



Distance Education at University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba between The Problem of Terminology and its Quality and the realities of application: an Descriptive study

التعليم عن بعد بجامعة باجي مختار عناية بين إشكالية المصطلح وجودته ووقائع التطبيق: دراسة وصفية

Mecif Aicha¹

aicha.mecif@univ-annaba.dz

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Article abstract: The global trend towards the adoption of information and communication technologies, and the keenness of many institutions to deliver their services to the largest possible number of beneficiaries, has made universities, led by the University of Annaba, to fully rely on these technologies and generalize their use, and among the outputs of this use is the trend towards distance education by harnessing all possible possibilities due to the added value it provides, but despite the importance of this, this study seeks to diagnose the reality of distance education at Annaba University, relying on the descriptive method by identifying the outcomes of distance education and the problem of applying this term and its relationship with it.

Keywords: Distance education; the problem of the term; quality; Baji Mokhtar University ; descriptive study.

ملخص المقال :

إن التوجه العالمي نحو اعتماد تكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصالات، وحرص العديد من المؤسسات على إيصال خدماتها إلى أكبر عدد ممكن من المستفيدين، ما جعل الجامعات وعلى رأسها جامعة عنابة تحذو نحو الاعتماد الكلي على هذه التكنولوجيات وتعميم استخدامها، ومن بين مخرجات هذا الاستخدام هو التوجه نحو التعليم عن بعد من خلال تسخير كل الإمكانيات الممكنة نظرا للقيمة المضافة التي يوفرها، لكن بالرغم من أهمية ذلك تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى خلال تشخيص واقع التعليم عن بعد بجامعة عنابة، بالاعتماد على المنهج الوصفي، من خلال الوقوف على مخرجات التعليم عن بعد، وإشكالية تطبيق هذا المصطلح وعلاقاته بمصطلحات أخرى كالتعليم الإلكتروني وغيره، ومدى تأثيره على جودة الممارسات التعليمية بالجامعة.

كلمات مفتاحية: التعليم عن بعد ; إشكالية المصطلح ; الجودة ; جامعة باجي مختار ; دراسة وصفية .

1.Introduction and Problem Statement

Since the end of the last century, the integration and use of digital technologies in educational environments, from schools to universities and in various public and private sectors, has been the subject of extensive studies and research.

Some of them even went so far as to say that universities may become redundant, similar to the fate of printed books after their digitization. However, the passage of time has revealed the complexities and challenges inherent in adopting such a model, primarily due to the widespread implementation of distance education systems across all academic institutions, replacing traditional face-to-face education.

Today, technological advances have become an indispensable element in various fields and sectors, serving as the cornerstone of various organizational processes. Modern advancements such as the internet, artificial intelligence, e-learning, and distance learning have become an integral part of our daily interactions. In particular, the education sector, led by universities, has become increasingly dependent on these technologies, especially in light of the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This reliance has not only facilitated not only the continuation of educational endeavors, but has also made remote learning a vital resource for academic education

Despite encountering several hurdles, this shift has opened up vast avenues for interaction across multiple disciplines, removing many barriers that once impeded universities' ability to disseminate knowledge. Developed nations have leveraged their experiences to make significant strides in this domain. The University of Baji Mokhtar in Annaba has actively engaged in adopting and implementing distance education by developing training programs and mechanisms to operationalize this novel educational system, particularly following directives from the Ministry of Higher Education to intensively utilize distance education technologies and optimize their benefits for a wider academic audience.

The proven feasibility and considerable benefits of scientific communication and distance education underscore their potential. This research endeavors to evaluate the efficacy and quality of the distance education system at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba. It scrutinizes the practical deployment of distance education technologies within this academic setting, aiming to provide a comprehensive analysis of their impact. Specifically, the study investigates the strategic approaches adopted by the university to enhance the educational experience through distance learning.

The core of this inquiry centers on addressing the following pivotal question: What is the effectiveness and quality of the distance education system at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba, what strategies are being implemented to support this modality, and how does this influence the academic outcomes of students and researchers?

1.1 Study Hypotheses:

— The deployment of the distance education system at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba has realized the anticipated benefits.

— There exists a well-defined strategy aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the distance education system.

— The implementation of the distance education system faces numerous challenges, primarily due to the limited technological resources available to many students and researchers.

1.2 Study Significance:

The concept of distance education at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba carries substantial significance; yet, it is fraught with ambiguities, particularly concerning its accurate definition and application. A thorough literature review indicates a prevalent confusion between distance education and related concepts such as online education and e-learning .

Unlike these related terms, distance education possesses unique characteristics and operational mechanisms. This study is dedicated to clarifying the distinctions between distance education and other similar terminologies that utilize digital technologies to facilitate remote teaching and learning. Furthermore, existing research often overlooks the nuanced application of the term 'distance education' at an institutional level .

Our research aims to elucidate the utilization of this term at the university, exploring its benefits, requirements, costs, effectiveness, and expected outcomes, thereby informing its strategic implementation at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba.

1.3 Objectives of the Study:

This study is designed to critically evaluate the implementation of distance education at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba, with a specific focus on clarifying the term 'distance education' within this academic institution. It addresses the prevalent confusion between distance education and e-learning, where these terms are often interchangeably used .

The objectives include identifying research gaps within this field, analyzing the advantages and challenges of the distance education system, and investigating both the benefits and the impediments encountered by the university in adopting this contemporary educational framework. The study further aims to delineate the obstacles and issues faced during the implementation process.

1.4 Study Methodology:

Given the thematic focus of this research, a descriptive methodology was employed. This involved an extensive review of existing literature pertinent to distance education and a detailed analytical examination of the current state of distance education at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba. This approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the subject, ensuring a thorough exploration of the institutional application of distance education strategies and their outcomes

2. Theoretical Framework of the Study:

2.1 The Problem of Terminology:

It is widely recognized that electronic technologies are inherently complex and feature overlapping functions and capabilities. Many of the technologies employed in the distance education process are also integral to the electronic education system. Consequently, the literature review revealed a plethora of terms associated with electronic education, often leading to confusion about their specific and potential applications within the distance education framework.

During our literature review, we encountered a variety of terms with diverse descriptions and applications in contemporary education processes, such as online teaching, web-based education, internet education, computer-mediated communication (CMC), computer-assisted learning, e-learning, virtual classrooms, information and communication technology (ICT), open and distance learning (ODL), distributed education, web-based education, technology-enhanced learning, educational technologies, and virtual education (Guri-Rosenblit, S., & Gros, B., 2011).

This analysis illustrates that numerous terms are used to describe the utilization of electronic technology in modern educational environments. These terms vary in their functions and roles across different environments and institutions, demonstrating that electronic education or distance education has yet to be definitively established as a distinct field of study and education.

Most terms emphasize the interactivity of online communication, while others highlight access to contemporary information resources, and many underscore the application of teamwork in the teaching or learning process. Most digital technologies serve as supplementary tools in traditional teaching methods, whereas other applications necessitate a substantial restructuring of the distance education environment. This will be further elaborated in subsequent sections.



2.2 Distance Education:

Distance education represents a contemporary educational methodology embraced by universities to bridge the spatial and temporal divides between students and instructors. It establishes a virtual proximity between the student and the professor, where the student can be virtually present in a digital space through the internet, obviating the need for physical attendance at the university. This modality significantly streamlines the process of accessing higher education and aims to close the educational divide within the diverse community associated with the university. (Adilson Pinto, 2020)

2.3 E-learning:

E-learning serves as an adjunct to traditional in-person education, specifically designed to enhance scientific communication between teachers and students across various educational settings, including schools and universities. For instance, it facilitates the submission of assignments online and enables the administration of tests synchronously with the rest of the class.

Researcher James Anderson articulates this interaction: "We use e-learning to communicate with our students. They can connect with us through the network, and we can engage with them to improve their writing and educational skills." E-learning is renowned for leveraging new multimedia technologies and the internet to augment the quality of learning by providing easy access to resources and services, and by promoting remote exchanges and collaboration. (Guri-Rosenblit, S., & Gros, B., 2011)

Additionally, e-learning delivers electronic content through various multimedia formats and facilitates both synchronous and asynchronous interactions with content, instructors, and learners, while managing educational activities through specialized applications and programs. (Watanabe, 2005)

2.4 E-learning and Distance Education: Interchangeable Terms:

In terms of technologies and functions, the terms 'e-learning' and 'distance education' are often considered similar, which has led to considerable confusion regarding their use. Many scholars within the higher education domain use these terms interchangeably, with some describing e-learning as the contemporary evolution of distance education.

For example, a detailed report by the Pew Program on Learning and Technology in the USA indicates that terms like 'distance learning,' 'distance education,' 'distributed education,' and 'online education' are frequently used synonymously across various contexts. This report underscores the role of these modalities in facilitating electronic scientific communication through digital technologies, computer devices, and internet portals, which allow learners to easily access lessons online, irrespective of their geographical location or time constraints. (Mishra, 2007)

However, it is important to note that while distance education can occur without internet-based education, and vice versa, the two often overlap. Indeed, some universities that specialize in distance education heavily rely on e-learning frameworks. Despite this overlap, from our analysis, distance education and e-learning should not be viewed as synonymous. (Guri-Rosenblit, S., & Gros, B., 2011)

2.5 Concept of Quality:

The notion of 'quality' encompasses a wide array of definitions. Ibn Manzoor, in his seminal dictionary "Lisan Al-Arab," derives the term 'quality' from the root 'good,' as opposed to 'poor.' He explains that to 'make something good' is to enhance it, and to 'produce good' reflects quality in both speech and action. (University of Libya, 2020) Quality is fundamentally assessed by comparing an item to its counterparts, focusing on its superiority or inferiority. It represents a high standard, often becoming a part of a person's character, particularly highlighting admirable traits. It is also a distinguishing characteristic that sets one entity apart from another. (Terumi Miyazo, 2008)

2.5.1. Definition of Quality Terminologically:

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) characterizes quality as the amalgamation of features and characteristics of a product or service that meet explicit needs and requirements.

Edward Deming articulates a more nuanced definition, viewing quality as the attainment of high standards that align with consumer expectations. He emphasizes several critical aspects in understanding quality: it should be framed within the boundaries of the beneficiary's needs; it possesses multiple dimensions; it cannot be defined solely by a singular characteristic of products and services; and quality levels vary depending on consumer requirements. (Tirupathi R. Chandrupatla, 2009)

Bogue & Saunders expand on this by defining quality as the conformity of a product or service to the specifications of the message and achieving the objective within the levels of perfection and accountability expected by the beneficiaries. Moreover, quality in an educational context is seen as the comprehensive efforts exerted by educational institution managers to enhance and refine their outputs, reflecting global shifts towards total quality management. (Peter T. Ewell, 2015)

Quality, therefore, represents the degree of excellence that can be anticipated through the application of appropriate and cost-effective standards. It has emerged as a pivotal concern in modern society, especially in the service sector, and notably in education. In what some scholars term the "Age of Quality," excellence is no longer an optional luxury but a critical necessity driven by the demands of contemporary life, marking an organization's or educational institution's ability to sustain and thrive. (Mustafa Al-Sayeh Mohammed, 2014)

2.5.2 Quality in Education:

In the realm of higher education, quality is an intricate concept that encompasses all functions and activities across educational, academic, programmatic, research, scholarship, employment, student services, infrastructure, and resource management sectors. All these dimensions are directed towards enhancing the well-being of the community and the academic environment. (Jurabaeovich, S. N., & Bulturbayevich, M. B., 2020)

2.6 The Necessity of Quality in Distance Education (Mary Burns, 2023):

Quality, a broad and somewhat nebulous term, acquires specific connotations when discussing the comparison between distance education and traditional face-to-face education. It includes elements of value, values, impact, and effectiveness. Experts advocate that high-quality distance education programs necessitate a concentrated effort on policy direction and future planning to ensure their effective and beneficial implementation. Achieving this standard depends fundamentally on adhering to well-established points:

2.6.1 Standards-Based Design:

Quality in distance education begins with a commitment to standards. There exists a range of national and international standards aimed at designing and developing online education programs, such as the UNESCO standards for Information and Communication Technology, which are regarded as foundational for establishing quality, particularly standards related to internet utilization.

These standards are crucial as they outline clear goals and objectives, specify the skills to be developed, delineate learning methods, enumerate all inputs and activities, and detail the technology to be employed. Additionally, they focus on how technology can bolster distance education, enhance technological proficiency among learners and teachers, and aid in the development of study materials and the design of online programs and lessons.

2.6.2 Engagement in Quality Assurance:

Quality Assurance (QA) serves as a pivotal mechanism to ensure that the academic standards, which stem from a university's or college's mission, are clearly defined and achieved, aligning with national or global benchmarks. QA is integral to the overarching framework of 'quality assurance.' It encompasses a suite of procedures designed to monitor and assess performance against established standards, thereby ensuring the attainment of high-quality outputs.

Quality assurance primarily focuses on meticulous planning, robust processes, and the outcomes thereof, to identify, analyze, and rectify deficiencies within both processes and results. When implemented effectively, QA fosters a culture of continuous reflection and enhancement within

distance or online education programs, as well as within the institutions that administer these programs.

2.6.3 Comprehensive Evaluation of the Distance Education System:

While quality assurance is concerned with adherence to established standards, evaluation focuses on assessing outcomes, impacts, and the added value—each of these being critical components for achieving overall quality. Continuous evaluation is essential for the success of any online educational program. It aids in pinpointing deficiencies and pinpointing opportunities for enhancement, such as improving existing programs or deciding which ones should be continued, modified, discontinued, or expanded.

2.6.4 Employing Qualified and Trained Human Resources in Distance Education Systems:

The implementation of distance education does not negate the necessity for high-quality in-person teaching. Despite the availability of various sophisticated platforms for online instruction, these platforms demand competencies that enable precise and effective management of the distance education system, adept at addressing potential issues and responding to learners' needs and requirements. (Mary Burns, 2023)

The emphasis on quality is paramount across all facets of distance education, as highlighted in discussions on distance education for teacher training: methods, models, and practices. A focused commitment to quality should pervade every element of the distance education system, from qualified and well-prepared instructors and meticulously designed training courses to adherence to standard-based practices.

3. The Process of Modern Education in the Internet Environment

E-learning is notable for its accessibility at any time and from any location, making it ideally suited for diverse groups under various circumstances. On the other hand, distance education is specifically designed to be accessible from any student location, effectively overcoming barriers to accessibility, thus allowing students to participate in primary classes, possibly through webcams or chat programs. (Brenda Berg, 2018)

3.1 Benefits of E-learning and Distance Education:

E-learning and distance education offer numerous benefits, thanks to several defining characteristics of both systems:

3.1.1 E-learning:

This educational approach enhances interactivity and advancement in the learning process with the support of cutting-edge information and communication technologies. Many individuals experience academic isolation, under the misconception that traditional face-to-face education is the only effective method.

In contrast, e-learning enriches the learning experience by making it more interactive. It provides significant advantages, such as overcoming the constraints of time and location, allowing access to educational resources from any place for various learners simultaneously, and enhancing research, linguistic, and cognitive skills to keep pace with this modern educational system. (John Biggs, 2003)

3.1.2 Distance Education:

Compared to e-learning, which may require multiple technologies and equipment, distance education is less costly and particularly suitable for individuals such as caregivers or students with family or community responsibilities (Afrouz & Crisp, 2020). It offers a valuable option for those looking to conserve resources and rely on a method that is both free and accessible. Distance education does not necessitate the physical presence of learners in a classroom setting, offers various types of online lessons, and focuses on the information provided to learners without concern for their type, nature, or situation. This makes distance education an appealing alternative for educational pursuits. (Brenda Berg, 2018)

In this context, the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba has adopted a flexible model for blended or flexible education, tailored to the specific needs of each university. This model integrates aspects of both face-to-face and distance education, aiming to deliver educational programs that accommodate the unique needs of learners, involving the use of the internet or technological tools. Distance education is provided in two forms at the university: Online Distance Learning (ODL) and Modular Distance Learning (MDL). A significant portion of the academic community at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba prefers the online education model, known as ODL, which can be synchronous or asynchronous, because of the aforementioned advantages and benefits.

3.2 Benefits of Distance Learning

Distance Learning (DL) presents numerous advantages in terms of teaching and learning methodologies, notably in terms of cost and time efficiency. Often, the fees associated with online classes are substantially lower than those for traditional on-campus classroom settings. This arrangement benefits both the student and the university by reducing educational expenses compared to face-to-face education, which requires more extensive preparations, capabilities, and larger budgets. Through the distance education system, the likelihood of students missing physical classes is minimized; they simply need an internet connection at home to participate in remote learning and access educational resources by downloading them to their computers. This format also extends learning opportunities to individuals residing in remote or rural areas, provided there is internet connectivity.

3.3 Drawbacks of Distance Learning:

- learning is related to the learners themselves, who may exhibit indifference and struggle to grasp online lessons as effectively as they would in a face-to-face setting. This issue has been particularly evident at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba, where it is observed that a considerable number of students are disengaged with this new educational modality. Many students feel no compulsion to actively participate in online lessons; instead, they tend to download educational materials and revisit them only during examinations, often without a thorough understanding or engagement with the content. Additionally, environmental factors such as studying in inappropriate settings like cafes can further diminish the effectiveness of distance learning, leading to poor academic performance and diminished educational outcomes. This scenario necessitates a greater effort from educators to develop more engaging and interactive online lessons and to foster student participation and motivation to enhance their active involvement in the learning process.
- Another prominent drawback pertains to the technological limitations within the distance education framework. Many universities, including the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba, lack the necessary technological infrastructure and high-speed internet connectivity, which impairs the students' ability to fully benefit from distance education initiatives. On the student side, the lack of personal computing devices and internet access severely restricts their ability to acquire information and actively participate in distance learning. The challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic have further highlighted the deficiencies in the university's ability to adapt to and support distance education, underscored by an absence of essential resources and adequately trained human resources.
- Additionally, the scarcity of financial resources allocated to distance education and the substantial costs associated with software, digital technologies, internet connectivity, and training for educators and learners pose significant barriers. These financial limitations prevent the effective and efficient implementation of distance education systems, impeding both the reach and quality of education provided. (Clyde Ericson Nolasco, 2002)

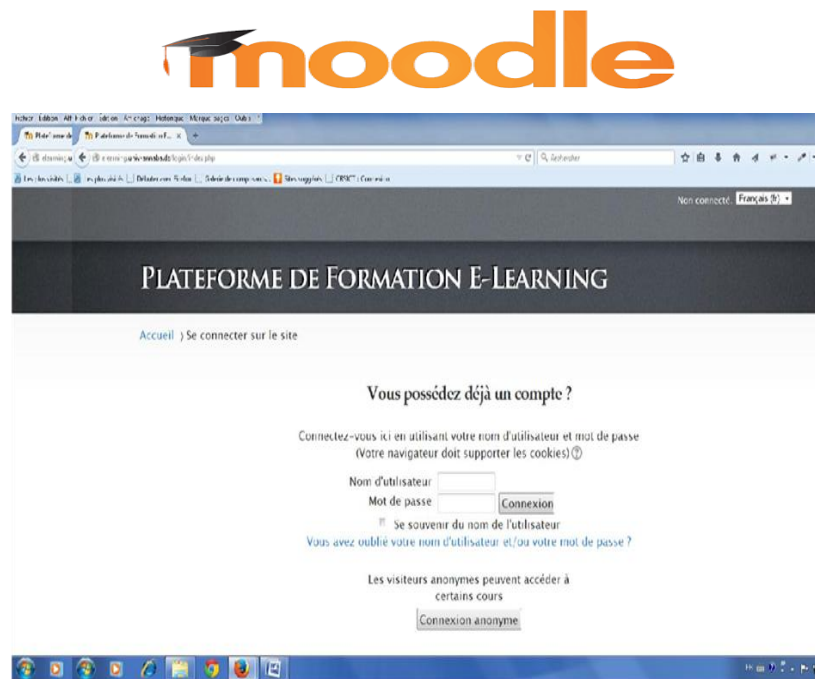
4. Analytical Study of Distance Education at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba:

4-1 Introduction to the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba

The University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba was established pursuant to Decree 28/75 on April 29, 1975, initially utilizing the infrastructure of the Institute of Mines and Minerals in Annaba. Over the years, the university has experienced steady growth, characterized by the annual introduction of new departments. Initially organized in administrative sections, it witnessed the establishment of five institutes in 1980: Social Sciences, Arabic Language and Literature, Natural Sciences, Exact Sciences and Technology, and Medical Sciences.

Additionally, since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the university has successfully implemented a robust distance learning platform, creating specialized digital platforms for all academic disciplines, thereby significantly facilitating the continuity of education and service delivery to its academic community.

Figure 1 Moodle Distance Learning Platform



Source: https://elearningdeprecated.univannaba.dz/pluginfile.php/23574/mod_resource/content/1/Guide%20d'utilisation%20de%20Elearning%20.pdf

4.2 Readiness of the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba Towards Adopting the Distance Education System (Teacher, Learner):

Through a descriptive study examining the state of distance education at universities, supplemented by theoretical insights and our personal involvement in remote learning processes, we have delineated several foundational pillars essential for the optimal functioning of these systems. This study, conducted through the digital Moodle platform hosted by the University of Badji Mokhtar Annaba, identifies critical mechanisms necessary for leveraging the full potential of the university's distance education offerings.

The ensuing analysis draws upon personal experiences and a series of deductions focusing on three principal components of the distance education framework: the university, the educator, and the learner. Each component is detailed below:

- **Learner Requirements:**

Effective participation in distance education at Badji Mokhtar University in Annaba requires learners to exhibit several core competencies and attributes that facilitate successful outcomes. These are encapsulated in the following essential skills and qualities (Rebecca Sherwood, 2017):

- Proficiency in utilizing technology.
- Commitment to self-directed learning and continuous self-improvement.
- Well-developed information literacy, encompassing skills and confidence in accessing diverse information sources.
- Capability to access contemporary information resources.
- A robust digital culture and adeptness at navigating information platforms.
- Effective time management and judicious use of available time.
- Advanced computer skills and familiarity with digital technologies.
- Independence in learning, coupled with solid study habits and strategies.
- Motivation to engage with online courses and fully embrace the distance learning model.

- **Educator Requirements:**

Educators at Badji Mokhtar University in Annaba must possess a suite of competencies that enable the effective delivery of distance education:

- Openness to embracing new educational models.
- Mastery over the technological tools essential for online teaching.
- Access to and efficient use of digital information resources.
- Skills in motivating, encouraging, and actively engaging students.
- Effective time management to facilitate organized course delivery.
- Adherence to the university's information policies and a commitment to maintaining privacy.
- Ability to provide intellectually stimulating content that aligns with the curricula.
- Pedagogical expertise and educational prowess.
- Technological adeptness to enhance educational delivery.
- Sensitivity to the varied needs of learners and adaptability in teaching methods.
- A clearly defined strategy for online teaching to ensure coherent and effective course delivery.

- **University Requirements:**

For Badji Mokhtar University in Annaba to implement a successful and effective distance education system, it must ensure the availability of the following resources and infrastructures:

- Adequate financial resources earmarked specifically for distance education initiatives.

- A robust technological infrastructure to support information and communication needs.
- A cadre of qualified personnel skilled in managing distance education frameworks.
- Dependence on streamlined electronic management systems.
- Strong, centralized leadership to steer distance education policies and practices.
- Curricular content that is both relevant to the university's specializations and responsive to learner prerequisites.
- A well-established information and digital culture.
- Problem-solving capabilities to address challenges inherent in distance education and responsiveness to the evolving needs of the community.
- Focused attention on developing and training human resources dedicated to the administration and improvement of the distance education system.

The strategic measures required to overcome these challenges, derived from our analysis of the university triad (teacher, learner, university), include the following:

- Focusing on technological resources and digital applications dedicated to distance education.
- Eliminating information scatter and loss.
- Overcoming scientific and social isolation by opening access for everyone
- Addressing the issue of the lack of trained and qualified human resources .
- Providing interactive and engaging lessons that reduce distraction and boredom among students and learners.
- Developing distance learning habits through the enhancement of time management skills.
- The ability to engage in effective scientific communication, openness to others, and fostering a spirit of teamwork and group discussion.
- Making good investments in distance education technology, by providing internet networks and supplying computers, applications, and programs dedicated for this purpose. (Guri-Rosenblit, S., & Gros, B. 2011)

4.3 Challenges of Distance Education at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba:

- **First, the Technical Aspect:**

The rapid evolution of distance education technologies necessitates a deep understanding and integration by the university under study. However, reliance on technological applications alone is insufficient to improve the educational system. The university faces significant challenges regarding the deployment of technology in both traditional and distance education settings.

The University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba also encounters hurdles in adapting to the swift changes within the distance education landscape and the repercussions of its utilization. Thus, it is imperative for the institution to formulate a clear, long-term strategic plan, drawing lessons from past experiences and even failures encountered during the initial phases of adopting a distance education system.

- **Second, the Traditional Aspect of Education Versus the New System of Distance Education (Better and Less Costly): .**

As many experts suggest, each new technological advancement challenges established methodologies, compelling the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba to make informed choices about the most effective educational systems. This involves providing all necessary mechanisms to ensure success and achieve educational objectives. While comparing traditional and modern educational approaches, the outcomes in terms of added educational value may be comparable; however, the distinctions lie in the costs, capabilities, and resources allocated for these purposes. Therefore, the university is tasked with selecting the most effective and cost-efficient technologies to foster educational excellence.

- **Third, the Advanced Aspect of Educational Technology and the Digital Divide (Sarah Guri-Rosenblit, 2013):**

The University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba has endeavored to adopt a distance education system utilizing advanced technologies. In contrast, other universities are still at nascent stages of generalizing and fully implementing distance education. There is a noticeable digital gap in the technological infrastructure necessary for using digital technologies in education across many universities, between developing and developed countries, and among different universities. Examining the scenario in developing countries, their institutions and universities significantly lack internet networks and computers.

In stark contrast, places like Singapore showcase a 98% internet usage rate within the community, exemplifying high rates of personal computer availability per 1,000 people, among other technological benchmarks. Various organizations and bodies have actively worked to bridge this digital divide by providing broad internet connectivity to remote areas and different countries, and by integrating smartphones, electronic devices, computer games, and providing multimedia devices connected to the internet that are portable and accessible at any time and place.

Conclusion and Results:

Since initiating its distance education system, the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba has encountered numerous challenges. In my view, these difficulties primarily stem from inadequate comprehensive planning and the absence of a definitive strategy for the system's implementation. The most notable obstacles include:

- Weak infrastructure and technology.
- High costs associated with technology and accompanying techniques.
- Significant apprehension among students and even teachers about using the distance education system.
- Lack of necessary digital skills among both learners and teachers to handle this new educational system.
- Failure to achieve satisfactory results, particularly as many teachers rely entirely on distance education without providing complete lessons online.
- Lack of necessary training and education for both learners and teachers.
- Poor internet connectivity, preventing a large segment of students from effectively engaging with distance education platforms.

In conclusion, adequate preparation is the key to overcoming these issues in DL. For students, teachers, and administrators, although the transition to DL may be abrupt due to unforeseen

circumstances, ongoing efforts to enhance DL capabilities are critical. Capitalizing on past experiences and existing models may help address current shortcomings in the distance learning framework. With these considerations, distance learning can continue to be a viable norm in educational practice, especially in times of crisis such as pandemics or necessary lockdowns. Despite all these challenges, long-term strategies can be implemented to effectively mitigate these issues. To ensure the continuity of education under any circumstances.

6. Suggestions:

In order for Baji Mokhtar University Annaba to overcome the challenges and obstacles mentioned above, it is necessary to fully prepare and strategically prepare for this new system of education, and therefore, through the results of this study, we present a set of proposals to enhance the quality of distance education at Baji Mokhtar University Annaba, we detail them as follows:

- Comprehensive and strategic planning for implementing the distance education system at the university.
- Sufficient awareness and attention from the Ministry of Higher Education and Research and universities alike.
- Adequate preparation for both learners and teachers through training courses and practical workshops on employing the distance education system at the University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba.
- Studying the problems and obstacles faced by the university during its initial adoption of the distance education system, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Necessary evaluation of the outputs of the distance education system at the university, compared with the available capabilities and targeted mechanisms.
- Essential study of the university's needs (students, teachers, researchers) through comprehensive and adequate preparation of learners who will be part of the distance education system.
- Necessary training for both teachers and learners on how to use distance education platforms, clarifying the process of applying lessons online and the distance education management system (LMS), and sufficient familiarity with devices and programs to achieve the best results.
- The university needs to evaluate its needs and outputs and study the gap between its previous situation and after adopting the distance education system, allowing for the identification of deficiencies and attempts to improve them.

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