

A Qualitative Case Study of How College Students Regard Distance Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Saudi Arabia

M. Almanie Abdullah

*Educational Administration, College of Education, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8769-0002>*

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this study was to assess e-learning during the coronavirus pandemic regarding advantages, limitations and their recommendations for managing learning during the pandemic. This study employed a qualitative research based on the case study. Sixteen students from the College of Education, King Saud University, were invited to participate. These students use the 'Zoom' application for receiving their online lectures. Additionally, a WhatsApp one-on-one semi-structured interview for 20 minutes was employed. The application, iCloud was used to record meetings and interviews for direct transcription to ensure trustworthiness (transferability, dependability, confirmability and credibility). Results were presented in three themes that is, advantages of employing distance education, limitations of usages, and recommendations for improvements. Analysing the feedbacks collected from students by the four interviewers, important characteristics of distance education emerged. They were student-centred learning, which included comfortable, self-directed learning, asynchronous learning, and flexibility. The most common limitations associated with distance education in general included the inefficiency that is, lack of student feedback, and lack of attentiveness. As for recommendations for improvements the most obvious characteristics that became evident in students' responses were teaching and assessment and quality enhancement.