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| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi|

Comparison of Instructors' Experiences in Distance Education and Face-to-Face Education Processes[1]

Sedat AKÇURU[2], Mustafa ERDEMİR[3]

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to reveal the experiences of lecturers regarding this phenomenon in the process of transition to distance education due to the Covid-19 pandemic and to compare these experiences with face-to-face education. For this purpose, a phenomenological design, which is a method of qualitative research, was used in the study, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 lecturers. The interviews were subjected to content analysis and as a result of the analysis, the lecturers' views on distance education were revealed. The lecturers evaluated distance education negatively because of limited interaction, lack of communication, insufficient technological tools and equipment, technical infrastructure problems, measurement and evaluation not reflecting the reality, and this education model is not suitable for applied courses. In the distance education process, there were differences compared to face-to-face education in the general teaching of the course, the methods and techniques used, the activity of the stakeholders, the time used for a course and the completion of the content of the course planned until the end of the semester. The advantages of face-to-face education were listed as the ease of involving students in the course process, the fact that validity and reliability reflect the reality, and the ease of interaction and communication.

Öz

Çalışmanın amacı, Covid-19 pandemisi sebebiyle uzaktan eğitime geçilen süreçte öğretim elemanlarının bu fenomene dair deneyimlerinin ortaya çıkartmak ve bu deneyimlerin yüz yüze eğitimle karşılaştırmaktır. Bu amaçla çalışmada, nitel araştırmanın bir yöntemi olan fenomonolojik desen kullanılmış, 18 öğretim elemanı ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme yapılmıştır. Yapılan görüşmeler içerik analizine tabii tutulmuş ve analiz sonucunda öğretim elemanlarının uzaktan eğitime dair görüşleri ortaya çıkartılmıştır. Öğretim elemanları, uzaktan eğitimi; karşılıklı etkileşimin sınırlı olması, iletişim eksikliği, teknolojik araç-gereç yetersizliği, teknik alt yapı sorunları, ölçme ve değerlendirmenin gerçeği yansıtmaması ve uygulamalı dersler için bu eğitim modelinin uygun olmaması nedeniyle olumsuz değerlendirmişlerdir. Uzaktan eğitim sürecinde dersin genel işlenişi, kullanılan yöntem ve teknikler, paydaşların aktifliği, bir ders için kullanılan süre ve dönem sonuna kadar planlanan dersin içeriğinin tamamlanmasında yüz yüze eğitime göre farklılıklar olmuştur. Öğrenciyi ders sürecine dahil edilmesinin kolay olması, geçerlik-güvenirliğin gerçeği yansıtması, etkileşim ve iletişimin kolay sağlanabilmesi ise yüz yüze eğitimin avantajları olarak sıralanmıştır. Öğretim elemanları yüz yüze eğitimde kendilerini başarılı bulur iken, uzaktan eğitimde kısmen başarılı bulmuşlardır.

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[2] Fen Bilgisi Öğretmeni, Kastamonu Universitity, Kastamonu, TÜRKİYE; https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0904-1728
[3] Corresponded Author, Kastamonu University, Kastamonu, TÜRKİYE; https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0854-7030

INTRODUCTION

Education has been a formation that we encounter in every field and in every community in the acquisition of complex knowledge as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills in daily life with the existence of human beings. From this perspective, learning at every stage of human life adventure affects the individual's life, cognitive and affective skills and behaviors. The education received by the individual allows him/her to change and improve these qualities (Kaya, 2002).

It is extremely important to meet the educational needs of individuals in order for them to have the knowledge, skills, equipment and abilities required by the age. Social, economic, scientific and technological developments have developed rapidly with the implementation of educational activities (Demir, 20014). Given the current world context with new technological tools and the emergence of internet technology, dimensions of education such as teaching, learning and pedagogy are experiencing a shift (Battro & Fischer, 2012). Yang (2020) emphasized the need to redesign the educational ecosystem to better serve the needs of the current information age with the integration of information technologies. Desai, Hart, and Richards (2008) stated that the change and expansion needed in educational environments can be achieved by using educational technology and the confinement of learning to the physical boundaries of a classroom will end. Distance education has emerged as a result of these developments and efforts (Demir, 2014).

Distance education is a planned arrangement in which teachers and students are in spatially independent environments, where the use of technology is mandatory in order to teach courses and apply teaching methods and techniques (Moore & Kearsley, 2005). Uşun (2006) defined distance education as a planned and systematic technology application in which the teaching and learning processes between the source and the receiver take place in independent environments, which offers "flexibility, independence and individuality" to the receivers in terms of time, age and space, in which printed and written materials, various audio and visual tools are used in teaching processes, and in which the interaction between the source and the receiver can be provided by technologies. Bates ise (2005a) uzaktan eğitimi, öğrencilerin ve eğitimcilerin aynı yerde bir arada bulunmadıkları bir eğitim biçimi olarak tanımlamaktadır. Bates (2005a) aynı zamanda uzaktan eğitimin teknolojiyle iç içe olduğunu ve uzaktan eğitim ile teknolojinin bir bütün olduğunu belirtmiştir.

The elimination of some educational problems in our country and the renewal and development of our education system in accordance with the requirements of the information age can be achieved through distance education (İşman, 2011). When we look at the advantages of distance education, we see that it eliminates inequality of opportunity in terms of the opportunity to access information by offering a different and rich learning environment to learners, contributes to the access of information from the first source by everyone, contributes to the development of learning responsibility and independent learning skills of learners, as well as reducing educational costs and providing a standard in educational programs (Kaya, 2002). Considering these advantages of distance education, it can be said that it is a globally important education model and that it is necessary to contribute to the development and dissemination of this education model. When we look at the limitations of distance education, the most emphasized disadvantages are the inadequacy and problems of technical infrastructure in terms of technology, the difficulties encountered especially in applied courses and the inefficiency of these courses, the difficulties experienced by the individual in taking responsibility for their own learning, the materials being more labor and time consuming, and the limited in-class interaction and communication (Balıkçıoğlu et al. 2019; Duman, 2020; Demirdağ & Altun, 2022).

In late 2019, with the coronavirus disease (Covid-19), which emerged in Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei province, affecting the world in a very short time, it is thought that distance education has gained more importance. With the announcement of the Covid-19 pandemic, education has been the most affected area among the areas that have been changed globally. Many countries have decided to suspend their spatial education activities and switch to distance education thanks to digital platforms. With the first Covid-19 case in our country on March 10, 2020, some measures have been taken, especially in social and social areas. The first of these was the suspension of education on March 12, 2020 and the transition to distance education (Soylu, 2020). The number of students affected by the suspension of education and training activities carried out spatially in our country is approximately 25 million (UNESCO, 2020a). It has been stated that our perspective on education and the way we interpret education has changed with the Covid-19 pandemic (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020).

The importance of distance education carried out with technology and the digital transformation of academic institutions such as universities has once again been understood in order to prevent the interruption of education and training activities when the pandemic has not disappeared or when any epidemic or disaster is encountered in the future. From this perspective, it is extremely important to know the advantages and disadvantages of distance education and to eliminate the disadvantages. It is of great importance in this digital age for our present and future to reveal the views of the lecturers, who are one of the stakeholders most affected by the new system, to offer solutions to them by indicating the negativities they have experienced, to examine the researches on this subject and to conduct new researches that will contribute to the field. In this study, the opinions of the lecturers working at the Faculty of Education of a university in the Western Black Sea region about their experiences in the distance education process carried out with the Covid-19 pandemic were determined and compared with face-to-face education. For this purpose, it was tried to determine the experiences of the lecturers on the following topics.

Study Problems

In this study, the opinions of the lecturers working at the Faculty of Education of a university in the Western Black Sea region about their experiences in the distance education process carried out with the Covid-19 pandemic were determined and compared with face-to-face education. For this purpose, answers to the following sub-problems were sought from the lecturers;

- What are the experiences of lecturers about the general functioning of a course in face-to-face and distance education?
- What are the experiences of instructors about the benefits and limitations of face-to-face and distance education?
- What are the experiences of lecturers about the difficulties experienced in distance education?
- What are the lecturers' self-evaluations of face-to-face and distance education?

METHOD

This research is a qualitative study aiming to obtain the opinions of the lecturers about their experiences in the distance education process, which was transitioned with the Covid-19 pandemic, and the comparison of these experiences with face-to-face education. Qualitative research can be conducted to understand the context or environment in which participants address a problem or issue. Qualitative research is a data collection process in which researches on events and situations are carried out in their natural environments through interview, observation, and document review (Başkale, 2016).

Research Design

This study was conducted with a phenomenological study, which is a design of qualitative research. Phenomenological study is defined as understanding the experiences of individuals (Van Manen, 2007). Phenomenology is a qualitative research design in which individuals reflect their feelings and perspectives on how they perceive any phenomenon, concept or situation as a result of their experiences (Rose et al. 1995). In the Covid-19 pandemic, with the transition to distance education in Turkey as of March 2020, it is thought that the lecturers experienced this process for the first time and gained a perspective accordingly. In this study, it was concluded that the distance education experience gained by the lecturers could be revealed with phenomenological research, which is a design of qualitative research.

Study Group

The research was conducted by selecting purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is preferred to shed light on the questions to be answered in the study in detail (Patton, 2014). The study group consisted of 18 instructors working in a faculty of education in the Western Black Sea region. At the same time, the lecturers emphasized that they actively taught their courses in face-to-face education, that both the students and themselves were active in the face-to-face education process, and that they did not have any experience with distance education. The number of participants in the study was determined according to data saturation and data were collected from 18 instructors on the basis of volunteerism.

Data Collection Tools

Semi-structured interview technique was used to collect data from the instructors. The biggest advantages of the semi-structured interview technique are that the questions are prepared in advance by the researcher, flexibility can be provided on the questions during the interview, and a discussion environment can be provided by changing the order of the questions according to the course of the interview (Çepni, 2012). The questions prepared for this research are related to face-to-face education conducted spatially and distance education that was introduced with the Covid-19 pandemic. Particular attention was paid to ensure that the questions were clear, simple and understandable so that the participants could understand them comfortably. Approximately 25-30 questions were directed to the participants to serve the sub-problem of the research. With the permission of the ethics committee and the consent of the participants, the questions directed to the participants and the answers to these questions were recorded using a voice recorder. The audio recordings were transcribed and coded in order to be written. The duration of the interviews conducted within the scope of the research varies between 25-60 minutes. The questions in the semi-structured interview prepared for the data to be obtained from the research were formulated after reviewing the relevant literature. Some of the questions directed to the lecturers are as follows;

- How did you conduct a course in face-to-face education? Are there any methods/techniques/strategies you used while teaching the course? If yes, what are they?
- How did you conduct a course in distance education? Are there any methods/techniques/strategies you use in distance education? What are they, if any?
- Can you compare distance education and face-to-face education in terms of benefits and limitations (stakeholders, technical dimension, technological possibilities, etc.)?
- How would you evaluate yourself in all these two education models?

Data Collection and Implementation Process

The questions in the semi-structured interview prepared for the data to be obtained from the research were formulated after reviewing the relevant literature. In order to determine whether the prepared questions serve the purpose or not, the opinions of an expert with qualitative studies were taken. In line with the opinions received, additions and deletions were made in some questions. Then, a pilot study was conducted to understand whether the prepared questions worked or not. The pilot study was carried out with two lecturers working in the faculty of education of a university and the final form of the questions was obtained by applying to the expert opinion again. For the interviews to be conducted within the scope of the research, 18 lecturers were contacted on a voluntary basis and an appointment was requested at a convenient time for them. Interviews with 18 lecturers were conducted on different days and this process was completed in approximately one month. The interviews were conducted in the rooms of the lecturers where no one else was present except the participants and the researcher.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data collection tools are realized through observation, document review or interview (Cansız Aktaş, 2019). In this study, interview technique was used as a data collection tool. The data obtained were subjected to content analysis. Analysis in qualitative studies consists of four parts. These are; collecting data, creating themes and codes from the data obtained, organizing themes and codes, and defining and interpreting the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Transcripts were made in order for the data to be written down. The written data were analyzed in detail and codes and main themes were identified. From this perspective, the research involves an analysis process based on induction according to the Miles and Huberman model. In order to ensure the reliability of the codes and themes obtained from the research, they were re-coded by an expert lecturer in qualitative study and the codes and themes were compared. The reliability of the codes and themes determined by the researcher and the expert was calculated with the consistency between the coders. As a result of the calculation, the inter-coder consistency of the research was found to be 90%. The concepts in the light of the data obtained and the relationships between these concepts were revealed.

Validity and Reliability of the Study

While validity and reliability are expressed with numerical indicators in quantitative studies, validity and reliability cannot be achieved with numerical indicators in qualitative studies. For this reason, the validity and reliability of qualitative studies should be addressed with different dimensions (Başkale, 2016). It has been emphasized that validity and reliability in qualitative studies can be achieved through credibility and this credibility can be achieved through some criteria. These criteria are credibility, reliability, confirmability and transferability (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). There are multiple methods to increase credibility in a qualitative research. The most common of these are participant checking and peer debriefing (Holloway and Wheeler, 1996). In order to ensure validity and reliability in this study, participant confirmation was sought. For the missing or incomprehensible points in the transcript of the data, the participant was asked to complete the missing or incomprehensible points. In addition, some participants were interviewed again and asked for their opinions on the accuracy of the meanings derived from the analysis of the data. Another method used to ensure validity and reliability is expert review. In this study, the expert provided feedback to the researcher by looking critically at all processes from the research design to the data collected, data analysis and writing the results. At the same time, the expert was asked to evaluate the codes and themes and the inter-coder agreement, which corresponds to the concept of internal consistency in the Miles and Huberman (1994) model, was found to be 90%.

FINDINGS

The experiences of the teaching staff about face-to-face and distance education were categorized under 4 headings. These are the general teaching of a course in face-to-face and distance education, the benefits and limitations of face-to-face and distance education, the difficulties experienced in distance education, and self-evaluations of face-to-face and distance education experiences.

Findings about the general functioning of a course in the face-to-face and distance education experiences of the instructors

In table 2, the themes of "strategies-methods and techniques used, time used, activity and content completion" and the codes belonging to these themes are given regarding the general functioning of a course in face-to-face education and distance education. In the findings, the instructors were coded as A1, A2, A3...and the statements of the participants were included.

Table 2. Instructors' experiences about the general functioning of a course in face-to-face and distance education

		Face-to-Face Education	Distance Education
Theme	**Code**	**f**	**f**
Strategies Used	Presentation	15	18
	Research Review	3	0
Methods and Techniques Used Lecture	Used Lecture	9	15
	Question and Answer	5	3
	Discussion	5	3
	Group Work	3	0
Time Used	0-30 minutes	0	9
	30-45 minutes	5	9
	45-90 minutes	9	0
	90-120 minutes	3	0
	120-180 minutes	1	0
Activism	Academician	3	12
	Academician+studen	15	6
Content Completion	Yes	8	11
	No.	10	7

The lecturers were asked questions about the general teaching of a course in face-to-face education conducted spatially and distance education conducted due to the pandemic. When Table 2 is examined, while the instructors stated that the strategy they used in face-to-face education was mostly the way of presentation (f=15), three instructors preferred the research-study strategy. With the transition to distance education, it is seen that all instructors preferred the presentation strategy (f=18). When the same table is continued to be analyzed, it is seen that the instructors mostly expressed the methods and techniques used in face-to-face education as lecture (f=9), question and answer (f=5) and discussion (f=5). In distance education, almost all instructors stated that the method and technique they used in the teaching of a course was lecture (f=15). The lecturer coded A4, who stated that he preferred the research-examination strategy in face-to-face education, expressed the strategy he used in his course with the transition to distance education as follows; "*I can say that the strategies in the direction of presentation have increased in distance education.*" The lecturer coded A5, who stated that he used less traditional strategies-methods-techniques in face-to-face education, justified that he had to prefer traditional methods with the transition to distance education as follows; "*Compared to face-to-face education, I can say that while I prefer less traditional in face-to-face education, I use more traditional presentation methods in distance education, I can say that I can experience the difficulty of making students active in this process.*"

The lecturers were asked to indicate the time used for teaching a course in face-to-face and distance education. While the lecturers expressed the time used in face-to-face education as 30-45 minutes (f=5), 45-90 minutes (f=9), 90-120 minutes (f=3), 120-180 minutes (f=1), with the transition to distance education, there were changes in these durations and they expressed this situation as 0-30 minutes (f=9) and 30-45 minutes (f=9). The lecturer coded A5 stated that with the transition to distance education, a lesson hour lasted less than 30 minutes due to the lack of interaction as follows; *"In distance education, it was definitely less than what we planned, that is, the planned time was 40 minutes for example and it was impossible to fill it. Because there is no interaction... since you could not make eye contact with the students, we could not understand where they were bored and we completed our lessons with the feeling that we were talking to the wall, so I can say that it lasted about 20 minutes."*

Instructors were asked to indicate whether the content of a course they planned until the end of the semester was completed or not. There were instructors who stated that they could complete the content of a course in face-to-face education (f=8) and that they could not (f=10). The lecturer coded A13 stated that he could not complete the content of the course he planned in face-to-face education, especially in theoretical courses, as follows; *"We could complete it for applied courses, they were usually given three hours anyway, they were enough, but we could not complete it in our theoretical courses." The same instructor stated that he was able to complete the content of the course he had planned with the transition to distance education due to the lack of student interaction as follows; "* I completed it, it was generally completed. If I hadn't done 45 + 45, it wouldn't have been completed, but when I did it that way and there was no student interaction, it was completed*." The lecturer coded A8 explained that he could not complete the content of the course he planned in face-to-face education and how he followed a path for this situation as follows; "I could never complete it, I give the children publications about the subjects that were not completed and they read them." The lecturer coded A14 stated that he could complete the content of a course in face-to-face education, but with the transition to distance education, he could not complete the content of the course as follows; "It did not catch up in distance education, because of the time given to us by the portal. I tried to complete this situation by giving homework to the students."*

Findings on the benefits and limitations of instructors' face-to-face and distance education experiences

Instructors were asked to compare the benefits and limitations of face-to-face and distance education. In this context, the lecturers mostly explained the benefits of face-to-face education as the ease of including the student in the process (f=15), validity and reliability giving more precise results (f=13), providing mutual interaction (f=13), easy classroom management (f=9), providing feedback and correction (f=6), students being able to take role/model (f=5), being more suitable for using different methods and techniques (f=3) and having the opportunity to socialize (f=3) (Table 3).

Table 3. Instructors' experiences on the benefits and limitations of face-to-face and distance education

		Face-to-Face Education	Distance Education
Theme	**Code**	f	f
Benefits	Ease of involving the learner in the process	15	0
	Validity-reliability	13	0
	Interaction	13	0
	Ease of classroom management	9	3
	Feedback/Correction	6	0
	Role/Modeling	5	0
	Different method-techniques	3	0
	Socialization	3	0
	Technology use	0	11
	Spatial independence	0	8
	Ease of time management	0	7
	Digital literacy	0	2
	Flexibility	0	2
Limitations	interaction/communication	0	18
	Insufficient technological infrastructure	0	14
	Measurement and evaluation	0	14
	Applied courses	0	7
	Inequality of technological opportunity	0	3

Instructors believe that face-to-face education has no limitations. The benefits of distance education are; increased use of technology by stakeholders (f=11) and accordingly an increase in their digital literacy (f=2), the formation of a learning environment independent of space (f=8), easy time management (f=7), easy classroom management (f=3) and providing flexibility to stakeholders (f=2). Instructors emphasized the limitations of distance education as lack of interaction-communication between stakeholders (f=18), inadequacy of technology infrastructure (f=14), measurement and evaluation not reflecting the reality (f=14), not suitable for applied courses (f=7) and creating technological inequality of opportunity (f=3).

The explanations of the lecturer coded A9, who stated that face-to-face education is beneficial in terms of providing ease of including the student in the process, providing more accurate results in terms of validity and reliability, providing interaction, easy classroom management, providing feedback and correction and taking the student as a role model, are as follows; *"When we look at face-to-face education, there is inevitably student-student interaction in classroom interaction, so we can include the student in the process... All exams should be face-to-face in terms of validity and reliability.... In face-to-face education, for example, classroom management was easier because we could see the student. Again, in face-to-face education, I can give feedback to students about homework assignments, but we could not do this in distance education... In face-to-face education, children receive not only field knowledge but also teaching knowledge. I'm not talking about vocational courses, I'm talking about teacher posture, they can understand how a teacher should be by seeing us in face-to-face education."*

The statements of the lecturer coded A10, who emphasized the benefits of distance education as providing an increase in his/her own technology usage skills, providing an education opportunity independent from space, being economical in terms of time management, providing flexibility and gaining digital literacy, are as follows: "*In distance education, you can plan your time better. Because you know that you have a time limit, but in face-to-face education you can extend it a little longer. In distance education, you evaluate time management well... We had to use technology and we learned technology by doing and experiencing. Our digital literacy has actually improved in distance education... Being independent of space, I taught my lessons without going out of my comfort zone...*"

Instructors who thought that face-to-face education had no limitations mentioned many limitations of distance education. The instructor coded A11 expressed the limitations of distance education as follows; "In distance education, it was not possible to do anything, especially in applied courses, in our laboratory-related courses. The application areas of education that require practice

and skills were incomplete... We could not perform formative evaluation much in distance education." *The lecturer coded A1 expressed the limitations of distance education as follows; "I think the biggest limitation of distance education is that we cannot know whether the student is fully participating in the process or not... We received many e-mails from students saying that they could not enter the system, they could not attend the lesson, they could not take the exam, they could not take the exam, our internet connection was not good, and so on. For example, one of my students told me that I don't have a computer, my father brings his friend's computer and that's how I listen to the lessons...now we can't say anything to these students, they don't have technological means, what can we do.... In face-to-face education, when you are doing assessment and evaluation, you are there with the student at that moment, maybe you are more sure of what the student does, what he/she does with his/her own knowledge, but you cannot be sure in distance education..."*

Findings on the difficulties experienced by instructors in distance education

Instructors were asked to explain the difficulties experienced in distance education. The most emphasized challenges are summarized in Table 4. These are; lack of interaction (f=12), difficult classroom management (f=9), technical problems (f=9), difficulty in getting used to the university's distance education system (portal) (f=6), lack of technological infrastructure (f=6), lack of technological opportunities for students (f=5), The following factors were mentioned: lack of technological knowledge and skills in stakeholders (f=4), insufficient portal (f=4), screen fatigue (f=4), home-work environment being the same (f=3), pedagogical difficulties (f=2) and adaptation to the process (f=2).

Table 4. Instructors' statements about the difficulties experienced in distance education

Theme Frequency	Code	f
Challenges in distance education	Lack of interaction	12
	Classroom management	9
	Technical problems	9
	Not recognizing the program	6
	Technological infrastructure	6
	Technological possibilities of the student	5
	Lack of technological knowledge and skills	4
	Portal inefficiency	4
	Screen fatigue	4
	Home-work environment	3
	Pedagogical	2
	Adaptation to the process	2

Explaining the difficulties experienced in distance education with difficulties in classroom management, inability to establish effective interaction and pedagogical difficulties, the statements of the lecturer coded A3 are as follows: *"For example, there is something we call classroom management. Pedagogically, we need to enter into a teacher-student interaction with children. There was no such event in distance education, I had a lot of difficulty pedagogically*." While the lecturer coded A11 stated as follows; *"The basic logic of the interactive course is to provide student-teacher interaction. In distance education, we could not ask questions to students and create discussions."* The statements of the lecturer coded A15, who explained the difficulty he experienced in distance education with the lack of technological infrastructure, are as follows: *"If there was a very strong infrastructure or if my internet was very strong, maybe I would not have difficulty in distance education."* The lecturer coded A9 expressed the difficulty he experienced in distance education as screen fatigue as follows; *"The screen was very tiring. It is constantly lecture, screen, homework, screen..."*

Findings on instructors' self-evaluation in face-to-face and distance education experience

When the instructors were asked to make a self-evaluation based on their face-to-face and distance education experiences, all instructors (f=18) found themselves more successful in face-to-face education. In addition, four instructors also evaluated themselves as successful in distance education. When the same table is continued to be analyzed, most of the lecturers evaluated themselves as partially successful in distance education (f=11), while three lecturers evaluated themselves as unsuccessful in distance education.

Table 5. Self-evaluations of instructors' experiences with face-to-face and distance education

		Face-to-Face Education	Distance Education
Theme	**Code**	**f**	**f**
Self-Assessment	Successful	18	4
	Partially Successful	0	11
	Failed	0	3

The statements of the lecturer coded A7, who found himself more successful in face-to-face education based on his experience of face-to-face education and distance education process and explained the reason for this situation with his inadequate technology use and skills, are as follows; *"I am more successful in face-to-face education and I enjoy it and I think I learn more and teach more. I told you that I am not good at using technology."* The lecturer coded A16 explained the reason why he characterized his self-evaluation as partially successful in distance education by justifying it as follows; *"I cannot say that I am successful in measurement and evaluation in distance education, I can summarize distance education as follows; the student did not stay away from education and training for a year. We tried to keep them in the environment in one way or another. Let's not say we succeeded, but let's say we tried. I did my best, I can neither call it successful nor unsuccessful."*

When Table 5 is analyzed, it is seen that four instructors characterized their self-evaluations as successful in distance education as they were in face-to-face education. The lecturer coded A5 justified his self-assessment as successful in the distance education process as follows; *"If I need to evaluate myself in general, I found myself successful, I was a prepared lecturer. I am a person who can use technology and has technology knowledge because of my field."* Within the scope of all these processes, the statements of the lecturer coded A14, who characterized himself as unsuccessful especially in distance education, are as follows; *"When I evaluate myself in distance education, I can consider myself unsuccessful, I can say this clearly."*

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

With the Covid-19 pandemic, the importance of distance education has once again emerged in order not to interrupt education and training activities. This research, which was conducted in order to reveal the thoughts of the lecturers about this education model due to the fact that they have experienced distance education and gained an experience, as well as to make some suggestions about this education model, examined the advantages and disadvantages of distance education, distance education model and face-to-face education models from the eyes of the participants from different perspectives. In this context, the general teaching of the course in face-to-face education and distance education, the benefits and limitations of both education models, the difficulties experienced in distance education and the self-evaluations of the participants within the scope of all these processes were determined based on the explanations and descriptions of the participants as the themes of the research.

In face-to-face education, the general teaching of a course is mostly carried out by lecturers with the presentation strategy, and the most commonly used method-techniques are the lecture method, question-answer and discussion techniques. In this context, it can be said that instructors do not prefer different constructivist-based strategies. In their research, Kurnaz and Serçemeli (2020) concluded that the lecturers in face-to-face education use the classical method of using the board and slides to teach their lessons, and accordingly, they mostly prefer the presentation strategy. In this context, it is in parallel with the findings of this study. When the findings in the same theme continued to be analyzed, it was concluded that the time allocated for a lesson in face-to-face education was between 45-90 minutes, and that both the instructor and the student were active in this process. Based on the explanations of the participants, the reasons for the student's being active in the course can be explained by the fact that the course content is suitable for the student's activity and the necessity of the student's active participation in applied courses. It was observed that instructors had difficulty in completing the course content they planned in face-to-face education until the end of the semester.

With the transition to distance education, there have been significant changes in the general teaching of a course, which was the first theme of the study. These changes were seen in the strategies-methods-techniques used, the time used, stakeholder activism and the completion of the course content. One of the most striking findings of the study was that the planned course content could not be completed in face-to-face education while it was completed in distance education. The reason for this is thought to be that instructors cannot involve students in distance education as much as in face-to-face education model, instructors are more active in the course process than in face-to-face education, and interaction and effective communication cannot be provided by stakeholders.

In this study, the biggest advantage of face-to-face education for lecturers is explained by the fact that it is easier to involve students in the process of education and training activities. This can be explained by the fact that the interaction in face-to-face education model is reciprocal and thus communication between stakeholders is easier, eye contact can be established and feedback/correction can be given to stakeholders. Institutions where face-to-face education activities are carried out are an

environment where students can participate effectively and provide a discussion environment, and where students can develop personal competencies such as empathy, love, respect and self-confidence (Zins et al. 2007). Another noteworthy result of the study is that the measurement and evaluation conducted for the course is thought to give more accurate results in face-to-face education. The reason why lecturers think this way can be explained by cheating in exams conducted in distance education. The negative evaluation of measurement and evaluation in distance education is associated with the fact that it is easier to cheat in online exams, inadequate or complicated distance education system software of universities, and the inadequacy of instructors and students in using information communication technologies (Kınalıoğlu & Güven, 2011). In this study, lecturers were of the opinion that face-to-face education has no limitations.

Based on the findings of the research, the advantages of distance education are that it provides an increase in the technology usage skills of individuals due to the fact that individuals are more exposed to technology, that education can be done anywhere and anytime by providing a space-independent education and training opportunity, and that it is economical in terms of time. Instructors who think that face-to-face education has no limitations think that distance education has many limitations. These limitations are as follows: interaction and communication cannot be carried out mutually, lack of or inadequate technological and technical infrastructure, inefficiency of distance education for applied courses, and inequality of technological opportunities especially among students. The limitations of distance education are encountered in both national and international literature. The fact that distance education is more efficient for theoretical courses and the lack of technological infrastructure are the biggest limitations (Djalilova, 2020; Gao & Zhang, 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Christoforou, 2021). Aras and Karakaya (2020) concluded in their research that distance education eliminates time and space problems, but there may be problems in effective communication and interaction. From this point of view, the results of this study and the results obtained from the findings of this study are similar.

The biggest difficulty experienced in distance education is that the interaction between student-student or instructor-student cannot be carried out mutually. The reasons for this situation can be explained by the shorter duration of the course compared to face-to-face education, the inability of the instructors to involve the student in the process in order to complete the planned course content until the end of the semester, the lack of technological facilities or lack of technological infrastructure of the students, and the students' lack of desire to participate interactively in the course since they are in a certain comfort zone. Similar findings were also found in the studies of Tuncer and Tanaş (2011), Gürer et al. (2016), Moorhouse and Kohnke (2021) and they stated that the instructors were not satisfied with the limited interaction, which is one of the biggest limitations of distance education. One of the most striking difficulties experienced in distance education is the limited technological equipment possibilities of the students and the technical infrastructure problems (problems in internet connection, difficulties in the distance education system provided by the university, etc.) encountered by both students and instructors. In their study, Karadağ and Yücel (2020) found that 63% of the students had internet connection at home and 66% had computers and tablets. Therefore, they concluded that 64% of the students continued distance education with computers or tablets, 32% with smartphones, and 23% could not continue distance education in any way. In their study, Simamora et al. (2020) emphasized the need for the widespread use of distance education in terms of providing more materials, although instructors have problems such as insufficient internet access.

Within the scope of this research, another difficulty experienced by the instructors in distance education was the inability to provide classroom management. Within the scope of this research, it is possible to say that the lecturers do not see classroom management as a discipline because they think that classroom management can be achieved through mutual communication and interaction as well as eye contact. In the study conducted by Fakazlı, İlhan and Yılmaz (2021), lecturers stated that classroom management is easier in distance education. This can be explained by the fact that instructors see classroom management as a discipline.

In the distance education process, instructors characterized their self-evaluation as partially successful. The reason for this situation was explained in different ways by the participants; the most emphasized point is that the instructors explained their technology usage skills as intermediate level; they need a certain amount of time to reach the level of technology knowledge-skills-usage of today's conditions. In this context, it is thought that when instructors are given enough time and technological opportunities, they can adapt to the distance education system more. When the related literature is examined, the positive self-evaluation of the lecturers is associated with their ability to achieve the purpose of their courses (Ustabulut, 2021).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above, some suggestions were made for the distance education system to be more efficient with the results of this research and for future research.

1. This research was conducted only with instructors. In another research, the views and experiences of distance education model from the perspective of both stakeholders can be revealed by including students in the research.

2. The opinions of lecturers in seven regions of Turkey on distance education can be revealed.

3. Even though we were caught unprepared for distance education, it is possible to say that the instructors adapted to the distance education system at the end of a semester. In this context, the ground for a more successful education and training

process can be created by eliminating the technological-instrument deficiencies and technological infrastructure deficiencies of both instructors and students.

4. In addition to providing in-service training to the lecturers, it will be possible for them to find themselves at least as successful in the distance education system as in face-to-face education by giving them a certain amount of time for the development of their technological knowledge-skill competencies.

5. The limitations of distance education can be minimized by equipping universities with the necessary technological equipment and infrastructure.

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Statements of publication ethics

I/We hereby declare that the study has not unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

Examples of author contribution statements

The study was conducted and reported with equal collaboration of the researchers.

Researchers' contribution rate

The study was conducted and reported with equal collaboration of the researchers.

Ethics Committee Approval Information

For the master's thesis "The View of the Lecturers to Distance Education in the Covid-19 Pandemic", was discussed by the Kastamonu University Social and Human Sciences Research and Publication Ethics, at the meeting dated 4.01.2022 unanimously approved.

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