

**The Advantages and Disadvantages of Distance Learning for
Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
During Covid-19 at University in UAE**

إيجابيات وسلبيات التعلم عن بعد للطلبة من ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في جامعة
بدولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة أثناء جائحة كوفيد-١٩

by

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning for SEND (students with special educational needs and disabilities) during COVID-19 crisis at the University in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The study depends on the qualitative method using interview that depends on semi-structured interviews. Data was collected from SEND, teachers and special need education coordinator/ specialists' perspectives.

Overall the experience and thoughts were a mix up between positive and negative aspects of studying online from students with special educational needs and disabilities. I believe that the reason behind it, that remote learning has always been a debatable topic. Yet during COVID-19, the students have no choice to choose remote learning or traditional learning because the ministry of education in UAE forced all students to study remotely. In the long run, the outcomes of the remote learning experience depending on the type of disability, the readiness of the students, the acceptance to change and sometimes the type of course that students took.

Findings show that most of the parties involve in the semi-structured interviews agreed that remote learning after categorizing it as a safety matter, it saves times and open a door to learn new technology skills. On the other hand, lack of communication interaction was the main disadvantages of remote learning as students feel lonely while attending classes, teachers can't interact and can't observe if the learning objective was met and specialists believe that students learn from other students sometimes and they missed this chance.

Recommendations for the research was to keep training students and teachers on new strategies and new technology to be prepared for the future whether if any crisis occurred or for a job. Governments should study the case from a different angle to overcome all the challenges and include all learners in any policy and procedures. Limitation of the study was the limited access to higher education organizations. Also, the limited number of SEND involved as it is only from one university in the UAE. As well as depending on interviews only to follow the rule of no social interaction between people.

Keywords: Remote learning, Covid-19, students with special educational needs and disabilities, higher education

ملخص

إيجابيات وسلبيات التعلم عن بعد للطلبة من ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في جامعة بدولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة أثناء جائحة كوفيد-١٩

تبحث هذه الدراسة على إيجاد الإيجابيات والسلبيات التعلم عن بعد للطلاب من ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة (أصحاب الهمم كما يطلق عليهم في دولة الإمارات)، خلال أزمة فيروس كورونا المستجد COVID-19، في إحدى جامعات الإمارات العربية المتحدة. تعتمد الدراسة على الطريقة النوعية باستخدام المقابلات شبه المنظمة. وتم جمع البيانات من وجهة نظر الطلاب ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة، والمعلمين، ومنسق / متخصصي تعليم ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة. بشكل عام، كانت التجربة والأفكار مزيجا بين الجوانب الإيجابية والسلبية للدراسة عبر الإنترنت من الطلاب ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة. أعتقد أن السبب وراء ذلك، أن التعلم عن بعد كان دائما موضوعا قابلا للنقاش. ومع ذلك، خلال COVID-19، لم يكن أمام الطلاب أي خيار لاختيار التعلم عن بعد أو التعلم التقليدي لأن وزارة التربية والتعليم في الإمارات العربية المتحدة أجبرت جميع الطلاب على الدراسة عن بعد. على المدى الطويل، تعتمد نتائج تجربة التعلم عن بعد على نوع الإعاقة، واستعداد الطلاب، وقبول الطلاب للتغيير أحيانا.

تظهر النتائج أن معظم الأطراف المشاركة في المقابلات شبه المنظمة اتفقت على أن التعلم عن بعد، بعد تصنيفها كمسألة تتعلق بالسلامة، فإنها توفر الوقت وتفتح الباب لتعلم مهارات تقنية جديدة. من ناحية أخرى، كان الافتقار إلى تفاعل الاتصال هو من الصعوبات الرئيسية للتعلم عن بعد، حيث يشعر الطلاب بالوحدة أثناء حضور الفصول الدراسية، ولا يستطيع المعلمون التفاعل ولا يمكنهم ملاحظة ما إذا تم تحقيق هدف التعلم أم لا. ومن ناحية أخرى فيعتقد المتخصصون أن الطلاب يتعلمون من الطلاب الآخرين أحيانا، وقد فاتتهم هذه الفرصة. كانت توصيات البحث توصي بالاستمرار في تدريب الطلاب والمعلمين على الاستراتيجيات الجديدة والتكنولوجيا الجديدة؛ ليكونوا مستعدين للمستقبل سواء حدثت أي أزمة في المستقبل أو للحصول على وظيفة. يجب على الحكومات دراسة الحالة من زاوية مختلفة؛ للتغلب على جميع التحديات، وإدراج جميع المتعلمين في أي سياسات وإجراءات تتعلق بالتعليم. كان من صعوبات تقييد الدراسة هو الوصول المحدود إلى مؤسسات التعليم العالي المختلفة في الدولة، بالإضافة إلى العدد المحدود من الطلاب ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في التعليم العالي.

DEDICATION

*I dedicate the achievement of my dissertation to **my parents** for always being supportive and encouraging to continue my study journey. I dedicate to my husband, **Abdulaziz Khamis** for being patient, supportive and always rewarding me for my achievements. I dedicate to my pride, my daughter **Futaim and Aisha** whom I expect to deliver her in December, 2020 to always be their role model and inspiration in education. My supportive sisters (**Maitha and Shaikha**) who always encourage me throughout the journey. I dedicate also to my special friend (**Tooba Mazhar**) for being a great consultant for me during my study. Finally, I dedicate to **my students** who always been a source of patience and determination.*

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Chapter 1

Introduction

“For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible.” – Mary Pat (“Assistive Technology and AEM”,n.d.)

Distance learning is “a method of study where teachers and students do not meet in a classroom but use the Internet, e-mail, mail, etc., to have classes.”, (webster, 2020). Distance learning represents a modern way of teaching and learning. Technology nowadays used almost in every area of human activities, (Kireev, B & Zhundibayeva, A & Aktanova, A., 2019). By the time of COVID-19 pandemic which is a global health crisis of the current time and also categorized as socio-economic crises because of the effect on people’s jobs and life, (United Nations Development programme,2020). According to the United Nation, Covid-19 pandemic created the largest interruption of the education system in history, it affected around 1.6 billion students over 190 countries worldwide (2020). COVID-19 forced schools to close, this affected 94% of the learner’s population and 99 per cent students who are in low and middle-income countries, (the United Nation,2020). This crisis impacts the chance for different categories of learners in continuing their education such as people who live in a poor area, girls, refugees, persons with disabilities and forcibly displaced person, (the United Nation,2020).

The United Nation belief that the disruption of education had has and will continue to have consequential effects beyond education,(2020). On the other hand, this crisis increased the creativity in innovation especially for education in a way of depending on technology and other approaches to let learners access education. The appreciation here goes to governments, parents, teachers and other partners who supported education in a different way to continue education, (the United Nation,2020). According to the United Nation, education act as an essential right for humans and if education structure falls apart then peace, prosperous and productive societies will be affected and cannot be sustained,(2020). To protect the education system worldwide, several policies generated from the United Nation should be followed by governments and stakeholders:

- 1- Overcome transmission of COVID-19 virus and plan to re-open schools: countries should take a proper reaction to reopen the school and educational institutions to prevent the crisis from controlling communities for an unknown time.

- 2- Protect education financing and coordinate for impact: as the pandemic is affecting the economy, governments should recognize education as one of the highest priorities and find solutions to protect it.
- 3- Build a strong education system for equitable and sustainable development: reopening schools should be studied to follow a better coop in any future crisis. Governments should consider equity and inclusion, risk management, provide strong leadership and coordination, improve consultation and communication instruments.

Accordingly, during COVID-19 the UAE government implement number of laws and regulation to help in stability of citizen and services as much as possible. In the mid of COVID-19 pandemic time, the UAE applied distance learning for all students in the UAE from 22 March 2020 until the completion of year 2019/2020, (The United Arab Emirates government portal,2020). This decision was applied for all UAE public and private schools as well as higher education institutions. This decision shows that the effective rule of the ministry of education is ready to have an alternative, modern way of teaching and to ensure that the learning process has continuously functioned during the pandemic. The ministry brought a positive cognitive outcome while implementing remote learning in schools after experimenting with the use of smart platforms with students, (Two-week distance learning initiative kicks off targeting all UAE students,2020). The ministry of education also trained 25,000 government school teachers and administrators and 9,200 private school teachers and principals to improve virtual learning approach and the effectiveness of managing education process in remote learning, (Two-week distance learning initiative kicks off targeting all UAE students,2020).

The sudden new experience was difficult on everyone and was more challenging for special educational needs and disabilities who needed training and support to use the alternative electronic platform to follow up in the learning process. Before COVID-19 crisis, the world was facing numerous challenges on fulfilling education as a basic human right for all, (the United Nation,2020). UNESCO static that more than 250 million children were out of school and around 800 million adults were uneducated, (the United Nation,2020). Moreover, 56% of children worldwide identified as having a lack of reading skills and the crisis will increase the gap by up to one-third than known previously, (the United Nation,2020). Among higher education, not all

universities manage to shift education into online learning base due to the lack of information technology with both students and teachers, (the United Nation,2020). UNESCO estimated that 23.8 million children and youth may not have access to school or choose to drop out school next year only because of the crisis economic reason, (the United Nation,2020). The United Nation (2020) argue that girls and young women will prefer to either got married in younger age or choose to get early pregnancy.

This paper will study the experience of SEND from different categories such as physical impairment and specific learning disabilities during distance learning. It will evaluate the transformation to online learning for this population n in UAE and will determine the strengths and challenges from implementing this kind of study approach due to COVID-19 crisis.

1.1.Purpose of the study

This study investigates the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning on students with special educational needs and disabilities in the UAE. It examines the mode and the readiness of education in UAE during pandemic times. The study identifies the adaptation and accommodation provided for SEND in a virtual classroom in term of instructional way and learning process. It gives multiple information about the effect of distance learning among a different category of students with visual impairment, students with physical challenge and students with a specific learning difficulty. Besides, teachers and accessibility specialist and learning difficulty specialists are involved in gathering their challenges throughout COVID-19 period.

The study depends on the qualitative design method to accumulate more information from participants as each case or each point of view is taken from a different category. This paper may affect the following stakeholder in education community specialists, teachers, parents, UAE special needs organizations, to evaluate distance learning program. Limited studies evaluated online learning for students with special educational needs and disabilities in the UAE so far. Accordingly, the research study is to (a) name the advantages and disadvantages of SEND enrolling in an online course in a university in UAE and (b) to gather information based on

different experiences from a different point of views and perspectives about the effectiveness of distance learning.

1.2. Background of researcher

The topic of my research is related to my specialization and my work field. As my work is to accommodate materials/exams for students with special educational needs and disabilities and provide an accessible environment for them in the university. I experienced the situation when COVID-19 pandemic started and all educational instructions in UAE were transferred from regular classroom to an online or distance learning and I felt that SEND were left behind and had extra challenges to be able to continue with their educational path. The government applied this transformation to control the number of people getting infected by the virus. As well as from the experience of working with SEND, there were certain difficulties I want to focus on that was not obvious for instructors and the educational community. I want to find out some challenges to either find solutions for it or to let further researches find more about it as most of the time people with disabilities are left behind.

1.3. Research Question

The main question of this study is:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning for students with special educational needs and disabilities during COVID-19 in UAE?

1.4. Significance of the study

This study will analyze the experience of distance learning on students with special educational needs and disabilities during COVID-19. It will examine the mode and the readiness of the education system in the UAE during pandemic times. The general contribution of this study is to research the transformation to online learning for SEND especially during coronavirus crisis and how the learners dealt with the problems and challenges they faced. Specifically, there will be several advantages and disadvantages that stakeholders can consider it and plan to resolve it. For the researcher, the study will help on giving the full picture of how SEND is continuing their learning process and to how extent they need assistance.

1.5-Organization of chapters

This study combines five informative chapters, In which chapter 1 is the introduction of the study. Chapter 2 is a literature review about online learning, COVID-19 and students with special educational needs and disabilities in the UAE. It will also include information about distance learning in general and the advantages and disadvantages of applying distance learning in educational intuitions from recent studies and researches. On the other hand, chapter 3 describes the plan that the research follows to find out the results. In the end, chapter 4 will discuss the findings and the result of the research. Finally, in chapter 5 is a conclusion and recommendation sections which include limitation and further studies as well.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter explores information about distance learning gathered from different researches and articles. here I defined distance learning and the differences between distance learning and traditional learning approaches. Then, I mentioned briefly about the development of education in UAE from the beginning until today when there is a lot of emphasizing merging SEND in the education system. After that, there is a section for COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of it in the education system. In addition, I described the situation in the UAE about remote learning in general then particularly for people with disabilities. One of the important parts in the literature review is the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning for students with special educational needs and disabilities. Finally, I compared and contract three pieces of research about e-learning each from the last 20 years.

2.1.Definition of Distance learning

The technology used in almost all areas of human activity and education became one of the areas in which we have now e-learning or distance learning, (Kireev & Zhundibayeva & Aktanova, 2019). Distance education theory (Garrison, 1990; Hayes, 1990) described as “ no more than a hodgepodge of ideas and practices taken from traditional classroom settings and imposed on learners who just happen to be separated physically from an instructor”,(The Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 2001). Distance learning, e-learning, online learning and remote learning are different, but it all depends on information telecommunication technology to proceed. Distance learning can be defined when the communication between teachers and learners occur at different times and at separate places to ensure facilitating and supporting educational processes,(Meshur & Bala,2015). Remote learning usually works best for the adult learner and its mainly student’s centre learning whereby the student is responsible for attending classes and following up with activities, (SAW,2017). Distance learning nowadays depends on different tools as technology to communicate and succeed, (Weidlich & Bastiaens, 2018). A certain level of experience with technology is needed for students to be able to enroll in online learning, (Weidlich & Bastiaens, 2018).

E-learning is a telecommunications-based distance education approach where the study is beyond limits occurs in the same time and when video-communication link work as a live teacher-student inquiry, (Chaney, N.D). Recent studies show that the relationship between technology and distance learning is circumstance and effects on the student's performance. For example, different software used as a platform to deliver information to learners which has an impact on satisfaction, student's interaction and the learning community, (Weidlich & Bastiaens, 2018). In online learning, students have the choice to choose either (a) synchronous learning which is when a student attends classes online at a designated time or (b) asynchronous learning where the student work with the curriculum in their own time under the teacher's guidance, (Tularam & Machisella, 2018). Asynchronous learning is depending mainly on Piaget's cognitive stages whereby the student can learn by themselves and nowadays it can be done via email, discussion forms, computer networking, wikis and blogs, (Tularam & Machisella, 2018). Although a bigger population can get benefit from asynchronous learning as they can access the lessons any time anywhere however not everyone will have access to a laptop and a good internet connection and technical support to complete the task, (Tularam & Machisella, 2018). E-learning recently become a new learning approach because of the massive use of computer technology nowadays, (Tularam & Machisella, 2018).

2.2.Differences between distance learning and traditional learning

Traditional classroom refers to learn physically by being surrounded with colored-walls, desks and chairs facing the lecturer, (Li & Qi & Wang.G & Wang.X, 2017). In the traditional setup, learning is always focused on teachers and books rather than different learning styles of students, (Li & Qi & Wang.G & Wang.X, 2017). However, Distance learning is under the umbrella of online learning which can be defined as education that takes place over the internet and computer, (Li & Qi & Wang.G & Wang.X, 2017). E-learning is always categorized as learner-centered approach, (Li & Qi & Wang.G & Wang.X, 2017). Distance learning can be a good option for people who live far from the learning institution or learners who have challenges in attending physically, (Perry & Pilati, 2011). Also, it offers education anywhere and anytime with the availability of the internet and modern tools/technology, (Perry & Pilati, 2011). According to Perry & Pilati (2011), there are three main evidenced concluded from the verity of researches about the effectiveness of online learning;

- 1- Students who took full or part of online courses performed better compared to the students who took the same class face-to-face.
- 2- Instruction combining online study with face-to-face approaches have an advantage of effectiveness on students rather than face e-to-face approach.
- 3- The effectiveness of online learning considers as an advantage of different learning styles in one classroom.

2.3.Quality of distance learning

“investigating the quality of distance education is a complex undertaking which is located in an inherited context of time, place and power” (Nunan, 1992, p. 6), (Chaney, N.D).

The quality of distance learning is different from each role to another. The quality of distance learning for a teacher depends mainly on instructional guidelines and type of activities. Thus, for school management, it is the way of the teaching and learning process and the outcomes of the learning approach. So, the parties who are interesting in the quality is the federal government which is to accomplish the ministry of education goals, faculty and students, (Chaney, N.D).

There are seven principles of good practice in distance education including curriculum and instruction, role and mission, faculty support, resources for learning, student services, commitment to support, and evaluation and assessment, (Chaney, N.D). Most importantly is having a proper technology to maintain the good practice for distance learning, (Chaney, N.D). The characteristic of successful distance learning are (1) financial support and commitment from all administration stakeholders, (2) utilize e-learning to deliver the information, (3) clear analysis of the students, (4) faculty and training support, (5) the availability of students services, (6) Information technology support, (Chaney, N.D).

2.4.Education in UAE

The United Arab Emirates was properly established in 1971 with a total of 6 emirates out of seven (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Qawain, and Fujairah) and the seventh emirates which is Ras al-Khaimah joined in 1972, (Alhebsi & Pettaway& Waller,2015). since then, the government emphasize on the importance of education and provide free education for all UAE citizen from preschool to high education. The ministry of education in UAE illustrate

that the region went through four iterations of educational development, (Alhebsi & Pettaway& Waller,2015). These are 1) the Mutawa and the Katateeb, 2) Educational Circles, 3) Semi-Organized Education, as well as 4) the Modern Education System, (Alhebsi & Pettaway& Waller,2015). First, Mutawa was the imam of the masjid and the wisest person in the area, he is responsible for teaching boys and girls in the katateeb which is a physical place where the process of learning Quran was going on, (Alhebsi & Pettaway& Waller,2015). Educational circles are like schools nowadays where the teacher is giving lectures and semi-organized education which was the base process to build schools among UAE, (Alhebsi & Pettaway& Waller,2015). Last, the modern education system which what we have known; three stages of schools primary(6 years of study), secondary (3 years of study) and high school (three years of study), (Alhebsi & Pettaway& Waller,2015).

The UAE had a focus on educating both males and females and in 1975 the percentage of adult literacy was 54 among men and 31% among women, (Embassy of the United Arab Emirates,2020). However, now adult literacy for both males and females are close to 95% which is a significant jump among the last fifty years in UAE, (Embassy of the United Arab Emirates,2020). Many initiatives have been launched in UAE to improve education in UAE to produce an educated generation who can study in qualified international universities and compete in the global marketplace, (Embassy of the United Arab Emirates,2020). The ministry of education in UAE initiate Emirati schools which depends on the successful experience and framework used in the top schools in UAE, (Quality Education in the UAE,2019). The ministry's main goal was to achieve sustainable education by applying lifelong skills and learning, integrate proper technology to help improve education, adopt best practices and curriculum with the implementation of innovation, (Quality Education in the UAE,2019).

2.5. Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in the UAE

The UAE committed to UNESCO and the united nation by adopting the idea and then a federal law was stated in 2006 no.29/2006 by HH shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed the president of UAE, for the right and the opportunities of a person with special needs, (Bock,2015). The federal law stated “This law aims at protecting the rights of the person with special needs and providing him with all needed services appropriate to his capacities and abilities. His special needs shall

not be a reason to refrain the person with special needs from obtaining the said rights and services, especially those related to the special care, social, economic, health, educational, professional, cultural and entertaining services.” (The Federal Law no.29/2006: Article 2). So, education was one of the essential rights that was given to SEND in the UAE and does not only in education but also health, social and entertaining services.

“School for All” is an initiative launched by Ministry of education in UAE in 2010. The philosophy behind this initiative is to give access for students with special educational needs and disabilities to educational program and services, (school for all,2010). Also, all student’s despite their disability have the right to be educated with age-appropriate peers who do not have any disability, (school for all,2010). The Ministry of education confirms that the least restrictive environment for SEND is regular classroom but not all the time is the best option for the students.

The ministry of education listed the category that is expected in “school for all” which are: specific learning disability, physical and health-related disability, visual impairment, hearing impairment including the deafness, speech and language disorder, Autism disorder, emotional and behavioral disorder, intellectual disability, giftedness and exclusionary disorder, (school for al,2010). Still, there is continuous effort to get a proper inclusion education in the UAE as the Ministry of education announced the need of special education specialists that will help in different areas to support learners with special educational needs and disabilities such as special education teacher, therapists, resource centers, shadow teachers and counsellors,(AlAbdooli, 2018). The need for anyone will make the inclusion happen successfully.

2.6.Covid-19 pandemic

The coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic is a global health crisis and a huge challenge after world war II. It started at the end of 2019 in Asia and has spread all over the world except Antarctica (United Nations Development Programme,2020). The world health organization raise an alarm of Coronavirus being a global issue and had an impact on the economy, education, health and most fields. Regarding education, most of the education organizations worldwide closed because of the virus which transfers fast through direct contact and public places and schools are a place in which contacting people happens all the time. So, people used to stay at home to prevent further spread of the virus. All countries act differently about the education

sector as it encounters a huge number of populations worldwide. Countries suggested multiple ways for replacing attending in schools and university such as online learning or distance learning whereby students learn online through technology and the availability of internet, (What is the Impact of Coronavirus on Education,2020). Another way was the free online program in which some platforms offers online programs free for people who stuck at home. lastly, parental care was also an option for a parent, especially with young children.

According to the University of the people (2020) Coronavirus impacted education in several ways such as:

- 1- **Delays:** Some countries delayed standardized and acceptance exams due to the unexpected change to the online course which needs extra time for staff and faculty to shift to online platforms.
- 2- **Challenges for staff and students:** it was a challenge for some teachers and students to use the online platform overnight as some have struggled with technology.
- 3- **Challenges for low-income families:** many children who came from low-income families missed proper food or lack some mandatory resources to continue the learning process online.
- 4- **Difficulties in Concentration:** younger children, people who suffer from attention defiant hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and a certain type of students with special educational needs and disabilities who need qualified assistant found it difficult to focus on online learning.

However, during pandemic students got new opportunities to learn as more online resources and programs are available during coronavirus pandemic and for some students who are introduced newly to this learning approach, they gain new technical skills, (What is the Impact of Coronavirus on Education,2020).

2.7.Education during COVID-19

As coronavirus still causing socio-economic challenges among the world, education on the other hand has been reacted and adapted. Most governments ensure to continue teaching and learning process while protecting students and teachers, (The United Nation,2020). UAE government also react quickly to education as it is now being adopted almost in all education

institution around the country. Many governments embrace to shift to ICT (information and communication technology) to continue the education process. The UNESCO confirm that areas with limited internet access depend more on traditional methods to continue education such as educational television, radio programs and handling printed books comparing to high-income countries who shifted 80% to digital and online technology and platforms, (The United Nation,2020).

The evaluation of students has been affected due to the dependence on online platforms and the majority of countries choose to either postponed exams and assessments but only a few countries cancelled exams and others request an alternative assessment, (The United Nation,2020). Early-childhood distance learning is more challenging and not everyone manages to offer virtual kindergarten. However, in higher educational organizations, distance learning is more flexible, (The United Nation,2020).

2.8.Remote learning in UAE during COVID-19

On March 22, 2020, the UAE government implement remote learning for all private and public schools and universities all over the country, (The United Arab Emirates' government portal, 2020). The ministry of education in UAE provided professional training for 25,000 teachers and administrative staff from government schools and 9,200 teachers from private schools regarding distance learning, (The United Arab Emirates' government portal, 2020). They also facilitate a technical support line for students and parents to solve any problems during the remote learning, (The United Arab Emirates' government portal, 2020). Also, the ministry decided to cooperate with telecommunication lines to provide a free internet package for students who have no access to the internet in-home, (The United Arab Emirates' government portal, 2020). However, after one month of implementing the new learning system in UAE, parents and students complain of long hours, multiple live session and the need of help during the day, (Zaman, 2020).

On the beginning of September, where usually schools reopen, coronavirus was still spreading in the country. The government aimed to keep everyone in the school safe and healthy. So, there were different protocols and procedures for students to return to school. All government and private higher education institutions remain study remotely and the same applies to government schools until further notice. However, all private schools are requested to reopen

schools for the students and strictly follow the protocols for reopening. The protocols involved different areas of school actions such as entry, pick-up and school visit procedures, screening and contact tracing, physical distancing arrangements and school buses. The most important procedures were that teachers and students above 6 years have to wear masks all time, the school have to follow a strategy for entry and pick-up to minimize crowdedness and maintain 2 meters distance, daily clean up and sanitization of all area and maintain 2-meter distance between student and another in the classroom, (Protocols for the Reopening of Private Schools in Dubai,2020).

2.9.Distance learning for SEND during COVID-19

As most of the governments worldwide took the action of reducing the spreading of COVID-19 by forcing self-quarantine and online schooling and remote learning, students with disabilities faced different challenges. The US Department of Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) reported that more than seven million students with special educational needs and disabilities who received services from them were separated from classrooms due to COVID-19 pandemic. Remote learning for some special cases can work well yet can cause more difficulties for other cases,(IDEA,2020). Students with special educational needs and disabilities during remote learning may face challenges because of the absence of appropriate assistive technology needed, internet access, accessible materials and the physical support needed,(The United Nation,2020). For students who have ADHD and need to move a lot in the classroom, distance learning can help them move around the place without distracting other students, (Young & Donovan, 2020). So, students with specific learning disabilities, ADHD and some forms of autism can perform well in remote learning with a supportive environment, (Young & Donovan, 2020). On the other hand, learners who have severe autism, severe cognitive disorders and brain trauma might not get their needs through online learning, (Young & Donovan, 2020). Despite the learning process difficulties, these students might face other issues such as self-regulating, following a routine or staying motivated and some might need extra physical support, (Young & Donovan, 2020).

According to Yong and Donovan (2020), “Success is less dependent on the student’s disability and more on the approach of the school team and the presence of someone at home with the student”. This means that all school community and people at home are responsible for

the success of SEND during remote learning. Teachers should use appropriate accommodations and modifications to ensure access learning for all. IDEA suggested that the school department should provide an appropriate Individual educational plan (IEP) and mention the amount of support that the learners needs from the surrounding people, (Young & Donovan, 2020). Online education may also align with specific learning style with SEND and increase their academic performance, (Tularam & Machisella, 2018).

2.10.Teaching strategies in distance learning for students with special educational needs and disabilities

“The teacher is the key to success for students with special educational needs and disabilities online”, (Young & Donovan, 2020). Teachers are the one who is leading the team whether students, parents and any other party in the learning process. During COVID-19 crisis, teachers were asked to immediately implement online teaching in different online platforms, and this is to protect teachers’ physical health, yet in some countries, the transformation was without guidance or training, (The United Nation,2020). Educators must use certain strategy while teaching scientific courses online which can draw from cognitive load theory (CLT) that focuses on human cognitive ability as a natural information processing system, (SAW,2017). It also requires the teachers to use instructional strategies that keep learners focus and engaged during the session and not exceed the capability of what students can handle or understand within a time.

E-learning is not a trend as much as it is a part of the modern education system nowadays. Trainers and teachers should be knowledgeable about using technology and the most important is to integrate technology in instructional strategies effectively as it has a certain complexity, (Gerasimova, Melamud, Tutaeva, Romanova &. Zhenova, 2018). To get a successful experience with e-learning, there should be a cooperation between different fields such as teachers, IT department, library and others, (Gerasimova, Melamud, Tutaeva, Romanova &. Zhenova, 2018).

Teachers who teach SEND in distance learning base need to focus on five main elements such as: “supportive distance teaching and learning, student engagement, lesson design and

instructional resources, social-emotional support and executive function capacity”,(Herburger,2020). For students with special educational needs and disabilities, the technology works sometimes as a barrier for distance learning and the challenges on finding certain materials in an accessible format, (Herburger,2020). Thus, in this case, educators have to use alternative ways and strategies to follow the law by giving equal effective access to education for people with disabilities. “Every teacher is an expert of their content, but they aren’t an expert in the online teaching tools,” says Grillo,(Herburger,2020). So, the teacher who has a lack of IT skills will suffer as the shift of online classroom happened quickly due to the pandemic of COVID-19. Teachers should work to improve their remote teaching strategies to follow the track.

Teachers should provide extra time for learning and a realistic schedule for distance learning such as fun activities in between classes, (Herburger,2020). The teacher may focus on one or two clear learning objectives to establish each session. Also, they can prepare non-tech materials and needed books in a box for the students to collect and use during the semester, (Herburger,2020). According to Herburger (2020), student engagement may increase for SEND through online classes, so teachers should make sure that they engage and interact regularly to make learning process accessible for all.

Accessible materials, platform and documents is an important element during online learning for SEND. There is a verity of choices on how to deliver the session and which platform to depends on. Teachers during online courses use zoom, google docs, Microsoft team and other platforms, however not all of them are accessible for learners, (Herburger,2020). The accessibility features available on Google Docs and slides have been categorized as the best technology to use as it implements screen reader, braille display, speech to text and text to speech function, (Herburger,2020). Also, Khan Academy for Mathematics lessons might help different category of students such as low vision, color blindness, hard of hearing and student who are sensitive to animation, (Herburger,2020). Teachers should not focus also on executive function skills which are to be organized, follow directions, keep up with assignments and handle emotions because students learn theses skills in schools and distance learning should not ignore teaching different skills, (Herburger,2020).

UNESCO suggested a wide list of educational applications and apps for all learners, teachers and schools to use. There are apps for digital learning management systems such as ClassDojo, Schoology and google classroom, (Distance learning solutions,2020). Also, some self-learning content, mobile reading applications, tools for teachers to create digital learning communication and other categories that help the success of distance learning, (Distance learning solutions,2020). The use of universal design learning approach could be appropriate for most of the learners especially students with special educational needs and disabilities and it can also increase the inclusiveness of distance learning, (Petretto & Masala, I & Masala, C, 2020).

Covid-19 has an impact on teachers' salaries and employment and the most common issue was the delay of salary payment, (The United Nation,2020). Teachers on temporary contracted were affected the most and teachers who are paid hourly were out of work in most countries, (The United Nation,2020). The impact was worst for low-income countries where parents stop paying schools for several reasons and teachers were unable to teach remotely, (The United Nation,2020). A survey was done by Education international which is "a global union federation that represents organizations of teachers and other education employees" acknowledged that among 93 teachers from 67 countries, two-third replied that teachers in private educational institutions were accordingly affected, (The United Nation,2020). The result of no-payment for teacher affects teachers, their families, communities and well-being and effect on the quality of education.

2.11.The role of the parents in remote learning

To provide a successful experience for SEND during remote learning, the parents should provide some certain of support especially for younger ages and severe cases. Students with special educational needs and disabilities team in schools and university have to be in regular contact with parents; to give them tips and advice which keep them on track and assess with them the appropriate assistive technology used, (Young & Donovan, 2020). Teachers can also meet parents through phones or any virtual platform and may review the IEP with them, (Young & Donovan, 2020).

2.12. Advantages of distance learning

One major advantage of distance learning is the flexibility of time and location, (Weidlich & Bastiaens, 2018). As a result of this, studies show that fewer students drop courses in online learning base comparing to regular classrooms. Another success factor of distance learning is the learners' self-motivation, (Kireev & Zhundibayeva & Aktanova, 2019). If the student has a positive internal self-motivation to study and succeed, s/he will be able to complete the courses. The latest reports show that the enrollment of distance learning is still growing, (Weidlich & Bastiaens, 2018). Moreover, e-learning provides students with the flexibility of a learning schedule which allows them to choose the time and the place of the session, (Gerasimova, Melamud, Tutaeva, Romanova & Zhenova, 2018).

In some cases, low expenses cost work as an advantage of some learners of buying educational materials or transportation fees and also with training sessions, (Gerasimova, Melamud, Tutaeva, Romanova & Zhenova, 2018). This point is in advantage for people with low income, people with different disabilities and people who have long-term health issues, (Kilinc & Yazici & Gunsoy, 2019). Remote learning enhances the quality of learning by providing easy access for all resources and services for learners, (Gerasimova, Melamud, Tutaeva, Romanova & Zhenova, 2018). In developing countries, open and distance learning has a positive advantage for inequality whereby girls will have the opportunity to study in the university and work at the same time, (Kilinc & Yazici & Gunsoy, 2019). The use of multimedia tools, advanced technology and interaction software can enhance the quality of online learning because it serves the learning process in an up to date methods and information, ((Tularam & Machisella, 2018). Moreover, teachers can enhance teacher-student communication by using different apps and software, ((Tularam & Machisella, 2018).

E-learning plays a huge role in the security of the person and helps prevent the spread of diseases like HIV, (Kilinc & Yazici & Gunsoy, 2019). This was the main reform of applying distance learning in UAE in 2020 which is to reduce the number of COVID-19 patients. Distance learning is the best option for women and mothers to become in assistance for the family and children, (Kilinc & Yazici & Gunsoy, 2019).

In 2003 a university in the UK offered online degree and produced 150,000 courses, the result was that overall disabled students had lower passing rate, grades and completion rate compared to non-disabled students, (Catalano, 2014). The survey in this study showed that 46% of students of disabilities believed that their disability reduces their success in an online course. Others mention different reasons such as the difficulty of using the computer, time management or getting distracted, (Catalano, 2014). Moreover, 62% of students mention that they require the use of assistive technology to be able to attend and participate in classes effectively, (Catalano, 2014). The study shows that SEND and especially visually impaired students are more likely to ask for material accommodation in online courses compared to face-to-face, (Catalano, 2014). One of the success factors of distance learning is the learners' self-motivation, (Kireev & Zhundibayeva & Aktanova, 2019). I believe that online learning can be very successful for people who are intrinsic motivation who got their motivation for their own sake and personal reward which in this case to complete education. Also, in remote learning, the student is not necessary to search for parking and face travelling issues, (Tularam & Machisella, 2018). This can save time that spends on driving and searching for parking as well as reducing the possibility of having an accident.

2.13.Challenges in distance learning

As colleges and universities offer online courses, sometimes students have no choice but to select an online course so students with special educational needs and disabilities may get left behind,(Catalano, 2014). According to Catalano (2014), distance learning can be challenging for students with different disability types either physical disability, learning difficulties and students having health issues if accessibility is not addressed. Students in undergraduates' programs tend to do a lot of researches and need to use the library facilities and web search engine to gather information, so library resources while distance learning should be considered, (Catalano, 2014). Catalano (2014) ensure that libraries should serve people with disabilities through built in a universal design platform whereby all people can access it easily. Catalano also emphasizes that the result of accessible online library website will lead to the idea of accessibility for all learners or different learning style students and "multiple engagement methods with the curriculum", (2014).

The digital divide terminology applied for people who have internet for example but cannot access it due to the difficulties the learners faced, or their machine faced, (Catalano, 2014). So, if the student has access to the distance library resources but the database not fully accessible, here is a problem, (Catalano, 2014). In remote learning, there might be a problem with information technology and technology issues during the session that will affect on the learning process, (Gerasimova, Melamud, Tutaeva, Romanova &. Zhenova, 2018). Sometimes distance learning causes social distance and minimal networking between teachers and students affects some students who will always feel isolated, (Gerasimova, Melamud Tutaeva, Romanova &. Zhenova, 2018).

Distance learners need extra clarifications and strategies for complex courses like mathematics, physics and advanced science, (SAW,2017). Higher-level courses require high level from students to succeed, (SAW,2017). Students who are enrolled in distance learning should already have a good science and math background such as probability, statistics, calculus and reading graphs from high school, (SWAN,2017). learners who have a solid background will build new information easily and will not struggle much. Distance learner should gather information from different sources to the boost learning process, (SAW,2017).

2.14.E-learning researches in previous years

E-learning approach was a debatable concept in the last 15 years. In this section, there will be multiple types of research all discussing the idea of online learning in education especially in universities. Three different types of research each in a different generation; one in 2000, one in 2010 and last in 2019. This is to show the different perspective of using e-learning among time and how it changes. It also correlates the progressive of e-learning and the advantages of online learning.

Keller & Cernerud studied the students' perceptions of e-learning in university education in 2002. The focal point for their argument with distance learning in higher education was the teacher's responsibility on integrating technology in teaching where students' knowledge about technology during 2002 was very limited compared to now, (Keller & Cernerud,2002). According to Keller & Cernerud (2002), student's expectation about e-learning in a university depends on three major specific variables in addition to the age and gender which are (1)students

having experience with technology, (2) students who accept to use and depend on technology and (3) students whose learning style is technical. The research expanded that the younger the student the better for e-learning because young people may have a chance to use technology during their studies, but older people might use technology for the first time in university, (Keller & Cernerud, 2002). To add, gender also played a role in choosing remote learning in university back in 2002. The findings of the research showed that male candidates are using computers more than female candidates because men find the technology useful where women find non-technical methods are easier to use, (Keller & Cernerud, 2002). Consequently, this might be examined the acceptance of using technology theory which called the theory of “diffusion of innovation theory” by Rogers (1962), (Keller & Cernerud, 2002). The theory is an old social science theory which shows the adaptation of new skill or product that a specific population may adopt, (LaMorte, 2019). Diffusion of innovation theory depends on five main adopter categories which are innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards: which are conservative people, (LaMorte, 2019). Keller and Cernerud also pointed on learner’s learning style as a reason for accepting e-learning, (2002).

One of the research questions on Keller and Cernerud study was the most important advantage and disadvantage for e-learning in high education. The result for considering e-learning as an advantage learning way was as the following: (1) 44% of students mention the access of information, (2) 15% of students answered the flexibility of time and place, (3) 14% said that there are no advantages, (4) 11% liked the easy communication between teachers and students and 16% of the students gave miscellaneous reasons. The second part of the question, students indicate the disadvantages of e-learning as the following; (1) 28% said inconsistent platform used in every course, (2) 23% faced technical problems, (3) 14% the dependence on the computer was too much, (4) 7% lack of real contact with human and 28% mentioned miscellaneous answers.

Another research was conducted in the US in 2010 regarding the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning in comparing to traditional learning, (Company & Montserrat & Bosch, & de Sanjosé, 2010). This research gathers information from 990 educational institutions about the quality of e-learning after an investment of 13 billion dollars on online learning at that

time. The findings show that 81.9% of US institution was offering full or part courses as an online classroom in 2010. More than 90% of students were satisfied with online learning but three-quarters of them said that it is not appropriate for everyone or every subject. Before implementing online learning, faculties got proper intensive training on integrating technology in their very successful teaching methods. The research also found that e-learning empowered learners tended to be more accepting of this learning approach and e-learning became popular after this experience.

E-learning in the US gave opportunities for a bigger number of enrolled students and from 53 worldwide countries. One of the important results of e-learning implementing that both students and administrative mention that the quality of learning in e-learning is the same as in traditional learning. Company & Montserrat & Bosch, & de Sanjosé (2010) discussed women in online learning as it was changing in term of educational and career path. According to the researchers, women tend to link online learning more than men due to the commitment between studies and spend time at home. 63% of interviewee haven't heard about online learning and couldn't envision how virtual classes like to be. The writers believe that the development in technology is the key to online learning and expected that the communication methods will be developed in future. They also wish that online learning does not replace traditional classroom to engage classic students.

Meskhi & Ponomareva & Ugnich (2019) study limitation, opportunities and need in using e-learning in inclusive learning. E-learning became possible after the 1990s because of the internet and it has gone through several stages to develop. This led to the demand for the development of pedagogy design of learning and technology standers which can be described in another word as a learning management system (LMS) and learning content management system (LCMS). According to Meskhi & Ponomareva & Ugnich (2019) e-learning nowadays are popular because the number of students who used the online learning system is more than 40 million students. Moreover, in the last 5 years, there was a rapid growth on using online learning internationally as it was 9.2% but now it is 52% in China, 41% in Malaysia, 38% in Romania, 28% in Poland and 27% in the Czech Republic.

The improvement of information technology and the social correlation have affected positively on the evolution of e-learning, (Meskhi & Ponomareva & Ugnich, 2019). The fundamental factors of the success of online learning in 2019 are because of the availability of accessibility features in information technology, the effective collaborations and the existence of the social environment and the high security of IT, (Meskhi & Ponomareva & Ugnich, 2019). All research's authors agreed that online learning can be done only for higher inclusive education. The development of inclusive education worldwide with the exposure of using technology made it very flexible for learners with disabilities to depends on e-learning mode, (Meskhi & Ponomareva & Ugnich, 2019). According to the study, the reason behind the enhancement of inclusion education is because of the number of people with disabilities increased and reached 23% of the world population which is equal to 1 billion people. Also, for learns with special educational needs and disabilities; higher education is very important because it makes them not isolated and can grantee a key for a financial outcome, (Meskhi & Ponomareva & Ugnich, 2019). So, the researchers' advice the higher organization intuitions to enhance and improve the teaching techniques and methods so it will not be a barrier for people who have physical and health issues.

There is a huge difference between generation to generation whereby researches in early 2000 linked the idea of students' accepting technology and having a little experience on using it and this applied on very limited students because they will be exposed to the computer for the first time in university. On the other hand, in 2019 and above, students seem to be more accepting to e-learning approach in education and this is due to the huge dependence on technology in everyday life and using technology from younger ages as in preschools. So, the generation is more into technology comparing to the early 2000s. I observed that in both researchers from 2000 and 2010 emphasize on the gender topic especially women in remote learning. So, in the beginning, males were superior to females on leaning virtually but then the idea changed due to the increase of women learns in the higher organization. However, gender was not an issue for online learning in 2019 which means both male and female are equal in education.

2.15.conclusion

To conclude, due to coronavirus pandemic education system suddenly changed from traditional school setting to the online classroom. The huge change in a night created a different impact on both teachers and students and all school community. In early 2000, people tend to have a negative attitude toward online learning comparing to 2019 where learners were accepting it more. Applying remote learning had numerous advantages and disadvantages for all but more on SEND, teachers and the quality of education. According to the literature review; advantages were the flexibility of time and location and the easy access to multiple curriculum and online resources, yet the disadvantages were the appearance of technical issues during the lesson and the difficulties on teaching some subjects remotely such as mathematics.

Chapter 3

Research design and Methodology

Introduction

This chapter provides in detail about the methodological framework in the research. It mentions the research paradigm type which is constructivism and how its link to the study. Also, it gives brief information about the mode of the research which is acting as a descriptive design. After that, the type of data collection instrument which is a qualitative method in this paper and what is the method used to gather responses on the research question. I decided to go with telephone and video link interviews to prevent any social contact due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus and to use an accessible tool for all participants including SEND, there is a brief description of the decided sample for the research and data analysis as well. Finally, I described in detail the process of getting agreements and my ethical consideration. Last, the limitation and challenges of the research.

3.1. Research paradigm

Research paradigm can be defined as “the set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed”, (Patel,2015). Research paradigm for the researcher is the perspective of the thinking, or school of thoughts, or it can also be defined as a set of beliefs of research data, (Kivunja & Kuyini,2017). The paradigm used in this research is constructivism, which is mainly about how people learn, (Constructivism as a paradigm for teaching and learning, 2002). Constructivist paradigm approach is mainly when a researcher wants to get into the head of the subject or human who is being studied and what s/he is thinking of making a context of the topic and world around them, (Kivunja & Kuyini,2017). It says that people build their knowledge and understanding of the world by reflecting on their experience, (Constructivism as a paradigm for teaching and learning, 2002). Sometimes people will change their believes and ideas among the main topic and sometimes they will be introduced to something new, (Constructivism as a paradigm for teaching and learning, 2002). To achieve this type of researches, the researcher should ask a question, assist experiences and maybe feelings. So, the case of the research here is that students are asked to shift to online classrooms which are a new experience for them and then reflect about it. Constructivist

researches have assumed that there is no single reality or single truth, but multiple realities have to be explained so it depends more on qualitative methods (Patel,2015).

In this paper, the main question of the research which is the advantages and disadvantages of online learning for SEND during COVID-19. So, human or learners with special educational needs and disabilities will reflect on their experience and I as a researcher will know more about what they are thinking about the surrounding situation which is COVID-19 pandemic.

3.2.Mode of research design

This research follows descriptive design mode which gives an answer of what, when, where, who and how but not why questions, (Sacred Heart university,2020). Descriptive research indicates the type of questions in the research, design and data analysis for the topic, (The Association for Educational Communications and Technology,2002). In this research the main question is “what”: what the advantages and disadvantages of online learning for people with disabilities are. It also runs in a current status or condition in a particular situation which in this research is during COVID-19 pandemic which occurred in December 2019 until today. It can depend on either qualitative method where the aim is to describe the category or find causes and effects or depend on quantitative method when collecting numerical forms, (The Association for Educational Communications and Technology,2002). Also, the descriptive mode has a unique feature which can detect only one variable in the research or many like other research design, (The Association for Educational Communications and Technology,2002). Descriptive studies have an important role in educational researches, it enriches our knowledge on what is happening in schools and educational centers, (The Association for Educational Communications and Technology,2002). It is also a good resource of information whereby it holds rich data that lead to important recommendations for stakeholders.

3.3.Qualitative research

Qualitative researches act as scientific research always seeks for answers on questions, (Qualitative Research Methods Overview, n.d). It gathers information about a problem from people who are involved with consideration about values, opinions, behaviors and social context of a particular population, (Qualitative Research Methods Overview, n.d). the strength of this

method is the ability to collect different views and perspective of peoples' experiences, (Qualitative Research Methods Overview, n.d). there are several qualitative research methods such as observation, in depth-interview and focus qualitative, (Qualitative Research Methods Overview, n.d). Qualitative approaches objectives are usually (1) described variation which means we know who the participant is, (2) explain relationships, (3) describe individual experiences and (4) describe group norms, (Qualitative Research Methods Overview, n.d). Qualitative methods depend on open-ended questions and the format of the data are mainly textual. In qualitative research, the researcher is more involve with participants and play as a suggestion tool, (McLeod, 2019).

3.4.Interview Method

The interview is a conversation for gathering information (Easwaramoorthy & Zarinpoush, 2006). A research interview must involve an interviewer who organize the process of conversation and ask questions and an interviewee who react and answer these questions, (Easwaramoorthy & Zarinpoush, 2006). The interviewee view is one of the important methods in qualitative researches and the best option for any exploratory and descriptive study, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). It's an appropriate tool when used to collect in details information about people's perspective, experience, feelings and thoughts about an issue, (Easwaramoorthy & Zarinpoush, 2006).

There are three types of interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. In a structured interview, the researcher uses closed-ended questions and ask a standard question in the same way and it is easy to code the answers for large interviewees, (Easwaramoorthy & Zarinpoush, 2006). This interview is best for surveys. However, unstructured interviews depend on open-ended questions and can be changed due to the participant's response and there are no guidelines for questions.

Here I'm using a semi-structured interview method whereby the response is a combination of closed and open-ended questions, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). Semi-Structured interviews will let some candidates explore more in some topics, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). It allows the interviewer to ask more question or clarifications if needed, (Easwaramoorthy & Zarinpoush, 2006). In this research, I will depend on the individual

interview rather than group interview because I want to gather information from a different point of view.

There are different types of questions to form a successful interview, (Strategies for Qualitative Interviews, n.d) such as:

- Direct questions: a sentence that asks a direct question and ends with a question mark.
- Indirect questions: a question or an order that can be embedded in a statement.
- Structuring questions: a question which answers should be in a specific way such as true or false, yes or no, good or not good.
- Follow-up questions: a question the interviewer asks in case s/he want to investigate on the interviewer answer.
- Probing question: open-ended questions that encourage in-depth thoughts about the topic.
- Specifying questions: questions that somewhere between close-ended and open-ended style, its design to gather the information that is sometimes left out in conversation.
- Interpreting questions: questions that ask for interviewee's assumption where there might be more than one answer and each answer should be supported with evidence.

In this research, I depend a lot on probing questions to get deep thoughts about how the remote learning experiences for SEND who sometimes used different tools or strategies to access curriculum and courses. Also, two questions were structured question whereby I compare between first when learners experienced the sudden transformation from the traditional classroom to an online classroom and then the overall rate for the remote learning.

3.4.1.Telephone and video link interview

There is a verity of ways to conduct interviews such as face-to-face interview, telephone/ video link and web interview, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). Each has its advantages and disadvantages. The commonly used technique is face-to-face interviews and according to Wilson, Williams & Hancock, it is the highest quality of data collection,(2000). Second is telephone and video links and usually happened when the face-to-face approach is difficult to apply or the topic is sensitive and it is very effective for collecting data using accessible techniques, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000).The only challenge in this type of interview

is the difficulty in recognizing facial expressions, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). Last, web interviews which include email interviews and interactive web page. This research will depend on telephone and video apps such as zoom and cisco WebEx meeting as it is difficult to interact with people due to COVID-19 and to keep all participants safe.

Researchers advise to make sure that to interview students with special educational needs and disabilities, the researcher should use an accessible platform or feature and test it before the interview time, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). In addition, the research when using telephone or video interview need to make sure to record the conversation using suitable technology and the quality of the call is good, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). The researcher should agree on a time with interviewees and the call should be on the researcher's bill, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000).

3.4.2.sample of interview

Good research not only stands for a good methodology but a suitable sampling strategy that the research use to get feedback for the research question, (Cohen, &Manion, & Morrison, 2018). As there are different approaches for an interview, there is a different requirement for selecting a response. For qualitative researches, the number of interviewees is not important so the researchers can interview as many as possible, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). The sample is representee of a defined population in research, (Cohen, &Manion, & Morrison, 2018). The researcher can choose small representative sample whereby each can answer on behalf a category or choosing theoretical sample whereby the number is not important as much as the interviewee will add something new to the research data, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). Sample of my research the current research is based on a small representative sample of SEND each represent different category; some have physical impairment; some are blind, and some have a specific learning difficulty. Also, I'm interviewing some teachers who taught the student during remote learning and then I will ask specialists who dealt with the students during remote learning.

3.5.Data analysis

As the research depends on only one method for collecting information which is semi-structured interviews, the analysis of the data is more complicated than researches that depend on

quantitative data. There are four steps to create a high-quality code for qualitative data which is first to cover as much as responses as possible, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). Then, all similar answers should be categorized as one code and third is to capture positive and negative information together, (Wilson & Williams & Hancock, 2000). Last, reduce too many data into simple points. So, I followed the steps to be able to conduct a clear finding.

After conducting interviews, I gathered all participants' responds and then combined each category separately to define the positive and negative points from different professions' point of view. In the research, I will depend on 5 main questions however I will try to change some words so specialists and teachers will reply from their point of view and their own experience which will be different from learners' responds. All interviews were recorded and transcribed after taking permission from the candidates. The findings will be summarized in clear and short paragraphs.

3.6. Getting agreement to undertake interviews

Agreement and access are very important in any research that has interactive with a human. Permissions are required from official gatekeepers (the research department, research committee and management) in a qualitative research study. The procedures I followed to interview in this research was as the following: first, I contacted the university that I chose to do my research in to be able to interview students, teachers and specialists. Second, I was asked to sign a consent form for the department that give services for SEND in the university. Consent form means "a person knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently, and clearly and manifestly, gives his consent", (Fouka & Mantzourou, n.d). Then, I start contacting students and teachers using emails to send them the consent form for my research study for their virtual signature. I used emails as it is the best way to send and receive documents during COVID-19 because no students or teachers were allowed to go physically to the university. I explained the purpose of the research and the way I conducted it which is via video app and telephone calls. I gave the option for the participants to choose the time that suite them in particular days and I ask to record the session after their agreement. Since all participants are above 18 years old no parental consent was given to the students.

3.7. Ethical Considerations, Confidentiality & Anonymity

According to Cohen & Morrison (2018), the researcher should get approved consent from all participants who will be interviewed, questioned or observed to consider the research as ethical research. There is no harm in any way in the research process neither emotional, social or economic. Participants were given the option to withdraw interviews if they found it harmful for them at any stage.

Proper research should ensure confidentiality. Confidentiality here defined as a situation which the researcher knows the identity of the research subject, but uses techniques to protect identity from being exposed to others,(Cohen & Morrison, 2018). So, I as a researcher ensure to not share any information with a third party in any case to obtain confidentiality of the research and to follow the agreements between the researcher and the participants. Interviews were recorded after getting permission from the interviewee and the option of quitting interview at any time was given to the participants before the interview.

Anonymity is when the identity of the participants is not known and actual names are not mentioned in the research,(Cohen & Morrison, 2018). The anonymity of the participant will be secured at all time; no names will be written even if the students agreed to.

3.8.limitation and challenges

In this research, there are different limitation and challenges. One, the sample of the interview is very limited in number and place as it is conducted only in one university in UAE. Also, it is limited to selective sample and not randomly distributive where the findings might be varied due to the different experiences and circumstances. Second, interview via phone made it challenging for me to observe the candidates and track their body language while answering the interview questions yet it made it easier to conduct interviews at any time in a day. As the research depends on the qualitative mechanism, it needed a lot of time to choose a time and then write all the answers then revisit to collaborate information. The coding for qualitative data is more complicated compared to quantitative techniques. To get access to ask students, the university has a very lengthy process to get a clearance to interview students and faculty. Also, the researcher has to wait at least one month to get a confirmation to start the research.

3.9.Timeline

It took nearly one month to get approval from the university and start interviewing candidates. Then, It took one week to complete interviewing candidates and an additional one week to summarize findings and organize data. In the end, it took one intensive week to wrap up the full research and complete the data needed.

3.10.conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter mapped the technique used in the research. The research theory that I followed was a constructivism paradigm because I mainly looking to understand the thoughts of participants and their experience. Then, I mentioned in detail about the mode of the research whereby I choose a descriptive design to ensure getting a direct answer for my research's question. As the data I'm looking for was qualitative data, I describe the method that I relay on in this research which is the interview. In the interview, I used a semi-structured interview which is a mix between open-ended and close-ended questions which I already described in detail in chapter 3. Due to COVIDid-19 and to protect me and all participants, I chose to conduct an interview using telephone and video link and then will analyze data accordingly. Then, I expressed the process of getting access and ensuring confidentiality in the research. Last, some limitation occurred while doing the research and I point them under limitation and challenges heading.

Chapter 4

Findings

Introduction

In this chapter, I will display the findings from the interview that was conducted over telephone and video programs with students with disabilities, teachers and specialists from a single university in the UAE. Five questions were given to participants to gather information for the main research question which is *what the advantages and disadvantages of remote learning for students with special educational needs and disabilities during COVID-19 crisis are*.

The five interview questions are as the following:

1-How was the unexpected transformation from traditional classroom to online classroom?

2-Which type of courses you used to study/ teach through online classroom and how was the experience with it?

3-What are the advantages of remote learning during COVID-19 pandemic?

4-What are the disadvantages of remote learning during COVID-19 pandemic?

5-How was the overall experience of remote learning?

4.1.Question 1: How was the unexpected transformation from traditional classroom to online classroom?

Students answers: The vast majority of students with special educational needs and disabilities who are physically challenged, mentioned that the transformation from the traditional classroom to the online classroom was difficult and challenging at first because they were not used to it. Only a few students were excited to explore a new education platform for the future if they want to study in distance. One student reported that due to the stress she gains from the spread of COVID-19, she found everything difficult at the beginning and with the training and expressing her feelings with teachers, she used to it at the end. Another student who has vision loss specifies that she couldn't visualize the idea of online courses especially with her math courses which she had several challenges with it in traditional classrooms. Another student with vision impairment acknowledged that she is glad to experience online learning and now she is confident to use different online platforms.

Teachers' answers: A teacher who taught a student with vision loss find teaching in remote learning went well because of the appropriate support that the student got from the specialists. Another teacher said the transformation was fine because she had good communication with students, she managed to do virtual sessions with them after class time. However, she adds that she spent extra time to provide materials with different formats for students.

Specialists' answers: An accessibility specialist respond that the sudden transformation was very difficult to students who are depending on old facilities such as printed Braille documents or completing exams on paper, but it was very smooth for students who depend on assistive technology and digital format. Moreover, the learning difficulty specialists mention that the transformation was difficult for students because the UAE is a social culture society and students get the benefit when social interaction is available. Yet, she thinks that transformation to remote learning worked best for students who have anxiety as they were not seen and not judged in the class.

4.2.Question 2: Which type of courses you used to study/ teach through online classroom and how was the experience with it?

Students answers: Basically, Students who had lecture base courses were fine with remote learning. Only 2 students find that taking 6 courses which is equal to 18 credits in a semester as an online class is more challenging than in traditional learning. For one student the reason behind the difficulty with 6 courses is because, “in online courses, all group assignments shifted to writing assignments or reports which was a lot!”. The same student now doing her internship and due to COVID-19 pandemic, it was required that she do her internship virtually. She confirmed that she is enjoying the new experience and virtual internship is preparing her for a future job. A student whose low vision reflected that she is taking management courses and math courses online and she added “Math online classroom is easy for me as I can see the explanation but in the regular classroom I can’t focus and see. Due to my disability, I can see everything clear after setting the features in my laptop to be more accessible for me”.

Another student who have physical impairment compared to online learning before and after COVID-19 crisis. She said that before the pandemic the process of online courses was that the student studies the course by herself and then take the assessment where now all classes are interaction classes, so she found online learning now more sensible and similar to the traditional classroom. A student answered “I take all marketing courses but only one course is an Information System Management course, it’s a combination of IT and Management. For me, this course was the hardest to learn and study for virtually. Because it’s very practical and getting face-to-face in-class feedback would have helped me understand the material better”.

Teachers’ answers: A teacher who used to teach theory classes and writing classes specified that a theory class is much easier to teach students with total blindness comparing to writing classes which need extra accommodations.

Specialists’ answers: in term of training specialists who used to give students physical training or applying new programs faced difficulties with students who have low technical skills.

4.3.Question 3: 3-What are the advantages of remote learning during COVID19 pandemic?

Students’ answers:

- **Remote learning saves time:** most of the students replied that online learning provides them with more time to study less time for transportation. Also, one student has had physical impairment mentioned that online learning requires less time to reach class as compared to the movement challenge on the campus which sometimes for her to arrive late for classes.
- **Manage health issues:** Students who suffer from spin problems find remote learning provides her with a more comfortable setting at home while attending classes. The same student said that studying online give her the chance to do her surgery and then attend classes during the long recovery period without harming her education. Another student who uses wheelchair reflect that online courses gave her more time to schedule her medical appointments in hospital as the campus was way far from the hospital and

her home is near the place so now she can attend all her classes and reach her appointments on time.

- **More participation:** two students who have vision loss felt that online classes allowed them to participate in the class more comparing to regular room setup and one of them said it is because she doesn't feel shy in the online classroom and no one in the class knows who is giving the answers.
- **Technical advantages:** student with visual impairment figured out that using online platforms is not easy and a lot of technical issues occurred, and different short cuts were needed to be done. Yet, it made students more familiar with using online platforms and apps which lead to gain problem-solving skills not only for technical issues but for life. Another student gets an advantage from classes being online on the availability of class recordings which makes a great tool for revision.
- **Miscellaneous:** a student said during online learning, we are safe. Another advantage was that the students being more independent and more responsible for learning and go through the materials.

Teachers' answers:

- **A higher level of concentration:** A teacher intimated that one of the advantages of having remote learning is that "students do not have an opportunity to chat during class time, so students who need accommodations can probably focus better because nobody is chatting around them".
- **Quality of mental health:** A teacher who taught students with specific learning difficulties commented that remote learning helped the student to continue school and decreased her anxiety level because it gives student less time to think what is going on while attending classes and completing assignments. Also, it gave the students the choice to explore her feelings with the teacher, the advisor and the counsellor in the university. The teacher added that this can work for all learners not only SEND.
- **Safety:** All teachers agreed that the advantages of remote learning are to be safe and secured for both teachers and students.

Specialists' answers:

- **More independence:** remote learning forced students with special educational needs and disabilities to be more independent and responsible to ask for whatever services they need.
- **Changes of assessment types:** assessments and exams on remote learning mostly transferred to alternative assignments or written exams. So, exam modifications and accommodation were less than usual.
- **IT skills:** SEND despite their disability exposed to different apps and programs so it increases their skills in technology.
- **The availability of materials and lecture online:** prior the pandemic teachers refused to post any recording for lectures on Blackboard for security issues. So, students with physical limitation and learning difficulties are getting benefit from lectures being recorded as they revisit the sessions to take note or rewatch the class.

4.4.Question 4: What are the disadvantages of remote learning during COVID-19 pandemic?

Students' answers

- **Lack of communication interaction:** students said not being able to meet friends and people make it difficult to develop communication skills. Another student mentioned that “online classroom gives me the feeling that I’m sitting alone watching a video and not surrounding with peers who share ideas and thoughts regarding the lesson”. A student with vision impairment responds that “instructors can’t see me and don’t know me. even if the teacher knows that there is a student with visual impairment in class, still they forgot that I only listen to the lecture and they start writing in the board”. One student with vision impairment noticed that in online learning they rarely do group activities or work in pairs comparing to normal classes.

- **Loss attention:** in online courses, a student with vision loss said that she loses attention faster comparing to before especially if she is feeling bored and when teachers are showing something in the board that will not benefit the student, she ends up doing something else. Other students felt that it is distracted when student interact in online learning and middle of teachers' explanation.
- **Technical issues:** a lot of students said that technical issues effect on attending the lesson and if a student has a difficulty on joining the lesson, a lot of periods time been wasted until the teacher or the technician solve the problem.
- **Miscellaneous:** The loss of boundaries between personal time and space and course work commitments.

Teachers' answers:

- **Check students' understanding:** one teacher found it difficult to check if students understand the lesson and some of the students are not focusing on the class. Moreover, a teacher said that with technology it is difficult to track students' expression and body language comparing to old school style.
- **Less interaction:** A teacher mentioned that remote learning decreases the interaction between teachers and students, so less observation occurs in the classroom and it is very challenging to identify students' weakness especially in mathematics courses.

Specialists answers:

- **Physical health issues:** A specialist mention that for physical disability students, physical movement is less for students as they are setting in same positions while having back to back classes and for low vision students staring at a screen for a long time causes different problems. She reflects " a student with severe low vision suffered a lot to complete her exam electronically and after a while, tears came from her eyes and she required a longer time than usual to complete her exam".
- **Lack of motivation:** As students happen to have the decision to choose pass and fail grade in the online setting rather than the actual grade they have got in the semester.

Students being less ambitious and less motivated to study, they are putting minimal effort compared to before the pandemic. Also, the student can skip classes easily through remote learning.

- **Not organized:** for students with specific learning difficulties, online learning leads students to be less organized in a way that they lose files more quickly and hardly managing time and keeping up with due dates

4.5.Question 5: How was the overall experience of remote learning?

Students' answer: Generality, students with special educational needs and disabilities liked remote learning after overcoming the challenges in the beginning. A student mentioned that “It is true, I struggled in the beginning, however, online learning now is an easier, enjoyable and unforgettable experience for me”. A different student who is blind declared that remote learning gave her the possibility to learn the basic techniques in using different online platforms and apps which make her more confident to choose remote learning in future. An extra thought from students was to count on virtual learning as being an option for post-COVID 19. Only one student still prefer traditional classrooms as her academic progress is higher compared to online learning.

Teachers' answer: the overall experience with teachers was opposite than students. A teacher thinks that all students, not only the ones who need accommodations, are losing the good quality of education for different reasons. Yet, another teacher described virtual learning as a good method for delivering the same lesson in a different way using different strategies.

Specialists answers: all in all, the experience was new for SEND. A specialist said, “I’m glad that students are up to date with using different assistive technology that made remote learning successful”. Specialists believe that the emotional side changed in term of students’ resilient. It was great that students achieved things were not achieved in the regular classroom. However, a learning difficulty specialist said that “some students suffered because the home environment is not appropriate for online schooling in term of being free or having a quiet area to study or being distrusted in the home”. Another specialist answered,” We were successful in assisting students to succeed”.

4.6.Fnding Discussion

As everything new starts very difficult and with time human use to it. The remote learning experience was new for the majority of all students, teachers and accessibility specialists. Overall, online learning for most of the students with special educational needs and disabilities was positive. From the student's perspective, online learning was not much suitable for some courses such as advanced mathematics, management and sciences. The reason behind it goes back to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) the idea of "Zone of proximal development" explore that a student has his current ability but requires help and social interaction to develop fully, (Vygotsky sociocultural theory, n.d). So, social interaction is a must for teaching higher-level concepts such as math and science. I believe that without tangible materials, teaching science courses might be difficult in understanding and for learners with total vision loss or low vision it might be worse. A successful Shifting to e-learning requires people who have basic knowledge of using technology despite if they are students or teachers. For a certain category of SEND, this might need extra knowledge to get an effective learning process. I see advantages and disadvantages of studying remotely is a debatable topic and depends on student's disability, self-motivation, preferred learning style, surrounding environment and many other factors.

There are different advantages and disadvantages of remote learning during COVID-19 and all students agree that remote learning saves time where there is less time for transportation and getting to back to back classes on time especially for students with movement difficulties. Moreover, online learning being accessible anywhere, students take it as advantages in a way to manage their health issues and be committed with their appointments and physiotherapy sessions. However, remote learning can also increase health issues in some cases. For students with a physical disability, the minimal movement might lead to serious issues later. So, learners should manage their routine and include exercise as they might be setting in the same position more than half of the day. Time management might be the key to this issue as well. For students who are shy in class or have low confidence, online learning helped them to overcome their social weakness. Thus, remote learning is reducing social communication and meeting friends which might affect in a negative way for social people. So, all students, teachers and community

might get benefit from meeting psychologists or consular during COVID-19 crisis to maintain stable mental health. Even though online classroom base face technical issues but students and teachers gain different knowledge for using technology and online platform which make them up to date with technology and increase their skills.

Teachers like students found remote learning is a good experience with the availability of accommodated materials, support and communication from the students. They refer to remote learning as being a way of making students concentrate more in classes because of the absence of chatting and destructions in the actual classrooms. However, still, teachers find it difficult to check students understanding but this can be done when doing short quizzes or asking students during the lesson. The conflict was that some teachers felt that the quality of education reduces remote learning, yet others found the existence of the education system is an important fact now. The UAE took a positive, strong decision on continuing education during the crisis.

For specialists who support SEND in the university, remote learning depends on the learners' readiness to determine whether it is an easy or difficult experience. As everything transferred to online, physical training was not applicable in the situation COVID-19. According to specialists, students with disabilities became more independent academically but affected socially. Online learning is also affected student's physical and mental health, so counsellors and exercises will work great for all students with physical disabilities and learning difficulties. Both specialists and students reflected that remote learning was a good reason to gain more technical skills.

Remote learning for all students with physical disabilities and learning difficulties, teachers and specialists was overall good and worth to try. This will help everyone regardless of their responsibilities and job to be prepared for the future in a way that they are ready for remote education and remote working. COVID-19 was a true test for the education system and services in the university and all UAE educational institutions. It is only the beginning of using remote learning and with the proper services and modification on the teaching and learning system will make it possible and successful. I believe the quality of teaching and learning will increase in future once overcome the disadvantages and challenges.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to find out the advantages and disadvantages of remote learning for students with special educational needs and disabilities. It helps to get an idea of how the education system in a different point of view and perspectives such as learners having different disabilities, teachers and specialists. The overall experience was extremely new and good to save time, control health issues and overcome social problems. In this chapter, I focused more on the implementation of the research and further recommendations. Also, I will mention the research limitation and suggestion for further studies.

5.1.Implication for the research

The findings of this study contain verity of consideration and elements as it came from SEND with a different disability, so it depends on different experiences or perspectives. All parties agreed that the availability of technology and the internet is the fundamental stage for remote learning and thanks for the government to provide a high quality of internet and still providing internet and devices for low-income families. As Covid-19 pandemic is a recent issue that occurred in December 2019, very limited researchers about remote learning during the crisis. So, I started this study with limited information and recording outcomes from new experiences and thoughts. I'm still amazed by how people of determination find alternative ways to coop with changes, especially in education.

5.2.Recommendation

The most valuable recommendation is to consider all learners while implementing any education policy. Stakeholders should provide suggestion to overcome the disadvantages of distance learning in to develop the education system in the UAE. Training on new technology should be the aim from now on to keep both teachers and students prepared and up to date if any situation happened. For students with disabilities and certain occasion even when traditional classes are back, it can be implemented in case of studying during the recovery period or in distance. Also, providing psychological and mental support for learners from younger ages in

school may enhance students' mental health. Maybe a combination of traditional classroom and remote learning in future for learners s may increase their performance and skills for real-life situations.

5.3.Research limitation

The major limitation of this study that it was conducted only on few female students, teachers and special need specialists and all from one university faced the same procedure and have the same issues. Although they were a total of 15 participants, all provided significant evaluation for the situation. Extra participants will add more circumstances and arguments to the research's findings to make it generalized for all educational community in the UAE. Due to the safety protocol, only telephone calls and video meeting were the possible ways to conduct interviews which limited the use of other methods. If parents were included to reflect on remote learning for their daughters during the Coronavirus crisis, it will give a different point of view and experience. Besides, the research was done only for female learners because they were the only category available in the university and I think if there were males it will add to the findings remote learning from the male perspective.

5.4.Further study

This study drew attention on the impact of online learning and what are the advantages and disadvantages for students with special educational needs and disabilities during coronavirus pandemic. However, many questions remain. For example, as now the implementation of remote learning during COVID-19 will soon complete one year. So, it is important to investigate how to manage learners' behavior in distance learning for SEND. Also, the impact of remote learning for people with disabilities on the quality of education. What are the procedures and process for re-opening schools within COVID-19 and how the education system can be changed positively for SEND because of COVID-19? In addition, and from policies point of view, what are new policies for the education system during the crisis and how to include all learners? Further study could help investigate how to provide effective support for younger SEND who are in pre and primary grades or special centers during the crisis.

5.5.Conclusion

This study explored the positive and negative factors of implementing remote learning in a university during Covid-19 crisis in UAE via collecting data from interviewing students with special educational needs and disabilities, teachers and specialists. The objective is to study the readiness of the education system in UAE for SEND and to provide inclusion even during Covid-19 pandemic and not let them fall behind. Moreover, the study shows different advantages and disadvantages from a different point of views all in the same topic which is mainly education for SEND in the meantime to develop solutions and increase the quality and experience of students with physical and learning difficulties. I believe that effective collaboration between all stakeholders (administration, teaching staff, special need department and students with special educational needs and disabilities) will make the experience successful.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Consent form used

Consent Form

Research Topic: The Advantages and Disadvantages of Distance Learning for Special Need Students During Covid-19 at University in UAE

Invitation to Participate: I am researching project participant competency and you are invited to participate. My name is Mariyam Juma and I am accommodation officer at Zayed University, Students Accessibility Services department.

Research Purpose: The purpose of the study being conducted is to learn about the experiences of remote learning for students of determination who are in higher education institution in UAE as well as the faculty members who taught them. I am interested in learning about both experiences during covid-19 pandemic occurred and the system of education transformed along with advantages and disadvantages. There are no risks involved in participating on this study.

Research Method: Participation consists of one interview, enduring approximately twenty minutes. This interview will be recorded, but the option to participant will be provided whether he/she can disagree. There may be additional follow-up/clarification through email, by taking care of participant's choice and request regarding adding information.

Confidentiality: Privacy will be ensured through entire procedure and steps. Participation is established on volunteering and the interviewee has the right to terminate the interview at any time. Participants can say no at any time.

A summary of the results will be available to participants upon request. Please contact interviewer, with any questions or concerns.

Signing Consent Form: Your signature on this Consent Form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in this research project and agree to participate as a participant.

Signature of Interviewee Date

Signature of Interviewer Date

Contact Information

Mariyam Juma

Telephone: 0501088841

Email: mariyam-ismj@hotmail.com |

Appendix 2. Sample of signed consent form

Consent Form

Research Topic: The Advantages and Disadvantages of Distance Learning for Special Need Students During Covid-19 at University in UAE

Invitation to Participate: I am researching project participant competency and you are invited to participate. My name is Mariyam Juma and I am accommodation officer at Zayed University, Students Accessibility Services department.

Research Purpose: The purpose of the study being conducted is to learn about the experiences of remote learning for students of determination who are in higher education institution in UAE as well as the faculty members who taught them. I am interested in learning about both experiences during covid-19 pandemic occurred and the system of education transformed along with advantages and disadvantages. There are no risks involved in participating on this study.

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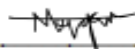
Confidentiality: Privacy will be ensured through entire procedure and steps. Participation is established on volunteering and the interviewee has the right to terminate the interview at any time. Participants can say no at any time.

A summary of the results will be available to participants upon request. Please contact interviewer, with any questions or concerns.

Signing Consent Form: Your signature on this Consent Form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in this research project and agree to participate as a participant.



Signature of Interviewee Date



Signature of Interviewer Date

Contact Information

Mariyam Juma

Telephone: 0501088841

Email: mariyam-ismj@hotmail.com

Consent Form

Research Topic: The Advantages and Disadvantages of Distance Learning for Special Need Students During Covid-19 at University in UAE

Invitation to Participate: I am researching project participant competency and you are invited to participate. My name is Mariyam Juma and I am accommodation officer at Zayed University, Students Accessibility Services department.

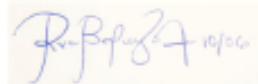
Research Purpose: The purpose of the study being conducted is to learn about the experiences of remote learning for students of determination who are in higher education institution in UAE as well as the faculty members who taught them. I am interested in learning about both experiences during covid-19 pandemic occurred and the system of education transformed along with advantages and disadvantages. There are no risks involved in participating on this study.

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A summary of the results will be available to participants upon request. Please contact interviewer, with any questions or concerns.

Signing Consent Form: Your signature on this Consent Form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in this research project and agree to participate as a participant.



R [redacted] 10/06
Signature of Interviewee Date



Signature of Interviewer Date

Contact Information
Mariyam Juma
Telephone: 0501088841
Email: mariyam-ismi@hotmail.com

Interview questions

Research title: The Advantages and Disadvantages Of Distance Learning For Special Need Students During Covid-19 at University in UAE

Mariyam Juma
20180999

- 1-How was the unexpected transformation from traditional classroom to online classroom?
- 2-Which type of courses you used to teach/study through online classroom and how was the experience with it?
- 3-What are the advantages of remote learning during covid-19 pandemic?
- 4-What are the disadvantages of remote learning during covid-19 pandemic?
- 5-How was the overall experience of remote learning ?