Problems associated with the practice of distance education as an alternative mechanism to Attendance education and how to face them a study applied to students of social work at Umm Al-Qura University

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Abstract

The current research aimed at identifying the problems associated with the practice of distance education as an alternative to Attendance education from the students' point of view, as well as identifying the roles, methods and skills that the practitioner social worker can use in professional work within the university community for facing these problems. The current research was conducted in the period from December 2020 to May 2021, and the research population consisted of a sample of 125 male students from all the academic levels at the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social Science. Social survey and a questionnaire were used in the current analytical descriptive research. Results showed that the problems facing students were divided into four classifications that related to: students' relationship with course teachers during distance education practice, students' psychology, students' lack of distance education skills, and the lack of infrastructure of distance education. These four classifications were overlapping from the students' point of view. New mechanisms, new roles and new skills for the social worker should be found to participate in addressing these problems.

Key Words: Distance Education, **A**ttendance Education, Problem, E learning.

Introduction

Distance education is one of the largest fields that witnesses rapid and escalating growth and development as a result of scientific and technological developments. Because of the characteristics and features of online education, authorities responsible for education in the world seek to use it in the implementation of their programs that are provided to all learners, and its market size is doubled every year.

Perhaps the reason for this global interest in distance education is due to the guarantee it offers to educational institutions and their staff and students in terms of raising the quality of their programs, providing renewable sources of knowledge, increasing the effectiveness of teaching, increasing the spread of the educational programs they offer, and transcending the limits of the place to become global, so that students can study from around the world and at lower financial costs(Al-Mebrek, 2002)

E-learning and distance education are among the modern methods of education that help in solving the problem of the knowledge explosion and the increasing demand for education. In raising the percentage of learners and eliminating illiteracy, distance education greatly increases the effectiveness of education and reduces the time needed for Jraining. It, also, reduces the cost of training (Guckel , K. & Ziemer, Z,2009) and allows for live interviews and discussions on the network, simulations, exercises and interactive practical applications (Al- Karam, A. M. & Al- Ali, N. M, 2001).

Distance education is defined as a style of teaching delivered electronically using computer-based media, in which educational materials are frequently accessed over a network, including websites, the Internet, cross-networks, CDs, and CDs. DVD e-learning not only access information as creating web pages, but also assist learners in achieving specific results as achievement of goals. In addition to providing teaching or teaching via e-learning, students' performance is monitored and their progress is reported. (Yuhanna, Alexander & Kachik, 2020).

Furthermore, distance education helps in solving the problem of overcrowding in lecture halls, and contributes in increasing acceptance in education, training and educating workers and qualifying them without leaving their jobs and educating housewives, and thus raises the percentage of learners and eliminates illiteracy. Distance education increases the effectiveness of information consistent with the needs of learners, and provides simulation programs, exercises and interactive practical applications (Al- Karam, Al- Ali,, 2001)

Among the benefits of distance education is its ability to meet the needs of individual learners so that individuals learn at their own pace, improve information retention, timely access to information, update quickly information in the network, unify content and information for all users, improve cooperation and interaction among students, and reduce students feeling of embarrassment in front of their colleagues when they make a mistake (Burnner, 2003).

The Corona pandemic that the world suffers from resulted in severe global social and economic damage, including the largest global economic recession since the Great Depression, in addition to the postponement or cancellation of sporting, religious, political and cultural events, significant shortages in supplies and equipment, reduced emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases, and the closure of schools, universities and colleges, and the pandemic caused the largest interruption in education and training systems in history. It has caused the prosperity and recovery of the idea of distance education, after students stayed at home and did not go out to the streets or schools and universities. It forces officials to think about the appropriate alternative represented in distance education, which provides the opportunity for the continuity of education, despite its different approach and methodology from traditional face to face education. (Hassan, 2020).

Based on what is previously stated, the world has witnessed a revolution in the field of education since the beginning of the Corona pandemic and is forced to join distance education, which has led to the collapse of the routine system of going to school or the training hall and students' feeling of comfort due to not having to use transportation or equipment or preparing meals and other consequences of attendance education.

The students, in general, and in the social work department in particular, faced this transformation and the transition from in-person education to distance education. However, they meet great challenges represented in their lack of training in using electronic platforms and the lack of motivation to use them, the interruption of the Internet, and the difficulty of accessing black Board sites and other matters that may have affected the educational process to some extent.

Research Problem

The Covid-19 pandemic has prompted hundreds of millions of students and pupils around the world to resort to distance education, suddenly. Some of them were ready and

equipped to live such an experience, while others faced many obstacles due to the lack of the equipment and techniques .The period of sanitary isolation and social distancing that the world is going through revealed several difficulties that stood in the way of distance education, perhaps the most important of which are: (https://www.mc-doualiya.com)

1-   The Internet has witnessed great overcrowding as the majority of citizens stay at their homes and resort to the Internet for working, learning or entertainment, which has led to its slowness and the inability of students to connect sometimes to the virtual lessons platforms.

2-   Not everyone has good access to the Internet, where communication via the Internet is the basic condition for the availability of distance education at the present time, as it has swept our daily lives and communication without it has become almost impossible.

3-   Not all students have a personal computer at home. This fact has revealed the existence of social disparity between students, as many do not have a personal computer, the social disparity has been evident in families with multiple children or limited income so that they do not have a computer and printer.

3-   Parents are not teachers: it is difficult for students to help their parents to bridge the gaps in the teacher's absence, which also revealed a social disparity between those who are able to teach their children and those who do not have the qualifications to do so.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is keen to expand the scope of distance education in its various universities. It is included in Vision of 2030, as it refers to the possibility of transferring academic study from educational courses and university campuses to various places in many geographical areas inside or outside the country, where the distance learning process aims at achieving the following goals (Zyadde.com/distance Education):

1-   Working to avoid the problem of moving to the headquarters of universities that are far from some students, which is one of the problems that many face and reduces their chances of joining university education, in addition to the fact that distance education is not obligated to specific times, which makes it easier for many people who have duties to enroll in university education without affecting their other duties.

2 -   Getting rid of the problem of the lack of professors in some universities.

3-   Providing data and information by applying international standards in this regard with following the modern regulations adopted in foreign countries

4-   The fact that distance education is much more flexible than regular education, as it is possible to enroll in any university without having consequences specific to place or time, in addition to that it provides great flexibility in dealing with changes at the global level.

5-   Distance education achieves the principle of education, as a guaranteed right for all, which is adopted by Saudi law.

6-   The cost of studying in distance education is lower than the costs of regular study, which encourages many individuals to enroll in university education.

Based on distance education connection to the Kingdom's Vision of 2030, the current research problem has been stated as follows:

1-   Working to avoid the problem of moving to the headquarters of universities far from some students, which is one of the most problems that many face and reduces their chances of enrolling in university education, in addition to the fact that distance education is not obligated to specific times, which makes it easier for many people who have other tasks to enroll. University education without affecting their other duties.

2 -   Getting rid of the problem of the deficit in university education professors in some universities.

3-   Providing data and information by applying international standards in this regard by following the modern systems adopted in foreign countries.

4-   The fact that distance education is much more flexible than regular education, as it is possible to enroll in any university without having consequences specific to place or time, in addition to that it provides great flexibility in dealing with changes at the global level.

5-   Distance education achieves the principle of education as a guaranteed right for all, which is adopted by Saudi law.

6-   The cost of studying in distance education is lower than the costs of regular study, which encourages many individuals to enroll in university education.

Based on the foregoing and its connection with the Kingdom's Vision 2030, the research problem has been crystallized as follows:

"Problems associated with the practice of distance education as an alternative mechanism to Attendance education and how to face them"

A study applied to students of social work at Umm Al-Qura University

Literature Review

Al-Sufyani, (2008) studied distance education and the philosophy of its capabilities and educational media. The study showed that the pillars of distance education are many and multiple, the most important of which are printed educational material, visual and audio media, the mechanism of information delivery, study centers, academic supervision, student services and assessment. The study, also, indicated that some do not differentiate between distance education and multi-channel education used in formal educational institutions.

Al-Mousa (2007) aimed at knowing the effect of using web pages on the academic achievement of students at the educational technology course at the Teachers College in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The study concluded that there were no statistical differences at the (0.05) level between the mean score of the experimental group and that of the control group at the academic achievement of the educational technology course, favoring the experimental group. The study aimed evaluating the current experience of e- learning at the Arab Open University (Riyadh Branch) and The General Corporation for Technical Education and Vocational Training in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from the students' point of view. Findings revealed that: The interaction of students with e-learning was affected by the inability to apply e-learning, which depends on some factors such as students' proficiency in using computers and familiarity with technology and a large strata of the sample needed to understand the information and to have help to follow the curriculum, which reduced their abilities for self-learning and the costs of connecting to the Internet and the absence of a teacher when needed are among the most prominent obstacles to e-learning.

Al-Zamil (2005): indicated a lack of agreement, between those interested in the concept of distance education, as some researchers are satisfied with considering it as an aid in the method of teaching using technology, while the other group believe that the concept of e-learning includes the   elements of the entire process. In the field of devices, tools and equipment, the study concluded that the position of the basic elements of infrastructure in the field were laid, and in the field of curricula, it reached that there are special standards for

electronic curricula that must be followed when designing curricula used in distance education and that training the teacher and the learner on new technologies and strategies is a prerequisite for the educational process.

Al-Zahrani (2004): aimed at identifying the views of faculty members towards the use of virtual classrooms in the distance education program, identifying the importance of using virtual classrooms in the program, and identifying the difficulties that limit the use of virtual classrooms in the distance education program. Results indicated no significant statistical differences between the responses of the study sample towards the use of virtual classrooms in the distance education program due to4

The familiarity of using the Internet. The study recommended expanding the scope of distance education with the virtual classroom system in all colleges.

Dennis (2021) compared the outcomes of problem-based learning between synchronous online groups and traditional face-to-face learning groups, in terms of learning outcomes and time of performing the task. The study used a post-test control group design to investigate the effects of learning conditions on learning outcomes and processes. The experiential learning condition was defined as computer-mediated problem-based learning (CMPBL), while the control learning condition was the traditional problem-based learning in face-to-face groups. (TPBL). The learning process consisted of four components: an initial educational program, a self-directed learning period, a second educational course, and a lecture in the laboratory. During the initial tutorial, students created learning problems that they submitted to the search engine. In the self-learning phase, the groups shared information related to their learning issues. Results showed no significant difference in learning outcomes between groups, as the CMPBL experimental group spent much more time learning than the traditional TPBL control group - possibly due to their inability to use technology in learning.

Al-Qahtani (2009) studied the educational design criteria for the student of distance education through the experience of the Open University of Sudan. The study clarified the conditions and criteria that must be taken into account in the educational design of the distance education conditions, and the extent to which these conditions were related to the overall education at the University of Sudan .The study confirmed that for distance education to be applied ,transparency should be linked to those in charge of these objective standards that increase the effectiveness of the educational design of distance education.

Idris, (2010) identified the proposed vision for the foundations of developing distance education in Saudi universities, the concept and dimensions of distance education, its reality in the universities of the Kingdom, and the extent of benefiting from contemporary global trends in the field of distance education. The study found that there was a consensus among experts on the importance of distance education. The study, also, indicated a need to establish cooperative and financing relations between the Ministry of Education, companies and civil society organizations, to prepare well-constructed educational programs within the teacher preparation programs, so that the teacher is able to make optimal use of educational technologies, and to establish a specialized center to develop electronic curricula and link them to a unified information network.

Awwad (2020) attempted to find out the response plan to the outbreak of the Covid-19 disease   and distance education in Moroccan universities. The study examined various documents consisting of news articles for daily newspapers, reports and notices from the universities' website. Results indicated that the pandemic challenged universities to continue

to overcome the difficulties facing both students and professors, and invest in scientific research to discover a vaccine. New teaching methods were based on increased student autonomy, and additional duties for professors were to maintain their work from home, and to provide free access to a few paid e-learning platforms or databases.

Al-Attas (2020) tried to know the impact of closing universities due to the Corona virus (Covid-19) on education and the mental health of students and faculty, as the new coronavirus originated in Wuhan, China, and spread rapidly throughout the world, and thus a large number of universities postponed or canceled all university activities. Universities have taken extensive measures to protect students and staff from the highly contagious disease, and faculty members have moved to electronic distance learning system. Results showed that universities must implement laws to slow the spread of the virus, the health and safety of students and staff must be a top priority, counseling services must be available to support the mental health of students, and the authorities must take responsibility for ensuring food, and housing for students.

Berg and Simonson (2020) aimed at clarifying the ways in which the Corona pandemic affected the reshaping of education in Indonesia and explained the types and learning strategies that teachers use in the world via the Internet due to the closure of universities to limit the spread of the Coronavirus. The study, also, clarified the advantages and effectiveness of using online learning, where it indicated a high rate of impact of the Corona epidemic on the education system, as the traditional method of education has declined, and the spread of learning at home through the Internet to reduce the mixing of individuals with each other, and reduce the spread of the virus. The study proved the importance of using various strategies to increase the smoothness and improve Education through the Internet.

Canno, (2020) tried to study the experience of moving from learning in schools to learning via the Internet during the spread of the Corona virus epidemic in Georgia. After studying the benefits of distance education such as with special needs persons who need additional hours, increasing the effectiveness of group teaching or increasing student independence and acquiring new skills .The study concluded that the transition from traditional education and online education was successful, and the system and skills acquired by teachers, students and school management can be benefited from.

Dubois and Will (2020) aimed at revealing the difference between distance teaching in emergencies and online education, where the researchers designed a model consisting of evaluation conditions and a set of questions through which distance teaching can be evaluated in emergency situations and measure the success of online learning experiences, in terms of quality of planning, and courses offered online in response to a crisis or disaster.

Commentary on Previous Studies

The previously mentioned studies dealt with many variables that affect distance education and its activities, including: educational media, web pages., difficulty of the evaluation process, difficulty of agreeing on its concept, problems in virtual classrooms, educational design standards, errors in program implementation, reshaping education and its opportunities, the absence of a middle stage between physical education and distance education. Results confirmed that most of these variables affect, to varying degrees, the current practice of distance education, and it is noted that there is a lack of references and studies that interact with the negative aspect of distance education practices, and that address its problems and difficulties facing it.

Significance of Research

1- Harmony and compatibility with the recommendations of global, regional and local conferences and symposiums that have called for the development of education, and stressed the importance of using modern technological strategies and means in the educational process in order to reach better education in the shortest time and the least cost and effort possible.

2- Reaching recommendations and proposals that help remove and confront the difficulties that limit the emergence of distance education in a positive mental way and reduce the difficulties that impose a negative mental image of it.

3- The current research seeks to confirm the importance of educational diversity and not to rely on a single mechanism in education, as it provides an opportunity to use distance education effectively and freely without pressure imposed on those in charge of education.

4- The scarcity of studies and research that dealt with the subject of distance education within the framework of the profession of social work and its branches, more accurately within the framework of the general practice of the profession, or within the limits of clinical therapeutic efforts.

5- Its importance with the outbreak of the Corona epidemic in the countries of the world which imposed on all educational institutions a shift from face-to-face education that allows physical rapprochement, and constitutes an opportunity for transmission of infection, to e-learning or distance education, as a type of education that had a controversy over the necessity of incorporating it into the educational process before the Corona pandemic. However, it has become an alternative and an urgent necessity for the continuation of education in conditions that impose physical social distancing.

6- The current research helps in activating and spreading e-education, including distance education, training on it and practicing and getting used to its problems, in addition to its contribution to some extent in applying the preventive precautionary measures for students in the face of Covid-19.

7- The current research may contribute in achieving the vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030 to provide the highest level of welfare in the Kingdom, it may contribute to the realization of some mechanisms of establishing the vision.

8- Distance education is an investment in two fields, one of which is the field of education, which is called the human industry, and the second is information technology, which represents one of the most important alternatives that the educational system can rely on to develop its components of operations and outputs.

Research Aims

1- Determining the problems associated with the practice of distance education as an alternative mechanism for traditional education.

2- Identifying the role played by the social work profession in dealing with the problems associated with distance education practice.

3- Determining the methods and techniques used by the social worker in dealing with the problems associated with distance education practice.

4- Recognizing the quality of the skills applied by the social worker in dealing with the problems associated with distance education practice.

5- Developing a proposed theoretical vision for the role of the social worker that can be practiced in facing the problems of education practice.

Research Questions

The current research tried to answer the following questions

1-   What are the problems associated with the practice of distance education as an alternative mechanism for traditional face-to-face education?
2-   What is the nature of the role played by the profession of social work in dealing with the problems associated with distance education practice?
3-   What are the methods and techniques used by the social worker in dealing with the problems associated with   distance education practice?
4-   What are the types of skills that the social worker uses in dealing with the problems associated with distance education practice?
5-   What are the proposed solutions designed to deal with the problems associated with distance education practice?

Research Concepts

1- The concept of the problem:

A situation that occurs as a result of factors and conditions related to the social environment and that requires a corrective treatment through the collection of social means and methods to face and treat it (Rondy, 2020).

It is a state of dissatisfaction or an undesirable result, giving the sense that there are obstacles that must be overcome to achieve a goal, and it arises from the presence of several known or unknown reasons, that need to be studied to identify and try to solve them in order to reach the desired goals. The problems differ in terms of Its type, severity and impact (Kabatkhana, 2016)

The problem is operationally defined in the current research   as the problems or difficulties that accompany the application and practice of distance education, those problems that social work students feel while practicing distance education.

2- The concept of distance education:

It is an interactive system linked to the educational process and based on the existence of a digital electronic environment that presents students with courses through electronic networks and smart devices(Al-Hadi, 2005)

It is the process of teaching and learning that includes the transfer and acquisition of knowledge and skills through multiple media, and used due to the distance between the teacher and the learner (Kandil, 2006)

It is operationally defined as the planned and purposeful process in which students of social work at Umm Al-Qura University interact with faculty members to achieve specific goals and outputs through the use of interactive educational software, electronic networks and smart devices to ensure physical distancing during the period of the spread of the Corona virus.

3- The concept of Coronavirus (Covid-19):

It is a family of viruses that may cause disease in animals and humans, and cause respiratory diseases in humans ranging from severity of common colds to more severe diseases,

especially Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, and severe respiratory syndrome (SARS) and is rapidly spreading (Al-Fuhaid, 2020,WHO, 2020).

Coronavirus (Covid-19) is operationally defined in the current research as one of the dangerous infectious diseases that affects the respiratory system of humans and may cause death .It requires precautionary measures, the most important of which is physical distancing.

4- The concept of e-learning:

It is the use of technology and technological means in education and harnessing them to teach the student individually and collectively and making him the focus of the lecture, starting with the technologies used for display in the classroom from multimedia and electronic devices, and ending with the output physical components of education such as the smart school and virtual classes through which the interaction between the members of the educational process takes place via the Internet and interactive video technologies (WHO, 2020).

Theoretical Background

1- Connectivism Theory:

This theory is based upon the fact that there are two separate channels (auditory and visual) for processing information. Each channel has a finite capacity, and the learner can only process a finite amount of information in one channel at a time.

The brain does not interpret a multimedia presentation of words, pictures, and auditory information in a mutually exclusive fashion; rather, these elements are selected and organized dynamically to produce logical mental constructs.

Learning is an active process of filtering, selecting, organizing, and integrating information based upon prior knowledge, and the learner makes sense of incoming information by actively creating mental representations. (Clark& Mayer, 2008)

Reflection upon content is important. In the online environment, an instructor can ask students to reflect upon the content to bring prior knowledge and experience to the forefronts of their minds.

In order for learning to be meaningful, it should be relevant. In the online environment, an instructor or instructional designer may identify learners' prior knowledge and background and relate instruction and assignments to learners' backgrounds.

Mayer, (2003) says the following about learner centeredness, "it is not what is done to the learner, but how the learner interprets what happens, that is, on the learner's personal experience" (p. 5).

Cognitivism recognizes that not all learners have the same level of cognitive abilities. As a result, not every distance learner will progress at the same level. eLearning course designers should, therefore: Allow individual learners to sequence learning content the way they need (Clark& Mayer, 2008); a few are identified here:

2- The Rationale of Distance Education:

Distance education is that type of education that depends on the use of electronic means in communication between the parties of education, the teacher, the learner, and the educational institution. The need for distance education has increased as an actual alternative in the

presence of difficulties facing traditional education and its practice alongside traditional education is to increase its effectiveness. The rationale behind distance education is the increase in the number of alternatives and choices for the teacher to improve the educational process, and the importance of distance education has increased even before the emergence of Covid (19) due to several reasons, including: (Kandil, 2006)The low level of education, as educational systems have become unable to keep pace with global development, and the multiplicity of curricula and sources of knowledge, the speed of information flow, the importance of self-learning, the development of the individual's abilities of thinking and creativity, the increasing awareness of the working group of society towards developing their knowledge and experiences, new trends in international conferences about specialization, the desire of persons who missed the opportunity of education due to certain circumstances to enroll in schools and continue education, the increase in the number of students per class due to the lack of schools, and the imbalance in the geographical distribution of educational institutions as a result of focusing on areas with high population density. These are the most important justifications for the existence of distance education.

3- Problems facing Distance Education

a- Technical problems:

It is represented in the weak technical support provided to male and female students at universities, weak Internet service by service providers, the lack of appropriate computers and programs, in addition to the lack of trained technical support teams at universities with necessary adequate understanding of the nature of the modifications that these students need to access to the electronic content easily. Actually, the difficulties related to the availability and speed of Internet technology service have affected students' utilization of distance education in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the geographical regions to which these universities belong.

b- Difficulty of Evaluation

There is a difficulty of evaluating university performance in distance education, meaning the difficulty of using all mechanisms that can give a good evaluation for students, course teachers and all those concerned with distance education:

There are some types of exams that are difficult to apply online.

c- Education outputs are kept away from the labor market.

This is related to the failure of institutions to measure this type of education on the basis of the needs of the labor market, and thus the students feeling difficulty to engage in work.

d- Absence of scientific conditions for distance education

The absence of scientific standards and conditions for this type of education does not indicate its weakness as much as it indicates the inability of its users to establish its own scientific goals. It is also difficult at the current stage to achieve scientific communication with international and regional academic institutions in this field.

e - Problems of the Internet:

These include

1-   Not everyone has a good Internet transmission, so the Internet is rapid in some geographical areas, weak in others, and average in third areas.
2-   Not all students have a good personal computer to access the Internet effectively.

3-   Not training students to use the (online) programs.
4-   Students feel that the screen does not replace the teacher and the course instructor. (Fojtik, 2018)

Research Methodology and Procedures

Research Design

The current research is descriptive analytical studies that describes the reality of the problems associated with the practice of distance education as an alternative mechanism for face-to-face education, and how to confront these problems from the students' point of view.

Research Methodology

The sample social survey method was used for the university youth sector, for investigating the problems associated with distance education after the outbreak of the Corona pandemic.

Research Population

The research population consisted of a sample of 125 male students who were selected randomly from different grades at the Department of Social Work/ Faculty of Social Sciences during the academic year (2020/2021),.

Research Tools:

To achieve the objectives of the current study, a questionnaire was designed of the problems associated with the practice of distance education after referring to a number of previous studies, as well as to the views of 12.university professors at Umm Al-Qura and experts in this field. The criteria for the questionnaire consisted of the following items:

1-   Primary data.
2-   The problems that students face in their relationship with course instructors are related to distance education.
3-   Problems that students suffer psychologically as a result of distance education.
4-   Problems faced by students related to their lack of distance education skills.
5-   Problems faced by students related to the lack of infrastructure for distance education.
6-   The methods that the social worker can use to face the problems resulting from distance education.
7-   The skills that the social worker can apply to face the problems resulting from distance education.
8-   The professional roles that the social worker can offer to face the problems resulting from distance education.
9-   Solutions and suggestions for problems arising from distance education.

In order to achieve the external validity of the questionnaire, it was submitted to several jurors of professional faculty members at Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah Al-Mukarramah, in order to judge the suitability of its items to the sample of the study, the clarity of its language, the effectiveness of its items alternatives, the items number, and the extent of Items' representation for the problems of the students. The correlation coefficient of the

questionnaire that expresses the external validity was 98.2% at the statistical significance level (0.05), which means an acceptable degree of validity.

In order to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, the reliability coefficient was measured through the test -retest method. The questionnaire was re-applied after two weeks on a pilot sample consisting of (15) students from the Department of Social Work, College of Social Sciences, Umm Al-Qura University, and then the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the two estimates of the whole questionnaire, and the Cronbach alpha equation was used to measure the questionnaire reliability, the questionnaire score was 91% on the test- retest method , and 92.7% on the Cronbach alpha coefficient, which means a high degree of reliability. The questionnaire was applied to students at the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences, Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah Al-Mukarramah on a random sample of 125 students in the time period from late December 2020 to May 2021 and results were extracted by analyzing the tables related to the questionnaire.

Some significance tables of research:
Table (1) *The problems that students face in their relationship with course instructors*

Problem	Yes	To some extent	No	Weighted Average	Arrangement
1- Lack of usual communication and interaction between the student and the teacher	70	27	28	2.35	8
2- His inability to control and prevent fraud during assessments	87	29	9	2.63	1
3- The teacher's inability to attach educational materials to students easily and easily	75	22	28	2.38	5
4- Not being able to answer students' inquiries on a continuous basis	62	18	45	2.13	10
5- Not being able to fully control the lecture.	79	27	19	2.50	3
-6- Difficulty of taking into account individual differences among students	62	18	45	2.13	10
7- Inability to commit to continuous assessment of students	61	37	27	2.27	7
8- Difficulty creating electronic exams	68	35	22	2.38	5
9- Difficulty tracking the attendance and absence of students	80	22	23	2.55	2
of 10. The teacher tends to focus on theory rather than practice	71	31	23	2.38	5
11- Difficulty asking questions, managing discussion and interaction	76	31	18	2.47	4
12- Difficulty sending and receiving homework	61	38	26	2.27	9

Table (2) *Psychological problems that students face as a result of distance education*

Problem	Yes	To some extent	No	Weighted average	Arrangement
- Boredom as a result of sitting behind screens for a long time	85	25	15	2.57	3
2- Loss of focus after attending more than one lecture	78	25	22	2.45	4
3- Feeling of technical isolation	69	35	21	2.39	6
4- Not being able to understand all aspects of the lecture	61	37	27	2.27	7
5- The lecture is boring and devoid of interaction	78	25	22	2.45	4
6- The student's feeling of lack of seriousness and commitment	68	36	21	2.38	9
7- The student lacks motivation and encouragement	69	34	22	2.39	6
8- Ease of being affected by side caterers	86	24	15	2.58	2
9- Low student motivation to participate	87	29	9	2.63	1
10- The student is not accustomed to this amount and type of teaching inside the home	62	18	45	2.13	8

Table (3) *The problems related to students' lack of distance learning skills*

Problem	Yes	To some extent	No	Weighted Average	Arrangement
1- Lacking the skill of sending assignments via Blackboard or other platforms easily and easily	74	22	30	2.35	6
2- It is not possible to respond to their inquiries on an ongoing basis	82	31	13	2.55	2
3- Difficult to attend assessment tests regularly	83	27	16	2.53	4
4- Difficulty attending all lectures	83	30	12	2.55	2
5- Difficult to prepare in advance for the lecture	99	16	11	2.90	1
6- Difficulty of asking questions and managing discussion in an educationally motivated manner	69	33	24	2.36	5
7- Difficulty in purchasing some equipment required for distance learning as well as training on equipment use	60	22	34	2.12	7

Table (4) *Problems faced by students related to the lack of infrastructure for distance education*

Problem	Yes	To some extent	No	Weighted Average	Arrangement
1- Difficulty and weakness of internet service	68	36	21	2.38	6
2- The virtual library is not available as a source of information	69	34	22	2.39	4
3- Inability to deal with technical and technical support	61	37	27	2.27	7
4-Some students do not have computers or smartphones	76	31	18	2.47	3
5- Not training students on using distance education tools, especially transmitters	70	33	22	2.39	4
6- Not providing a guide for using the course websites	98	15	13	2.77	1
7- Disabling the blackboard and its irregularity	84	22	20	2.52	2

Results and Discussion

Results related to the first question stating " What is the quality of the problems associated with the practice of distance education? " recommended that the quality of the problems associated with the practice of distance education as an alternative mechanism for traditional face to face education, includes four problems from the students' point of view, each problem includes within it multiple sub-problems, the problems can be prioritized from the students' point of view where the calculated weighted average scores were as follows:

1- The psychological problems associated with distance education(2 93).
2- Problems related to students' relationship with course instructors(2.87).
3- Problems related to students' lack of distance learning skills(2.65).
4- Problems related to the lack of infrastructure for distance education(2.64).

As for the first aspect related to psychological problems, most of them were as follows:

1- Low students' motivation to participate (2.63)
2- Ease of being affected by side distractors (2.58)
3- Boredom as a result of sitting behind screens for a long time (2.57)
4- Loss of concentration after attending more than one lecture (2.45)
5- Boredom from the lecture that does not include interaction (2.45)

As for the second aspect related to the student's relationship with course instructors, results of the weighted average scores were as follows:

1- The teacher's inability to control and prevent cheating during assessments (2.63)
2- Difficulty of tracking the attendance and absence of students (2.55)
3- The inability to fully control the lecture (2.50)
4- Difficulty of asking questions, managing discussion and interaction (2.47)
5- Difficulty of creating electronic exams (2.38)
6- Teacher's tendency to focus on theory rather than practice (2.38)

As for the third aspect regarding students' lack of the skills of distance education, the results of the weighted average scores were as follows:

1-   Difficulty in preparing for the lecture (2.90)
2-   The inability to respond to students' inquiries on a continuous basis (2.55)
3-   Difficulty of attending all lectures (2.55)
4-   Difficulty of attending periodic assessment tests constantly (2.53)
5-   Difficulty in asking questions and managing discussion in an educationally motivated manner (2.36)
6-   Lack of the skill of sending assignments via Blackboard and other platforms easily and conveniently (2.35)

As for the fourth aspect, concerning the problems facing students and related to the lack of infrastructure, results of the weighted average scores were as follows:

1-   Unavailability of a guide for using the websites of the course (2.77)
2-   Breaking down of the platforms, especially the blackboard (2.52)
3-   Students do not possess computers or smartphones that meet the speed of distance education (2.47)
4-   Unavailability of the virtual library as a source of information (2., 39)
5-   Difficulty of internet services and poor network (2.38)

Results related to the second question, stating "what is the nature of the role offered by the social work profession in dealing with the problems associated with the practice of distance education?"

The students' responses to the questionnaire indicated that they see the role of social work according to the weighted average scores as follows:

1-   The role of guidance and awareness of the importance of distance education and the conditions of resorting to it (2.97).
2-   The role of creating an integration model between distance education and face to face education (2.84).
3-   The role of providing facilities that make the experiment successful and effectively confronting its obstacles (2.83).
4-   The role of providing evidence and international experiences associated with the same experience for distance education (2.55).
5-   The role of removing obstacles to achieve the effectiveness of distance education (2.54).
6-   The role of training students on the skills they need in distance education (2.50).
6-   The role of removing the negative aspects, frustrations and doubts about the effectiveness of distance education (2.47).
8-   Strengthening networking between universities and families of students in achieving the goals of distance education (2.40).
9-   Correcting the negative mental image that some students created for distance education (2.33).

Results related to the third question stating " what are the methods and techniques used by the social worker in dealing with the problems associated with the practice of distance education?", The students viewed the most important of these methods with weighted average scores of:

1-   Blackboard or Zoom platforms (2.85).
2-   WhatsApp (2.84).
3-   Text messages (2.80).
4-   Virtual discussions (2.75).
5-   Electronic committees (2.60).
6-   Playing the electronic role (2.59).
7-   Homework (2.59).
8-   Reverse feeding (2.50).
9-   Electronic individual interviews (2.22).

Results related to the fourth question stating "What is the quality of the social worker's skills in dealing with the problems associated with the practice of distance education?" showed that there is a type of these skills with a hypothetical significance that helps to make all the requirements of distance education a success, the most important of which is:

1-   Skill of the initiation to break into the world of distance education.
2-   Results showed that the social worker in schools and universities can use a type of professional skills that help effectively dealing with the problems associated with the practice of distance education, and the most important of these skills had following weighted average scores:
1-   Skill of using technology and dealing with the computer (2.98)
2-   Skill of conveying what students have learned (2.80)
3-   Skill in overcoming technical faults (2.77)
4-   Skill of finding technological alternatives in cases where the original alternative cannot be used (2, 70)
5-   Skill in designing new virtual programs (2.69)
6-   Skill in solving students' technical problems (2.30)
7-   Skill of motivating students to pursue distance education (2.29

Suggestions and Solutions to Problems Associated with Distance Education.
1-   To achieve seriousness and commitment, distance education laws can be imposed on students through periodic successive exams that provide motivation.
2-   Preparing reports by the course teachers to help in facing the problem of not having complete control over the classroom, getting to know the students' personalities, and achieving the internal control of the virtual classroom.
3-   Raising the efficiency of teachers, training and providing them with sufficient information on using the tools, to face the lack of the skills of dealing with modern technology.
4-   Course teachers can use feedback systems and video chats with students in order to overcome the limitation of directing students' feedback.
5-   The interaction between students, which is called cooperative education and group education, can be enhanced to face the problem of isolation via the Internet.
6-   Organizing training courses and educational workshops for students on how to use distance education and facing its problems.
7-   Developing plans in advance by the university administration to follow students during the application of distance education and to provide the infrastructure, tools and technical means necessary for implementing distance education in universities.
8-   Designing interactive electronic educational content, in addition to the availability of courses in (pdf) format on the ministry's website.

9-   Developing emergency alternative plans to resort to in times of crisis, so that they are clear features and objectives for teachers to be used in emergency time and reduce personal judgments and confusion in the distance education process.

10-   Developing and restructuring the curricula in a way that includes flexibility and suitability for distance education, with partial activation of the distance education process, even during in-person education, so that it becomes part of the educational system and not only in emergency situations.

11-   Cooperating with the local community in preparing training courses for parents on how to deal with distance education tools and how to manage time.

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