Journal of Religious Inquiries

ISSN 2645-9132
Volume: 4 Issue: 1 (July 2021)

A Quantitative Evaluation of the Experiences of Faculty Members and Students at the Faculty of Theology/Islamic Sciences regarding Distance Education System during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Article Information		
Type Research Article		
Received 06 March 2021	**Accepted** 29 July 2021	**Published** 31 July 2021
Cite as Yazıbaşı, Muhammed Ali – Yemenici, Ahmet – Serinsu, Mehmet Enis – Zengin, Zeki Salih. "A Quantitative Evaluation of the Experiences of Faculty Members and Students at the Faculty of Theology/Islamic Sciences regarding Distance Education System during the Covid-19 Pandemic". *ULUM* 4/1 (2021), 99-131.		

Research / Publication Ethics

This article was reviewed by at least two referees, a similarity report was obtained using Turnitin, and compliance with research/publication ethics was confirmed.

A Quantitative Evaluation of the Experiences of Faculty Members and Students at the Faculty of Theology/Islamic Sciences regarding Distance Education System during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Abstract

During the Covid-19 pandemic, lectures have been delivered through distance education since the Spring Semester of the 2019-2020 Academic Year at the faculties of theology/Islamic sciences, as has been the case at all educational levels in our country. The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of the students and faculty members of the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences, regarding the impacts of distance education on higher religious education, its advantages and disadvantages, along with problems encountered in this medium of education. In this quantitative study, the data were collected using two online surveys, one of them being for students and the other for faculty members. The data obtained from the participants were analyzed using SPSS v24. The population of the study was the faculty members and students of the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences in Turkey. The sample of the study was selected from a group of faculty members and students at 25 faculties of theology/Islamic sciences dispersed across the seven geographical regions in Turkey.

Keywords

Distance Education, Faculty of Theology, Faculty of Islamic Sciences, the Covid-19 Pandemic, Higher Religious Education

Covid-19 Pandemi Sürecinde İlahiyat/İslami İlimler Fakültesi Öğretim Elemanları ve Öğrencilerinin Uzaktan Eğitim Sistemi ile İlgili Tecrübelerinin Değerlendirilmesi Üzerine Nicel Bir Araştırma

Öz

Covid-19 Pandemi sürecinde ülkemizin bütün eğitim kademelerinde olduğu gibi İlahiyat/İslami İlimler Fakültelerinde de 2019-2020 eğitim öğretim yılı bahar döneminden günümüze kadar eğitim-öğretim, uzaktan eğitim sistemi üzerinden devam etmektedir. Araştırmanın problemini "İslami İlimler/İlahiyat Fakültesi öğretim elemanları ve öğrencilerine göre uzaktan eğitimin yüksek din eğitimine etkisi ve uzaktan eğitimin avantaj ve dezavantajları nelerdir?" Araştırmanın amacı uzaktan eğitimin yüksek din eğitimi üzerindeki etkisi, avantaj ve dezavantajları, uzaktan eğitimde karşılaşılan problemlerle ilgili İlahiyat/İslami İlimler Fakültesi öğrenci ve öğretim elemanlarının değerlendirmelerini tespit etmektir. Nicel yöntemin kullanıldığı çalışmada veriler birisi öğrencilere diğeri ise öğretim elemanlarına yönelik çevrim içi iki adet anket yoluyla toplanmıştır. Araştırmaya katılan öğretim elemanlarından ve öğrencilerden elde edilen veriler SPSS 24 istatistik paket programı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmanın evrenini ülkemizdeki İlahiyat/İslami İlimler Fakültesi öğretim elemanları ve öğrencileri oluşturmuştur. Araştırmanın örneklemini ise yedi farklı

coğrafi bölgeden seçilen 25 İlahiyat/İslami İlimler Fakültesi öğretim elemanları ve öğrencilerinden seçilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Uzaktan Eğitim, İlahiyat Fakültesi, İslami İlimler Fakültesi, Covid-19 Pandemi, Yüksek Din Öğretimi

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined the Covid-19 virus, which is reported to have initially appeared in Wuhan, China on December 31, 2019, as a new type of corona virus (2019-nCoV) and then as SARS-CoV-2. On February 11, 2020, the Covid-19 virus was officially declared as a pandemic by the WHO because it had affected many countries and had reached the size of a global epidemic.[1]

Countries started to implement different strategies to cope with the "Covid-19" pandemic. Education system has been one of the areas where strategies have been implemented. The world has undergone a digital transformation in education, and an apparent transition from face-to-face education to distance education has taken place. Although the digital transformation of education and training in Turkey officially became a part of the agenda of the country in 2016,[2] the Council of Higher Education (CHE) added it to its own agenda in 2019.[3] The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation of education in higher education institutions. In our country, 121 (64%) of the 189 universities switched over to distance education as of March 23, 2020; 41 of them (21.6%) did so as of March 30, 2020, and 25 of them (13.2%) did it as of April 6, 2020.[4] During the pandemic, distance education has been considered as a viable alternative to formal education as it is characterized by its ability to remove the limitations of time and space. In this type of education, a relationship is established between the teacher and the student who cannot come together in the same educational space or at the same time. In this process, education is provided through various tools, such as television and computer.[5]

A. Theoretical Framework

1. Problem

[1] http://www.tuba.gov.tr/files/images/2020/kovidraporu/Covid-19%20Raporu-Final%2B.pdf erişim 20.02.2021; Semih Dikmen, Ferhat Bahçeci, "Covid-19 Pandemisi Sürecinde Yükseköğretim Kurumlarının Uzaktan Eğitime Yönelik Stratejileri: Fırat Üniversitesi Örneği", *Turkish Journal of Educational Studies*, 7/2 (Mayıs 2020), 80-82.

[2] Elif Nuroğlu, Hüseyin Nuroğlu, "Türkiye ve Almanya'nın Sanayide Dijital Dönüşümü: Yol Haritaları ve Şirketlerin Karşılaştırılması," *Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi,* 23 (2018), 1554.

[3] https://www.yok.gov.tr/Sayfalar/Haberler/2020/uzaktan-egitim-platformu-saglama-protokolu.aspx Accessed on: 01.03.2021

[4] https://www.yok.gov.tr/Sayfalar/Haberler/2020/uzaktan-egitime-yonelik-degerlendirme.aspx Accessed on: 20.02.2021

[5] Ahmet Cevizci, *Eğitim Sözlüğü*, (İstanbul: Say Yayınları 2010), 482; Zeki Kaya, *Uzaktan Eğitim,* (Ankara: Pegem A Yayınları 2002), 10.

Covid-19, declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization, affected the whole world within a short time.[6] Due to the Covid-19 virus, the death toll has still been increasing around the globe. Moreover, problems in areas such as health, trade and education have become apparent in some countries. Therefore, such countries have been adopting different practices other than conventional ones in these areas to overcome apparent problems and reduce the spread of the virus and deaths. Education systems have also been affected by this change; a switchover from face-to-face education to distance education is now noticeable around the globe.[7] In Turkey, since the spring semester of the 2019-2020 academic year, education has been delivered through distance education systems on digital platforms in higher education institutions, as well as at all levels of education. This study aims to investigate the perspectives of faculty members and students regarding the impacts of distance education on higher religious education, as well as its advantages and disadvantages.

Research Questions

- Could the faculty members and students adapt well to the process?
- What can be the pros and cons of distance education from the perspectives of faculty members and students?
- Can the faculty members and students cope with the process successfully?
- How did distance education affect higher religious education according to the faculty members and students?
- Do the faculty members and students consider themselves competent enough to use such technological tools as computers and tablets for educational purposes?
- Do the universities have the essential digital infrastructure to deliver distance education efficiently?
- Do the personal characteristics of the participants, such as age, gender, title, length of service, department and university, affect the efficiency of distance education?
- Do the students' characteristics, such as gender, grade level and place of residence, affect the efficiency of distance education?

2. Purpose

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, lessons have been delivered through distance education at the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences since the spring semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. After the decision

[6] https://lastatalenews.unimi.it/covid-19-primo-mese-didattica-online-statale Accessed on: 20.02.2021

[7] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/-- travail/documents/briefingnote/wcms_745450.pdf erişim 20.02.2021

taken by the CHE in late March 2020, some of these faculties were caught unprepared for distance education. In this context, this study aims to investigate the perceptions of the faculty members and students of the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences regarding the impacts of distance education on religious education, its advantages and disadvantages and the problems they encounter during this process. Based on their perceptions, the study also aims to evaluate the suitability and limitations of higher religious education programs for distance education, the technological infrastructure of the universities and the competencies of academic staff and students in distance education.

Hypotheses

- Most of the faculties of theology/Islamic sciences experience problems in preparing and using the infrastructure for distance education.
- The staff have received in-service training on distance education.
- The students were informed about distance education.
- None of the faculty members have sufficient knowledge of and experience in distance education.
- Most of the students lack sufficient knowledge and experience about distance education systems.
- The teaching staff can adequately use computers, tablets and similar instructional technologies.
- Students have no trouble accessing computers and the Internet.
- Independent variables such as age, gender, title, length of service, department and university affect the productivity of the faculty members in the distance education process.
- Independent variables such as gender, grade level and place of residence affect the productivity of students in the distance education process.

3. Method

Adopting a survey methodology, this quantitative study,[8] used two surveys[9] as the data collection tools, in which the opinions of the participants on the research problem were sought. Two different surveys for the students and faculty members were prepared, and they were evaluated by field experts. The resulting questionnaire was administered to 100 students from 50 different universities to pilot it, and its final version was prepared. The reliability analysis was conducted to test the reliability of the tools, and a factor analysis was carried out to test their validity. Moreover, a frequency analysis was also conducted to examine the demographic characteristics of the faculty members and students making up the study sample. Then, the online versions of the questionnaires were administered to the faculty members and students of the faculty

[8] John W. Creswell, *Eğitim Araştırmaları: Nicel ve Nitel Araştırmanın Planlanması, Yürütülmesi ve Değerlendirilmesi,* çev. Selçuk Doğan – İsmail Karsantik (İstanbul: EDAM Yayınları 2017), 481.

[9] Münire Erden, *Eğitim Bilimine Giriş,* (Ankara: Arkadaş Yayınevi 2017), 116.

of theology/Islamic sciences sampled from the seven regions in Turkey. The data obtained from the participants were analyzed using the SPSS v24. The research report was written by analyzing the obtained data in a planned way.

4. Population and Sample

The population of the study was composed of the academic staff and students of the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences in Turkey. The study sample was composed of 2378 students (1831 females and 547 males) and 280 teaching staff (51 females and 229 males) at the Faculty of Theology at the Universities of Amasya, Ankara, Atatürk, Çukurova, Dicle, Dokuz Eylül, Erciyes, Harran, Hatay Mustafa Kemal, Kilis 7 Aralık, Marmara, Sakarya, Siirt, Sivas Cumhuriyet, Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa, Şırnak, Van Yüzüncü Yıl, Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit, 19 Mayıs and at the Faculty of Islamic Sciences at the Universities of Afyon Kocatepe, Kırıkkale, Kütahya Dumlupınar, Mersin, Yalova and Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt. To identify the impact of the faculties' experiences in terms of technical infrastructure on online education, the date when they first began to provide education (institutional experience) was taken into consideration while choosing the faculties.

5. Demographic Data

Table 1. Demographic Data about the Students

Variables	Number (N)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Female	1831	77.0
Male	547	23.0
Grade Level		
Freshman	530	22.3
Sophomore	568	23.9
Junior	750	31.5
Senior	530	22.3
Hometown		
City	1160	48.8
County	637	26.8
Town	60	2.5
Village	521	21.9

Table 2. Demographic Data about the Teaching Staff and their Institutional Affiliations

Variables	Number (N)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Female	51	18.2
Male	229	81.8
Academic Title		
Associate Professor	83	29.6
Research Assistant Dr.	7	2.5
Asst. Prof. Dr.	117	41.8
Lecturers	38	13.6
Professor	35	12.5
Length of Service		
1-5 years	59	21.1
5-10 years	64	22.9
10-15 years	40	14.3
15-20 years	42	15.0
20 years or more	75	26.8
Department/Program		
Philosophy and Religious Sciences	119	42.5
Islamic History and Arts	32	11.4
Basic Islamic Sciences	129	46.1
Institutional Experience		
1-5 years	86	30.7
5-10 years	104	37.1
10-15 years	12	4.3
15-20 years	7	2.5
20 years or more	71	25.4

6. Factor Analyses

6.1. Factor Analysis of the Student Data

The Principal Components Technique and Promax Rotation Technique were used to examine the construct validity of the tool used to collect data from the students in the study. First, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartletts tests were carried out to determine if a factor analysis was applicable. The tests revealed that the KMO test result was 0.971, and the Bartletts test $\chi 2$ value was 42572.900 ($p < 0.05$). These results indicated that the size of the study sample was large enough to perform factor analysis and that the data were structurally valid.

Table 3. Item Analyses and the Distribution of the Items across the Subdimensions

	Subdimensions	*N*	*M*	*SD*
Factor 1. Communication				
Item 26	The faculty members are proficient in using the online education system.	2363	2.99	1.234
Item 15	I can get enough feedback from faculty members during the online instruction.	2363	3.10	1.248
Item 27	Audio-visual and written materials were used effectively in the online classes.	2363	2.97	1.278
Item 14	I can communicate effectively with faculty members during the online education process.	2363	2.99	1.320
Item 17	I was able to reach the faculty members outside the online sessions.	2363	2.99	1.265
Item 28	Assessment and evaluation were carried out objectively during online instruction.	2363	2.80	1.253
Item 29	Assessment and evaluation criteria are included in the instructions of various types of examinations, such as take-home examinations, graded projects during the online education.	2363	3.14	1.201
Item 25	The faculty members were willing to deliver their classes through online education.	2363	2.76	1.180
Item 10	During the online education process, the lessons started and finished on time.	2363	2.94	1.361
Item 13	The course materials (textbooks, PDFs, PPTs, lecture notes, etc.) used in the online classes were comprehensible enough for the students.	2363	3.26	1.256
Item 30	During the classes, I did not have any problems with the online system of the university where I study.	2363	2.43	1.349
Variance Explained: 47,638% Eigenvalue: 13,339 Cronbach Alpha: 0.923				
Factor 2. Attainment				
Item 22	I feel happier during the online classes.	2363	2.20	1.395
Item 21	I did not have any motivational problems during the online learning process.	2363	2.24	1.381
Item 19	I did not have a problem focusing on the lessons during the online learning process.	2363	2.22	1.395
Item 20	My academic success increased during the online education.	2363	2.37	1.318
Item 24	My attainment during the online education process increased my self-confidence.	2363	2.45	1.289
Item 2	The curricula in the faculty of theology/Islamic studies lend themselves well to online education.	2363	2.64	1.353

Item 1	Online education promotes access and equity in undergraduate education.	2363	2.15	1.242
Item 9	The time was used effectively during the online instruction.	2363	2.65	1.340
Item 8	I have previously taken undergraduate classes through distance education.	2363	2.22	1.366
Item 11	Different and abundant educational materials were used in the classes during the online education.	2363	2.48	1.200
Variance Explained: 6,505% Eigenvalue: 1,821 Cronbach Alpha: 0.908				
Factor 3. Experience				
Item 18	I easily accessed the Internet during the online education.	2363	2.75	1.467
Item 6	I did not have any problems using the computer and Internet during the process of online education.	2363	2.51	1.485
Item 12	I could easily access the equipment (computer, laptop, notebook, smartphone, etc.).	2363	2.74	1.507
Item 4	I had no trouble using the online education system.	2363	2.61	1.456
Item 5	I easily accessed course resources and instructional materials during the process.	2363	2.64	1.397
Item 7	I have enough knowledge about the content and functioning of distance education.	2363	3.18	1.248
Item 16	I regularly attended the classes during the online education process.	2363	3.17	1.371
Variance Explained 4.973% Eigenvalue: 1,392 Cronbach Alpha: 0,890				

As a result of the factor analysis, Item 3 and Item 23 were excluded as they had multiple factor loadings. After the explanatory factor analysis, a survey with 28 items and 3 factors were obtained, and it explained the 59.11% of total variance. To test the reliability of the survey, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were calculated, and they were found to be 0.923, 0.908, 0.890 for the subdimensions **"Communication", "Attainment"** and **"Experience",** respectively; the global Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be 0.958. The analyses revealed that the questionnaire created to determine students' evaluations of their online education experience was valid and reliable.

6.2. Factor Analysis of the Faculty Members' Data

The Principal Components and Promax Rotation Techniques were used to test the construct validity of the questionnaire used to collect data from the academic staff participating in the study. First, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartletts tests were conducted to determine if factor analysis was applicable. The test revealed that the KMO test result was 0.860, and the Bartletts test χ^2 value was calculated as 2933.043 ($p < 0.05$). These results indicated that the size of the study sample was large enough to perform the factor analysis and that the data were structurally valid.

Table 4. Item Analyses and the Distribution of the Items across the Subdimensions

Subdimensions	*N*	*M*	*SD*
Factor 1. Communication			

Item 16	I received feedback from my students during the online education process.	280	3.38	1.023
Item 15	I communicated effectively with my students during the online education process.	280	3.12	1.151
Item 23	I included assessment and evaluation criteria in the instructions of various types of examinations, such as take-home examinations or graded projects during the online education.	280	3.65	1.012
Item 18	I was able to reach my students outside of the online sessions easily.	280	2.96	1.156
Item 21	I got responses to the questions I asked my students during the online education.	280	3.05	1.041
Item 19	I easily accessed the Internet during the online education.	280	3.84	.964
Item 22	I had no difficulty adapting to the online learning process.	280	3.44	1.159
Item 27	During the online education, I carried out the assessment and evaluation procedures objectively.	280	3.32	1.086
Item 26	I used audio-visual and written materials effectively in online classes.	280	3.47	1.040
Item 28	During the classes, I did not experience any problems with the online system of the university where I work.	280	3.26	1.174
Item 4	I had no trouble using the online education system.	280	3.27	1.263
Item 12	During the online education, I started and finished my classes on time.	280	3.99	.995
Item 14	The course materials (textbooks and PDFs) used in the online classes were comprehensible enough for the students.	280	3.83	.957
Item 8	I had difficulty in assessment and evaluation during the distance education.	280	3.62	1.256
Variance Explained 29.900% Eigenvalue: 8,073 Cronbach Alpha: 0.839				
Factor 2. Attainment				
Item 2	The curricula of the faculty of theology/Islamic studies lend themselves well to online education.	280	2.43	1.055
Item 10	When face-to-face education begins, I would like to deliver my lessons through distance education.	280	2.18	1.235
Item 1	Online education promotes access and equity in undergraduate education.	280	2.41	1.078
Item 24	My students did not experience any motivational problems during the online education.	280	2.63	1.050
Item 25	The students are competent in using the online education system.	280	2.98	1.037
Item 20	I did not have trouble focusing on the lessons during the online instruction.	280	3.37	1.112
Variance Explained: %6.909 Eigenvalue: 1,865 Cronbach Alpha: 0.723				
Factor 3. Experience				
Item 6	During the process of switching over to online education due to the pandemic, our institution provided training and/or information about the use of pedagogical and technical infrastructure.	280	3.66	1.202
Item 17	During the online education period, students regularly attended the lectures.	280	2.19	1.095
Item 5	I had taught online classes before the Covid -19 pandemic.	280	2.65	1.635
Item 9	Our university has an infrastructure suitable for distance education.	280	3.44	1.190

Item 11	In the online education period, course resources and instructional materials were easily delivered to the students.	280	3.53	1.070
Item 7	I encountered difficulties while preparing the course materials for online education.	280	2.71	1.215
Item 13	I did not experience any problems in using such instructional tools as computers, laptops, tablet computers during the online education process.	280	3.79	1.152
Variance Explained: %6,599 Eigenvalue: 1,782 Cronbach Alpha: 0,637*				

* In reliability analysis studies, the Cronbach alpha coefficient range of 0.7 and 0.9 is often defined as "higher reliability", and the range between 0.6 and 0.7 is considered as "acceptable reliability"[10].

As a result of the factor analysis, 3 items were excluded from the survey as they had multiple factor loadings. An exploratory factor analysis was carried out using the Promax Rotation Technique, and it was found that a 7-factor structure was created. Since the number of factors was high, it was reduced to three by examining the scree plot and making a comparison with the items administered to the students.

Following the explanatory factor analysis, a structure with 27 items clustered into 3 factors was obtained, and it explained the 43.409% of the total variance. For the reliability of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient values were calculated. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were obtained as 0.839, 0.723 and 0.637 for the subdimensions, of **communication, attainment and experience**, respectively, and the global reliability coefficient was found to be 0.851. The analyses revealed that the survey developed to determine the faculty members' perceptions of online education was valid and reliable.

B. Findings and Discussion

The findings obtained through the analysis of the data from the surveys intended for the students and faculty members at the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences at various universities were evaluated under three headings: ***communication***, ***attainment*** and ***experience***.

1. Communication

1.1. Findings about the Students

As Table 3 shows, the mean scores were similar for the following survey items that sought information about students' evaluations of the faculty members' digital competences and willingness to use the online system: *The faculty members are proficient in using the online education system (2,99); the faculty members were willing to deliver their classes through online education (2,76).* This indicates that the faculty members are competent in distance education and are willing to deliver their lectures through such medium of education.

[10] Kazım Özdamar, *Paket Programlarla İstatistiksel Veri Analizi-1*, Eskişehir: Kaan Kitabevi, 2002.

An examination of the following items which sought the participant's evaluations of the instructional materials used and the assessment procedures followed by the faculty members reveals that they used the instructional materials effectively during the distance education process: *Audio-visual and written materials were used effectively in the online classes (2,97); assessment and evaluation were carried out objectively during online instruction (2,80); assessment and evaluation criteria are included in the instructions of various types of examinations, such as take-home examinations, graded projects during the online education (3,14); the course materials (textbooks, PDFs, PPTs, lecture notes, etc.) used in the online classes were comprehensible enough for the students (3,26).* In addition, the students thought that the faculty members objectively carried out the assessment and evaluation procedures.

The following survey items about communication reveal that there were no communication problems between the students and faculty members: *I can get enough feedback from faculty members during the online instruction (3,10); I can communicate effectively with the faculty members during the online education process (2,99); I was able to reach the faculty members outside the online sessions (2.99).*

1.2. Findings about the Faculty Members

As Table 4 shows, the mean scores were similar for the following items that sought information about the students' evaluations of the faculty members' digital competences and willingness to use the online system: *The faculty members are proficient in using the online education system (2,99); the faculty members were willing to deliver their classes through online education (2,76).* This indicates that the faculty members are competent in distance education and are willing to deliver their lectures through this medium of education.

As indicated by the mean scores for the following survey items about the use of instructional materials and assessment and evaluation procedures, the faculty members used instructional materials effectively: *Audio-visual and written materials were used effectively in the online classes (2,97); assessment and evaluation were carried out objectively during online instruction (2,80); assessment and evaluation criteria are included in the instructions of various types of examinations, such as take-home examinations, graded projects during the online education (3,14); the course materials (textbooks, PDFs, PPTs, lecture notes, etc.) used in the online classes were comprehensible enough for the students (3,26).*

2. *Attainment*

2.1. Findings about the Students

The mean scores for the following items about the students' attainment were relatively lower; this could be seen as an indication of lack of improvement in the students in terms of both affective and academic aspects: *I felt happier during the online classes (2,20); I did not have any motivational problems during the online learn-*

ing process (2,24); I did not have a problem focusing on the lessons during the online learning process (2, 22); my attainment during the online education process increased my self-confidence (2.45); my academic performance increased during the online education (2.37).

It is seen that the mean score for the item *"Online education promotes access and equity in undergraduate education"* is lower than those of the other items. The students' responses to the item *"I have previously taken undergraduate classes through distance education"* justifies the item above. The students do not consider distance education, in which they found themselves unprepared, as a means for access and equity.

The data from following items about the students' attainment indicate that the time was used effectively and that a variety of instructional materials were used: *The time was used effectively during the online education process (2,65); Different and abundant educational materials were used in the classes during the online education (2,48).*

2.2. Findings about the Faculty Members

The data from the following items in the second subdimension of the survey indicate that the faculty members experienced no problems in adapting to distance education and that they were highly motivated*: My students did not experience any motivational problems during the online education (2.63); the students are competent in using the online education system (2.98); I did not have trouble focusing on the lessons during the online instruction (3.37).*

The mean scores for the following items that sought information about if the objectives of the curriculum of the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences were achieved indicate that the program of the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences was not considered appropriate for distance education by the faculty members: *The curricula of the faculty of theology/Islamic studies lend themselves well to online education (2,43); when face-to-face education begins, I would like to deliver my lessons through distance education (2,18); online education promotes access and equity in undergraduate education (2,41).*

3. Experience

3.1. Findings about the Students

In the third of the three subdimensions emerging as a result of the factor analysis, the mean scores for the items about whether the students had the necessary opportunity and economic sources to access computers and the Internet and to attend classes regularly were quite similar: *I easily accessed the Internet during the online education (2,75); I did not have any problems using the computer and Internet during the process of online education (2,51); I could easily access the equipment (computer, laptop, notebook, smartphone, etc.) (2.74); I had no trouble using the online education system (2.61); I easily accessed course resources and instructional materials during the process (2,64), and I regularly attended the classes during the online education process (3,17).* This indicates that the students have adequate opportunities, as regards the access to the Internet, computers and course materials during the distance education process.

The item *"I have enough knowledge about the content and functioning of distance education" (3,18)* sought information about if the students were proficient enough to efficiently take part in online education, and the data from this item indicated that the students were proficient in using computers and the Internet.

3.2. Findings about the Faculty Members

An analysis of the means scores for the following items in the third dimension that emerged as a result of factor analysis indicates that universities provide guidance to their faculty members in terms of both knowledge and infrastructure in distance education: *During the process of switching over to online education due to the pandemic, our institution provided training and/or information about the use of pedagogical and technical infrastructure (3,66); our university has an infrastructure suitable for distance education (3, 44).*

The following items that sought information about if the faculty members had the opportunity and adequate economic power to participate in the classes regularly: *I did not experience any problems in using such instructional tools as computers, laptops, tablet computers during the online education process (3,79); In the online education period, course resources and instructional materials were easily delivered to the students (3,53).* The data from these items indicated that the faculty members had sufficient opportunities and experience for online education.

The item *"I encountered difficulties while preparing the course materials for online education" (2,71)* sought the faculty members' perceptions of preparing instructional materials. The data from this item indicated that the faculty members had problems in preparing the instructional materials for distance education. Furthermore, the faculty members made negative evaluations in their responses to the item *"During the online education period, students regularly attended the lectures" (2.19).*

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and the students' perception of the necessity of face-to-face instruction for effective undergraduate education. More faculty members than students thought that face-to-face instruction is necessary for effective education in undergraduate degree in Islamic sciences/theology.

A statistically significant difference was found between the scores of the faculty members and those of the students regarding the item that sought the participants' opinion of whether the faculty members are competent to use the online education system. That is, the faculty members thought that they had higher competency in using the online education system than their perceived competence by the students.

For the item about *using audio-visual and written materials effectively in the online classes*, a statistically significant difference was found between the scores of the faculty members and those of the students. The faculty members stated that they used audio-visual and written materials more effectively in the online classes compared to the students' perceptions of this issue. However, there was not a statistically significant difference between the perceptions of the faculty members and those of the students as regards the students' ability to reach faculty members easily outside the online courses ($p > 0.05$).

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and students' perceptions of *carrying out the assessment and evaluation procedures objectively during the online education process*. It was found that, in contrast to what the students generally thought, the faculty members stated that they carried out the assessment and evaluation procedures objectively. The students and the faculty members differed with respect to their perceptions of whether the assessment and evaluation were carried out objectively. While faculty members thought that they used objective assessment and evaluation procedures, the students thought otherwise.

A statistically significant difference was found between scores of the faculty members and those of the students in the item about *including assessment and evaluation criteria in the instructions in the take-home examinations and graded projects*. In their evaluations about online education, more faculty members than students stated that assessment and evaluation criteria are included in the instructions in the take-home examinations and graded projects.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and the students' perceptions of the faculty members' *willingness to use online education systems or their having difficulties*. Another finding was that the faculty members, compared to the students, reported being more willing to use the online education systems or they reported experiencing much fewer difficulties.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members and the students in the item about *the punctuality of the classes during the online education process*. More faculty members than students stated that the faculty members started and finished the classes on time.

A statistically significant difference was found between the scores of the faculty members and those of the students for the item about *the comprehensibility of the instructional materials (e.g., textbooks or PDFs) in the classes during the online education process*. While the faculty members stated that the instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, PDFs) used in the classes during the online education process were comprehensible enough for the students, the students did not agree with this statement as much as the faculty members did.

A statistically significant difference was found between the perceptions of the faculty members and students with respect to the item *"I had no trouble using the online education system"*. Unlike the students, the faculty members stated that they did not experience any problems with the online system of the university during the classes. In other words, it was apparent that the students experienced more problems than the faculty members did.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and the students' perceptions of the item *"Online education provides access and equity in undergraduate education"*. In their evaluations about online education, more students than faculty members thought that online education does not promote access and equity in undergraduate education.

A statistically significant difference was found between scores of the faculty members and those of the students for the item that sought information about *if the curricula of the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences were appropriate for online education*. According to the results, while the students thought that the curriculum

of the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences is suitable for online education, the faculty members did not agree with this idea.

A statistically significant difference was found between perceptions of the faculty members and those of the students regarding the students' *experiencing motivational problems during the online education process*. The students thought that they faced motivational problems, whereas the faculty members mostly thought that what their students experienced was not really a motivational problem.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and the students' perceptions of *having trouble in focusing on the lessons*. While the faculty members thought that they did not have problems focusing on the lessons during the online education process, the students had some perceived problems in focusing on the lessons during the online education process.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members and the students' perceptions of the students' regularly attending classes in the online education process. More students than faculty members stated that the students attended the classes regularly during the online education process.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and students' perceptions of problems in using the digital tools, such as computers, laptops and tablets, during the online education. More faculty members than students stated that they had no problem using such tools.

4. The Analysis of Subdimensions Based on the Independent Variables

An analysis of the subdimensions was carried out for the data from the students and faculty members participating in the study based on the independent variables. *T* test, ANOVA and Tukey test were conducted to examine whether the independent variables had an impact on the subdimensions related to the students' evaluations of online education. The p value's being lower than 0.05 means that the null hypothesis is rejected at the 95% confidence level.[11] The results of the analysis were interpreted based on this.

Analysis and Interpretation of "Communication" as a Subdimension of the Evaluations of Students and Faculty Members about Online Education Based on the Independent Variables

In this subdimension, an analysis was carried out to test whether gender, grade level, place of residence and university have an impact on the perceptions of the faculty members and students. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. The Impact of the Students' Independent Variables on the Subdimension "Communication"

Independent Variables	Statistical Test	Test Value	p value
Gender	*t* test	3.681	,000*

[11] Hamza Gamgam, Bülent Altunkaynak, *Parametrik Olmayan Yöntemler Spss Uygulamalı*, (Ankara: Gazi Kitapevi,2008), 17-178

Grade	ANOVA	5.698	,001*
Home City	ANOVA	10.005	.000*
University	ANOVA	18.658	.000*

*(p<0,05)

Table 5 presents data regarding the impacts of the students' gender, grade level, place of residence and university on **communication**.

As seen in Table 5, the independent variables (p <0.05) that have an effect on communication are the students' gender, grade level, place of residence and the university where they study.

Therefore, it is possible to say that the perceived communication levels of females are higher than those of the males. It was observed that as the grade level increases, the survey scores of the students for the subdimension of "**communication**" also increased.

Similarly, as the place where the students live changed from the village to urban areas, their scores for the items related with "**communication**" increased. There was a positive relationship between the size of residential area where the students lived and their level of access to online education; as it got larger, the learners had higher scores for the perceived level of **communication**.

The data from the students' perceptions of their online education experiences, indicated that there was a significant difference (p <0.05) between universities with respect to the scores in the subdimension "**communication**". It was found that the evaluations of the students in Dicle, Hatay Mustafa Kemal, Mersin, Siirt, Şırnak and Van Yüzüncü Yıl Universities about their online education experiences were positively different from those of the students at the other universities.

An Analysis and Interpretation of the data from the Subdimension of "Communication" Based on Lecturer-Side Independent Variables

For the scores from the **communication** subdimension, an analysis was carried out to test the impact of gender, academic title, length of service, department, university and institutional experience of the faculty on the participants' perceptions. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. An Analysis and Interpretation of the Effect of Lecturer-Side Independent Variables on the Subdimension "Communication"

Independent Variables	Statistical Test	Value	p value
Gender	t test	3.295	,001*
Academic Title	ANOVA	1.161	,329
Length of Service	ANOVA	1.382	.240
Department	ANOVA	3.363	.036*
Length of Education at the Faculty	ANOVA	3.238	.013*
University	ANOVA	1.111	.338

*(p<0,05)

Table 6 presents the data about the impact of the variables of gender, academic title, length of service, department, institutional experience (how long it has been since the date of establishment of the faculty) and university on the subdimension of "**communication**".

The independent variables with a statistically significant effect on **communication** in Table 6 ($p < 0.05$) are the gender of the faculty members, the institutional experience of the department and faculty where they work.

The data obtained from the faculty members in the "**communication**" subdimension showed a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) by gender. It can be said that the **communication** levels of female faculty members are higher than those of males.

The data from the faculty members about online education showed a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) by the department/program where they work. There was a statistically significant difference in the **communication** subdimension regarding the perceptions of online education among the faculty members working at the department/program of philosophy and religious studies and basic Islamic sciences. **Communication** during online education was found to be more effective according to the faculty members working in the department of philosophy and religious studies than according to those working in the department of basic Islamic sciences.

The scores of the faculty members about online education show a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in the **communication** subdimension by the variable of institutional experience. The results of the Tukey test indicated that there was a significant difference between the perceptions of the faculty members who worked at a faculty with 15 to 20 years of institutional experience than those working at other faculties with differing institutional experiences, in terms of **communication**. In the evaluations of faculty members about the subdimension "**communication**", it was observed that as the institutional experience increases, the scores also increase, but when the faculty's institutional experience is 20 years or more, there is an apparent decrease.

However, the other independent variables led to no significant differences on the scores for the items composing the **communication** subdimension ($p > 0.05$).

Analysis and Interpretation of the Subdimension "Attainment" according to the Independent Variables

The data from the student survey were analyzed to test whether gender, grade level, place of residence and university had any effect on the subdimension "**attainment**". The results of the analysis are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. The Impact of the Student-related Independent Variables on the Subdimension "Attainment"

Independent Variables	Statistical Test	Value	p value
Gender	t test	-0.769	,442

Grade	ANOVA	14.301	,000*
Place	ANOVA	16.171	,000*
University	ANOVA	10.363	,000*

*(p<0,05)

Table 7 presents data about the impacts of the students' gender, grade level, place of residence and university on the subdimension "**attainment**".

As seen in Table 7, the independent variables (p <0.05) that have a significant impact on the perceived "**attainment**" of the students at the faculty of Islamic sciences/theology are the grade level of the students, their place of residence and the university where they study. It was found that gender did not have an effect on "**attainment**"; in other words, there was not a significant difference (p> 0.05) between the males and females regarding their attainment. However, the data indicated that as the grade levels of the students increased, the perceived **attainment** in online education also increased.

Moreover, as the place where the students lived changed from the village to urban areas, their scores for the items related with "**attainment**" increased. In other words, as the place of residence got larger, the learners had higher perceived attainment in online education.

The students' scores for the items in the subdimension "**attainment**" in online education significantly differed (p<0.05) by the university variable. It was observed that the evaluations of the students at Dicle, Hatay Mustafa Kemal, Kırıkkale and Siirt Universities regarding online education were positively different from those of the students at the other universities.

An Analysis and Interpretation of the Data from the Subdimension of "Attainment" Based on Lecturer-Side Independent Variables

For the scores from the subdimension "**attainment**," an analysis was carried out to test the impact of gender, academic title, length of service, department, university and institutional experience on the participants' perceptions. The results of the analyses are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. The Impact Lecturer-Side Independent Variables on the Subdimension "Attainment"

Independent Variables	Statistical Test	Value	p value
Gender	t test	-0.872	,384
Academic Title	ANOVA	.374	.827
Duration of Service	ANOVA	,221	,926
Department	ANOVA	2.176	.115
Institutional Experience	ANOVA	4.007	,004*
University	ANOVA	.837	.685

*(p<0.05)

Table 8 presents data about the impacts of department, university, the faculty members' gender, title, length of service, along with institutional experience, on the subdimension "**attainment**".

As seen in Table 8, according to the data from the faculty members, the independent variable with a statistically significant effect on the subdimension "**attainment**" (p <0.05) was institutional experience.

In the data regarding the faculty members' evaluations about online education, there was a significant difference (p <0.05) in the "**attainment**" subdimension according to institutional experience. The result of the post hoc (Tukey) test indicated that the scores obtained from the items related to the faculty members' perceptions of online education produced a significant difference between perceptions of the faculty members working at faculties with an institutional experience of 15-20 years and those working in the others. That is, as the institutional experience increased, the scores obtained from the items for their evaluations about online education also increased in terms of **attainment**, but they decreased in those faculties with institutional experience of 20 years or longer. However, the other independent variables had no statistically significant impact on **attainment** (p>0.05).

An Analysis and Interpretation of the Data from the Subdimension of "Experience" Based on Student-Side Independent Variables

For the scores from the subdimension "**Experience**," an analysis was carried out to test the impact of gender, grade level, place of residence on the learners' perceptions. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. An Examination of the Impact of Student-Side Independent Variables on the Subdimension "Experience"

Independent Variables	Statistical Test	Value	p value
Gender	*t* test	1.967	.049*
Grade	ANOVA	31.230	.000*
Home City	ANOVA	73.649	.000*
University	ANOVA	22.176	.000*

*(p<0,05)

Table 9 presents data regarding the impacts of the students' gender, class, place of residence and university on the subdimension "**experience**".

As seen in Table 9, the independent variables with statistically significant impact on "**experience**" (p <0.05) were the students' gender, grade level, place of residence and the university where they studied. That is, it can be said that the level of **experience** among females is higher than that among males. It was also found that as the grade level increased, the students' scores for the subdimension "**experience**" also increased.

Similarly, as the place where the students live changes from the village to urban areas, their scores for the items related with "**experience**" increase. It was found that there is a positive relationship between size of residential area and level of access to online education; as it gets larger, the learners have higher scores for the perceived level of **experience**.

The data from the students' perceptions of their online education experiences indicate that there is a significant difference between universities with respect to the scores in the Subdimension "**experience**" ($p < 0.05$). It was found that the evaluations of the students at Dicle, Hatay Mustafa Kemal, Kırıkkale, Siirt, Şırnak and Van Yüzüncü Yıl Universities about their online education experiences are positively different from those of the students in the other universities.

An Analysis and Interpretation of the Data from the Subdimension of "Experience" Based on Lecturer-Side Independent Variables

For the scores from the subdimension "**experience**," an analysis was carried out to test the impact of gender, academic title, length of service, department, university and institutional experience on the faculty members' perceptions. The results of the analyses are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. An Examination of the Impact of Lecturer-Side Independent Variables on the Subdimension "Experience"

Independent Variables	Statistical Test	Value	p value
Gender	*t* test	0.007	.994
Academic Title	ANOVA	1.252	.289
Length of Service	ANOVA	1.150	.333
Department	ANOVA	2.186	.114
Institutional Experience	ANOVA	7.519	.000*
University	ANOVA	1.695	.029*

*(p<0,05)

Table 10 presents data about the impacts of the faculty members' gender, title, length of service, department, university and institutional experience on the subdimension "**Experience**". As seen in Table 10, the independent variables that affect the **experience** ($p < 0.05$) were institutional experience and university.

The faculty members' survey scores for the subdimension "**experience**" significantly differed by institutional experience ($p < 0.05$). The results of the Tukey test revealed that there was a significant difference between the scores of the faculty members who work at a faculty with an institutional experience of 15-20 years and those with varying other lengths of institutional experience. It was found that the survey scores of the faculty members increased as the institutional experience of the faculty increased, but when it was 20 years or more, the scores decreased.

The scores of the faculty members for the subdimension "**experience**" differed significantly ($p < 0.05$) by the variable of university. It was observed that the perceptions of the faculty members working at Ankara, Çukurova, Kilis 7 Aralık, Marmara, Sivas Cumhuriyet, Yıldırım Beyazıt, Van Yüzüncü Yıl Universities

were different from those of the faculty members at the other universities. The independent variables had no statistically significant impacts on the scores of the faculty members for the subdimension "**experience**" (p>0.05).

Table 11. The Mean, Standard Deviation and Independent Samples t-test Results

SCALE	Participant	N	Mean	SD	Independent-samples	
					t test	p value
Communication	Faculty Members	280	3.4436	.62244	8.560	.000*
	Student	2371	2.9433	.95436		
Attainment	Faculty	280	2.6667	.70964	5.049	.000*
	Student	2368	2.3607	.98406		
Experience	Faculty Members	280	3.1367	,55687	5.020	,000*
	Student	2378	2.8007	1.10375		
TOTAL	Faculty	280	9.2470	1.50799	6.796	.000*
	Student	2363	8.1063	2.75988		

*p<0.05

As Table 11 shows, the scores obtained from the items used to investigate the participants' perceptions of online education provided in Islamic sciences/theology faculties showed a significant difference (p <0.05) between the students and faculty members. The results revealed that the scores obtained from the evaluations of the faculty members about online education were higher than those of the students.

University	Student		Faculty Members	
	N	%	N	%
Afyon Kocatepe University Faculty of Islamic Sciences	89	3.7	4	1.4
Amasya University Faculty of Theology	45	1.9	17	6.1
Ankara University Faculty of Theology	151	6.3	8	2.9
Atatürk University Faculty of Theology	68	2.9	4	1.4
Çukurova University Faculty of Theology	76	3.2	12	4.3
Dicle University Faculty of Theology	196	8.2	12	4.3
Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Theology	57	2.4	3	1.1
Erciyes University Faculty of Theology	182	7.7	8	2.9
Harran University Faculty of Theology	86	3.6	7	2.5

Hatay Mustafa Kemal University Faculty of Theology	69	2.9	4	1.4
Kırıkkala University Faculty of Islamic Sciences	59	2.5	5	1.8
Kilis 7 Aralık University Faculty of Theology	240	10.1	13	4.6
Kütahya Dumlupınar University Faculty of Islamic Sciences	92	3.9	4	1.4
Marmara University Faculty of Theology	33	1.4	5	1.8
Mersin University Faculty of Islamic Sciences	64	2.7	6	2.1
Sakarya University Faculty of Theology	40	1.7	10	3.6
Siirt University Faculty of Theology	119	5.0	6	2.1
Sivas Cumhuriyet University Faculty of Theology	75	3.2	9	3.2
Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University Faculty of Theology	66	2.8	6	2.1
Şırnak University Faculty of Theology	54	2.3	5	1.8
Van Yüzüncü Yıl University Faculty of Theology	160	6.7	6	2.1
Yalova University Faculty of Islamic Sciences	30	1.3	4	1.4
Yıldırım Beyazıt University Faculty of Islamic Sciences	114	4.8	17	6.1
Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University Faculty of Theology	125	5.3	8	2.9
19 Mayıs University Faculty of Theology	88	3.7	5	1.8
Missing	0	0.0	92	32.9
Total	**2378**	**100.0**	**280**	**100.0**

Table 12. Means, Standard Deviations and Independent Samples t-test Results

SCALE	Participant	N	Mean	SD	Independent-samples	
					t test	p value
3. Face-to-face interaction (education) is vital for effective instruction in undergraduate programs.	Faculty	280	**4.27**	.983	2.001	0.046*
	Students	2378	4.12	1.240		
Factor 1. Communication						
4. I had no trouble using the online education system.	Faculty members	280	**3.2714**	1.26345	3.631	0.000*

26. The faculty members are proficient in using the online education system.	Students	2378	2.9874	1.23503		
16. I received feedback from my students during the online education process.	Faculty members	280	**3.3786**	1.02281	3.552	0.000*
15. I can get enough feedback from faculty members during the online instruction.	Students	2378	3.1030	1.24961		
26. I used audio-visual and written materials effectively in online classes.	Faculty members	280	**3.4714**	1.04001	6.367	0.000*
27. Audio-visual and written materials were used effectively in online classes.	Students	2372	2.9667	1.27732		
18. I was able to reach my students outside the online sessions easily.	Faculty members	280	2.9607	1.15558	-0.358	0.721
17. I was able to reach the faculty members outside the online sessions.	Students	2378	2.9891	1.26633		
27. During the online education, I carried out the assessment and evaluation procedures objectively.	Faculty members	280	**3.3214**	1.08603	6.712	0.000*
28. Assessment and evaluation were carried out objectively during the online education.	Students	2378	2.7969	1.25350		
	Faculty members	280	**3.6500**	1.01194	6.869	0.000*

23. I included assessment and evaluation criteria in the instructions of various types of examinations, such as take-home examinations or graded projects during the online education. 29. Assessment and evaluation criteria are included in the instructions of various types of examinations, such as take-home examinations, graded projects during the online education.	Students	2378	3.1367	1.20135		
22. I had no difficulty in adapting to the online learning process.	Faculty members	280	**3.4393**	1.15930		
25. Faculty members were willing to deliver their classes through online education systems.	Students	2378	2.7578	1.18013	9.157	0,000*
12. During the online education, I started and finished my classes on time.	Faculty members	280	**3.9929**	.99458		
10. During the online education, the lessons started and finished on time.	Students	2378	2.9390	1.36026	12.573	0.000*
14. The course materials (textbooks, PDFs) used in the classes	Faculty Members	280	**3.8286**	.95747	7.314	0.000*

in the online education process were easy to understand. 13. The course materials (textbooks, PDFs, PPTs, lecture notes, etc.) used in the online classes were easy enough for the students to understand them.	Students	2378	3.2607	1.25676		
28. During the classes, I did not experience any problems with the online system of the university where I work. 30. During the classes, I did not have any problems with the online system of the university where I study.	Faculty members	280	**3.2643**	1.17385	9.912	0.000*
	Students	2371	2.4302	1.34904		
Factor 2. Attainment						
1. Online education ensures educational equity in undergraduate education.	Faculty members	280	**2.4143**	1.07754	3.345	0.000*
	Students	2378	2.1556	1.24026		
2. The curricula of the faculty of theology/Islamic studies lend itself well to online education.	Faculty members	280	2.4286	1.05506	-2.467	0.014*
	Students	2378	**2.6350**	1.35235		
24. My students did not experience any motivational problems during the online education. 21. I haven't had any motivational problems during the online learning process.	Faculty members	280	**2.6286**	1.04961	4.612	0.000*
	Students	2378	2.2355	1.37990		

20. I did not have a problem focusing on the lessons during the online learning process.	Faculty members	280	**3.3679**	1.11219	13.269	0.000*
19. I did not have a problem focusing on the lessons during the online learning process.	Students	2368	2.2213	1.39436		
Factor 3. Experience						
17. During the online education process, the students attended the lectures regularly.	Faculty members	280	2.1857	1.09470	-11.556	0.000*
16. I regularly attended the classes during the online education process.	Students	2378	**3.1682**	1.37204		
13. During the online education, I had no trouble using equipment, such as the computers, laptops, tablets and so forth.	Faculty members	280	**3.7893**	1.15248	13.914	0.000*
6. I had no trouble using the computer and Internet during the process of online education.	Students	2378	2.5118	1.48448		

*p<0.05

In the item that referred to the necessity of face-to-face classes for effective undergraduate education, a statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members and students. In the evaluations of the participants about online education, more faculty members than students expressed that face-to-face education is essential for effective instruction in undergraduate education.

In the item that sought the participants' opinions of if the faculty members were proficient enough to use the online education system, a statistically significant difference was found between the perceptions of the faculty members and those of the students. Compared to the students, the faculty members thought that they were more competent in using the online education system.

A statistically significant difference was found between faculty members' and students' perceptions of getting sufficient feedback from the faculty members/students in the online education process. Unlike

the students, a great majority of the faculty members stated that they can receive sufficient feedback from the faculty members/students during the online education.

A statistically significant difference was found between the perceptions of the faculty members and those of the students for the item about using audio-visual and written materials effectively in online classes. More faculty members than students stated that the faculty members used audio-visual and written materials effectively in online lessons. There was not a statistically significant difference between the faculty members and the students for the item about reaching the students/faculty members easily outside the online sessions ($p > 0.05$).

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and students' perceptions of objective assessment and evaluation during the online education process. In the evaluations of the participants regarding online education, contrary to what some students thought, the faculty members stated that they adopted an objective attitude in assessment and evaluation.

Similarly, a statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and the students' perceptions of the faculty members' including assessment and evaluation criteria in the instructions in take-home examinations and graded projects during the online education process. More faculty members than students stated that the faculty members specified the assessment and evaluation criteria in the instructions in such examinations or projects.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and students' perceptions of willingness to use online education systems or having difficulties. The faculty members, compared to the students, reported being more willing to use the online education systems or they reported experiencing much less difficulty than the students did.

A statistically significant difference was found between the perceptions of the faculty members and those of the students regarding the punctuality of the online classes. The scores from the survey for the faculty members regarding the punctuality of the classes were higher, compared to those from the survey for the students.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and students' perceptions of the course materials' (e.g., textbooks, pdf) being comprehensible enough for the students to understand. It was observed that faculty members mostly stated that such materials were comprehensible enough for the students to understand, yet fewer students thought so.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and students' perceptions of the problems experienced with the online system of the university during the courses. In comparison with the students, more faculty members stated that they did not experience any problems with the online system of the university during the online courses.

Likewise, in the item about if online education enhances access and equity at the undergraduate level, a statistically significant difference was found between the perceptions of the faculty members and those of

the students. The scores of the faculty members regarding if online education promotes access and equity were higher, compared to those of the students.

A statistically significant difference was found between the faculty members' and students' perceptions of the appropriateness of the curricula of the faculty of theology/Islamic sciences for online education. More students than faculty members thought that the curricula were appropriate for online education.

A statistically significant difference was found between the perceptions of the faculty members and those of the students in terms of experiencing motivational problems during the online education process. More faculty members than students stated that they did not experience motivational problems during the online education process.

A statistically significant difference was found between the perceptions of faculty members and those of the students in terms of having trouble focusing on the classes during the online education process. The faculty members received higher scores than the students for the item about not having trouble in focusing on the classes.

A statistically significant difference was found between the perceptions of the faculty members and those of the students regarding the students' regular attendance at the online classes. More students than faculty members stated that the students regularly attended the lessons during the online education.

There was a statistically significant difference between the faculty members' and the students' perceptions of whether they experienced a problem in using such digital tools as computers, laptops, tablets and so forth. Many more faculty members than students were found to have no trouble using such digital tools as computers, laptops or tablets.

Discussion and Conclusion

During the Covid-19 pandemic, lectures have been delivered through distance education since the Spring Semester of the 2019-2020 Academic Year at the faculties of theology/Islamic sciences, as has been the case at all educational levels in our country. A student survey and a lecturer survey were administered to 2,378 students from 25 faculties of theology/Islamic sciences, who continued their distance education in seven different geographical regions of our country, and 280 faculty members working at the same faculties, respectively.

The students and faculty members noted that online education was not suitable for the undergraduate education for the department of Islamic sciences/theology and that face-to-face education was necessary for effective instructional delivery. The students and faculty members thought that online education did not provide access and equity in undergraduate education. Globally considered, the students and faculty members did not have trouble in using the online education system. Moreover, it was found that the students and faculty members considered themselves competent in using instructional technologies.

The students and faculty members offered similar opinions regarding the punctuality of the lessons. It was found that faculty members included assessment and evaluation criteria in their instructions for take-

home examinations and graded projects during the online education period. Regarding the objective evaluation of the examinations, more faculty members than students stated that they carried out assessment and evaluation objectively during the online education.

It was found that while the faculty members apparently did not experience problems regarding adaptation to the distance education process, focusing on the lessons and retaining motivation, the students experienced such issues. The students thought that they did not feel happy during online education and that their sense of self-confidence and academic achievement decreased. It was clear that, despite these negative issues, the students hardly had any problems in communicating with the faculty members. However, the students and faculty members differed in their opinions regarding the students' attendance. While the students stated that they regularly attended the classes, the faculty members thought the exact opposite.

Similarly, the students and faculty members thought differently with respect to the online education infrastructure of the universities. While the faculty members found the infrastructure sufficient for online education, the students thought that this was not the case.

One of the positive findings was that the faculty members prepared audio-visual and written instructional materials through instructional technologies and introduced them in their online classes.

The following findings were obtained as a result of the analysis of the impacts of the learner-side variables, such as gender, class, university and the place of residence on the dimensions of "communication," **"**attainment**"** and **"**experience**".**

The female students had positive perceptions of the **communication** subdimension, which included such issues as academic staff's adaptation to online education, their willingness to teach online and their objectivity in assessment and evaluation. Furthermore, as the grade levels of the students increased, their evaluation increased positively in this subdimension. As the size of the residential area got larger, the learners had higher scores for the perceived level of communication. The students' survey scores for the subdimension "**communication**" differed significantly by the variable "university" ($p < 0.05$). It was found that the students at Dicle, Hatay Mustafa Kemal, Mersin, Siirt, Şırnak and Van Yüzüncü Yıl Universities had more positive perceptions of their online education experiences compared to the students at the other universities.

It was observed that gender did not have an impact on the subdimension "**attainment,**" which includes items such as the students' affective gain and academic achievement, along with access and equity provided by online education. In other words, there was not a significant difference between the perceptions of the males and females with respect to attainment in the online education ($p > 0.05$).

However, it was observed that as the grade levels of the students increased, the gains obtained through online education increased, too. It was found that as the size of the residential area where students lived got larger, the students' scores for the subdimension "**attainment**" also increased. It was found that there was a positive relationship between the size of the residential area where the students lived and their

level of access to online education; as it got larger, the learners had higher scores for the perceived level of attainment. Furthermore, the students' scores for the survey items in subdimension "**attainment**" differed at statistically significant levels by the variable of university ($p < 0.05$). It was found that the students at Dicle, Hatay Mustafa Kemal, Kırıkkale and Siirt Universities had higher survey scores compared to the scores of those at the other universities.

In the subdimension of **experience**, which includes items such as students' adaptation to distance education, the access to and use of instructional technologies, and not having problems in accessing course materials during the online education, it was found that the perceived experience levels of the females were higher than those of the males. It was found that as the grade level increased, the students' survey scores for the subdimension "**experience**" also increased. Another finding was that as the size of the place of residence increased, the students' perceptions of online education became more positive for the subdimension "**experience**". The students' survey scores for the subdimension of **experience** differed significantly by the variable of university ($p < 0.05$). The students' perceptions of their online education experience at Dicle, Hatay Mustafa Kemal, Kırıkkale, Siirt, Şırnak and Van Yüzüncü Yıl Universities were statistically different from those of the students at the other universities.

As a result of the analysis of the impacts of the lecturer-side variables such as gender, academic title, department, university and institutional experience on the dimensions of "communication**," "**attainment**"** and "experience," the following results were obtained:

Considering the scores obtained in the **communication** subdimension, which includes items such as being willing and competent to use the online education system and being able to use instructional materials in lessons, it was seen that the perceived communication level of the female faculty members was higher than that of the males. The survey scores differed at statistically significant levels ($p < 0.05$) by the variable of department. The survey data revealed that there was statistically significant difference in the scores of the faculty members for the subdimension of **communication** based on department. It can be said that the faculty members working at the department of basic Islamic sciences were involved in better perceived **communication** than those working at the department of philosophy and department of religious sciences.

The faculty members' scores for the subdimension of **communication** significantly differed by the variable of institutional experience ($p < 0.05$). As the institutional experience of the faculty increased, the faculty members' scores for the subdimension "communication" also increased. However, it was found that there was an apparent decrease when the faculty was founded 20 years ago or earlier. The independent variables had no statistically significant impact on the communication subdimension of the survey ($p > 0.05$).

None of the variables, except for institutional experience, had a statistically significant impact on the faculty members' scores for the subdimension of "**attainment**". The results of the Tukey test indicated that there was a significant difference between the perception scores of the faculty members who worked at a faculty with 15 to 20 years of institutional experience than those of the faculty members working at other faculties with different levels of institutional experience. Another finding was that the faculty members' scores increased as the institutional experience of the faculty increased, in terms of the subdimension of **attainment**, yet they decreased when the institutional experience of the faculty was 20 years or more.

It was also found that only the variables of the faculty's institutional experience and university had a statistically significant impact on the subdimension of **experience**, which includes items such as using instructional tools, such as computers, laptops, tablets and preparing course materials in the online education process. The results of the Tukey test revealed that, for the subdimension of "**experience**," there was a significant difference between the perception scores of the faculty members who worked at a faculty with 15 to 20 years of institutional experience than those of the faculty members working in other faculties with differing institutional experiences. However, a decrease in the scores was apparent when the institutional experience of the faculty was 20 years or more. A statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) was found among the universities, with respect to the faculty members' scores obtained from the subdimension "**experience**" in the survey. The faculty members at Ankara, Çukurova, Kilis 7 Aralık, Marmara, Sivas Cumhuriyet, Yıldırım Beyazıt, and Van Yüzüncü Yıl Universities were found to have more positive perceptions of their online learning experiences than those at the other universities.

When the research hypotheses were tested, the following results were obtained: Faculty members can sufficiently use computers, tablets and so on. Most of the faculties of theology/Islamic sciences experienced problems in preparing and using the distance education infrastructure. The independent variables of age, gender, title, length of service, department and university affected the efficiency of distance education based on the perceptions of the faculty members, and the independent variables of gender, grade level and place of residence affect the efficiency of distance education based on the perceptions of the students. However, based on the results of the study, the following hypotheses were rejected: Not all faculty members have adequate experience in distance education; the majority of the students do not have sufficient knowledge and experience in the distance education system, and the students do not experience problems in accessing computers and the Internet.

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