

The impact of covid-19 on Finance and Banking students using online or virtual teaching and learning at Al-Quds University

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to explore the students' Online Learning Experience as Perceived by Finance & Banking Learners at Al-Quds University. It will also identify the impact of implementing a virtual learning environment. Therefore, this study aims to discover the challenges that students face during online teaching, what are the advantages and disadvantages of online learning, how students can be assessed and evaluated during online teaching. This study is important because it will show the difficulties and benefits of using the ZOOM platform with students in online teaching. This research has been conducted to find out how Finance and Banking students at the Al-Quds University perceived online learning experience throughout COVID 19 Pandemic. This research aimed to reveal the learners' perception of the use of many online applications mainly zoom and Moodle in teaching and learning. The data regarding Finance & Banking learners' perceptions were obtained via an online-based questionnaire with three domains-advantages and disadvantages of the online experience in addition to students' suggestions for improving this experience in the future.

KEYWORDS: covid-19, Finance and Banking students, online teaching. Virtualteaching, online learning

I. INTRODUCTION:

Since the appearance of Covid-19 pandemic, most countries switched to online or virtual teaching and learning. Some countries were able to start online teaching immediately due to the advanced technology and well-equipped schools and universities and excellent internet infrastructure. Alas, other countries delayed online teaching due to a lack of technology and software as well as poor internet services. However, switching online teaching and learning urged educators and learners to take advantage of various online applications for the learning process so that the learning objectives can be achieved accurately. Some economic and powerful countries have offered online applications which can be accessed free of charge to support the good learning process, but other countries with weak economics found it difficult to adapt to the change, they had to buy software to deliver the education properly. Some of the famous applications such as zoom, Moodle, Google Meet were designed for online learning specifically, while social media that are often used for learning purposes include telegram, What Sapp, Instagram, Facebook, and so on. Some research has been conducted using online applications on a wide range of English language skills. The Internet is considered a powerful, accurate and precise resource bank and tool that can be used in foreign language education like reading online text (Park & Kim, 2017) & (Arikan, 2014), The accessibility of online resources in English means that today's informal context offers many opportunities for language development. In terms of perceived communicative competence and online informal English learning, the results indicate the co-evolution of two complex dynamic systems: the use of digital contexts in English and the participant's level of communicative competence level systems in English (Jurkovič, 2019).

Literature Review: Virtual learning system has been used by lecturers and learners during the Covid19 pandemic. Alvarez (2001) stated that online learning gives students a chance to break the limitations generally found in a traditional classroom setting, however, the performances of learners are evaluated through different

Types of assessment such as quizzes, and online test, most of the time students do not like to express their thoughts and difficulties they have in class directly to the lecturer. It has been thought that online learning gives broad freedom of learning style. Learners will have the self-confidence to deliver the obstacles they face in virtual class to lecturers online, a situation where they physically never do when they meet their lecturer via face-to-face in a real class setting. Online learning should be in reach to all students to fulfill different learning approaches and to accommodate students' needs with different backgrounds. According to Armstrong (2011, pp.223) to build an environment of effective online learning is challenging. Online education has a chance to be improved and increased as an educational tool. Moreover, an online learning system offers a great number of potentials and chances to succeed the language learning. Two of the many online learning platforms are Zoom and WhatsApp. Zoom could be better than video calls as WhatsApp offers. Scholars defined Zoom as a media of face-to-face or two ways broadcasting platform that can be used to interact directly like in real meeting face to face setting. It provides everyone the facility to participate in a meeting by clicking a link or room number. This platform has some advantages such as saving time, low cost, and positive impact environment. Students and lecturers will be easily writing and discussing during the class as they feel in a traditional classroom setting. Zoom allows the users, in this context lecturers and learners, to be acting freely as they do in a real conventional classroom. It opens opportunities for learners to give feedback directly to the lecturers face to face. The lecturer can organize the online class via zoom as he/she wants to synchronize with the course materials he delivers. Abdillah, & Darma (2020) in Wan Hassan *et.al* (2020, pp.5854) According to Yee (2011, pp. 17) said that the quality of learning is determined by how a student gets involved to interact in the learning class environment.

Virtual learning using Zoom should be evaluated to find out the effectiveness of its implementation. The best way to do it is by involving students by allowing them to give their perception of online learning tools as they have used in their virtual class setting. Agung, *et.al* (2020, pp.227) emphasized that students' perception of online learning will be developed opinion because they have concrete experience about it. This is in line with Bagata, *et.al* (2020, pp.3) stated that perception is primer psychological human in responding to the existence of many things around them. In today's situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, traditional forms of learning are not in the mind of many people anymore, therefore IT companies are racing to develop new technologies to use. As we can see today more and more people are choosing to improve their skills using online learning. Most people say it is beneficial whereas others argue that online education has disadvantages as well. People are in search of many new ways of learning. Unfortunately, this manner has advantages and disadvantages. The researcher will talk about those advantages and disadvantages in the coming sections of this research

Theoretical background: In this section, the researcher will talk and elaborate on the advantages and disadvantages of online learning. Anyone can use a computer access and Internet connection anywhere in the world, this is good for students who live in a remote location or rural areas. Hence, it is also useful for parents who want to would like to teach young children at home or any student who prefers to work in the comfort of their own home or coffee. Moreover, virtual learning is much cheaper than traditional classrooms. Students can save money, so they can save transportation costs, living expenses such as rent and grocers, so they can save money to pay for their courses. Especially, in the case of Palestine, as we have so many obstacles such as checkpoints to reach our schools and universities because of the Israeli occupation. Online learning may increase the flexibility of studying and working. the number of courses teaching online is not enough and some courses are required students to do activities, practice, and skill-building in the classroom. Save the time of commuting and traveling to seek knowledge and skills. No need to suffer from traffic jams and set up time.

However, on the other hand, virtual learning has its disadvantages; limited social interaction is one of the disadvantages. Furthermore, the only method of communication of online learning is through e-mail, chat rooms, or discussion groups. Students cannot interact with one another face to face and do not see and feel the real relationship with classmates. Slower bandwidth performance for sound, video, is a major problem we face while using online learning. Online learning makes it difficult to assess and evaluate students' performance. Some courses taught online are not enough because they require students to do activities and practice some skills in classrooms.

Research questions: The purpose of this study was to examine the learning experiences perceived by Finance & Banking students at PAU in Palestine. It aims to answer the following research questions:

- What challenges do Finance & Banking students face during online teaching?
- What are the advantages of online teaching as perceived by Finance & Banking students?
- What suggestions would Finance & Banking students provide to promote online teaching quality?

Statement of the problem :Due to the breakout of the pandemic (COVI-19), all educational institutions shifted to virtual teaching and learning. This causes many problems for both teachers and students. The researchers decided to find out the advantages, disadvantages, challenges, and proposed ideas that may help in promoting the process of teaching and learning in this new mode of learning.

Significance/Importance of the Study :The finding of this study will benefit Finance & Banking how to deal with online learning, which plays an important role in learning today due to COVID-19. The greater the demand on using online learning is increasing more and more today, it should be more effective to deliver the material especially for Finance & Banking students. I believe the results of this study may help students and teachers to better understand online learning which will be used in the coming future to improve the performance of students. The study may also help to uncover critical areas in the educational process that many researchers are trying to explore.

Limitations of the Study :The focus of the study is on the reality of online learning as perceived by Finance & Banking learners at Al-Quds university in the academic year 2020/2021. A questionnaire was used as the only tool to collect data.

II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

Research Method: The researcher employed a quantitative survey. 30 students were required to complete a questionnaire. A questionnaire survey was given and collected to know the result of students' perceptions. The questionnaire was used to describe students' perception towards online learning based on three domains of perception: Challenges, advantages, and suggestions for improving online learning. The data were collected from the students by using a reliable questionnaire (Cronbach's Alpha (0.87)). The questionnaire was developed to describe students' perceptions of online learning for English classes. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert format: (5) Strongly Agree, (4) Agree, (3) Neutral, (2) Disagree, and (1) Strongly Disagree which was distributed to Finance & Banking learners at Al-Quds university. This instrument was developed by the researchers based on the review of the literature, personal and peer experience. All responses were collected online through the Google Forms website. Furthermore, the data obtained from the questionnaire is presented in the form of tables and figures to determine the students' perceptions. Moreover, the researcher believes that descriptive design is appropriate in addressing the questions of the study because not only it provides the ability to undertake applied research seeking primary data, but it also illuminates the reality of the certain phenomenon and not the cause and effect of a phenomenon.

Data Collection: To collect the data of the study, the researcher used a questionnaire because the type of descriptive research that has been used was a survey.

Data Analysis Techniques : The researcher used means and standard deviation for descriptive quantitative variables, t-test, ANOVA for comparing groups, Cronbach alpha used to test reliability. This has been achieved by using the scaling system of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. Further, its respective value was computed through the numerical distribution: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 whereas five (5) is for the strongly agree and is the highest while (1) is for strongly disagree and is the lowest. Descriptive paragraphs were used to analyze the results of the open-ended questions at the end of the questionnaire.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 below shows the demographic data of the participants of the study.

Table 1:
The distribution of the sample by demographic data

Variable	Group	frequency	percent
Academic year	2 nd year	5	21.7
	3 rd year	9	39.1
	4 th year	9	39.1
	Total	23	100.0
Number of Online Courses taken at Al-Quds University	1-3	1	4.3
	4-6	2	8.7
	7-10	1	4.3
	11+	19	82.6
	Total	23	100

As seen in table (1) above, the total number of all participants was 23 and that 19 Finance & Banking learners have taken more than 11 online courses. Items in table (2) targets the challenges of the virtual experience as perceived by learners at Al-Quds university.

Table 2:
Means, standard deviations, and the percentages of the items of the 'Challenges' domain

Item	M	SD	%
1. There are sometimes bad internet connections.	4.04	.93	81%
2. Working long hours on the computer can be harmful to our health.	4.00	1.02	80%
3. Technical difficulties may give a barrier to our learning	3.91	.87	78%
4. Online learning has no direct communication with teachers.	3.78	.67	76%
5. I access the application on the internet easily.	3.77	1.11	75%
6. I cannot communicate online with my instructors comfortably.	3.68	1.04	74%
7. Break-out rooms cannot replace face-to-face communication.	3.59	1.30	72%
8. Lack of electronic background and experience is a real challenge.	3.50	1.01	70%
9. I cannot manage my study time effectively and easily.	3.18	1.26	64%
10. I cannot communicate with my classmates.	3.09	1.11	62%
11. I face difficulty in written communication with students and teachers.	2.64	1.09	53%
12. I face difficulties in uploading assignments on e-classes.	2.45	1.10	49%
Total	3.49	.52	70%

Table number 2 shows that the total mean for challenges as perceived by learners at Al-Quds university is 3.49 and a standard deviation of 0.52 which is considered a medium degree. However, the table also shows that the highest means were for the items 'There are sometimes bad internet connections' with a mean of 4.04, then 'Working long hours on the computer can be harmful to our health' with a mean of 4.00. The lowest mean goes to the item 'I face difficulties in uploading assignments on e-classes' with a mean of 2.45. As we can see, according to the literature review some scholars expressed that the use of the online platform was beneficial, enriching and practical for students and some found some obstacles to using online learning to students. On the other hand, according to our results, it was found that online learning experience was seen as disappointing because of the bad internet connection and long working hours on the computer which makes the students tired using an online platform.

Table 3:
Means, Standard Deviations and Percentages of the Items of the Advantages Domain

Item	M	SD	%
13. E-learning enhances my computer and Internet skills	4.00	1.15	80%
14. Web applications enhance working in groups.	3.95	0.90	79%
15. Learning online enhances my independence.	3.86	1.25	77%
16. E-learning provides complete content with good exercise.	3.77	1.02	75%
17. I can ask my questions and receive quick responses via the internet swiftly.	3.73	1.03	75%
18. E-learning applications improve my critical thinking skills.	3.64	1.14	73%
19. E-learning makes my learning more fun	3.59	1.10	72%
20. E-learning gives no time barrier.	3.59	1.05	72%
Total	3.59	1.10	72%
21. E-learning enables me to discuss activities with others easily.	3.55	1.18	71%
22. E-learning helps me to make my lesson more organized.	3.50	1.26	70%
23. Online activities motivate me to work outside classes.	3.45	1.22	69%
24. E-learning makes it more comfortable to compose texts.	3.36	1.33	67%
25. E-learning enhances my long-life learning skills.	3.36	1.05	67%
26. E-learning makes my learning more flexible.	3.32	1.09	66%
27. E-learning classes are more effective than chalk and talk ones.	3.32	1.29	66%

Table 2 shows there is total mean for advantages of online learning is 3.59, which is a positive thing perceived by the students, however, the table shows also that the item 'E-learning enhances my computer and internet skills with a mean of 4.00 scored the highest degree. This was discussed in the literature that online learning enhances and equips students with skills. Moreover, the table shows a mean of 3.95 for the item 'Web applications enhance working in groups' with a high degree making communication among group members much easier than before. Students can communicate at any time and from anywhere and time they choose. The lowest item is that 'E-learning classes are more effective than chalk and talk ones with a mean of 3.32. This result shows that students prefer to be taught in traditional classrooms with tutor interaction in the class.

Hypothesis Number One:

There is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in a virtual experience as perceived by Finance & Banking learners at Al-Quds university concerning academic year.

To examine the hypothesis, One-way ANOVA was used to compare means of virtual experience as perceived by Finance & Banking learners at Al-Quds university concerning the academic year variable.

**Table 4:
Means and Standard Deviation of the Academic Year Variable**

	Academic year	No	mean	Std
Challenges	2 nd year	5	3.55	0.36
	3 rd year	9	3.51	0.70
	4 th year	9	3.44	0.43
Advantages	2 nd year	5	3.75	0.23
	3 rd year	8	3.35	0.92
	4 th year	9	3.74	0.76
Total	2 nd year	5	3.66	0.14
	3 rd year	8	3.39	0.35
	4 th year	9	3.61	0.43

The results of one-way ANOVA used to compare means of virtual experience as perceived by Finance & Banking learners at Al-Quds university concerning Academic year shows some differences between the means of students' academic years. To make sure whether these differences are statistically significant or not, ANOVA Test was used as seen below.

**Table 5:
Results of the ANOVA Test**

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Challenges	Between Groups	0.04	2	0.02	0.067	0.935
	Within Groups	5.903	20	0.295		
	Total	5.943	22			
Advantages	Between Groups	0.786	2	0.393	0.689	0.514
	Within Groups	10.832	19	0.57		
	Total	11.618	21			
Total	Between Groups	0.286	2	0.143	1.111	0.35
	Within Groups	2.443	19	0.129		
	Total	2.729	21			

As noticed in table (5), there is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in a virtual experience as perceived by learners at Al-Quds university due to the academic year.

Hypothesis Number Two

There is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in a virtual experience as perceived by Finance & Banking learners at Al-Quds university due to the number of online courses taken by learners at the university.

To examine the hypothesis one-way ANOVA was used to compare means of virtual experience as perceived by learners at Al-Quds university concerning the Number of Online Courses I have taken at university.

Table 6:
Means and Standard deviations of the Variable Number of Online Courses

	Number of Online Courses I have taken at PAU	No.	M	SD
Challenges	1-3	1	4.00	
	4-6	2	3.50	0.71
	7-10	1	3.17	
	11+	19	3.48	0.53
Advantages	1-3	1		
	4-6	2	4.17	1.08
	7-10	1	4.27	
	11+	19	3.51	0.71
Total	1-3	1		
	4-6	2	3.87	0.92
	7-10	1	3.78	
	11+	19	3.50	0.30

The results of one-way ANOVA used to compare means of virtual experience as perceived by learners at the university due to the number of online courses, show some differences among the students' responses. To make sure whether these differences are statistically significant or not, ANOVA Test was used as seen below.

Table 7:
Results of the ANOVA Test

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Challenges	Between Groups	.366	3	.122	.415	.744
	Within Groups	5.577	19	.294		
	Total	5.943	22			
Advantages	Between Groups	1.257	2	.629	1.153	.337
	Within Groups	10.361	19	.545		
	Total	11.618	21			
Total	Between Groups	.313	2	.156	1.231	.314
	Within Groups	2.416	19	.127		
	Total	2.729	21			

As seen in table (7), there is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in a virtual experience as perceived by Finance & Banking learners at Al-Quds university due to the number of online courses.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concluded that Finance & Banking learners' perceptions of the use of online learning at Al-Quds university have some disadvantages such as weak internet connection and spending lots of time on computers which in turn develop some health problems because of the long hours. On the other hand, some students prefer using traditional classrooms over virtual learning. However, the exposure to educational technology encouraged students to believe that they can advance their skills somehow and enhances their ability to do more research and more group formation, so they learn from each other. As for the advantages of online learning, some other students are motivated and enthusiastic about using this new model in their Finance courses. Despite the presence of some disadvantages of online learning, the study concluded that virtual classes for Finance & Banking students in form of online learning were considered positive by some students and have some advantages of practicing skills and communication as groups. Although the availability and slow speed internet connection were being problems to use in online learning, they were also rated effective and efficient in terms of time, place, and expense. Moreover, this study showed that online learning can help students to improve language skills and to reduce shyness in virtual class interaction. As for the recommendations regarding the problem of internet connection, the university must allocate a certain adequate budget to build some free WIFI service areas. Moreover, they should also build supporting facilities, such as an internet tower, and the like. I would recommend considering that "wherever you use the technology you should always have a backup plan in place. There might be times when the websites are down, the computers crash, or worse, the electricity goes off.

This is necessary to avoid all the constraints that technology poses to teaching and learning. Another recommendation is very important to keep the class in the virtual environment be successfully developed; feelings of frustration whenever technology breaks down must be coped with using backup plans in teaching and a positive attitude towards this unavoidable reality. Lastly, we can continue talking about the beauty of modern technologies, but ultimately, their benefits rely partially on the investment university administrators make in their infusion into curricula. The implementation and upgrading of technological facilities and resources will undoubtedly benefit the academic community.

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