

The Use of Virtual Libraries by Master's Level Sociology Students at the University of Khenchela: A Reality Check

واقع استخدام المكتبات الافتراضية من قبل طلبة علم الاجتماع في طور الماستر بجامعة خنشلة

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Abstract:

This research seeks to uncover the actual usage of virtual libraries by master's level sociology students at the University of Khenchela. A descriptive approach was utilized, focusing solely on 128 male and female master's level sociology students for the academic year 2023/2024.

The study sample is a purposive sample aimed at fulfilling the research's goals, as master's level students are nearing the completion of their graduation dissertation, a project that entails bibliographic research and the gathering of multiple sources and references. Therefore, they are expected to have greater motivation than students at other academic levels to utilize virtual libraries, which are viewed as the modern method for collecting references.

The findings of this research showed that master's level sociology students often utilize virtual libraries as they meet their needs and desires, while also saving time and effort, particularly because students have a limited timeframe to submit their research to the university.

Keywords: **Library, Virtual library, University student.**

ملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى الكشف عن واقع استخدام المكتبات الافتراضية من قبل طلبة علم الاجتماع في طور الماستر بجامعة خنشلة، حيث تم تطبيق المنهج الوصفي، وشملت الدراسة طلبة علم الاجتماع في طور الماستر فقط وعددهم 128 طالب وطالبة للسنة الجامعية 2023/2024. عينة الدراسة هي عينة قصدية أو عمدية خدمة لأغراض البحث، حيث أن الطلبة في طور الماستر مقبلون على انجاز واتمام مذكرة نهاية التخرج وهي دراسة تحتاج الى البحث الببليوغرافي وجمع المصادر والمراجع المختلفة، فمن المفروض سيكون لهم دافع أكثر من غيرهم من الطلبة في باقي المستويات الأخرى لاستخدام المكتبات الافتراضية التي تعتبر وسيلة العصر في جمع المراجع. كشفت نتائج هذه الدراسة الى أن طلبة علم الاجتماع في طور الماستر يستخدمون بكثرة المكتبات الافتراضية لأنها تلي احتياجاتهم ورغباتهم، وتختصر الجهد والوقت، خاصة وأن الطلبة مقيدون بوقت محدد لإيداع بحوثهم لإدارة الجامعة. الكلمات المفتاحية: مكتبة، مكتبة افتراضية، طالب جامعي.

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Introduction

The remarkable advancements in technology globally have brought about significant transformations in every aspect of life, be it economic, social, cultural, or others, leading to a more compact and smaller world where everyone exists within a shared space referred to as the digital or virtual environment.

This is because of the advancement of contemporary communication methods, particularly the rise of social media platforms, educational websites, electronic libraries, and similar resources, enhanced by the swift and extensive reach of the Internet. This progress has reduced both effort and time while removing obstacles and distances, particularly in academia. The advent of virtual libraries, equivalent to electronic or digital libraries, has gained popularity in universities globally, including those in Algeria, which have undergone significant transformations following the emergence and increased usage of these libraries within the academic setting.

Consequently, this research aims to uncover the actual utilization of virtual libraries by university students, particularly those nearing graduation, as they seek sources and references to fulfill their research needed for graduation.

The researcher decided to perform the field study on master's level sociology students at the University of Khenchela since she is a professor there and possesses prior insight into the research community, making it easier to approach the study.

1. Statement of the problem:

The significant technological advancements have resulted in numerous transformations across different sectors, areas, and institutions, including universities, which are crucial societal entities that must incorporate modern technology in teaching and enhance positive interaction within the university environment.

It was essential to implement contemporary methods and technological tools to assist the entire university team in the educational and research activities, which are deemed the primary objectives of the university overall.

Currently, universities globally are in competition regarding their adoption of contemporary technology, and they are even assessed according to the extent and rate at which they utilize digital devices and technologies regarded as the language of the time.

The University of Khenchela is among the Algerian and global universities that aims to implement the widespread use of modern technology in its administrative, educational, and research activities involving all university users, including students, professors, administrators, and employees, with the goal of enhancing, promoting, and ranking the university.

While preparing their research and studies, students seek more than just regular physical libraries; they also utilize virtual, digital, or electronic libraries to gather numerous references and enhance their research with diverse information, or even to save time and effort that can be extended when searching for references in conventional paper libraries.



Virtual libraries have turned into a sanctuary for many students, particularly those nearing graduation, like Master's students who are the subject of this study. They are getting ready to present their final project papers, regarded as studies and research requiring extensive source gathering.

This study was therefore conducted to reveal the frequency with which Master's students visit virtual libraries, their motivations for using them, and their role in improving the students' academic level.

1.1 Research questions:

From the above, the following questions can be asked:

-What is the reality of the use of virtual libraries by Master's level sociology students at the University of Khenchela?

This question has three sub-questions:

1- What is the percentage of the use of virtual libraries by master's students in sociology at the University of Khenchela?

2-What are the motivations for using virtual libraries by master's students in sociology at the University of Khenchela?

3- Do virtual libraries have a role in improving the scientific level of Master's students in Sociology at the University of Khenchela?

1.2 Research hypotheses:

1- The use of virtual libraries is influenced by the number of students using them.

2- Motivation to use virtual libraries is related to the quality of the needs of the students who use them

3- The availability of virtual libraries contributes to improving the academic level of students who use them.

1.3 Research Variables:

Independent variable:

-Number of students using virtual libraries.

-The nature and quality of the needs of students using virtual libraries.

-Availability and spread of virtual libraries.

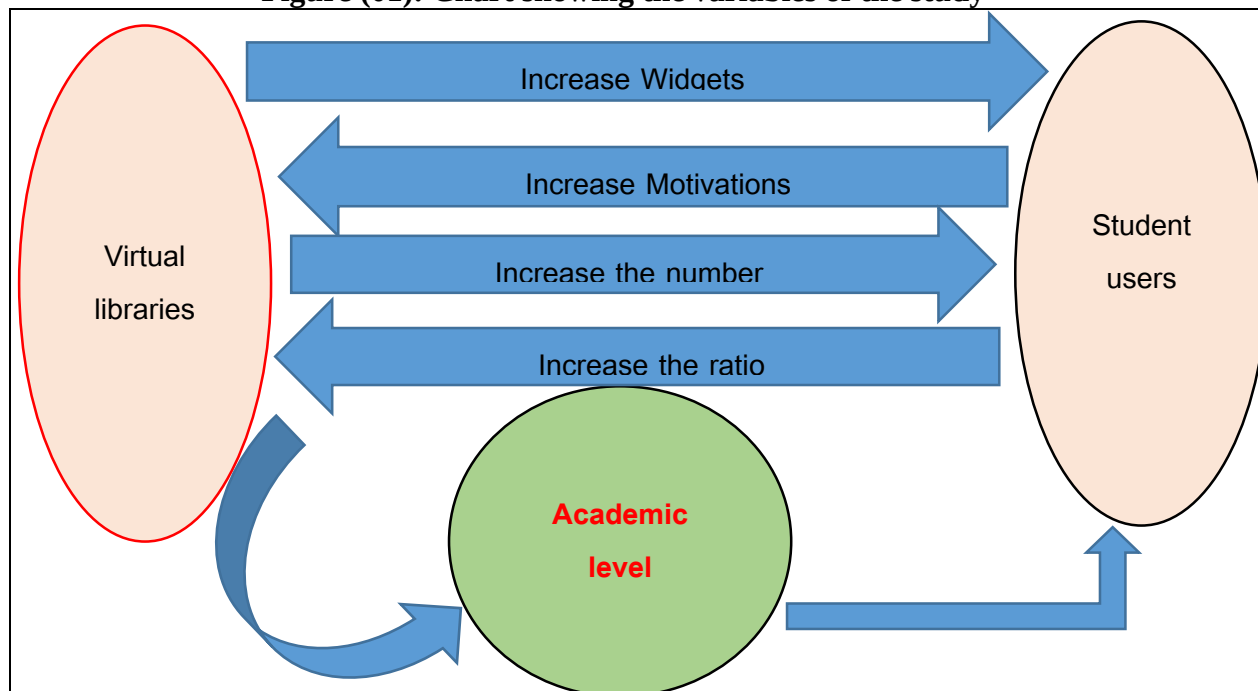
Dependent variable:

-Percentage of virtual library usage.

-Motivations for using virtual libraries.

-Improving the scientific level.

Figure (01): Chart showing the variables of the study



- Source: Prepared by the researcher.

2. Research terms:

2.1 Library definition:

- Linguistic definition:

The Larousse dictionary defines a library as: 'a building dedicated to a collection of books' (Larousse, 1989:70).

This definition limits the term library to a building or design dedicated to the placement of books, but the concept of a library is broader than that.

The Al-Munjid Alphabetical Dictionary defines a library as: 'the plural of offices and books, which is the position of the office' (Al-Munjid Alphabetical Dictionary, 1986: 994).

This definition does not differ from the previous definition in that it limits the concept of a library to the place where books are placed.

- Idiomatic definition:

A library is defined as: 'a cultural, educational, scientific and social institution whose goal is to collect information and arrange it in various ways in terms of cataloguing, classification and arrangement and provide it to beneficiaries through a range of direct services such as lending, periodicals, photography and others' (Al-Abed, 2020: 10).

The concept of the library is not only the place where books are placed, but it is a cultural, educational, scientific and social organisation that is indexed, classified and arranged to collect information and provide it to those who request it in ways that meet the desire of all individuals and segments, whether by lending books or photocopying them and other various library services, especially in the current era in light of the technological and digital development that has witnessed a great diversity and development in library services.

2.2 Definition of Virtual Library:

Before defining a virtual library, it is necessary to define virtual reality which can be: *'a computer-based multimedia environment that is highly effective, and the virtual does not contradict the real, as the virtual is what exists as a capability and not as a verb'* (Mehri & Bendjamaa, 2011: 29)

It is clear from the above definition that a virtual library is a computer-based library that contains references that can be accessed in a visual and close-up manner .

'The virtual library is based on virtual reality, which in turn is based on the use of modern technologies and advanced technology such as computers, telecommunications and multimedia' (Mehri & Bendjamaa, 2011: 29)

This definition resembles the earlier one, highlighting that the virtual library arises from computer advancements, and its arrival is connected to the development of computers housing various electronic or digital books.

The virtual reality imitates and reflects the actual reality, as all the conditions that facilitate interaction in the library are present, similar to what exists in real life or within a conventional library.

The sole distinction is that traditional or classical libraries involve direct interaction, whereas virtual libraries feature indirect or remote interaction.

However, some researchers argue that virtual libraries are not analogous to traditional libraries, because virtual libraries transcend spatial and geographical boundaries (Radja Mustafa, 2014: 124).

The fact that virtual libraries transcend spatial and geographical boundaries gives them a global character, eliminating the specificity and cultural and local diversity that traditional libraries are known for.

A virtual library is: *'A global library available electronically, a library that facilitates access to a huge amount of information on demand, at the time it finds appropriate and without any delay, and puts this information in front of him while sitting at his desk'* (Alyan, 2015: 160).

The virtual library, as defined above, is global because it is linked to the Internet, making it organised and available to all people at any time.

It also means virtual libraries: *'libraries that provide access points to digital information using various networks, including the Internet, and this term may be synonymous with digital libraries'* (Jawdat, 2019: 176).

The association of the virtual library with the Internet makes the term virtual library overlap with the term digital library and e-library, so what is the difference between the three terms?

Some distinguish between e-library, digital library and virtual library, stating that: *'The electronic library is the one that constitutes the largest source of electronic information, as it contains some traditional sources, unlike the digital library, whose contents are all digital'* (Melhem, 2014: 2016).

Therefore, the term e-library is more comprehensive and broader than the term digital or virtual library. The e-library is defined according to the services it provides, so some specialists define an e-library as: *'Its ability to store, organise and broadcast information to users through electronic information channels and sources'* (Al-Saeed, 2012: 116).

Some believe that there are no clear differences between e-libraries and digital libraries, as an e-library may form part of a library that includes various information sources, and may be limited to electronic sources, and the same applies to the digital library, and both rely on electronic operation, but the popularity of the term digital library came as a result of the use of the concept of digital radio or digital television and other means of communication (Al-Dabas, 2012: 324).

The term e-library is more comprehensive than the terms digital library and virtual library, and the term virtual library can be considered synonymous with the term digital library according to the National Science Foundation and the Association of Research Libraries in the United States of America (Melhem, 2014: 2013).



Moreover, the electronic library predates the other concepts, relying on electronic devices and demonstrating the method of interaction, whereas the digital library pertains to the handling of information via a digital system, and the virtual library represents the online environment for library utilization. Despite their differences, these three libraries are united by their use of electronic operations (Mehri & Bendjamaa, 2011: 33).

3.5 Definition of a university student:

A university student is one who: '*receives classes, lectures and training on how to obtain information in a higher education institution to obtain a university degree*' (Meziche, 2008/2009: 24).

The university students involved in this study are Master's level sociology students enrolled at the University of Khenchela, currently in their first and second year of the Master's program, focusing on two areas of study: Sociology of Organisation and Work, as well as Urban Sociology.

4. The field of study:

The study area includes the spatial area, temporal area, and human area, each of which can be presented separately.

4. 1 Spatial field:

*The general area of the study:

The field research was carried out at Abbes Laghrour University, situated in the city of Khenchela. Khenchela is one of the cities in Eastern Algeria, and the University of Khenchela, named after the martyr Abbes Laghrour, is regarded as an innovative multidisciplinary initiative by the University of Khenchela. The university currently has over 18,000 students, 705 faculty members, and 500 administrative and technical personnel distributed among six faculties: Faculty of Science and Technology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Economics, Business and Management Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and Natural and Life Sciences, Faculty of Arts and Languages, and Faculty of Law and Political Sciences (University of Khenchela, 2024, <https://univ-khenchela.com>).

*Specific field of study:

The Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, founded in 2012, offers education in the area of social sciences and humanities. The Faculty offers various specializations in the Bachelor's degree, such as Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy, History, and Media and Communication. At the master's level, there exist 06 distinct specializations: Urban Sociology, Sociology of Organizations and Work, Clinical Psychology, General Philosophy, History of Resistance and National Movement, and Audiovisual. At the post-graduate level: The faculty is equipped to mentor multiple cohorts of PhD students across various fields within 03 divisions: Sociology, History, and Philosophy. The overall student count for the academic year 2023/2024 was approximately: 1441 students, both male and female, guided by 104 professors (University of Khenchela, 2024 <https://univ-khenchela.com>).

4 . 2 Timeframe:

The study was conducted during the academic year 2023/2024 and the research questionnaire was distributed during the second semester examinations exactly from 12 May 2024 to 22 May 2024.

4 . 3 Population:

The study included first year and second year sociology students at the master's level, and included both existing majors, namely sociology of organisation and work and urban sociology.

There are 128 male and female students, according to the information obtained from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities Department of Teaching and Pedagogy, as shown in the following table:

Table (01): Number of Sociology students at the Master's level in all majors

Total	Male	Female	Level	Specialty
33	04	29	First Year Master	Urban Sociology
28	03	25	Second Year Master	
32	05	27	First Year Master	Sociology of Organisation and Work
35	09	26	Second Year Master	
128	21	107	Sociology students at the Master's level	Total

-Source: Researcher's processing based on data from the questionnaire.

5. Methodology of the study:

The descriptive approach was utilized as it is the most suitable for the research, which relies primarily on the precise depiction of the phenomenon, which certainly hinges on scientific and objective observation, and secondly on the analysis, interpretation, diagnosis, and examination of the phenomenon to uncover logical and accurate explanations for the study.

6. Study Sample:

To fulfill the objectives of the study and meet the demands of the subject, a purposive sampling method was utilized. A total of 128 male and female sociology master's students were chosen purposefully and intentionally. This selection was made as these students are nearing graduation from university and are currently engaged in finishing their graduation theses, which are the research projects conducted by students to earn their master's degree after two years of master's study.

Our sample consists of 128 individuals: 107 females and 21 males, indicating that females make up about 83.6% of the total sample.

Regarding the age demographic, the majority of the students fall within the age range of [20-30] years, representing 77.34%. In contrast, individuals aged [31-41] years account for approximately 17.97%. A very small group were above 41 years which estimated percentage is: 4.69 percent.

7. Data collection tools:

The researcher used the technique of observation, interview and questionnaire as means of collecting data and information on the subject matter of the study, as observation was applied since the beginning of the study, that is, since the start of the study in September 2023, which is considered the beginning of the academic year 2013/2024, and the researcher applied the technique of simple observation and participatory observation in repeated ways and for a long time because the researcher is a professor in the same college and teaches the same students who are considered the members of the sample, so the prior knowledge of the sample members and the field of study greatly helped the researcher in formulating the problem and analysing the data and field data obtained.

As for the interview technique, it was mostly free and unstructured interviews, due to the researcher's previous knowledge of the research community, which facilitated the application of this technique, and helped in obtaining all the information required to complete the study, which was mostly information about the definition of the field and sample of the study.

Regarding the research form, it comprises 20 questions, with 19 being closed and just one open question. It includes three main axes in addition to the personal data axis, which consists of four questions. The outcomes from the personal data axis, represented by inquiries about gender, age category (age), educational attainment, and type of specialization, were utilized to define the study sample.

The survey was shared with two reviewers, and several questions were adjusted according to the feedback obtained.

The researcher additionally examined the data from the collected forms through standard statistical analysis, calculating percentages, and presenting basic statistical tables.

8. Data analysis:

The first axis: Percentage of virtual libraries usage:

1- Table (02): Use of the Internet

Percentage	Repetition	The answer
100%	128	Yes
0%	0	No
100%	128	Total

-Source: Prepared by the researcher

By examining Table 02, it is evident that all participants utilize the Internet, which is the contemporary mode of communication and a commonly employed tool across different social groups, particularly for university students who heavily rely on it for referencing coursework, conducting research, or communicating with the university, professors, and peers. Currently, university students must utilize the Internet to handle their interests and responsibilities as students.

2-Table (03): Internet Usage Rate

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 78.12	100	Always
% 21.10	27	Sometimes
% 0.78	01	Rarely
%100	128	Total

-Source: Prepared by the researcher

What validates that the Internet has rightly established itself as a communication tool within the university setting is the appearance of these percentages in Table 03, where we observe a notable figure of 78.12% utilizing the Internet regularly, a considerable percentage that showcases the extensive usage of the Internet in the academic environment.

3-Table (04): Use of the Internet in study and research

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
%100	128	Yes
% 0	0	No
%100	128	Total

-Source: Prepared by the researcher

Additional evidence and an inclusive percentage have been added to validate the extensive use of modern technology or the Internet, which has penetrated all areas and has become essential for everyone, particularly universities and students, the focus of this study. It was noted that 100 percent of the sample in the study utilizes the Internet for academic and research purposes.

4-Table (05): Use of Virtual Libraries

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 93.75	120	Yes
% 6.25	08	No
%100	128	Total

-Source: Prepared by the researcher

The high percentages that indicate the fulfilment of the first hypothesis, which is to record a large percentage of students using virtual libraries, where it was recorded in Table 05 that 93.75% use virtual libraries, while a very small percentage not exceeding 6.25% do not use virtual libraries, but they may use or resort to other techniques and methods in obtaining information or searching for references, and this is confirmed by Table 04.

5. Table (06): Use Cases of Virtual Libraries

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 21.67	26	Always
% 62.50	75	Sometimes
% 15.83	19	Rarely
%100	120	Total

-Source: Prepared by the researcher

At the start of the academic year, students may not rely on virtual libraries consistently and frequently due to less intensive research and lessons compared to the academic year's end, particularly for second-year Master's students who must finalize their graduation thesis, a comprehensive study requiring numerous diverse references and sources. However, throughout the year, both first-year and second-year Master's students are required by the university and professors to conduct research and studies, which necessitates greater access.

6- Table (07): Percentages of virtual library usage

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 18.33	22	%100
% 61.67	74	%50
% 6.67	08	%25
% 13.33	16	%10
%100	120	Total

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

The assessment of the proportion of virtual library usage among master's level sociology students at Abbes Laghrour University in Khenchela reveals a substantial and noteworthy percentage, as illustrated in Table 07.

Virtual libraries have established themselves in today's world, as many students and professors across numerous universities globally utilize these virtual resources regularly due to the extensive range of materials and references available in every discipline and field, making it easier for university students to conduct their research and studies effortlessly.

The second axis: Motivations for using virtual libraries

1-Table (08): Challenges in using virtual libraries

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 41.67	50	Yes
% 58.33	70	No
%100	120	Total

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

Examining the table reveals that a notable share of the sample population, estimated at 58.33%, does not experience difficulties when using virtual libraries. Conversely, another portion, approximated at 41.67%, reports finding it challenging to navigate these libraries. The presence of challenges is quite

likely, given that every aspect of life has both advantages and disadvantages. Documenting obstacles and difficulties has been a part of human existence since the beginning, yet the key takeaway from the table is that the majority of sample members do not encounter issues while using virtual libraries.

2- Table (09): Types of Challenges in case of yes

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 48	24	Heavy internet traffic
% 32	16	Lack of books and references
% 20	10	Lack of references in Arabic
%100	50	Total

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

To determine the kinds of challenges encountered by the group of students who experience issues while using electronic libraries, with the percentage of this group estimated at 41.67%, which is considerable, a number of difficulties were noted based on the students' remarks, as illustrated in Table No. (09), where the greatest challenge we noted is the heavy Internet traffic, with the estimated percentage reported at 48 percent, followed by 32 percent who encountered issues when using virtual libraries due to the lack of necessary books and references, while an estimated 20 percent struggle to find references in Arabic.

It can be asserted that the method of utilizing virtual libraries differs from student to student based on internet speed and flow, varies by location, depends on each student's material resources, and may also change according to the specific academic field, as well as the nature of the research and studies being conducted.

3-Table (10): Motivations for using virtual libraries

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 35	42	Doing research
% 29.16	35	Developing knowledge and information
% 35.84	43	Both
%100	120	Total

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

Table 10 clearly shows that the reasons for utilizing virtual libraries are primarily for research activities and for enhancing knowledge and information, as noted by the percentage of students indicating: 35.84 percent. This usage may be aimed at completing undergraduate research (35 percent), followed by the enhancement of knowledge and information (29.16 percent).

4- Table (11): Reasons for using virtual libraries

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 50.83	61	Easy to use
% 30.84	37	Easy to download and store books
% 18.33	22	Both
%100	120	Total

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

The popularity of sociology master's students at the University of Khenchela for utilizing virtual libraries stems primarily from the convenience they offer, as indicated by 50.83 percent of respondents. The second reason, cited by 30.84 percent of the sample, relates to the simplicity of downloading and saving books and references. Lastly, 18.33 percent of those surveyed mentioned that both the ease of using virtual libraries and the convenience of downloading and storing materials together are influential factors.

The third axis: The role of virtual libraries in improving the scientific level

1-Table (12): Reliance solely on virtual libraries to accomplish research

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 15	18	Yes
% 85	102	No
%100	120	Total

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

Sociology master's students do not solely depend on virtual libraries for their research and studies; they may utilize physical books or university libraries to gather sources and references, as indicated by a significant number of students, estimated to be 85 percent of the entire sample.

Conversely, 15 percent of the sample participants indicated that they depend solely on virtual libraries for their research and studies, prompting the researcher to question the reason behind this, which will be clarified in the table below.

2- Table (13): Explanation of reasons in case of yes

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 72.22	13	Easy access to information
% 27.78	05	Difficulty in obtaining paper references
%100	18	Total

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

The reason why 15 per cent of students use virtual libraries only for their research and studies is mainly due to the ease of access to information, and according to the table, the percentage that stated this is a significant percentage, estimated at 72.22 per cent.

3- Table (14): Evaluation of virtual libraries (more than one answer can be selected)

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 26.67	32	Increase intelligence
% 75	90	Gaining new knowledge
% 32.5	39	Ability to express
% 46.67	56	Understanding and comprehension of lessons

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

Virtual libraries play a significant role in the scientific domain, and their impact on the academic success of university students should not be overlooked. Seventy-five percent of the sample participants indicated that virtual libraries play a crucial role in offering students new knowledge, while

32.5% recognize the advantage of virtual libraries in allowing students to express themselves, and 26.67% view the function of virtual libraries as enhancing students' intelligence.

4-Table (15): Virtual libraries' contribution to improving the scientific level

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 83.33	100	Yes
% 16.67	20	No
% 100	120	Total

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

Virtual libraries actually contributed to improving the scientific level of students, as stated by the Sociology Master's students, where their percentage reached 83.33%. While 16.67% of the total sample members stated the opposite, which may be due to the use of paper sources and references or perhaps the difficulty of dealing with the virtual library in itself, which makes it difficult for them to absorb and understand and thus their inability to evaluate this modern technological means.

5- Table (16): Percentages of the contribution of virtual libraries in improving the scientific level (if yes)

Percentage	Repetition	Answer
% 07	07	% 100
% 78	78	% 50
% 11	11	% 25
% 04	04	% 10
% 100	100	Total

- Source: Prepared by the researcher

To validate the responses of the participants, the researcher rephrased several questions in different formats to garner precise and honest answers. Allowing respondents to assess the impact of virtual libraries on students' university life and their academic performance led to the findings presented in the table above.

Number(16), where the highest percentage of 78% of the surveyed individuals believed that virtual libraries helped enhance their scientific competence by 50%, which is a significant and meaningful percentage that demonstrates that virtual libraries play an important role in elevating the scientific level of Sociology Master's students at the University of Khenchela.

In the final open-ended question concerning how respondents assess the impact of virtual libraries on their lives, all participants concurred that virtual libraries significantly enhance their knowledge, streamline the acquisition of information and references, and minimize their time and effort in conducting research, accessing lessons, and enjoying other advantages and services offered by virtual libraries.

Their proportion can be evaluated at: 90 percent, while the leftover approximated at: 10% of the study sample, thinks that the virtual library, while it made access to information easier, also impacted its value. This implies that when an individual faces challenges in acquiring information, they will recognize the significance of that information and internalize the majority of what they have learned. Unlike the present time, the wealth of information is countered by a deficiency in understanding and the capacity to remember it.

9. Discussion of findings:

The findings of the present study addressed the following questions:

1- What is the percentage of the use of virtual libraries by master's students in sociology at the University of Khenchela?



A significant and elevated proportion of the sample participants utilize virtual libraries, as documented by Table No. (05) percentage: 93.75% utilize virtual libraries.

2-What are the motivations for using virtual libraries by master's students in sociology at the University of Khenchela?

It is evident from Table No. (10) that the reasons for utilizing virtual libraries are to conduct research and to enhance knowledge and information collectively, as indicated by the percentage of students reporting this at 35.84%.

The aim might be to achieve research in the first degree, which accounts for 35 percent, while the advancement of knowledge and information in the second degree represents 29.16 percent.

3- Do virtual libraries have a role in improving the scientific level of master's students in sociology at the University of Khenchela?

Virtual libraries play an important role in the scientific domain, and their contribution to the academic success of university students is significant, as illustrated in Table No.14. In the sample, 75% affirmed that virtual libraries contribute to students acquiring new knowledge, 32.5% recognized their importance in enabling students to express themselves, and 26.67% acknowledged their role in enhancing students' intelligence.

Conclusion:

Virtual libraries are considered to be libraries that imitate and resemble traditional or classical libraries, essentially replicating physical libraries in all aspects, with the primary difference being the mode of interaction. In virtual libraries, engagement and communication take place remotely, relying solely on the sense of sight, whereas traditional libraries engage all the senses; **the scent of books is appreciated, the texture of their pages is felt, their text is visually engaged with, and even the underlying meanings between the lines are perceived—demonstrating that the interaction is profoundly authentic and the experience genuinely resonates with the essence of the book.**

Studying the subject of virtual libraries is valuable, as it remains a constantly relevant topic, prompting researchers and students to continually explore the impact of virtual libraries on educational success. Therefore, this research was conducted to explore the actual engagement of sociology master's students with virtual libraries at the University of Khenchela, culminating in the following findings:

A significant proportion of the sample participants utilize virtual libraries, as noted in Table No. (05) percentage: 93.75% utilize virtual libraries.

The reasons for utilizing virtual libraries involve carrying out research and enhancing knowledge and information, as illustrated in Table 10.

Virtual libraries play an important part in the academic realm, and their contribution to the scientific success of university students is significant. According to Table 14, 75% of the surveyed individuals emphasized the impact of virtual libraries in offering students new knowledge.

Based on the above, we can formulate a series of recommendations and suggestions that can be tracked as follows:

- 1- Offering a quick and robust Internet connection throughout the university.
- 2- Providing training for students and faculty on how to navigate and conduct research in electronic, virtual, and digital libraries.
- 3- Expanding the sources for gathering information and supplying it to students by equipping the university with electronic, digital, and virtual libraries.

Ultimately, it can be concluded that the significance and function of virtual libraries do not end at this boundary alone, but extend well beyond it, as the novelty of virtual libraries' emergence leads to an incomplete and inadequate assessment of them. This implies that they can only be evaluated after a considerably lengthy duration, allowing these virtual libraries to align with multiple generations.



Naturally, the evaluation will involve understanding their advantages and disadvantages, and even comparing them across generations in order to yield insights that genuinely represent the influence and consequences of this modern medium on its users.

The question raised in the conclusion, which might be a subject for examination or a theme for further research, is: In simpler terms, what are the effects of the swift information exchange on university students' capacity to comprehend information and attain scientific success?

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