

## PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

### COVID-19'S IMPACT ON DISTANCE LEARNING: CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF SHARJAH STUDENTS

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**Wafa Barhoumi, Fatima Algharbawi. COVID-19's Impact on Distance Learning: Case Study of University of Sharjah Students -- Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology 18(18), 639-663. ISSN 1567-214x**

**Keywords: Distance Learning, Academic Achievement, Corona Pandemic, The educational process's quality, The student-professor relationship, University of Sharjah.**

#### **ABSTRACT**

The study used a social sample survey to determine the impact of distance learning on University of Sharjah students in light of the "Covid-19" epidemic. The "questionnaire" tool was used to collect data. The study came to a conclusion on the quality of education and, in particular, the students' overall feelings of loneliness and isolation. Their positive attitudes about distant learning are shown in their ease of using technology for learning, independence, comfort, and developing individual skills and capability. And, in terms of a student's academic level and the extent to which the distance learning process affects them at the University of Sharjah, the students' perspective came to show that investing time in technology and attempting to access the lecture came first. Following that, due to a lack of student vision and confrontation, as in classical learning, individual variations are not taken into consideration. Last but not least, there was a lack of knowledge, a high level of individual motivation among students, and finally, the provision of basic information. The impact of virtual learning on the teacher-student interactive relationship shown that this type of education has taken place. It did, in fact, strengthen the relationship between the faculty members, followed by their perception that the information was not easily and clearly accessible in comparison to traditional education. Their fear of being unfairly judged, as well as the correlational relationships between the impact of distance learning in the context of the Corona pandemic, sample differences, and the existence of correlational relationships between gender, university level, specialization, region, number of siblings, and housing type.

## INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the Corona pandemic that swept the world at the beginning of 2020 has posed a challenge for countries and governments to confront the epidemic and ways to deal with it in light of incurable disease policies and social distancing measures while preserving working and educational life, and has worked on emergency planning and implementation in all operational sectors. The educational, religious, "where distant work, distance learning, and prayer at home to ensure everyone's health and prevent the spread of the epidemic, and the educational aspect has been affected in all its sectors," nurseries, schools, universities "because the closures and continuity vaguely cover all age groups, and thus the United Arab Emirates has been baptized. To laying out several scenarios for the educational process in schools and universities, based on various studies on the best ways to ensure education while maintaining the health and safety of students and educational staff, as confirmed by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the State. "More than one million students in UAE schools are looking forward to starting a new academic year, and our mission is to provide them with an integrated educational environment that meets the highest standards to comply with health and safety regulations ... and to guarantee that they obtain a good education" said the Governor of Dubai (Al-Bayan, 2020). This is only a reflection of the student's prominence, academic ranking, and scientific and cognitive skills.

In today's world of information and technology, education is one of the most fundamental foundations on which countries and governments establish their futures (Simonyan, 2001). In acknowledgment of their importance in the development and growth of the country, we are witnessing a rapid struggle by countries around the world today over factors of development and civilization growth in various fields, particularly in the field of education. The online educational revolution is one of the revolutions that has brought about current and future good developments in the field of education, which has made nations more prosperous. The Corona epidemic revealed that this revolution has come to fruition, rather than being embraced as a basic and necessary source in the educational process, where the preparedness of students, academic and administrative staff is concerned (Jamila, Nasira, 2007).

E-Learning is a kind of education that combines active learning with a variety of learning techniques and modalities. It promotes higher-level skills and individual learning by taking into consideration a variety of student characteristics, such as their learning speed, the right place and time for them to study, as well as their preferences, there are Visual Learners and students. The "Kinesthetic Learners" movement helps auditory learners and students learn (Al-Hamdani, 2006). Successful learning, on the other hand, necessitates the availability of the majority of the supporting infrastructural aspects, as well as the techniques and methods for employing and using them, so that the student may utilize and profit from them.

The age, the school system employed, the school stage, the features of the student population, and the desired learning outcomes differ, but in most strategies, the student is the primary focus, and education is customized to his

needs and skills. Learners' access to information resources with great flexibility, as well as enhancing Cognitive and active learning levels, improving student experience, and optimizing educational outcomes (Shawahin, 2016). The Corona epidemic has influenced the use of all methods of teaching and learning, including online learning, where varied strategies are used. Also, educational patterns by university major and age range.

The UAE's success in adopting the virtual education system in university and pre-university education is due to the fact that it was ready for it years ago, according to Minister of Education Hussain Al Hammadi. Distance education is the result of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Vice President and Prime Minister of the State and Ruler of Dubai's long-term vision, as His Highness stated in 2012 that education must undergo a wise transformation. This educational method had previously been used in a limited way, but in the light of the Corona crisis, it became a pillar of learning, indicating the UAE's readiness for these conditions. The crisis was highlighted through infrastructure, teacher and student training, and device delivery, and it was concluded to provide leave to prepare cadres so that students would not be burdened for a single day, and after implementation, continuous follow-ups were conducted, and schools and universities were transformed from buildings to electronic schools with follow-up and monitoring (Al-Bayan, 2020).

Accordingly, As a result, the student, who is at the basis of the educational process, found himself in a situation he had never encountered before in his educational career. The entire educational system had transformed by “receiving information, studying, examinations, and submitting assignments”, which surprised them at first. The United Arab Emirates' educational institutions, particularly the University of Sharjah, have been developing programs and tools for communicating with students, presenting their assignments and exams, and ensuring their continuous communication with their professors, and this is what really stems from the university's teaching and learning strategies for 2019-2024.

As a result, the problem of the study was narrowed to the impact of distance learning on University of Sharjah students in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, who had lived through and practiced this type of distance learning from home and without classroom encounter through four crucial dimensions over two semesters. First and foremost, there is the educational component, which involves determining the impact of this sort of education on the quality of the distance learning process. Second, the extent to which the student's academic dimension is influenced, as well as determining the influence of distance learning on academic achievement and educational level in light of the Corona virus. Third, the social dimension and emphasis In light of the Corona epidemic, consider the interaction between the professor and the student in the distant learning process. Fourth, in order to determine the extent to which different demographic and social parameters (age, gender, school year, etc.) influence students' opinions and attitudes.

In light of the foregoing, the current study **attempts to answer the following questions:**

1. Does the distance learning procedure influence the quality of education at the University of Sharjah?
2. How does the virtual learning process effect the university student's level, either negatively or positively?
3. Is there any impact on the real direct interaction between the teacher and the student throughout the distant learning time and virtual meeting?
4. To what degree does the demographic characteristics of students at the University of Sharjah impact their attitudes and opinions towards distance learning?

The study aims to reveal the effect of the distance learning process on students at the University of Sharjah, from the beginning of the spring semester 2019-2020 to the fall semester 2020-2021, who were completely immersed in the distance learning experience in various dimensions of the educational process. Obtaining virtual learning courses, electronically submitting assignments and exams, contacting professors electronically and digitally, and knowing whether their attitudes are positive or negative will open the horizon from predictors of future educational orientation during and after the pandemic.

The importance of the study revolves theoretically as it starts from a theoretical social dimension, in which the two approaches to "symbolic interaction, social life" have different dimensions that emphasize the importance of symbol, sign, and perception in the learning process, which may be missing due to distance learning. In addition to the originality of the phenomena of "virtual learning" and its acceptance due to a pandemic and a worldwide disease that the entire world is suffering from, not just the UAE society, it measures the effect of this process on students practicing this kind of education on them. Furthermore, one of the University Of Sharjah's most significant initiatives for 2019-2024 is to include blended learning and flipped classrooms into the educational process.

### ***Study Concepts***

**University of Sharjah:** A university edifice containing scientific and literary disciplines was established in 1997 and is still standing today, operating under state regulations and legislation, and virtual work and distance learning were activated in it during the pandemic in a short time, following the university's strategies and the state's rules and regulations.

**Distance learning:** It expresses receiving knowledge and establishing the educational process "learning, social relations, class activities and assignments, exams and short tests," but through technology and digital devices and over the Internet, where the instructor is in one location and the learner is in another, with the education process proceeding.

**Corona pandemic:** The spread of the new Corona virus "Covid-19" and the suffering of the whole world, as its rapid transmission and spread, which made social distancing and protection measures followed by everyone, including the educational process to ensure the safety of all workers in the educational process.

The educational process's quality: As measured by the student's competence, self-skill, and creativity, as well as his access to comprehensive and enough information while developing self-learning skills, self-confidence, and various technical abilities.

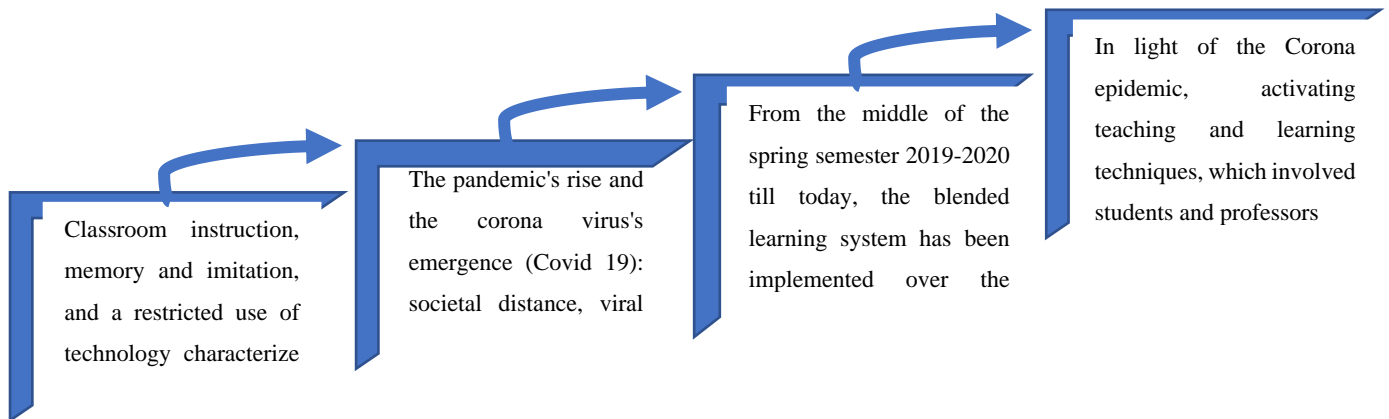
The student-professor relationship: The professor-student communication, the interactive relationship, the extent to which the student's interaction and motivation are affected, and the extent to which the professor's ability to communicate information and effectively communicate with the students.

Academic accomplishment: It refers to students' educational levels in various specialties, as well as their low or high rates and grades as a result of the new learning process on them and their perception of their professor's ability to properly evaluate them remotely.

In the first semester, beginning in August 2020, hybrid education in the field of "distance education on campus" has been adopted as a safer choice in the light of the Covid-19, and hence first degree training will be remote except in field disciplines requiring labs. Practical, research, clinical, running tests, and similar needs necessary for the usage of facilities (the official portal of the UAE Government in 2020) are the reflection of the preliminary planning and delivery of a strong infrastructure that contributes to the flexibility of implementation and management of the University of Sharjah. The beginning of the new academic year in diverse scenarios is consistent with the nature of each stage for students and teaching staff and offers the finest learning alternatives.

As a commercial and modern education institution, Sharjah University is committed to providing an innovative and sustainable cooperative learning environment that helps students to refine their knowledge of the 21st century, given the need to change higher educational institutions and to meet their current challenges. The University of Sharjah works to meet the current and future needs of local and global communities by providing innovative academic and professional programs.

The University of Sharjah also provided computers to a significant number of faculty members and workers at the university, and responded to students whose financial conditions prevented the presence of a computer to continue distance learning in light of the pandemic, in addition to creating special technical colleges coordinators to follow up on the technical aspects of the college in case The occurrence of any defect or emergency, and the monitoring system has been introduced in the examinations with distance learning, starting with one surveillance camera, then two cameras, and finally the presence of two cameras and one monitor to ensure the quality of the educational process in light of the pandemic.



**Figure 1:** Transformation of the traditional education system to distance learning under pandemic Corona

And all faculty members, whether they use distance learning or blended learning, replace personal office hours with a similar number of "virtual office hours" to provide them remotely to students, in order to ensure the social and psychological stability of a student, as the university emphasizes on faculty members, whether They use distance learning or blended learning, not to meet students in person, and priority is given to scheduling meetings online, and professors are urged to add a link on the blackboard of office watches to make it more visible to students.

***Theoretical approaches to student interaction in the learning process: The symbolic basis for the distance learning process:***

In the analysis of social systems, symbolic interactivity is one of the main thrust on social theory. It begins at the level of tiny units (MICRO), it begins with persons and their behaviour, as an open path to understand the social system (Al-Julani, 1997). In terms of meanings and symbols, a structure of roles might be seen as human expectations (Crepe, 1999). In this context, the emphasis is either on roles and social systems or on behavior and social activities.

While she sees social structures implicitly as roles' constructs in the manner of Parsons, her interest in the symbolic interaction of language, meanings, and mentality based on important facts of an individual's understanding of others is not only related to analytics at systems level (Crepe, 1999). Interactive theory owners will begin their study from the classroom of the school system. The interaction in the classroom, in the students and in the instructor has to do with the reality, since the students recognize that they are brilliant, foolish or lazy... In light of these categories, students and teachers interact with each other, where they ultimately achieve educational success or failure (Ahmed, 1995).

George Mead elaborated the basic ideas of this theory, and his students collected a book for him after his death, containing most of his ideas that they were recording in his lectures, under the title *Self and Mind Society*, (1934)). Mead begins by analyzing the communication process and classifying it into two categories: Symbolic Communication, Non-symbolic communication. The symbolic communication expresses the use of ideas and concepts, and thus

language is important for the process of communication between people in different situations. And accordingly, the social system is the product of actions that the members of society make, and this indicates that the meaning is not imposed on them, but is a subject for negotiation and deliberation between individuals (Al-Julani, 1997).

Herbert Bloomer agrees with George Mead that symbolic interaction is the hallmark of human interaction, and that this special feature involves translating the symbols and events of individuals and their reciprocal actions. He summarized his hypotheses in the following points (Crepe, 1999):

- Human beings act about things on the basis of what those things mean to them, such as students' behavior towards computers and technology devices during lectures as they represent for them classrooms and not any other tool only while the lectures are present.
- These meanings are a product of human social interaction, since before the Corona pandemic and the distance learning system, computers or distance learning devices did not acquire these meanings to students, but according to changing circumstances and use.
- These meanings are transformed and modified, and they are circulated through processes of interpretation, which each individual uses in dealing with the signs he encounters.

The importance of the symbols and connotations that have been referred to the symbolic interaction lies that they separate us from other beings ("animals") as the symbol is the common meaning and is developed in the course of the interaction process (Crepe, Glum, Sparrow, 1990) and the difference in following symbols other than those that take place inside rooms. The actual classroom, according to the changing context, has changed the symbols. In Bloomer's, *The Symbolic Interactive Book*, symbolic interaction is defined as "a distinct and unique characteristic of the interaction that takes place between people, and what makes this interaction unique is that people interpret and interpret each other's actions instead of an abstract response to them. Their response is not made directly." Instead, they are based on the meaning they affix to their actions (Hourani, 2007). Thus, from Bloomer's point of view, the educational interaction process will include three basic processes: "stimulating - interpretation - response" (Walf, Wallace, 2011). The speed and clarity of response in the distance learning process will differ from Direct learning, the fact that the excitement is far, which will undoubtedly lead to a defect in the interpretations at times, which makes the responses themselves confused, which will undoubtedly affect the orientation and perception of the student towards this educational process.

The system of interaction, expressed by Goffman in a number of stages, represented "persons, contacts, confrontations, types of performances and celebrations" as the prelude to short-term interaction units that would undoubtedly lead to far-reaching repercussions on the system as a whole" (Walf, Wallace, 2011). Interaction through students, network and encounters, distance learning, virtual, and network distance learning, through which interaction and celebration in various social events such as Science Day, for example, will

undoubtedly be reflected in the long-term in the outlook for this educational process and its success, failure, continuation or cessation.

We find that there is an intersection between the interactive and symbolic theory and the theory of social practices in dealing with social action that it is a voluntary social fact that is driven by the desire of affluence and his complete freedom to choose his action and learn it in life, as he desires and wants, and this does not happen by the individual commitment to the extent that it is a rhythmic repetition that makes the action. The practitioner is regular in daily life, and this is what did not happen in the distance learning process, which was compulsory for everyone while preserving the practice of the act and the way it is practiced according to each institution and student and their needs and available resources (Omar, 1997).

It focused directly on symbolic relationships that take place remotely and where parties do not meet, as in distance learning, where facial expressions are not seen in some academic courses in the event that the camera is not opened at one of the parties, which is a factor affecting the progress of the educational process and the absence of the element of vision and interaction. Face to face, and accordingly, the pioneers of this theory believe that this would raise the level of interaction and not be affected by expressive factors. Rather, we are affected by this situation by the sounds and movements that take place and are located inside the place of the speaker, such as the rise of the television or the presence of children. Such influences have a high resonance on one of the parties of the conversation. In turn, influences the conversation's course and focus (Omar, 1997). This portal depicts the educational process remotely, which will undoubtedly affect the quality of education, academic achievement and even the relationship between the student and the professor, because the absence of expressions and sound effects will generate anxiety and fear on both sides of the educational process without a doubt.

It stresses the necessity of anticipating the future in the remote educational process, as it is necessary not to rush to judge the nature of the course of lectures and monitor the students' attitudes, or as expressed by the theory, the dependencies of the conversations for certain periods to ensure their credibility and their relationship to reality. Therefore, researchers and those interested must be patient and wait until they judge the course of the course. The educational process through this system and up to the students' attitudes and visions (Omar, 1997).

Thus, the approach to symbolic interaction and social life illustrates the effects of the distance learning process, which will be formed through a group of influences "symbols, gestures and signals" during the interactive remote process, which is completely different from the direct educational process in the classroom, which passes through several stages. Response, where "the loudness or lowness of the voice and the presence of surrounding sounds" are all matters that give an impression on the progress of the educational process as a whole and will undoubtedly affect the future of this process, negatively or positively, through the opinions of students and their different orientations.



## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Corona pandemic, which began in early 2020, has produced many preventive strategies and policies that countries employ in terms of social distancing and maintaining a safe distance so that the epidemic does not spread further and the number of cases does not rise, and Arab studies may have focused on the epidemic's physical dimensions rather than its social consequences. Instead of explicitly addressing the process of distance learning and its different effects on the professor and student, many other foreign studies are concerned with which social distance-learning affect the process of education, as opposed to traditional learning aspects of distance learning and its impact on the student.

Mansour and Al-study's Shatti (2021) compared distance education in the State of Qatar to distance education in the State of Kuwait, demonstrating the benefits of distance education and student self-reliance versus traditional educational processes. The study also revealed a significant rate of cheating as a result of distance learning. Despite the lack of technological infrastructure in a number of Arab countries, Imad and Osama's study (2021) on the reality of education in Algerian universities reveals that technology has played a prominent role in the continuity of education, affecting the educational corps in the Arab world as a whole. Furthermore, the study found that the pandemic had an impact on the student's motivation to learn and desire to continue the educational year due to the uncertainty of the notion of distance learning among students in general.

The Al-Anazi study (2021) on education strategies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shows a significant interruption in education due to the pandemic, as well as the fact that distance learning is not better compared to face-to-face learning, regardless of the degree of development and modernity used in it, due to social factors that may play a decisive role. The process of distance learning, as opposed to the direct educational process, such as home duties, the Internet, and its quality. According to Al-Juhani's research (2021), the level of self-learning and distance education among graduate students at Taif University is high when compared to other universities, and there are statistically significant differences in the influence of females over males in the distance learning process. These findings merely highlight the challenge of implementing distance learning as a general system for all levels and nations, as a number of countries indicate a lack of infrastructure, as well as inequity in educational capacities across all educational levels.

The research (Pragholapati, 2020) indicated that the divergence and change in the learning process have affected 91 % of the number of students in the world, as a conventional learning that combines many skills, starting from meeting and ending with the implementation of activities, and to replace it with other educational techniques via the Internet, the educational system should not be shifted home. Parents must provide the essential supplies that students require, as well as the suitable setting for teaching and learning, and learning at home must be congruent with each student's interests and circumstances. Students are not evaluated in the same way they are in the classroom because the conditions and spaces are so dissimilar, and international reports show that students in general are subjected to economic pressures and their effects on daily and

academic life, recommending the need for psychological, moral, and material support.

The study (Abunasser, Ismail, Al Lily, Alqahtani, 2020) shows that many Arab educational systems are still not prepared for this type of education because it highlights the implications of virtual learning and concludes that a lack of preparation in several Arab countries will certainly affect the course of the entire process of learning, one of the most important of the world's most impoverished. Another research (by Schneider, Council, 2020) focuses on the need to provide students, if not available or available in schools, with the required resources and materials available electronically as in class.

The study (Afshan, Ahmed, 2020), which confirmed the existence since 1892, but with a lack of implementation and practice, in significant part, in universities and schools, concluded that integrated education combining traditional and advanced methods will prevail after the Corona pandemic and following the adoption of distance learning is 100%. According to the research (Händel, Bedenlier, Gläser-Zikuda, Kammerl, Kopp, Ziegler, 2020), the distant education system is a problem for students despite its complete preparedness in light of the Corona epidemic that colleges have encountered. They are familiar with and follow the current programs and have observed disparities in viewpoints among students of various universities and by gender and degree.

And the study (Dileep, 2020) on the sudden transformation in the education system, affecting all educational bodies around the world, has accelerated the rapid transmission of student and faculty participation in distance learning, virtual classrooms, and their impact on institutions, education and students, as well as on the pandemic in the Corona virus pandemic. Even after the corona epidemic, colleges were shown to increase their efficient teaching and learning methods using the Internet.

In the same context comes the study of Churiyah, Sholikhan, Filianti, Sakdiyyah, 2020 in universities in Indonesia, which confirms the students' sense of tension due to the absence of direct circumvention. The results of the analysis concluded that Indonesia has prepared a good virtual infrastructure, but the skills of teachers still need to be refined strongly because students are able to communicate information through distance learning and are less self-educated, and teachers reject using different technology tools and have no understanding of the nature of home teaching and learning,, all of the above makes the distance learning process incomplete or comparable with the direct educational process.

The study (Torrau, 2020) came to shed light on education in the time of Corona in general and concluded that distance education uses the latest means and tools, and that this type of education in light of the Corona pandemic takes into account the different education requirements that concern the teacher and the learner, as there are both. Inside the virtual classroom, the flipped classes and blended learning are also activated, and the interaction inside the virtual classroom is more enriched than the real classroom. On contrast to the previous study, the research (Zubizarreta, 2020) specializing in students superiority with a view to the corona pandemic. The challenge is stronger than the teacher and

the student. The curriculum must therefore be reequipped and students' access to different courses, success and the need to work on adapting graduation plans and presentations for delivery and assessment through distance learning. The student levels need to be adapted in order to be able to succeed and thrive as distant learning differs from the components of university campus learning, and in the case that students feel there must be comprehensive restructuring of the form of learning. This reflects the previous study that the learner and the educational process consider it favorable.

The study (in Ali, Khalil, El-Sharkawy, 2020) highlights the impact of distance learning, particularly on nursing students in particular at Misr University for Science and Technology, and the study concludes that the distance learning system has a positive effect on nursing students except that students refuse to receive distance learning via the Internet, because the system can replace traditional face-to-face education theoretically

The study (of Ali, Khalil, El-Sharkawy, 2020) sheds light on the impact of distance learning on nursing students in particular at Misr University for Science and Technology, and the study concluded that there is a positive impact of the distance learning system for nursing students, except that students refused that distance education on the Internet, the system can replace traditional face-to-face learning. The sample shows that the hazards posed by this style of education for the future are far more than positive and that, although they provide many advantages, they encourage investigations of the threats of long-term learning.

In the Corona 2021 study, which combined the teacher's readiness for the distance learning process and the student's awareness of the dimensions of this process in light of the Corona pandemic, the results showed that teachers' readiness is high and related to their ability to use different applications to communicate with students via mail, distance learning, platforms for learning about the students' readiness was affected by their ability to integrate and communicate their ideas in the virtual classroom, and the study recommends increasing training courses to raise the teacher's confidence, make the student feel comfortable and his ability to communicate his various information. The study (Yulia, 2020) is in accordance with previous research, which highlights that the education technique for university professors must be changed and more effective distant learning techniques must be substituted with face-to-face conferences in the light of the corona epidemic.

Maybe the study has been more positive and optimistic than other studies, as it looks at distance learning in the context of the Corona epidemic as a catalyst for further development in the blended learning sector and the Internet as well as the digitization of higher education. Along with many plans to change the education system in many universities which remain in place for years and were implemented in a few weeks in the light of the pandemic, it confirms what previous studies confirmed as "courses of distance learning, remote supervision, development of teleconferencing systems and regular meetings for university professors". Moreover, the study demonstrates distinct tendencies due to the huge variances in curriculum and the design of mixed learning.

Several study sessions dealt with the language of communication preferred by students in virtual communications with their instructors in light of the Corona epidemic, as well as a study (utri, 2020) which concluded that students prefer the traditional way of communication and use the daily language of dialogue away from the official language and language. The formal-language discourse, and the study (May 2020) comes in complete contrast to the previous study, where it sheds light on the challenges of higher education in general in light of the Corona pandemic, which concluded that there are real threats to the traditional educational process, and that part-time professors inevitably will be vulnerable to leave their jobs, and students who live in remote areas will be more vulnerable to anxiety and tension than other students due to the difference in social backgrounds and temporal times, and the question of where the educational process will go, the current study sees that it cannot be answered even after the end of the pandemic in sufficient time.

Likewise, the study (Kufi, Negassa, Melaku, Mergo, 2020) comes to discuss the effects of COVID-19 on higher education and its links to social and academic mechanisms, psychological and economic well-being and coping mechanisms, as it confirms the necessity of individual education skills for students as it is the basis of the distance learning process. With the necessity of helping students to adapt by those around and families to ensure consistent learning, and to ensure that monitoring is ineffective in some aspects of distance education, which forces teachers to have special experience, with the obligation to take into account groups of students with low income or disabilities, and finally the necessity to demonstrate As flexible as possible through diversifying the use of resources and teachers' willingness to deal with programs, with an appropriate inclination towards innovating how lessons are continued and appropriate follow-up through cooperation with parents and other relevant educational stakeholders.

The study (Xuedong, Qureshi, Ali, Bhatti, 2020) deals with the best education techniques practiced during the distance learning process in light of the Corona pandemic, which is in the interest of both the teacher and the learner, and concluded with any effort taken by educational institutions that are not prepared to learn about Yet it is an improvised and improper effort that harms the student and does not benefit him because the infrastructure is not prepared, and the study has shown great differences in the use of different applications that are comfortable for the teacher and the student, as "e-mail, distance learning, WhatsApp, and LandLine" for communication between the teacher and the student during the Corona pandemic, and DSL communication, and a café The Internet, Friend's House and Neighbor's House for Internet services, cable, and teleconferencing, followed by "Microsoft, Zoom, and TalnetLMS Schoology" for distance learning programs, and these results differ according to our viewpoint according to the country, its strategies, and the different programs adopted by it.

The study (Munguía, Luna-Reyes, 2011) focuses on graduate students in particular in Mexico, as it confirms that the performance and attitude towards technology are factors that help us understand the continuous use of

postgraduate students of the distance education platform, and the results were positively positive in the current study. As the high performance and position positively affect the use of technology among graduate students, the study confirms that some other factors must be taken into consideration such as "previous experiences, age, and favorable circumstances" in order to better understand students' behavior.

International reports indicate that inequality in students' ability to access remote learning in light of the Covid-19 pandemic threatens to deepen the global education crisis, and class disparities around the world, as access to technologies and materials required to continue learning during the closure of educational institutions is largely unequal. . Also, students for whom the home environment provides only limited learning support, then hardly any means available to support their education. It is very important to provide a range of educational means and accelerate access to the Internet for every educational body, and there was a learning crisis before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and we are now at the gates of an educational crisis that deepens and increases inequality (UNICEF, 2020), but this may not be We find it in the United Arab Emirates and the University of Sharjah in particular, where it worked to implement the state's policies and strategies in ensuring access to education for all groups while providing personal computers for students and professors who were unable to provide it on their own, as it is a social welfare state whose citizens enjoy all personal and personal needs.

Hence, the outcomes of previous studies are as follows:

First: the value of a direct meeting between instructor and student, where the student's personality is enriched, not defaulted by the classroom, direct learning and actual interaction, and comments on the instructor's performance.

Second, despite their awareness of the relevance and ease of E-Learning as a result of several of studies, the presence of a sort of tension, anxiety, and instability among students and, yet, social and psychological variables appeared within students.

Third: Many worldwide reports and international research have demonstrated the gap and the mismatch between the distance-learning process and the disparities in class between students and the different levels of nations across the globe.

Fourth: the need to increase the faculty's training and skills, which helps to make the process flexible, to take attention to the difference between each student, and to take the lack of direct interactions with the university professor, who carried out several studies, into account the issue of changing the style of appreciation for university students.

Fifth: the motivation of students in relation to the whole process of learning is decreased because of the above described reasons which other studies of tensions and anxieties caused by the pandemic have created in university students.

Thus, the current study differs from the previous studies as it is comprehensive and focuses on the attitudes of students of the University of Sharjah towards distance learning in light of the Corona pandemic through their relationship with the professor and their direct interaction with him in addition to their academic level and the extent of its negative or positive impact, and this is not covered by other studies, in addition to addressing the quality of the process. The educational process as a whole and comparing it to the traditional process from the student's point of view, and this was not the focus of previous studies that were satisfied with the quality of technology or training and not the process as a whole from the viewpoint of the university student.

## **STUDY METHODOLOGY**

### ***Study Population and Sample***

The study population includes students from the University who continuously study and are completely free of exceptions to the distant learning system. The students were divided into four colleges: "Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Sharia and Law, Design and Fine Arts, and the various scientific colleges." These colleges were emphasized because of the density of the students and their availability for the students and distant learning practitioners during their studies without exception.

The social survey was used in the sample of university students in the aforementioned faculties by (400) male and female students from each department in the four different colleges, and students from the University of Sharjah were selected to facilitate the sample for researchers, and those who have been continuously and regularly enrolled in distance learning since the middle of the spring semester of 2019-2020. The procedure of collecting data from the sample took around two months in order to have been a point, opinion, and direction towards distance learning and its nature, unlike students who use distance learning partially.

### ***Study Tool***

The questionnaire method was employed in two-part study: first, the basic data represent the sample characteristics (gender, age group, school year, university major, father's educational level, mother's educational level, region, father's practical status, mother's practical condition, the family income in dirhams, the number of siblings in the house, the type of housing, the nature of housing). The second part includes three basic axes as a measure of the attitudes and opinions of students at the University of Sharjah towards distance learning in light of the Corona pandemic, their academic achievement has been affected, and also the relationship between the lecturer and the student has been affected. "

### ***Tool Stability***

To ensure the tool's stability, it was given to a number of incoming and outgoing reviewers and arbitrators, and it was given to (20) students before being used, and the reliability coefficient was calculated using the Cronbach Alpha method,

resulting in a value of (0.75) for the tool's overall stability coefficient, which is appropriate for the purposes of the scientific application.

### *Statistical Treatment*

The statistical program for social sciences (SPSS) was used to examine the characteristics of the sample (primary data), the averages and standard deviations of the attitudes and opinions of the students on the preceding three fundamental axes, and many models were utilized for the objectives of research. The demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Table No. (1), and it is obvious that the majority of the sample is female (59%) and that half of the sample is in the age range 20-24 (50%), which represents half of the sample, followed by age groups 25 and above (28%) and less than 20 (23%). Half of the sample was 30 % in the first year, 20 % in the second year, and the remaining percentage was evenly dispersed in close proportion between the third and fourth years, as well as postgraduate studies.

**Table 1:** Analysis of demographic data for the study sample

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Male	205	41 %
	Female	295	59 %
	Total	500	100 %
<b>Age</b>	Less than 20	111	22.2 %
	20 – 24	250	50 %
	25 and above	139	27.8 %
	Total	500	100 %
<b>University stage</b>	Level 1	150	30 %
	Level 2	102	20.4%
	Level 3	79	15.8%
	Level4	89	17.8%
	Postgraduate	80	16
	Total	500	100%
<b>Specialization</b>	Scientific	98	19.6%
	human and social	190	38%
	Sharia and law	105	21%
	design and arts	107	21.4%
	Total	500	100%
<b>The father's qualification</b>	Reads and writes	76	13.4 %
	Primary	60	12 %
	Secondary	210	42 %
	postgraduate	154	30.8 %
	Total	500	100 %
<b>The mother's qualification</b>	Reads and writes	89	17.8 %
	Primary	120	24 %
	Secondary	200	40 %
	postgraduate	91	18.2 %
	Total	500	100 %
<b>Region of residence</b>	Abu Dhabi	180	36 %

	Dubai	120	24 %
	Sharjah	200	40 %
	Total	500	100 %
<b>Father's job</b>	Work	330	66 %
	does not work	170	34 %
	Total	500	100 %
<b>Mother's job</b>	Work	210	42 %
	does not work	290	58 %
	Total	500	100%
<b>Number of family members</b>	1 – 4	140	28 %
	5 – 7	210	42 %
	8 – 10	85	17 %
	More than 10	65	13 %
	Total	500	100%
<b>Accommodation type</b>	villa	199	39.8 %
	popular house	200	40 %
	Flat	101	20.2 %
	Total	500	100%
<b>The nature of the residence</b>	With family	320	64 %
	Independent	180	36 %
	Total	500	100%

The percentage of students in human and social disciplines was 38%, followed by equal proportions, specializing in Sharia, law, design and fine arts with a rate of 21%, and finally scientific disciplines by 19.6%. And with regard to the educational level of the father and mother, we find that nearly half of the sample, whose fathers have secondary education 42%, the same applies to their mothers by 40%, while the other half has a university education and 30% higher for fathers and 18% for mothers, followed by those who read and write for fathers 13%, 17% for mothers. And finally with primary education by 24% for mothers and 12% for fathers. We observe that the parent's education level, secondary education is the most common among parents, followed by university and higher for fathers and after elementary education for mothers, which may be attributed to the nature of UAE culture and the traditional perspective and idea of educating women, as we are talking about mothers.

In terms of residential regions, which reflect the utility of distance learning by shortening distance and time, we find that 40% of the sample was distributed between Sharjah and Abu Dhabi, which is a significant percentage that saved effort and time in coming and going, and 24% was distributed between Dubai and Abu Dhabi. And with regard to the work of parents and the extent of their presence with their work inside the home during the period of work and distance learning, we find that 66% of fathers are working and 42% of mothers do them, while 34% are not working, compared to a higher rate for mothers 58% are not working, and of course this indicates a large percentage who have been forced to work from their homes during the learning period Distance and presence of children and parents.



Regarding the nature of the environment in the family as well as the comfort and calmness that the university student enjoys, there are between 5-7 brothers, with almost half the sample at 42%, followed by 28% for 1-4 brothers in the family, most of whom live in popular houses. The number of brothers, housing nature, and participation in the extended family, which clearly shows a certain degree of instability, are 40% lower than comfort, 39% lower in villas, 20% lower in apartment and over half of sampled 64 % of those who live with their extended family while 36 % live in a single residential area far away from the extended family.

**Table 2:** Quality of the learning process from the perspective of the students of Sharjah University

#	Study questions	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Order
1	This kind of learning makes me feel lonely and isolated.	1.98	.772	1
2	This type of education does not contribute to enhancing student understanding.	1.97	.793	2
3	Distance learning increases my self-confidence.	1.87	.816	3
4	Distance learning develops my own abilities.	1.83	.830	4
5	It makes me feel comfortable and freedom in the educational process.	1.77	.741	5
6	I can organize my time.	1.70	.728	6
7	This kind of learning is consistent with contemporary standards.	1.67	.744	7
8	Easy access and monitoring of courses.	1.62	.722	8
9	I find that the Blackboard site is easy and clear to deal with.	1.51	.627	11
10	Distance learning increases my computer skills.	1.53	.647	10
11	Distance learning put us in a big challenge.	1.54	.630	9

Table No. (2) explains the hierarchy of paragraphs of the quality of distance learning in light of the Corona pandemic from the viewpoint of the students of the University of Sharjah, and it appears that the arithmetic averages of the paragraphs in general were low, while it was found that the feeling of loneliness and isolation came in the first place where sitting at home behind the screen and receiving information and that comes back. Perhaps the interaction of the educational process closely, unlike the remote educational process in light of the Corona pandemic, and this is completely different with the study (Torrau, 2020), which confirms that this type of education in light of the Corona pandemic takes into account the different educational requirements of the teacher and the learner, where there is both are inside the virtual classroom, as the flipped classes and blended learning are activated, and the interaction within the virtual classroom is more enriched than the real classroom. And this result meets with a study (Händel, Bedenlier, Gläser-Zikuda, Kammerl, Kopp, Ziegler, 2020) that the distance educational system in light of the Corona pandemic adopted by universities is a challenge for students despite their complete readiness, being informed and following the latest programs and a study (Zubizarreta, 2020) that concluded that the challenge What happened is

stronger than the teacher and the learner, and therefore the curriculum must be re-equipped.

The ease of using technology for learning, freedom, comfort, and the development of individual capabilities was in the middle, as it was neutral and gradient among students, reflecting their positive attitudes toward distance learning, but not to the exclusion of their sense of loneliness or the challenge posed by this type of education. Distance learning will quickly adapt and alter as the duration of this sort of education and its practice passes.

**Table 3:** The impact of the educational level of the students from the point of view of the students of the University of Sharjah

#	Study questions	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Order
1	Waste time on technical matters to enter the lecture instead of following the material with the professor.	2.06	.855	1
2	This kind of education has led to a decline in my educational level.	1.99	.803	2
3	Distance learning helps to increase scientific material absorption.	1.92	.820	3
4	Distance learning fosters a creative and innovative mentality.	1.86	.817	4
5	The individual distinctions between students are not taken into consideration.	1.85	.849	5
6	It increases my academic and cognitive achievement.	1.85	.838	6
7	The immediate experience we get from meeting our instructors is reduced in this sort of learning.	1.72	.811	7
8	It motivates my individual education.	1.66	.751	9
9	It provides us with organized and easy information.	1.71	.802	8

In terms of the student's academic level and how the distance learning process affects him, University of Sharjah students believe that wasting time in technology and attempting to enter the lecture came first in terms of modern technology and unusual procedures when compared to traditional education. This is consistent with the study of (Zubizarreta, 2020) which show that the challenge is greater than the teacher and the learner, and that curricula must be re-equipped, and students' access to various courses and success must be addressed. According to the study, the educational process has to be completely restructured. In order for the student to achieve success, online learning differs from the components of learning at the university's headquarters, as opposed to the previous study, which deems distance learning positive in the overall for the student and the educational process, while the lack of consideration of individual differences in the middle came, and this may be due to the student's failure to see and understand the differences.

This result agreed with the study of (Pragholapati, 2020) that claims students should not be evaluated in the same way they are in the classroom. The conditions and environments are vastly diverse, and a research (2012, Corona) recommends boosting training courses to improve the teacher's confidence, as well as the student's comfort and capacity to explain his diverse knowledge.

In the last ranks, the gradual progress came first, not to gain experience as well as face-to-face education, and this may be due to the absence of direct interaction and direct communication skills, and secondly the high individual motivation of students, which reflects the low effectiveness of distance education in promoting self-learning among students at the University of Sharjah, and finally, providing easy and simple information. This indicates the lack of clarity of information among students in general in light of distance learning, and this does not coincide with the theory of social life, which emphasizes the preference of remote interaction in terms of symbols and indulgence in communication as opposed to direct communication. The previous result confirms the study of Yulia, 2020, which is considered of great importance. Changing the teaching method for university teachers and replacing face-to-face meeting with more effective methods in distance learning in light of the Corona pandemic and the study of Filianti, Sakdiyyah, Sholikhah, Churiyah, 2020, which confirms that the distance learning process lacks perfection or comparison with the direct educational process.

**Table 4:** The interactive relationship between instructor and student and its influence from the viewpoint of the students of the University of Sharjah

#	Study questions	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Order
1	The new learning system contributed to strengthening the relationship between me and the instructor.	1.99	.807	1
2	The lack of open dialogue and direct communication between us and the instructor.	1.98	.853	2
3	It increases my academic and cognitive achievement.	1.88	.825	3
4	It reduces our motivation as a result of not seeing the professor.	1.86	.766	4
5	Because of virtual learning, I miss receiving direct information.	1.84	.778	5
6	The lack of direct communication led to a gap between me and my teacher.	1.83	.798	6
7	We are afraid and anxious because of the absence of direct office hours.	1.76	.749	7
8	The distance learning courses fulfill my expectations from the teaching and learning process.	1.73	.782	9
9	Anxiety that the professor will not be able to give me an accurate assessment.	1.68	.685	8

In terms of the interactive relationship between the teacher and the student, and the extent to which it has impacted distance learning in the fallout of the Corona

pandemic, it was discovered that this type of education has actually strengthened the relationship between the teacher and the student due to the large number of means of communication made available to the student instead of office hours. Perhaps this result contradicts the study (Pragholapati, 2020) and the study (Churiyah, Sholikhah, Filianti, Sakdiyyah, 2020) in Indonesian universities, which confirms the students' feeling of tension due to the lack of direct interaction, confirms that there is high psychological pressure on the students and constant tension, and confirms that there is no direct interaction. This is confirmation of the results of previous studies that this style of distance learning cannot replace direct and class learning, and is ultimately due to fear of unfair evaluation, due to a lack of direct interactions, that reflect the trust of the students at Sharjah University their faculty member beliefs and knows the level, even if they do not see it or understand it face to face. This is definitely what Goffman meant when he described the students' progress through the phases of "communications, confrontations, performances, and ceremonies" as determinants of short-term interaction with far-reaching consequences for the system as a whole.

**Table 5:** The correlation between the impact of the distance learning process and the students' demographic characteristics

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>S.E</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>
Gender	.600	1.063	.052	.594	.002
Age	.447	480.	103.	.2591	.090
University stage	.031	.134	.021	.230	.031
Specialization	.021	0.182	.012	.115	.000
Father's educational level	-.252	.154	-.067	-1.634	.103
Mother's educational level	.771.	.73.2	.05.9	.282.	.57.0
Region	.500	.688	.056	.726	.002
Father's working Status	.500	.688	.056	.726	.469
Mother's working Status	.294	.370	.070	.794	.428
Family members number	.499	1.789	.026	.279	.001
Accommodation type	.400	.0153	.025	.0564	.000
The nature of the housing	1.223	.733	.129	1.669	.097

The above table indicates the correlational relationships between the impact of distance learning in light of the Corona pandemic on the educational level and the quality of education and the relationship between the professor and student at the University of Sharjah and the difference in their demographic characteristics, as it is evident that there is an influence of sex and its difference (male / female) on the influence on the educational level and the presence of education and the relationship between the professor and the students. It is expected that females will be more affected by being more anxious and emotional, and the data indicate that there is a difference in the effect according to the university level and since most of the sample are from the first years of study, which are the years in which there is a lot of insufficient knowledge and excessive anxiety. Also, we find that specialization plays a role the difference in specialization and courses reflects different influences among students at the University of Sharjah in addition to the region, its distance and its proximity to the university, as it is assumed that students who live in Abu Dhabi and Dubai

are more affected by the fact that they cannot come to the university, especially at the beginning of the pandemic. As it shows that there is a correlation between the number of brothers and the type of housing He showed the influence of students, as the more siblings and the individual housing became the less affected and the greater the satisfaction in the distance learning process from home this is in agreement with the Praghlapati study, 2020, where it is not necessary to move the educational system home for several considerations, but it is necessary to choose the basic materials that students need and then provide the appropriate environment for teaching and learning by parents.

## CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

By analyzing data on the impact of distance learning in light of the Corona pandemic on students of the University of Sharjah in terms of the educational level, the existence of education and the impact of the relationship between the professor and students, the results with regard to the quality of education indicated that students in general feel lonely and isolated in the first place, due to receiving information and learning in the manner. Distance learning away from the interactive method at the university and this is what differed with the study (Torrau, 2020), and this result converges with the study (Händel, Bedenlier, Gläser-Zikuda, Kammerl, Kopp, Ziegler, 2020), which confirmed that the distance education system is a challenge for students. The ease of using technology for learning, freedom, comfort, and the development of individual capabilities was in the middle, as it was neutral and gradient among students, which reflects their positive attitudes towards distance learning, but it does not exceed their sense of loneliness or the challenge imposed by this type of education. Their impact will change and change over a period of the distance learning process.

As for the student's academic level and the extent to which it is affected by the distance learning process at the University of Sharjah, the students' view came to indicate that wasting time in technology and trying to enter the lecture came first and this is consistent with the study (Zubizarreta, 2020), where the study believes that a complete restructuring of the educational method must be repeated in order for students to excel and succeed, this is because distance learning differs from components of learning at the university's headquarters, unlike the previous study, which it deems positive for students and the educational process, and the lack of consideration of individual differences.

The classic inside the classroom and the study (Praghlapati, 2020) finally meets the progressive lack of experience as well as face-to-face education and high student motivation that reflects the poor efficiency of remote training in support of the self-learning among students at Sharjah University. Provide simple and easy information that reflects the lack of clear information for students with respect to distance learning and does not reflect social theory, which stresses that the symbolism and persistence of communication with the direct communication are a preference for distant interactions.

The relationship between the distance learning effect on education at the Corona pandemic and the quality of education, and the relationship between professor and student at Sharjah University and their demographic characteristics showed

that sex and its difference (male or female) have been influenced at educational qualification. Females are expected to be more affected, and data indicates a difference in the effect depending on the university level and that the majority of the sample is from the early years of study, and the specialization plays a part in this so that the difference of specialization and course effects in addition to the region reflects various effects of students at the University of Sharjah. This is congruent with the Praghlapati research, 2020, which found a link between the number of siblings and the type of housing and the effect of students, with the more siblings and individual housing, the less impacted and the higher the comfort in the process of distance learning from home.

The process of distance education and learning remains a significant challenge for students at the University of Sharjah, owing to its social and educational dimensions that differ from the traditional educational process, which is primarily dependent on the teacher, as opposed to the distance learning process, in which the student takes a significant amount, and learning must be available. Furthermore, these skills correlate to their technical competence, which a huge number of students did not attempt to develop or mold in the purpose of learning, which posed a challenge to them.

We can say that the student has become accustomed to a certain educational style in traditional classes, which causes him to recognize that the time spent entering lectures and being in the virtual hall is an impediment to the distance learning process, and that this time may also be wasted on campus between lectures or on the way to the lecture. Because there is no progressive implementation of this form of instruction and the students are not acclimated to it, the minutes before attending the lecture become a burden for them.

It is worth emphasizing that, unlike the traditional learning process, which is restricted to the recipient, the teacher, and the classroom, the distant learning process has been related to numerous social variables such as "home capacity, family size, and gender" due to its overlaps. Due to the level of social welfare and the high level of income in Emirati society in general, the aforementioned social factors must not be an impediment for the Emirati student.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Developing electronic monitoring methods to check and manage students' attendance in lectures, such as a system that reports the number of students who are absent or leave during a lecture.
- Including remote learning security mechanisms to ensure that distant learning is not hacked or interfered with.
- Attempting to diversity lecture methods and delivery techniques so that students may become familiar to the distance learning system and use it without difficulty.
- The availability of practical training for instructors to improve their proficiency and flexibility in using distance learning techniques.
- Encouraging students to deal with technology through educational and attractive programs such as "kahoot".
- Motivating instructors to enhance their relationships with students in order to overcome the worries and anxieties caused by the lack of office hours.

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