EXAMINING THE ADVANTAGES OF STUDYING IN E-LEARNING DISTANCE MODE BY PRISONERS

Mahlangu Vimbi PETRUS

Department of Educational Leadership and Management, College of Education
University of South Africa, South Africa, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8251-750X

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the advantages of studying in e-learning distance mode by prisoners. This article reports about one question from a study titled: "The Supervision of Postgraduate Students Studying at a Distance Through E-Learning While in Custody". The paper's central claim is that, despite their severe living conditions, inmates who are committed to their education cannot have their education impeded by prison walls. This research was carried out in a prison in Namibia. This study was qualitative in nature, utilizing interviews as a means of data collecting while adhering to an interpretive paradigm. Twelve participant prisoners were interviewed and the criteria for sampling them was that they were studying through a distance e-learning mode while incarcerated. During the transcription of the interviews two of the tape-recorded recordings were not audible and they were excluded when capturing the findings. A skilled transcriber transcribed the tape-recorded interviews verbatim, and the author was provided the notes to interpret. The analysis was conducted thematically. With relation to prison services, Namibia's legal system saw significant transformations as it moved from an approach centered on punishment and isolation to one that emphasizes corrections and community reintegration. The government of the Republic of Namibia has demonstrated a strong commitment to the rehabilitation of inmates by permitting them to enroll in distance education programs via e-learning, according to the findings. Imprisonment presents prisoners with increased opportunities for self-improvement. However, studying while incarcerated, especially remotely, is exceedingly challenging for prisoners.

Keywords: Prison, rehabilitation, e-learning, integration, inmate, distance education, virtual learning.

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine the advantages of studying in e-learning distance mode by prisoners. The paper's central claim is that, despite their severe living conditions, inmates who are committed to their education cannot have their education impeded by prison walls. The paper's central claim is that, despite their severe living conditions, inmates who are committed to their education cannot have their education impeded by prison walls. With relation to prison services, Namibia's legal system saw significant transformations as it moved from an approach centered on punishment and isolation to one that emphasizes corrections and community reintegration. The government of the Republic of Namibia has demonstrated a strong commitment to the rehabilitation of inmates by permitting them to enroll in distance education programs via e-learning, according to the findings.

Namibia is a young country with great development opportunities and some serious challenges. It is unique in many respects and shares important features with other countries in the southern African region. This caught the attention of the author as a scientist from a university in South Africa, who dedicated to the scientific analysis and better understanding of the experiences of the prisoners studying in incarceration in a Distance Mode. Investigating the provision of education to prisoners while in prison is both a highly complex and a highly sensitive issue. The author decided to approach this difficult issue through the application for ethical clearance both from the institution of the author as well as from the National Research Council of Namibia and the Correctional Authorities of Namibia. Permissions were granted from both the author's institution and from the Namibian authorities for the research to be carried out.

The educational

Education in the 21st century is heavily influenced by information and communication technology. The advancement of the Internet has enabled learning to be conducted online, which offers many advantages. Online learning is commonly managed using a learning management system (LMS), the most widely used being Google Classroom, especially in prisons around the world (Kassim, 2024). E-learning in the present era is the most needed teaching and learning technique that influenced both teaching staff and students. Integrating e-learning into higher education institutions (HEIs) is a complex process. Several universities had tried to impart learning online, especially amid the spread of COVID-19. However, they failed miserably due to the many barriers to online learning platforms' delivery and acceptance. Different barriers in adopting e-learning systems discourage institutions from adapting their teaching strategies. For example, in countries such as Australia, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Taiwan, Tanzania and the USA, barriers included lack of faculty training, inadequate technological infrastructure, lack of resources, need for structured e-course and student's competency levels (Qazi et al., 2024).

The integration of digital tools, online platforms, and collaborative technologies has dismantled geographical barriers, transforming educational landscape into a globalized and interconnected domain. This shift poses both challenges and opportunities for educational institutions, necessitating the reevaluation of existing teaching strategies to effectively navigate the dynamic and evolving nature of borderless learning environments. The rise of borderless learning environments has been fueled by advancements in information and communication technologies (ICTs), enabling learners and educators to transcend physical boundaries and engage in learning activities without being constrained by traditional classroom settings (Andrin et al., 2024).

Due to the technological advancements brought about by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, also known as "Industry 4.0", organisations from various sectors have utilised digital technology to revolutionise their process, especially distance e-learning institutions. These institutions are investing heavily in the development of digital capabilities to uncover innovative insights and implications that could enhance their competitive advantage in e-learning settings (Alghamdi & Agag, 2024).

Online learning is also known as distance learning, which means the distance between the student and the teacher. The teacher and the student are not in the same room or in the same place of residence. There is no direct and close contact between them. The oldest form of distance learning has been studying by correspondence, while nowadays, integration of technology is required for the sake of development of online learning. Without the integration of technological tools, online learning cannot take place (Zylfiu & Rasimi, 2020). Although the popularity of online learning has been on an increase worldwide, many traditional faculties use extensive e-learning, i.e. they use it as a supplement to traditional ways of learning, and few are willing to organize exclusively independent online programs (Radović-Marković, 2010). The latest Pandemic has changed not only our lifestyle behavior, but at the same the manner how we work, study, and evolve. We witnessed work from home, or remote working, as well as learning from home changes. The shift from the physical classroom to the online classroom came with advantages, but also with some, disadvantages (Moise et al., 2021).

Baidoun and Salem (2024) found that there are factors that must be considered that affect student behaviour towards online learning, namely: Perceived usefulness; perceived ease of use, perceived ease of use, perceived risk, and perceived quality of website. The factors are briefly explained below.

Perceived usefulness: Student prisoners' behaviors are impacted by their perceptions of utility. Perceived usefulness is the extent to which an individual feel that adopting a certain method can improve his or her performance. Perceived usefulness in the context of online learning refers to a studnet's belief that learning online will make their studying online more efficient. Perceived ease of use: The student's view of the easy of engagement with e-learning websites and the capable of completing online activities without much effort is characterized as perceived ease of use. Perceived risk: Students' perceptions of risk and the negative repercussions of engaging in certain activities are referred to as perceived risks. Students' perceptions of the probability of advantage of disadvantage in interactions with lecturers online are known as risk perception. Students in online learning use the internet to connect with institutions instead of direct communication, creating several risks while in prison. Perceived quality of website: Students' views of website quality directly impact their learning intentions, making website quality a critical topic in e-learning Students' views of website quality as users' judgments of a website's features meeting their needs and representing comprehensive quality of the website. Understanding which parts of the institutions' online services the students as website users view as essential must be a priority for distance e-learning institutions when implementing their online e-strategy (Baidoun & Salem, 2024).

Shevchenkoa et al. (2024), found that learning online hampered students' academic performance, though different groups of students demonstrated different efficacy of online learning as regards subject areas, English and Social Science, for example, proved less adaptable to online learning. Again, it was found that e-learning

courses should be learner-centred and practice-oriented. To reach the goals of an e-learning course it is suggested to create a list of e-learning resources and modules, developing an interactive map of an e-learning course, and creating online-forums and e-learning blogs that will encourage feedback from online students.

The introduction of cloud computing platforms has heralded a sea change in the field of e-learning, providing universities and prisons with a wealth of new options for improving efficiency, scalability, and affordability in online education. Modern cloud technologies have opened up exciting new possibilities for education by providing a nimble and user-friendly medium for the distribution of instructional materials (Khasawneh et al., 2024).

Online, there appears to be an imbalance between people's privacy risk and benefit perceptions. Studies repeatedly show that anticipated benefits are more strongly related to self-disclosure (intentions) as compared to the associated privacy risks. One way to support individual privacy decision-making is the application of privacy tools that show relevant information to the user (Meier & Krämer, 2024). Because there are usually racial/ethnic disparities in recidivism, the common predicted outcome for risk assessment tools, the concern is that instruments will overestimate risk for some individuals. The reason why overestimating risk is considered problematic is that rather than being used to guide the delivery of programming. The assessment of risk has long been a core component of correctional practice. Historically, risk assessments have been used to help make a variety of decisions for correctional populations, including institutional custody levels, whether people should be released from confinement, and the intensity of community supervision (Duwe, 2024).

E-learning has enabled a higher degree of interactivity among professors and students and easier study material coverage in both undergraduate and graduate students. Furthermore, professors are able to develop their students' critical thinking if they can be more freedom in their choice of technological tools and mutual exchange of ideas and information and knowledge expansion (Radović-Marković, 2010). Daymont et al. (2024), are of the view that a preference for a course enhanced with web-based tools or material delivered through virtual media does not necessarily mean that students prefer a course without face-toface meetings. Thus, from a learning perspective, students would benefit from and presumably prefer a web-enhanced traditional classroom or a blended course. The most common reason for students to choose the asynchronous online format appears to be flexibility or convenience. That is, the anytime, anywhere nature of asynchronous online courses allows more flexibility for students to choose the times when they are productively engaged in learning activities rather than being constrained by the scheduled meeting time for the class.

The advantages of online learning optimize the study load, help to increase digital literacy and better pass final exams, and reduce everyday risks. Other positive aspects of online education for prison students are the individualization of the educational route, saving of time and their budget, and the possibility of increasing the volume of their activities. Online studying is safe during epidemics and online lessons are more informative than usual, specialized computer programs for conducting online classes, effective presentations of new material, instant access to information, interesting for those wishing to become programmers, digital literacy, electronic home works, regular Skype consultations with teachers, communication with the whole class during lesson, networking, constant access to the Internet, electronic verification tests, a strong course in computer science, an archive of online lessons (Proshkova, 2020).

Online technology (email, learning management systems, discussion boards, video conferences, social media, etc.) can offer efficient and convenient ways to achieve learning goals for online education students. Failing technological aspects of online courses can be especially frustrating for students and have a negative impact on their overall perception of the course. Online students may feel more isolation from their professors if traditional assessments like multiple-choice quizzes and exams are used too heavily (Dumford & Miller, 2018).

The role of technology in online learning is the key to the success of distance education. Technology has enabled online learning to create more efficient and engaging prison students' experiences. Optimized websites and mobile apps give prison students 24/7 access to various programs and services, allowing them to learn anytime and anywhere. Technology also enables deep personalization, with systems that help and shape behaviour of incarcerated students (Silitonga et al., 2024). Hofer and Hargittai (2024) believe that there are detrimental effects of ICT use on mental health outcomes—especially if ICTs are used in a problematic fashion. The association between older adults' ICT use and mental health is relevant because a digital inequality exists between younger and older seniors in terms of adoption of specific services, the use of ICTs, and in terms of the skills to use these technologies in a personally beneficial way. Internet use might serve as a remedy for depressive symptoms or anxiety for those students in prisons. ICTs, and especially socially relevant ICTs such as social management systems (special software designed for older adults), can be used to reduce loneliness and (perceived) social isolation—a central predictor for depression and anxiety—among older adults in prisons. It was

found that older adults carefully manage their interactions within the digital environment to improve the quality of their lives in prison (Hofer & Hargittai, 2024).

Academic behaviors, including the use of strategies for self-regulated learning, quantitative reasoning, activities that promote higher-order thinking, and reflective and integrative learning can increase content knowledge as well as overall cognitive processing and are all linked to various aspects of achievement and success (Dumford & Miller, 2018).

The use of online learning in education continues to increase. Students no longer only have access to printed books, but also to educational materials that lie far beyond the walls of the school building. You and your students can find information in libraries that are diverse, far away and physically inaccessible. Students can actively participate because online learning provides an interactive learning environment. Students can link electronic information to their papers and projects, turning them into "live" documents linked with hypertext buttons. Students can communicate instantaneously with two-way text, images, voice, data, and audio / video, and the resulting interactions change the roles of both the student and the teacher.

E-learning increases opportunities for smaller schools as well as for individuals to participate in home schooling. (1) Navigation. The main advantage of the internet is the ability to move easily within and between documents. With the press of a button or the click of a mouse, users can search for documents in multiple locations without moving from their computer. (2) Exchange of ideas. Students can have a "conversation" with experts in a particular field. (3) Comfortable communication. E-mail allows students in a variety of locations for ideas. They can "talk" to each other at various times and respond to it based on their own convenience. The exchange of ideas is kept secret. (4) Low cost. The cost of hardware, software, and internet service is nominal and continues to decline (Yuhanna et al., 2020).

With the progression of Internet technology, new educational methodologies have emerged. Rather than being confined to physical classrooms, learning now occurs in virtual spaces online. Online learning offers learners the flexibility to access course materials asynchronously, at their convenience, and facilitates communication with instructors and peers via the Internet, eliminating the need for in-person meetings. The utilization of platforms like Google Classroom in education is significant as it allows learners to access information from various devices such as laptops, mobile phones, or tablets, anytime (Kassim, 2024). Al Rawashdeh et al. (2024), discovered that distance learning is increasingly expanding, providing users with the flexibility to transcend geographical and temporal constraints. E-learning ensures active engagement by incorporating texts, videos, audio, collaborative tools, and interactive visuals. The integration of Information Technology (IT) in the form of e-learning has not only reduced costs for students but also enhanced the quality of education. This indicates that e-learning can be cost-effective for students, allowing them to engage in other productive activities during their free time. Flexibility is another key advantage of e-learning, affording learners the opportunity to attend classes from anywhere, at any time. Furthermore, e-learning accommodates various learning styles by leveraging the abundance of interactive content available on the internet (Rawashdeh et al., 2024).

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to examine the advantages of studying in e-learning distance mode by prisoners. The paper's central claim is that, despite their severe living conditions, inmates who are committed to their education cannot have their education impeded by prison walls. With relation to prison services, Namibia's legal system saw significant transformations as it moved from an approach centered on punishment and isolation to one that emphasizes corrections and community reintegration.

Objective

The objective of this study was to examine the advantages of studying in e-learning distance mode for prisoners incarcerated in a Namibian correctional facility.

Question

The participant prisoners were asked the following question "What are the advantages of studying in e-learning distance mode?''

Method
Data collection

The research took place within the confines of a Namibian prison, focusing on qualitative methods to explore its subject matter. Utilizing interviews as the primary mode of data collection, the study operated within an interpretive paradigm, seeking to understand the nuanced perspectives of participants.

Data analysis

Initially, skilled transcriber meticulously transcribed the tape-recorded interviews verbatim. These transcripts were then handed to the author for interpretation. Subsequently, the voice-recorded interviews underwent translation by a professional translator, maintaining fidelity to the original data. Themes emerged from the questions posed during these interviews, forming the basis for analysis. Thematic analysis, as per Braun and Clarke (2006), served as the analytical framework. This method involves iterative readings of the transcripts to discern recurring patterns, themes, and trends. Through this process, the research sought to uncover the underlying dynamics within the data. The interpretation of the findings remained tethered to the research objectives, ensuring that conclusions were grounded in the context of the study. This approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter while providing valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of individuals within the prison setting.

Findings

The findings presented below are verbatim statements from the participant prisoners when responding to the following question "What are the advantages of studying in e-learning distance mode?" "I" was used to hide the identity of the participant prisoners and the responses are written as "I''. The participants are labelled as participant A, B, C, etc. This was done deliberately to ensure the anonymity and confidentially of the participants is protected.

Participant A: ''The advantage of the study is that you, especially whenever you are doing assignments, you spend more than seven references of which, when you are studying through the e-learning you get your things in time and you can do things faster than physical one or hard cover, or hard copy materials".

Participant B: "E-learning distance mode is like more advantage because you can interact with your students, your lecturer, or your tutors without physically going to the campus. It is more flexible especially for me who is in custody. Because we also for security reasons it is not always for me to go out so that is why e-learning it is bringing the world together so it is will like we are in class. So, that is learning with e-learning''.

Participant C: "The learning through a distance learning, it can accord you your own timetable, it give you your own time table. Thereby you are able to do your own planning, you do not have that pressure of having to plan for classes or attending to classes at the institution. And also, distance learning is more affordable, it is visually to us to who are in prison. It is the easiest or most affordable for learner of studies as if we have to be escorted or taking to our institutions every day, the government will not be able to afford it and thereby they will stop us from studying''.

Participant D: "I believe that distance studying, if you are on the outside, it is also more cost effective. Then having to do face to face studying at the institutions. On e-learning everything is online, you have access do everything online. You are time bound but then you can access the information online and even print the information so the information that we need is readily available''.

Participant E: "The advantages that I see is that you get other information from the internet, using the computer. Instead of going out for the classes, you use the computer, and you get the information that you want''.

Participant F: "Learning mode, the advantages is that you study, when you are studying at a distance mode, you, let me say you study on your own pace, yes on your own pace, it is good for a person with like he incarcerated if you are studying in a distance mode".

Participant G: "The advantages are you get information on time, and you are not physically there, and it is like saving you money on transport. Ja, considering our situation, it is a very good opportunity for us because I don't need to be taken to the university every day. Since everything, it has become very easy and flexible for us because you don't need to be in a face-to-face mode to do your studies, you can do it online".

Participant H: "The advantage for studying on the e-learning mode, one you find that you can interact easily with your lecturer. If you are having the problems, the lecturer it is easy for you to be able to share that information because you won't be able to pay a lot for the transport to the institution. Here I see that the advantage which that".

Participant I: "The advantages of studying in e-learning in a distance mode is you are on your own, you can do it from wherever, or from any environment that you are in. It is more on your own and on your pace that one can, those are the advantages, you are on your own and you can do it with basically I mean, maneuvering.

Participant J: "It is a bit difficult but the advantage that you have, they have provided us a place where we can study, and we have bought our own computers because there was in the beginning not enough computers, and it also stress down from yourself as an inmate''.

Discussion- Conclusions

Participant A: ''The advantage of the study is that you, especially whenever you are doing assignments, you spend more than seven references of which, when you are studying through the e-learning you get your things in time and you can do things faster than physical one or hard cover, or hard copy materials".

Flexibility is an advantage of e-learning as it provides prison learners the benefit to take classes anywhere and at any time. Furthermore, e-learning cater different types and varieties of learning approaches by utilizing much interactive content available on the internet (Al Rawashdeh et al., 2024). Also, Al Rawashdeh et al. (2024) believe that distance e-learning is an increasingly expanding prison distance e-learning environment, which enable students the flexibility to operate outside the barriers of their places and time. Online technology (email, learning management systems, discussion boards, video conferences, social media, etc.) can offer efficient and convenient ways to achieve learning goals for online education students. Failing technological aspects of online courses can be especially frustrating for students and have a negative impact on their overall perception of the course (Dumford & Miller, 2018).

Participant B: "E-learning distance mode is like more advantage because you can interact with your students, your lecturer, or your tutors without physically going to the campus. It is more flexible especially for me who is in custody. Because we also for security reasons it is not always for me to go out so that is why e-learning it is bringing the world together so it is will like we are in class. So, that is learning with e-learning''.

The findings by participant B are supported (Kassim, 2024) who found that with the advancement of the Internet technology have emerged new learning and teaching innovations. Instead of occurring in physical classrooms, learning could take place online. Online learning allows prison learners to access instructional materials at their own time, and it enabled them to communicate with their lecturers and course mates via the Internet without the need for physical conatct. By using of Google Classroom in teaching and learning prison students can access the information from the very same source through a variety of devices such as laptops, mobile phones or tablets any time. Furthermore, e-learning caters for different types of learning approaches by utilizing interactive content available on the internet (Al Rawashdeh et al., 2024)

Participant C: "The learning through a distance learning, it can accord you your own time table, it give you your own time table. Thereby you are able to do your own planning, you do not have that pressure of having to plan for classes or attending to classes at the institution. And also, distance learning is more affordable, it is visually to us to who are in prison. It is the easiest or most affordable for learner of studies as if we have to be escorted or taking to our institutions every day, the government will not be able to afford it and thereby they will stop us from studying''.

The findings by participant C are supported by Silitonga et al. (2024), who found that optimized websites and mobile apps give prison students 24/7 access to various programs and services, allowing them to learn anytime and anywhere. Technology provides students with systems to shape their skills and behaviour while incarcerated. E-mail allows students in a variety of locations for ideas to exchange ideas and the cost of hardware, software, and internet service is nominal (Yuhanna et al. 2020).

Participant D: "I believe that distance studying, if you are on the outside, it is also more cost effective. Then having to do face to face studying at the institutions. On e-learning everything is online, you have access do everything online. You are time bound but then you can access the information online and even print the information so the information that we need is readily available''.

These findings are supported by Proshkova (2020) who found that the positive aspects of online education for prison students are the individualization of the educational route, saving of time and their budget, and the possibility of increasing the volume of their activities. Students can access information instantly and they can use Skype to consult with teachers, for networking, and constant access to the Internet. Similarly, Daymont et al. (2024), are of the view that a preference for a course enhanced with web-based tools through virtual media would benefit students. The integration of digital tools, online platforms, and collaborative technologies has dismantled geographical barriers, transforming educational landscape into a globalized and interconnected domain. The rise of borderless learning environments has been fueled by advancements in information and communication technologies (ICTs), enabling prison learners and lecturers to transcend physical boundaries and engage in learning activities without being constrained by traditional classroom settings (Andrin et al., 2024).

Participant E: "The advantages that I see is that you get other information from the internet, using the computer. Instead of going out for the classes, you use the computer, and you get the information that you want''.

E-learning has enabled a higher degree of interactivity among professors and students and easier study material coverage. Furthermore, professors can develop their students' critical thinking if they can be more freedom in their choice of technological tools and mutual exchange of ideas and information and knowledge expansion (Radović-Marković, 2010). The use of online learning in education continues to increase. Students no

longer only have access to printed books, but also to educational materials that lie far beyond the walls of the school building. E-mail allows students in a variety of locations for ideas. They can "talk" to each other at various times and respond to it based on their own convenience (Yuhanna et al., 2020).

Participant F: "Learning mode, the advantages is that you study, when you are studying at a distance mode, you, let me say you study on your own pace, yes on your own pace, it is good for a person with like he incarcerated if you are studying in a distance mode".

The ideas of participant F are supported by Meier and Krämer (2024) who found that the benefits to prison students learning at a distance mode is strongly related to self-disclosure (intentions) as compared to the associated privacy risks. One way to support individual privacy decision-making is the application of privacy tools that show relevant information to the student as an online user. Modern cloud technologies have opened up new possibilities for education by providing a nimble and user-friendly medium for learning by students (Khasawneh et al., 2024). It was found that older adults carefully manage their interactions within the digital environment to improve the quality of their lives in prison (Hofer & Hargittai, 2024).

Participant G: "The advantages are you get information on time, and you are not physically there, and it is like saving you money on transport. Ja, considering our situation, it is a very good opportunity for us because I don't need to be taken to the university every day. Since everything, it has become very easy and flexible for us because you don't need to be in a face-to-face mode to do your studies, you can do it online".

Daymont et al. (2024), found that a preference for a course enhanced with web-based tools or material delivered through virtual media does not necessarily mean that students prefer a course without face-to face meetings. Thus, from a learning perspective, students would benefit from a web-enhanced traditional classroom. Also, Kassim (2024) supports the idea that e-learning in the present era is the most needed teaching and learning technique that could influence both teaching by lecturers and learning by students. Integrating e-learning into higher education institutions (HEIs) is a complex process and several universities had tried to impart learning online, especially amid the spread of COVID-19 even in prisons.

Participant H: "The advantage for studying on the e-learning mode, one you find that you can interact easily with your lecturer. If you are having the problems, the lecturer it is easy for you to be able to share that information because you won't be able to pay a lot for the transport to the institution. Here I see that the advantage which that".

Daymont et al. (2024), found that the use of technology through the web-based tools or material delivered through virtual media can help students to learn at anytime, anywhere because of flexibility and students can choose the times when they are productively engaged in learning activities rather than being constrained by the scheduled meeting time for the class in prison classrooms. The advantages of online learning could be the optimizing of the study time available.

Participant I: "The advantages of studying in e-learning in a distance mode is you are on your own, you can do it from wherever, or from any environment that you are in. It is more on your own and on your pace that one can, those are the advantages, you are on your own and you can do it with basically I mean, maneuvering.

The rise of borderless learning environments has been fueled by advancements in information and communication technologies (ICTs), enabling learners and educators to transcend physical boundaries and engage in learning activities without being constrained by traditional classroom settings (Andrin et al., 2024). Shevchenkoa et al. (2024) found that learning online should be learner-centred and practice-oriented. To reach the goals of an e-learning course it is suggested to create a list of e-learning resources and modules, developing an interactive map of an e-learning course, and creating online-forums and e-learning blogs that will encourage feedback from online students.

Participant J: "It is a bit difficult but the advantage that you have, they have provided us a place where we can study, and we have bought our own computers because there was in the beginning not enough computers, and it also stress down from yourself as an inmate''.

In countries like Australia, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Taiwan, Tanzania and the USA, barriers to e-learning in prisons could be exacerbated by the lack of faculty training, inadequate technological infrastructure, lack of resources, need for structured e-course and student's competency levels (Qazi et al., 2024). Hofer and Hargittai (2024) believe that there are detrimental effects of ICT use on mental health if ICTs are used in a problematic fashion. Also, the rise of borderless learning environments has been fueled by advancements in information and communication technologies (ICTs), enabling learners and educators to transcend physical boundaries and engage in learning activities without being constrained by traditional classroom settings (Andrin et al., 2024).

According to certain inmates, imprisonment presents them with increased opportunities for self-improvement. However, studying while incarcerated, especially remotely, can prove exceedingly challenging. The inmates' desires, intermittent assistance, and the resistance to taking the easy path occasionally result in the prison

administration refusing to acquiesce and instead suggesting alternatives. At times, they may assert that there are no resources available, meaning that arrangements must be negotiated with the institution to utilize learning facilities. The advantage of e-learning lies in its timeliness and efficiency compared to traditional methods. Distance education fosters interaction between students and instructors without the need for physical presence on campus, offering incarcerated individuals a more flexible mode of study. Due to security concerns, it's often impractical for prisoners to attend physical classes at higher education institutions, but e-learning bridges this gap, creating a sense of classroom participation from afar. This autonomy provided by e-learning allows prisoners to set their own schedules and plan their studies without the constraints of attending in-person classes. Furthermore, distance e-learning proves to be more cost-effective than traditional face-to-face learning, as it eliminates the need for daily transportation and supervision from prison authorities. Inmates can access information directly from the internet, using computers provided or purchased on their own, alleviating the stress caused by limited resources.

References

Alghamdi, O., & Agag, G. (2024). Competitive advantage: A longitudinal analysis of the roles of data-driven innovation capabilities, marketing agility, and market turbulence. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 76, 103547. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103547

Al Rawashdeh, A. Z., Mohammed, E. Y., Al Arab, A. R., Alara, M., & Al-Rawashdeh, B. (2021). Advantages and disadvantages of using e-learning in university education: Analyzing students' perspectives. Electronic Journal of E-learning, 19(3), 107-117. www.ejel.org

Andrin, G., Kilag, O. K., Groenewald, E., Benitez, J., Dagala, F., & Ubay, R. (2024).

Borderless Learning Environments: Impacts on Educational Management Strategies. International Multidisciplinary Journal of Research for Innovation, Sustainability, and Excellence (IMJRISE), 1(2), 43-49. https://risejournals.org/index.php/imjrise/article/view/41

Baidoun, S. D., & Salem, M. Z. (2024). The moderating role of perceived trust and perceived value on online shopping behavioral intention of Palestinian millennials during COVID-19. Competitiveness Review: An International Business Journal, 34(1), 125-143. https://doi.org/10.1108/CR-10-2022-0161

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative research in psychology, 3(2), 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Creswell, J. W. (2013). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. Sage Publications.

Daymont, T., Blau, G., & Campbell, D. (2011). Deciding between traditional and online formats: Exploring the role of learning advantages, flexibility, and compensatory adaptation. Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management, 12(2), 156-175. https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/deciding-between-traditional-online-formats/docview/851541755/se-2?accountid=14648

Dumford, A.D., Miller, A.L. Online learning in higher education: exploring advantages and disadvantages for engagement. Journal of Computer High Education, 30, 452–465 (2018). https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-018-9179-z

Duwe, G. (2024). Evaluating bias, shrinkage and the home-field advantage: Results from a revalidation of the MnSTARR 2.0. Corrections, 9(1), 20-42. https://doi.org/10.1080/23774657.2021.2011802

Hofer, M., & Hargittai, E. (2024). Online social engagement, depression, and anxiety among older adults. new media & society, 26(1), 113-130. https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211054377

Kassim, W. Z. W. (2024). Google classroom: Malaysian University students' attitudes towards its use as learning management system. Brazilian Journal of Development, 10(1), 207-223. https://doi.org/1034117/bjdv10n1-015

Khasawneh, N. A. S., Khasawneh, A. J., Khasawneh, M. A. S., & Jadallah abed Khasawneh, Y. (2024). Improving Arabic Content Delivery on Cloud Computing Platforms for Jordanian E-learning Environments. Migration Letters, 21(S1), 575-585. https://doi.org/10.59670/ml.v21iS1.6181

Meier, Y., & Krämer, N. C. (2024). The privacy calculus revisited: an empirical investigation of online privacy decisions on between-and within-person levels. Communication Research, 51(2), 178-202. https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650222110210

Moise, D., Diaconu, A., Negescu, M. D. O., & Gombos, C. C. (2021). Online Education During Pandemic Times: Advantages and Disadvantages. European Journal of Sustainable Development, 10(4), 63-63. https://doi.org/10.14207/ejsd.2021.v10n4p63

Proshkova, Z. V. (2020, May). Advantages of studying at online schools in assessments of students' families. In International Scientific Conference "Digitalization of Education: History, Trends and Prospects"(DETP 2020) (pp. 845-849). Atlantis Press. https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200509.150

Qazi, M. A., Sharif, M. A., & Akhlaq, A. (2024). Barriers and facilitators to adoption of e-learning in higher education institutions of Pakistan during COVID-19: Perspectives from an emerging economy. Journal of Science and Technology Policy Management, 15(1), 31-52. https://doi.org/10.1108/JSTPM-01-2022-0002

Radović-Marković, M. (2010). Advantages and disadvantages of e-learning in comparison to traditional forms of learning. Annals of the University of Petroşani, Economics, 10(2), 289-298. http://upet.ro/annals/economics/pdf/2010/20100227.pdf

Shevchenko, V., Malysh, N., & Tkachuk-Miroshnychenko, O. (2024). Distance learning in Ukraine in COVID-19 emergency. Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning, 39(1), 4-19. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680513.2021.1967115

Silitonga, D., Rohmayanti, S. A. A., Aripin, Z., Kuswandi, D., & Sulistyo, A. B. (2024). Edge Computing in E-commerce Business: Economic Impacts and Advantages of Scalable Information Systems. EAI Endorsed Transactions on Scalable Information Systems, 11(1). https://doi.org/10.4108/eetsis.4375

Yuhanna, I., Alexander, A., & Kachik, A. (2020). Advantages and disadvantages of Online Learning. Journal Educational Verkenning, 1(2), 13-19. DOI: https://doi.org/10.48173/jev.v1i2.54

Zylfiu, D. B. G., & Rasimi, D. A. (2020). Challenges and advantages of online learning: The case of Kosovo. International Journal of Management, 11(10), pp. 1-11. https://doi.org/10.34218/IJM.11.10.2020.175