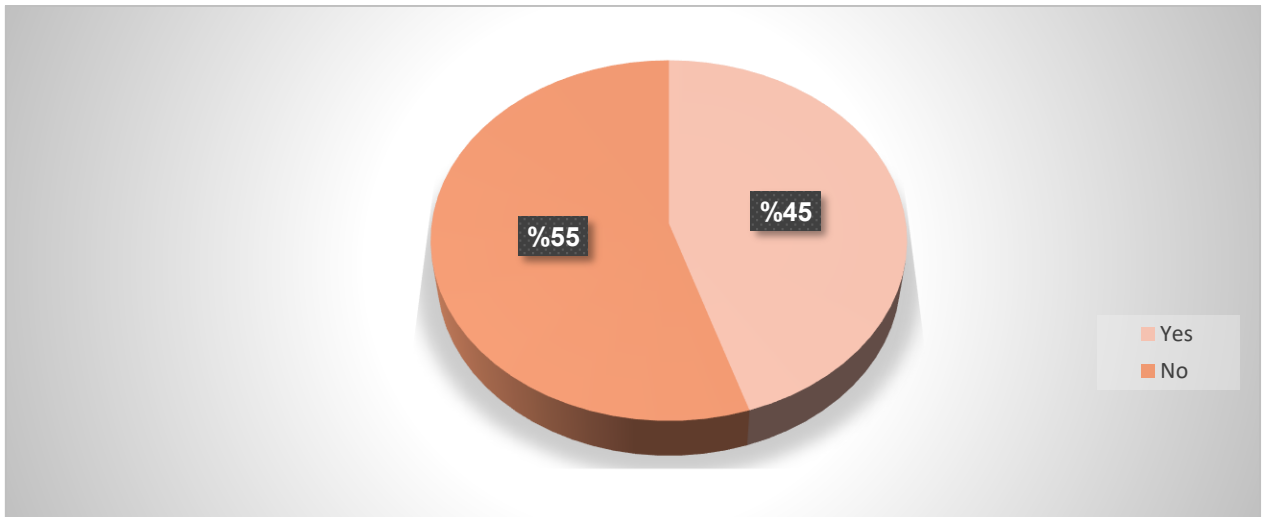
Figure 2.7: Teachers' Perceptions towardstheUCN Platform.

For the aim to know if the UCN platform is enough to work remotely, the majority (55%) of the teachers stated that it is not enough for a complete learning through distance education.Unlike the rest of them (45%), Who considerthe UCN platform as enough.

Q6: What are your biggest hurdles in delivering a good remote teaching?
Table 2.2. Teachers Hurdles in The Delivery of Online Lessons.

Statements	N	%
I have not had adequate training on the tools.	01	11%
It is more difficult to ensure that students are engaged and learning.	07	78%
I do not have the tools that I need.	01	11%

The table above shows that the majority of teachers (78%) are facing problems

to ensure that students are engaged andlearning when   delivering lessons through

distance education. In which one teacher shared that he lacks training on the

tools.while for the rest participant, who represents the percentage of 11%, stated that

he does not have the tools that he needs for online learning.

Q7: How well are your students doing with online learning?

Table 2.3. Teachers' Observations about Their Students When Using Online Learning

Statement	N	%
Almost everybody is doing well.	0	0%
It is a mixture, but the majority are doing well.	03	30%
It is a mixture, but the majority are facing problems.	05	50%
Most students are really struggling.	01	11%

Therefore, one can notice that most of the teachers share the same opinion which says that the majority of students are facing problems, in which three (03) teachers who represent (30%) from the sample, stated that the majority of their students are doing well. While only one teacher shared the opinion that most of students are really struggling.

Q8: What types of online learning methods do you prefer?

Table 2.4. Types of Online Learning used by Teachers.

Types	N	%
Synchronous learning	04	45%
Asynchronous learning	05	55%

This question was addressed to know what types of online learning teachers prefer. It is noticed that the majority of the selected participant (55%) like to teach asynchronously, by posting handouts, pdfs and books. Unlike the rest (45%) of them, choose to teach synchronously such as to use the Zoom Meeting in which they prefer to meet their students at a specific time.

Section 3: Comments and Suggestions

This section contains two (02) open questions, for the aim to list the main problems of online learning and how to solve them by suggesting some solutions.

Q1: What are the biggest hurdles you are facing when utilizing e-learning?

Concerning this question, which is an open question, the teachers were asked to list the main problem they are facing when using e-learning. The answers were different from one teacher to another because, they have different experiences. Firstly, most of the teachers are complaining about the internet flow, in which they also face difficulties in controlling and evaluating their students while learning online. Additionally, the lack of training of both teachers and students lead to many problems concerning the use of electronic devices. Finally, the majority of students are not fully aware about thee-learning,and they give less interest to online classes so that it is hard for teachers to engage them in this learning process.

Q2: What are your suggestions to improve working from home?

Reaching to the last question, where the teachers would give some suggestions to improve working from home and to solve some of its issues. The aim of this question is to open some space for teachers to comment about how to improve the quality of online learning. Most responses were nearly the same. They focused mainly on receiving better training program on how to effectively use online platforms. Improving the quality of the internet network in Naama city as well as better equipment (new computers) in UCN laboratories. In addition to that, it should be ensured that every student has a device for learning (pc, smart phones) to be motivated to attend online classes.

2.6.1. Statistical Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire:

Here is the presentation of the statistical analysis concerning students' questionnaire.

Part 1: Students' Profile.

This part contains some questions to collect personal information about the students such as: age and gender.

Q1: how old are you?
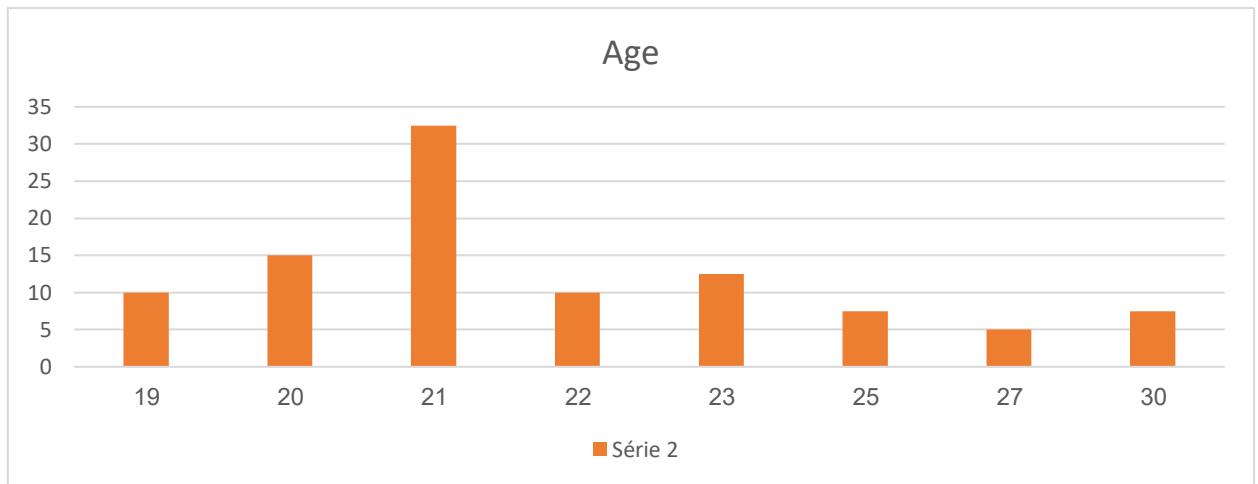
Figure 2.8: Students' Age

There is a big variation of ages in the students' sample. The ages are from 19 to 30.However, the majority belong to the category of (19- 21).

Q2:
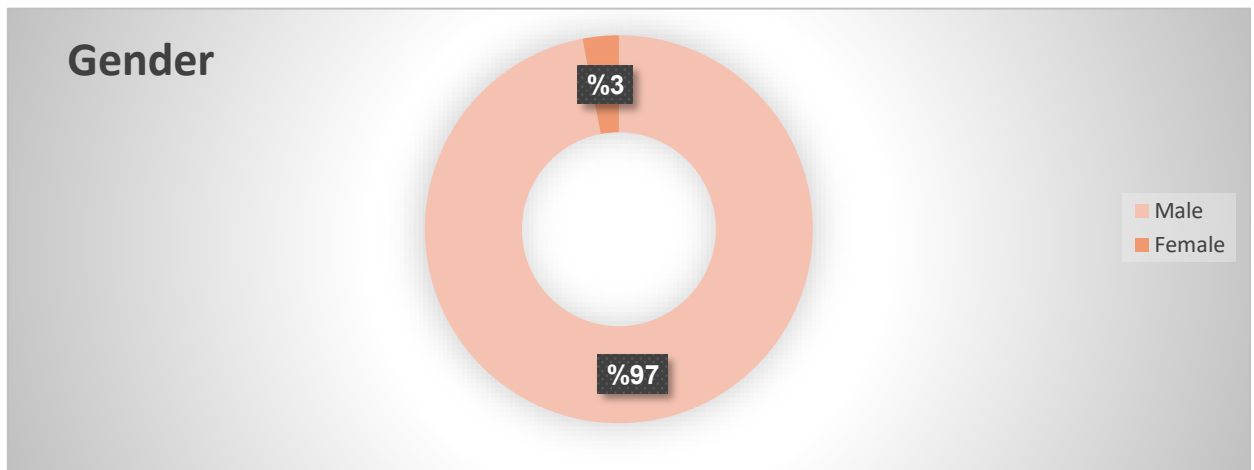
Figure 2.9: Students' Gender

As it can be seen, most participants are females. They represent 97% of the whole sample while males are only 3%. This is because females were more present in classand more ready to help answering questionnaire.

Part two: students' attitude towards using online learning

This part contains a set of questions for the aim to know the students' attitude towards using online learning.

Q1: Have you ever taken an online class before?
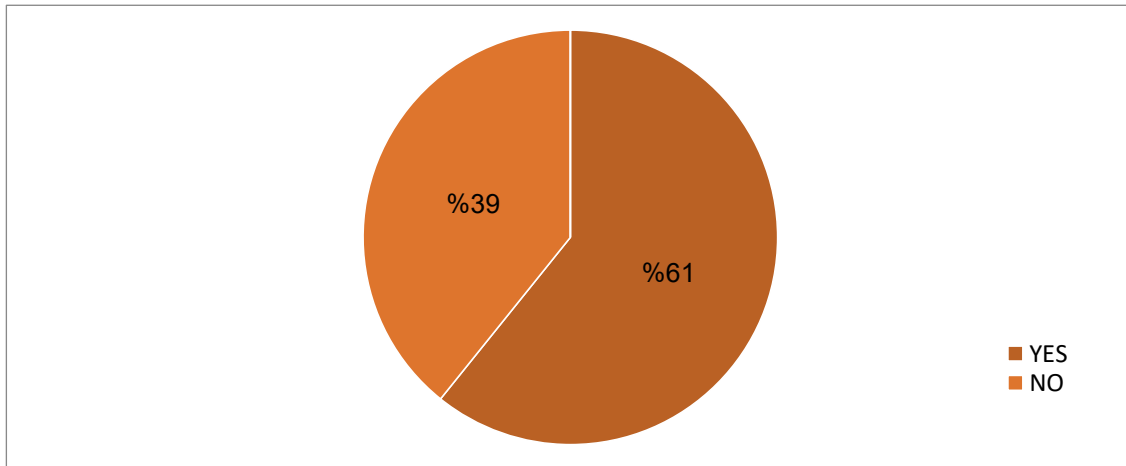
Figure 2.10: Students' Pre-experiences about Taking Online Classes.

It is mentioned that the majority of students (61%) have already dealt with online

learning. While the rest of them (39%) stated that they did not learn remotely before.

Q2: How oftendoyou prefer to study online?
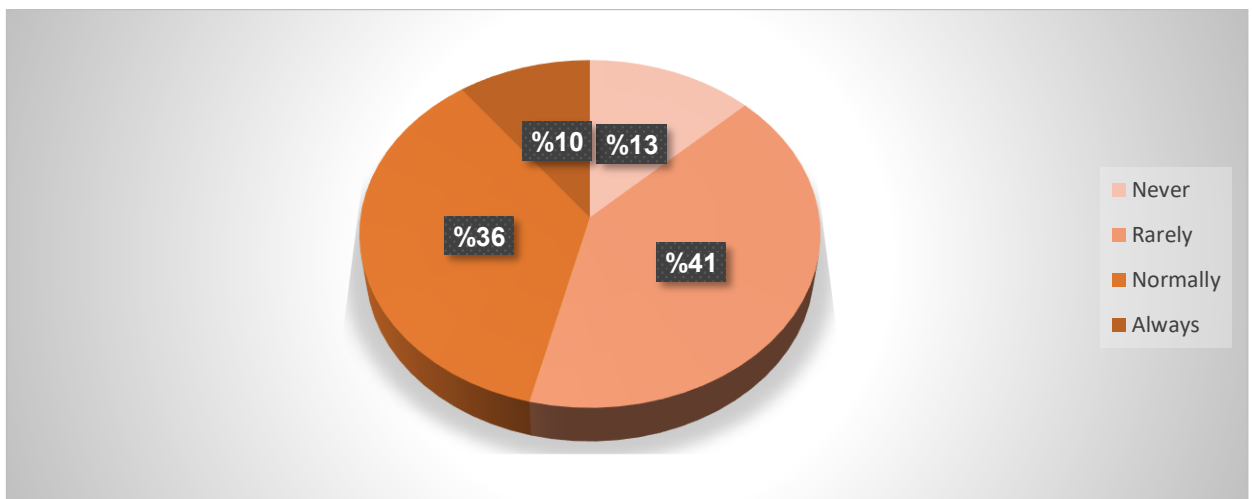
Figure2.11: Learners 'Satisfaction about Remote Learning.

From the above pie chart, one can understand that the majority of students (41%) are rarely enjoying online learning. In which, 14 students who represent (36%), mentioned that they normally enjoy learning from home. While 5 students who represent the percentage of (13%) shared that they never enjoy working from home.

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And for the rest, 4 students only who are representing (10%) always like to learn remotely.

Q3: Could you manage your time when studying online?
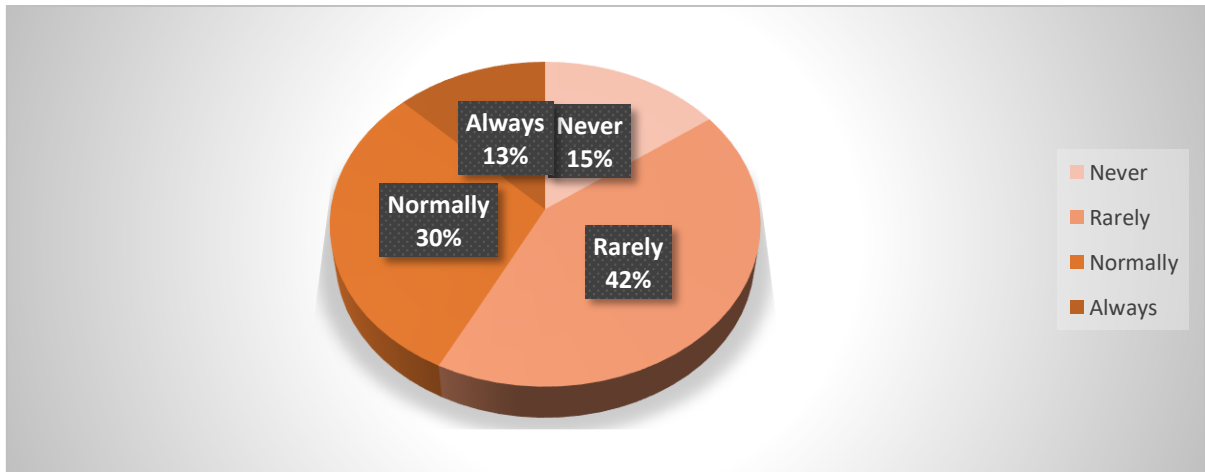
Figure 2. 12: Students' Time Management When Studying Online.

Concerning this question, seventeen (17) students are representing the percentage of (42%) stated that it is rarely when they can manage their time for online learning, other twelve (12) students arerepresenting (30%) claimed that they are normally able to succeed in managing their time to work online. In which, six (06) students who represent (15%) affirmed that they never could manage their time to learn remotely. The rest five (05) students who occupy (13%) said that they can always manage their time for their online learning.

Q4: How helpful are your teachers while studying online?
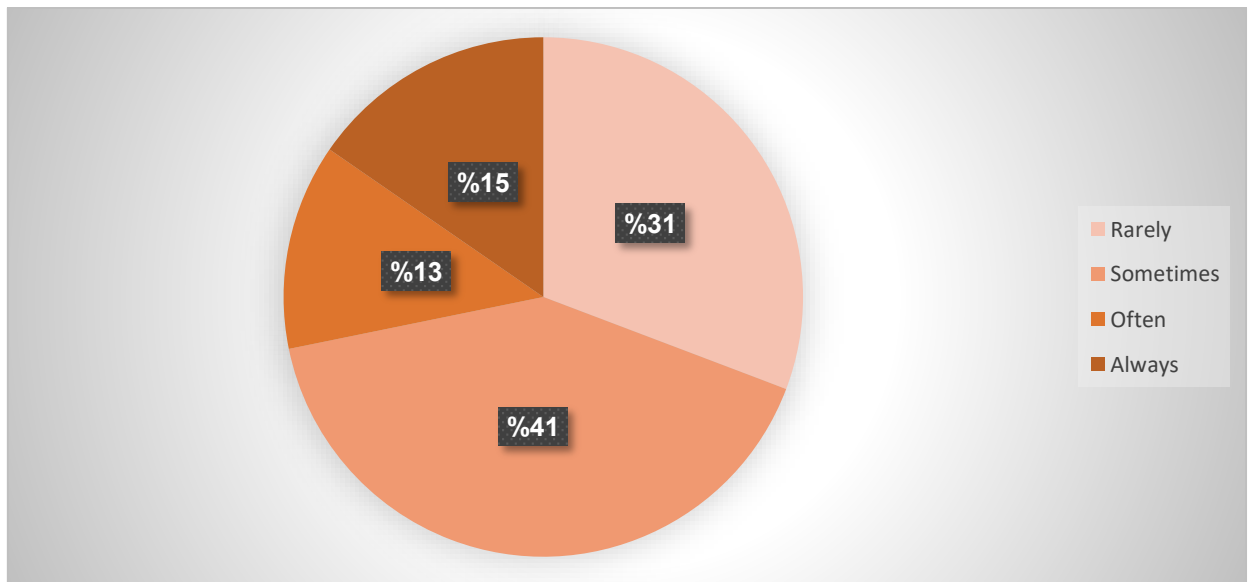
Figure 2.13: Teachers' Role When Studying Online.

This question aims to know how helpful the teachers arewhen studying online. The results obtained demonstrated that, seventeen (17) students are representing the percentage of (41%) stated that their teachers are sometime helping them when learning online, in which twelve (12) students who occupy (31%) affirmed that it is rarely when teachers help them. Other six (06) students representing (15%), give their opinions that sometimes they receive the help and the guidance when learning remotely. While, the rest of them five (05) Students who represent (13%) shared that their teachers often help them.

Q5: Are you satisfied with the technology and software you are using for online learning?
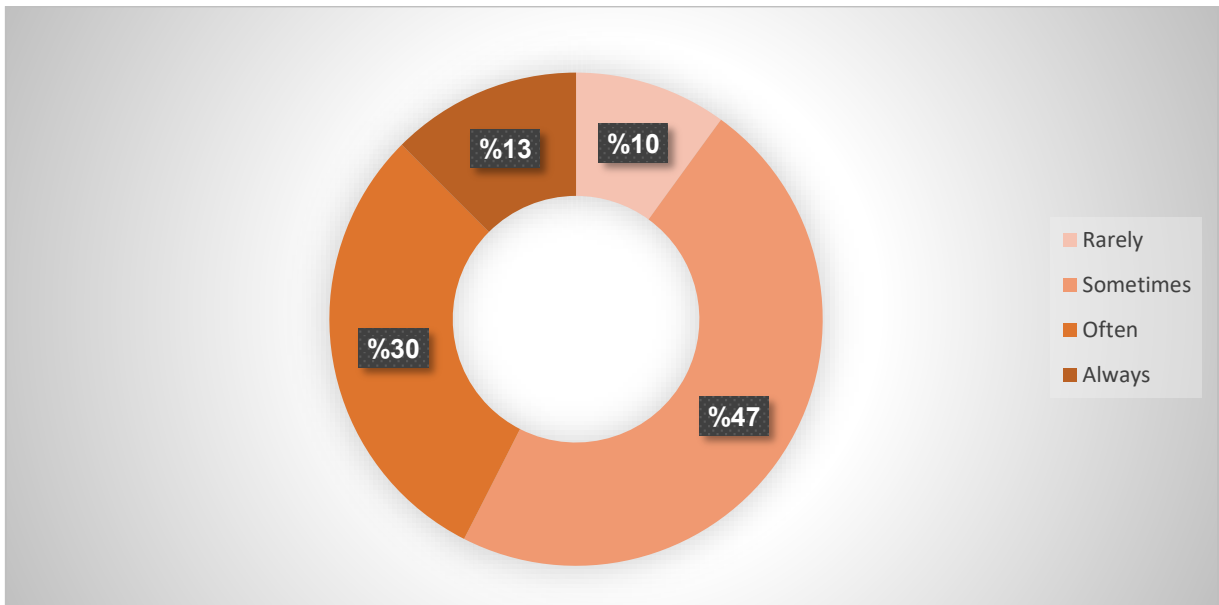
Figure 2.14: Students' Satisfaction withTechnology and SoftwarePrograms.

Concerning this question which aims to know how much the students are satisfied with software programs they use. Nineteen (19) students are representing the majority and occupying (47%) stated that they are sometimes satisfied. While, twelve (12) students who represent (30%) affirmed that they are often satisfied with the online educational platforms. In addition to this, (13%) from them shared that they are always satisfied. And as it is mentioned for the rest four (04) students who take the percentage of (10%) are rarely satisfied.

Q6: Do you find online classes:

Table 2.5. Comparing Online Classes to Traditional Classes.

Statements	N	%
a-The same as traditional classes	08	20%
b-Easier than traditional classes	21	52,5%
c-More difficult than traditional classes	11	27,5%

In this question, students were asked about how do they find online classes compared to regular classes. 52,5% of the students see that online classes are easier than traditional classes. 27,5% think that it is more difficult than traditional classes. The rest 20% see it as the same as regular classes.

Q7: What do you prefer?

Table 2.6. The Different Types of Learning.

Statement	N	%
a-Regular classes	13	32,5%
b-Hybrid classes	25	62,5%
c-Online classes	02	5%

As the results show, 62.5% of the students prefer hybrid classes which is the combination between online classes and the traditional ones. However, 32.5% of them favor regular classes to online classes. The rest 5% like studying online.

In this question students were asked to justify their answers. We collected 30 out of 40students' answers. These are some of the justifications provided about hybrid classes:

-It combines the benefits of both traditional learning with the flexibility of e-learning.

- It provides students with the ability to control their own pace of learning and study at a time and place that suit them.

-The combination between them makes the learning process more effective and easier.

-I think in nowadays we should not miss any opportunity to learn, so it better to have both regular and online classes.

-Because both of them can help the learner to develop his capacities.

- It was very helpful for me because this makes me comfortable, however sometimes it was hard to stay connected to the website because of the internet connection difficulties.

The following justifications are about preferring regular classes:

-I think so, because I see it more effective.

-Because in regular classes, the students can focus more, consequently they grasp more information.

- Traditional classes are more effective, because, e-learning was not appropriately applied.

-We were not familiar with e-leaning, we did not use to apply e-learning in our university before the pandemic. So, it is hard for us to adapt.

These are some justifications about online classes:

-It is a good alternative for regular classes because it provides time to study and practice.

-It is helpful for me, it makes me fearless with less anxiety, and less pressure.

Q8: Which tools of online learning have you taken?
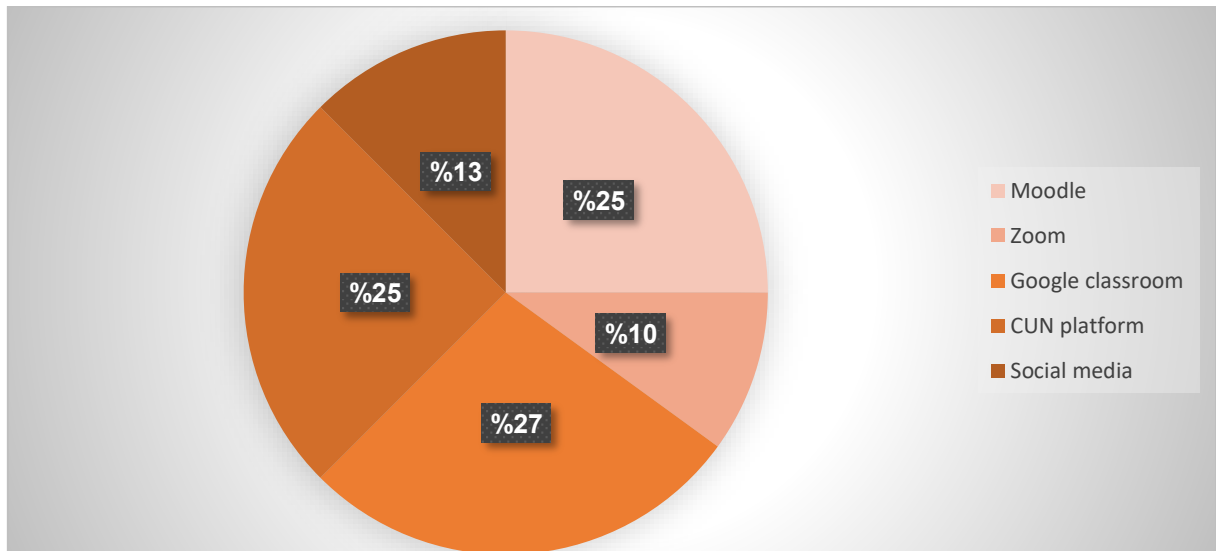
Figure 2.15: The Different Tools of Online Learning.

The diagram shows that 27% of the students use google classroom. The other participants tend to use both Moodle and UCN platform in which they represent 25% for each tool. 13% of the students use social media extensively even in studying matters. The rest of students use zoom in which they present 10%.

Part3: the impact of online learning on students' performance / Comments and suggestions.

The third part is made to open the door for students to give their comments and to suggest some solutions about how to improve the quality of online learning in the future.

Q1: Do you think that online classes make you a successful learner?
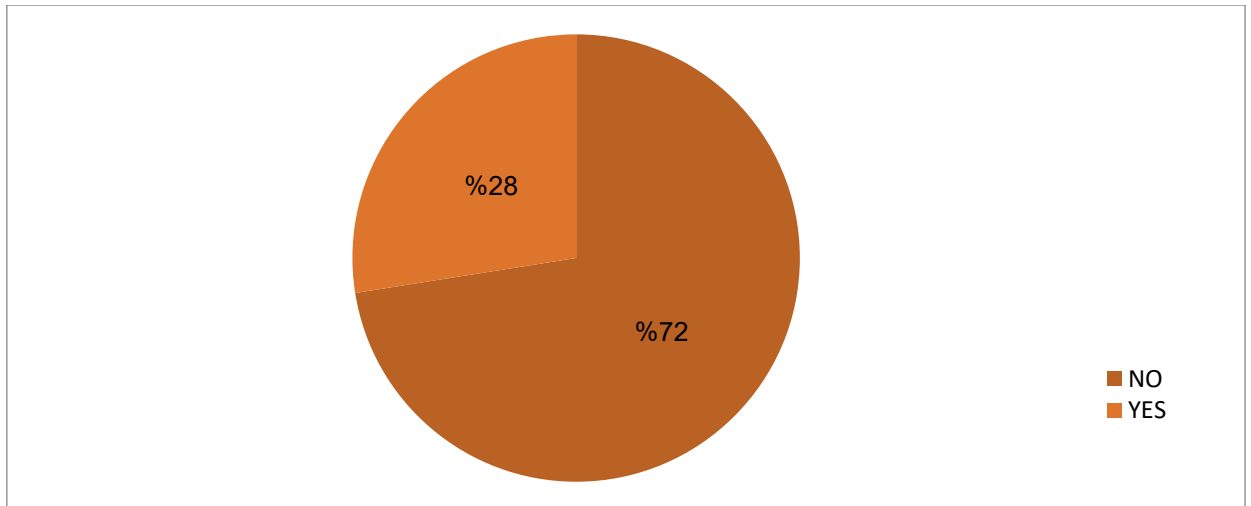
Figure 2.16: Students' Perceptions TowardsOnline Learning

The aim of this question is to inquire whether online learning makes them successful learners. The results show that the majority of students said no and they present 72% from the whole sample. However, the minoritysaidyes, they present 28%.

In this question, students were given the chance to express themselves whether they consider online learning as an effective method to make them successful or not, and these are some of the provided answers:

-No, it was bad, I faced many difficulties to access in the platforms.

- I dislike learning remotely, because I have difficulties in understanding lessons es especially those that are in Pdf form.

-I do not consider it as an effective learning method to rely on.

-No, I do not think so, I see that e-learning abroad is totally different from   the Algerian e-learning!

- No, I am always struggling with internet connection, it was hard for me to stay connected to the websites.

-Yes, it was so helpful I have engaged in learning program and it was easy to attend and get t lectures.

-Yes, I feel free and comfortable.

According to the results, every student relied on the following conditions: time management, good internet connection, and the needed interaction especially between teachers and students.

Q2: Comment on the following statements:

Table 2.7. Statements of Online Learning.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
online learning is good for academic performance of studentsbecause it offers flexibility.	17.5%	42.5%	30%	10%	0%
Online learning is considered as less effective method due to the lack of interaction.	20%	50%	20%	10%	0%
Some students are unwilling to use ICT tools thus, online learning is not helpful for them.	20%	52.5%	22.5%	5%	0%

This question aims to know students' opinions about someaspectsconcerning the use of online learning.

As it is mentioned in the table above, the majority of students agreed that online learning is good for the academic performance of students in terms of offering flexibility. Additionally, most of them also agreed that online learning is not effective

for those who do not have enough experience and pre-training about how to use the different ICT tools.

Q3: As student, what are your suggestions to improve the quality of online learning in the future?

The aim of this question is to let students add any further suggestions and comments to improve the quality of e-learning in the near future. Not all students commented but these are the most important comments received:

-First of all, the Algerian authority should enhance the internet network system to facilitate the online learning process.

-I think we should have a better organized platform or application that we can access and use it easily.

-More interaction with teachers to explain lessons for us not only posting them in PDF form.

-Training both teachers and students on how to use ICT tools.

-Students need to be guided.

-We need to get notified from the UCN platform itself when posting new lessons.

2.7. Results and Discussions

To develop this research work, the researchers had proposed a set of hypotheses. Concerning the first hypothesis of this research which is EFL learners believe to some extent that e-learning is an effective method, itmay offerflexibility, self-reliance, timesaving and motivation. After analyzing the collected data, researchers recognize that the hypothesis is confirmed. Because the majority of bothteachers and learnersshare a positive attitude towards online learning.

In thesecond hypothesis,the researchers proposed that the e-learning could notbe appropriately use atUniversity Center of Naama, because both students and teachers

face so many troubles such as; internet flow, lack of training, difficulties in evaluating students. The findings of this research work revealed that this hypothesis is approved.

The third hypothesis, which was proposed is that both teachers and learners should receive better equipment and better training on the different ICT tools for an advanced education in the future. This hypothesis is also confirmed.

2.8. Recommendations and Suggestions

The findings achieved in this research work led to suggest some recommendations to solve the problems faced by both teachers and learners to improve the quality of e-learning use at Salhi Ahmed University Center -Naama to have a successful educational system. Those recommendations are listed as follow:

1.The UCN platform is very useful, when it is appropriately used, but it cannot be considered as the only tool, teachers should use other alternatives to fulfill the different students' needs and suit their different levels.

2.It is necessary for teachers to adopt new effective approaches;this will promote the productivity and the effectiveness of the online learning. Such as: the use of Zoom, Moodle and so forth.

3. The administration should be aware about the challenges that students face; they should recognize that not all students have the same opportunity of accessing the platforms. All in all, teachers ought to be flexible by including both asynchronous and synchronous learning opportunities.

4.Students' engagement is a very important issue, in which teachers should check on students' comprehension, and give them for example the opportunity to pose questions in the chatrooms.

5.The physical distance does not mean the social distancing. This means that there should be interaction and meaningful discussions that lead to real connection between instructors and learners.

6.Students should be conscious that online learning is also considered as a method of teaching/learning. In which, they have to deal with it as they do in regular classes.

7. It is necessary for administrators to do a meeting with students to have a clear understanding about their challenges when using the online platforms.

2.9. Conclusion

This chapter includes an overview about the research design and data analysis. It deals with the research objective, research instruments, and data analysis methods. It lists the main challenges that teachers and learners face when using the e-learning. In fact, the analysis of both teachers' and students' questionnaires revealed that using online learning is helpful and useful. However, every teacher and learner should learn how to employ technology in education in order to avoid the main difficulties in its use. Additionally, it provides recommendations for both instructors and learners for a better education in the future.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

Online learning is a new strategy in the Algerian higher education system, it has been adopted after the pandemic COVID19 for the aims of improving the results of the educational process and searching for the effectiveness of the academic approaches. The e-learning also brought changes in the field of education and transformed both the teaching and learning approaches. Thanks to its benefits, the learners can study in a flexible way at their own pace. Another relevant point which is worth to mention is the role of teachers in the e-learning integration process, in which they can see the advantages and possibilities of the educational technology. However, it is important to have a sufficient facility, and teacher-direct support, as this study has already discussed. For this research work, the researchers introduced the following research questions:

- 1. To what extent is online learning effective?
- 2. What are the biggest challenges faced by both tutors and learners when learning remotely?
- 3. How to improve the quality of online learning in the future?

The above cited questions led the researchers to propose the following hypotheses:

- 1. EFL learners believe to some extent that online learning is an effective method, it offers flexibility, self-reliance, time saving and motivation.
- 2. Online learning could not be appropriately use in Naama university center, because both students and teachers face many troubles such as: internet flow, lack of training, and difficulties in evaluating students.
- 3. Both teachers and learners should receive better training on the different ICT tools for an advanced education in the future.

The study has started with a literature concerning the early beginning of the introduction of the distance learning by describing its historical overview and its definition. The researchers have also provided the different tools and types of online learning without ignoring its goals, advantages and disadvantages. They have also presented the role of both teachers and learners in the online learning environment. It

also highlights the e-learning culture in the blended classrooms. The second chapter presents the processes of data collection and analysis. In this study, the researchers chose to deal with one research instrument which is the questionnaire for both teachers and students, but it is differently made. Therefore, the obtained data have been analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The participants in this research are chosen randomly in which the researchers have dealt with questions concerning their attitudes towards the use of remote learning and the different online platforms and what could enhance its quality in the future education.

The analysis of the collected data gave positive as well as negative perceptions in which all participants showed a positive attitude toward the usefulness of online learning. However, some of them share a negative statement due to some difficulties that both teachers and learners face. At the end, the researchers have provided some recommendations and suggestions for better online education in the future.

As a conclusion to this research work, one might add that the present study has attempted to look for the impact of online learning on the students' performance by including its advantages and challenges. Moreover, it is important to mention that the research opportunity isstill available for the future inquiries on this topic.

Although the present study has attained its objectives, there are some limitations and shortcomings that should be taken into consideration. Some teachers and students did not answer the questionnaires. As for those who answered, there were some problems like the illogical answers, skipping questions, and the problem of handwriting.

The results obtained in this study can lead to suggest some recommendations for other researches. Further research studies are recommended to cover a large number of teachers and students. They are also recommended to use different instruments such as interviews to get a valid and stronger evidence for showing the experiences concerning the use of the e-learning, and ask them directly about the circumstances they face.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1
(Teachers' Questionnaire)

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is intended to gather the needed data in order to accomplish our research.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate the impact of online learning upon student's performance.

We would be grateful if you could share your experience by answering this questionnaire. Be sure that all your answers will be treated anonymously.

Part 01: Teachers' profile

1/ Gener:

Male ☐   Female ☐

2/ Qualification:

Magister ☐   Doctorate ☐

3/ Teaching experience: …… Years

Part 02: Teachers' attitudes towards online learning:

Q1: Did you have any experience of teaching through distance education?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Q2: Have you found online teaching different compared with teaching in a physical classroom?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Q3: Are you satisfied with the different platforms you are using for online teaching?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Q4: Do you see that UCN platform is enough for online learning?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Q5: What tools do you already use for either the preparation or delivery of remote learning?

Moodle ☐   Classroom ☐   UCN platform ☐   Zoom ☐

Others, please specify: …………………………………………………………………

Q6: What are your biggest hurdles in delivering a good remote teaching?

-I have not had adequate training on the tools ☐

-It is more difficult to ensure that students are engaged and learning ☐

-I do not have the tools that I need ☐

Q7: How well are your students doing with online learning?

-Almost everybody is doing well ☐

-It is a mixture, but the majority are doing well ☐

-It is a mixture, but the majority are facing problems ☐

-Most students are really struggling ☐

Q8: What types of online learning methods do you prefer?

-Synchronous online learning ☐

-Asynchronous online learning ☐

Part 03: The impact of online learning on teachers' performance:

Q1: What are the biggest challenges you are facing when utilizing e-learning?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

Q2: What are your suggestions to improve working from home?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for your collaboration

Appendix 2

(Students' Questionnaire)

Dear students,

This questionnaire is designed to gather the needed data in order to accomplish our research, the purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate the impact of distance learning upon students' performance.

We would be grateful if you could share your experience by answering this questionnaire. Be sure that your answers will be treated anonymously. Please, tick the appropriate answer and write full sentences if needed.

Part 01: Students' profile:

1/ Age: ……. Years old
2/ Gender:

Male ☐   Female ☐

Part 02: Students' attitudes towards using online learning:

Q1: Have you ever taken an online class before?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Q2: How often do you prefer to study online?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Normally ☐   Always ☐
Q3: Could you manage your time when learning remotely?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Normally☐   Always ☐

Q4: How helpful are your teachers while studying online?

Rarely ☐Sometimes ☐   Often ☐Always ☐

Q5: Are you satisfied with the technology and software you are using for online leaning?

Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Often ☐   Always ☐

Q6: Do you find online classes:

a-The same as traditional classes ☐

b-Easier than traditional classes ☐
c-More difficult than traditional classes ☐

Q7: What do you prefer?
a-Regular classes ☐
b-Hybrid classes (the combination between online classes and the traditional classes) ☐
c-Online classes ☐
Please, justify your answer.
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
Q8: Which tools of online learning have you taken?

Moodle ☐   Zoom ☐   UCN platform ☐   social media ☐   Google classroom ☐

Part 03: The impact of online learning on students' performance:

Q1: Do you think that online classes make you a successful learner?
a-If yes, what are the positive features that make you successful?
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
b-If no, what are the main obstacles you are facing while using online learning?
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Q2: Comment the following statements:

-Online learning is good for the academic performance of students because it offers flexibility.

Strongly agree ☐Agree☐   Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐   Strongly disagree ☐

-Online learning is considered as less effective method due to the lack of interaction.

Strongly agree ☐Agree☐   Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐   Strongly disagree ☐

-Some students are unwilling to use ICT tools so that online learning is not helpful for them.

Strongly agree ☐Agree☐   Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐   Strongly disagree ☐

As student what are your suggestions to improve the quality of online learning in the future?

Thankyou for your collaboration

SummaryRésumé   ملخص

Summary

The present study aims at investigating the impact of distance learning upon learners' performance. To construct this work, a case study was conducted at Salhi Ahmed University Center Naama, where the master one students and teachers of the English language were selected as a sample population. To collect data two questionnaires were used, in which one was directed to teachers and the other for students. The findings of the study showed that the e-learning allows both students and teachers to do better by making them working in flexible manner, independently at their own pace. They did however, express dissatisfaction at the lack of training on the ICT tools, and other different factors related to the use of e-learning programs. Therefore, it was recommended to work more better by adopting new effective methods to promote the productivity and the effectiveness of online learning in the future.

Résumé

L'objectif de cette étude est d'examiner l'impact de l'apprentissage à distance sur la performance des étudiants. Pour mener à bien cette étude, une étude de cas a été menée au centre universitaire 'Salhi Ahmed' de Naama, où les étudiants et les enseignants de master 1 en langue anglaise ont été sélectionnés comme échantillon. Deux questionnaires ont été utilisés pour collecter des données, l'un destiné aux enseignants et l'autre aux étudiants. Les résultats de l'étude ont montré que l'apprentissage en ligne permet aux étudiants et aux enseignants de travailler de manière plus flexible et indépendante à leur propre rythme, ce qui améliorer leur performance. Ils sont toutefois exprimés leur mécontentement quant au manque de formation sur les outils TIC et d'autre facteurs liés à l'utilisation des programmes d'apprentissage en ligne. Il est donc recommandé de travailler davantage en adoptant de nouvelles méthodes efficaces pour promouvoir la productivité et l'efficacité de l'apprentissage en ligne à l'avenir.

ملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى فحص تأثير التعليم عن بعد على أداء المتعلمين. لتحقيق هذه الدراسة، تم إجراء دراسة حالة في المركز الجامعي صالحي أحمد بالنعامة، حيث تم اختيار طلاب وأساتذة السنة الأولى ماسترفي اللغة الإنجليزية كعينة. تم استخدام استبيانين لجمع البيانات، أحدهما مخصص للأساتذة والآخر للطلاب. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن التعلم عبر الإنترنت يسمح للطلاب والمعلمين بالعمل وفقا لوتيرتيهم الخاصة، مما يحسن أدائهم. ومع ذلك، عبروا عن استيائهم من نقص التدريب على أدوات تكنولوجيا الإعلام والاتصالوعوامل أخرى متعلقة باستخدام برامج التعلم عبر الإنترنت. ولذلك لقد تمت التوصية على العمل بشكل أفضل لاعتماد أساليب جديدة فعالة لتعزيز إنتاجية وكفاءة التعلم عبر الإنترنت في المستقبل.