Chapter 107

# The Impact of the COVID–19 Pandemic on E–Learning Strata Among University Students in Morocco:
## Assessing Mechanics of Knowledge Reception, Cognition, and Approbation

**Hind Brigui**

*Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra, Morocco*

## ABSTRACT

*This chapter investigates the e-learning experience of Moroccan public university students during the COVID-19-prompted quarantine. It aims to identify and analyze the effects of the online learning context during the pandemic on students' actual learning process as divided into three main stages. It consequently attempts to determine and measure means of receiving—technically, mentally, and emotionally—cognizing or understanding, and appropriating class contents online amidst the unintentional shock of the pandemic and the limited affordability and accessibility to web-based education. A sample of 448 students was randomly selected and surveyed by means of an online detailed self-prepared questionnaire in order to test three hypotheses. Results show that learners did not manage to succeed in all the three stages of the e-learning process, which puts their actual e-learning usability and usefulness into question.*

## INTRODUCTION

Nobody expected the outbreak of Coronavirus and, of course, nobody was prepared. The Coronavirus, also referred to as COVID-19, has put the whole world in a challenging position due to the obvious life-threatening danger it presents and the worldwide rate of spread and infection. In addition to taking too many lives, it has triggered a number of problems such as unemployment, social distancing, disruption

of businesses and daily life. Since the beginning of March, the Moroccan government has laid down a strict strategy for reducing the spread of COVID-19 via the rules of specific social restrictions. Progressive measures are being taken to limit the spread of the virus by restricting human activity. It cannot be denied, however, that despite these various steps taken by the government to reduce COVID-19 transmission, there will always be community fear.

In the field of education, on March 13th, the Moroccan Government announced the closure of schools, effective March 16th. Following this decision, classes have been arranged from a distance, via internet, until further notice. Learning from home is implemented, carried out online, and through Moroccan Television channels, which show educational broadcasts simultaneously, every day, at every level of education. Still, the Ministry of Education in Morocco estimates that only 26% percent of students were able to access online education despite the significant efforts made by the government and educational institutions at all levels to find practical solutions in online learning amid the COVID-19 outbreak. At the level of higher education institution, the actual context seems more favorable compared to other educational levels.

To carry on with the teaching and learning process, institutions have instructed academicians to carry out classes virtually using online tools and services that were generally not tested before. Different universities managed to create online platforms and MOOCS to disseminate courses to every single student. Major tools such as university websites and emails were made available even with no internet connection. Academicians have found themselves in a different teaching environment where their students are supposed to be present within a computer screen as they deliver study content through online meetings and learning platforms. They also had to review their overall syllabus structures to ensure that students are taught fairly given all the shortcomings. In addition, all kinds of traditional and typical assessments (tests, quizzes, practical laboratories, viva, exams) are no longer possible. To overcome this issue, all assessments have been postponed till the beginning of the new academic year in September, with the exception of some Master's and first-of-a-kind Ph.D. defenses that were organized online.

The above presented image opens the floor to be optimistic towards the results of such undertaken measures, but the available research conclusions around the globe do not all share that hopeful outcome. Onyema and Sen (2020), for example, whose study was based on data gathered from different countries, including Nigeria, Bangladesh, India and Saudi Arabia, affirm "the devastating effects of COVID-19 pandemic on education and the various barriers that hinder students and instructors engagements in online education for continued learning during the COVID-19 lockdown" (p. 118). The same idea was shared by Rababah (2020) who found that university students in Jordan are faced with constraining factors while learning through ICT platforms that makes their e-learning experience not as good as expected. On the other hand, in Indonesia, Allo (2020) showed that the learners' perception on online learning reveals that it is good in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, in China, Pan (2020) characterized the Chinese college students' experience as unique and positive. So far, in the Moroccan context, there has been no detailed research on the impact of implementing e-learning during a pandemic outbreak on students. It worth mentioning that this study is based on the researcher's previous investigation on the e- learning readiness of Moroccan university students in a way to expect the success or failure of the new distance learning measures prompted by the COVID-19 outbreak. It particularly looked into "the students' perceptions about the main components of e-learning, namely, availability of technology, use of technology, self-confidence, acceptance and training in a way to predict the impact of e-learning on the students" (Brigui, 2020, p. 2). Results show that Moroccan EFL university students are ready for e-learning, though not with a striking high level, which is a good indicator of successful e-learning. In

24 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-e-learning-strata-among-university-students-in-morocco/312826](www.igi-global.com/chapter/the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-e-learning-strata-among-university-students-in-morocco/312826)

## Related Content

College Students ' Ecological Environment Moral Education From the Perspective of Ecological Civilization
Renjun Yaoand Rola Ajjawi (2024). *International Journal of Web-Based Learning and Teaching Technologies (pp. 1-12).*
[www.irma-international.org/article/college-students--ecological-environment-moral-education-from-the-perspective-of-ecological-civilization/336833](www.irma-international.org/article/college-students--ecological-environment-moral-education-from-the-perspective-of-ecological-civilization/336833)

Leveraging Web 2.0 for Online Learning
Prerna Lal (2015). *Student-Teacher Interaction in Online Learning Environments (pp. 235-249).*
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/leveraging-web-20-for-online-learning/116999](www.irma-international.org/chapter/leveraging-web-20-for-online-learning/116999)

Explain the Behavior Intention to Use e-Learning Technologies: A Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology Perspective
Amin A. Shaqrah (2015). *International Journal of Web-Based Learning and Teaching Technologies (pp. 19-32).*
[www.irma-international.org/article/explain-the-behavior-intention-to-use-e-learning-technologies/132742](www.irma-international.org/article/explain-the-behavior-intention-to-use-e-learning-technologies/132742)

Detecting Fake News Over Job Posts via Bi-Directional Long Short-Term Memory (BIDLSTM)
T. V. Divyaand Barnali Gupta Banik (2021). *International Journal of Web-Based Learning and Teaching Technologies (pp. 1-18).*
[www.irma-international.org/article/detecting-fake-news-over-job-posts-via-bi-directional-long-short-term-memory-bidlstm/287096](www.irma-international.org/article/detecting-fake-news-over-job-posts-via-bi-directional-long-short-term-memory-bidlstm/287096)

Contact and Interactivity in Televised Learning: 15 Years Later
Virginia Tucker Steffen (2017). *Handbook of Research on Writing and Composing in the Age of MOOCs (pp. 137-152).*
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/contact-and-interactivity-in-televised-learning/172584](www.irma-international.org/chapter/contact-and-interactivity-in-televised-learning/172584)