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Received: 23/12/2025, Accepted: 11/02/2026, Published: 30 /03/ 2026

### Abstract:

The concept of education has received great attention from researchers in various scientific disciplines, such as the social sciences, which have focused on studying its different aspects. Cognitive and sociological theories have addressed its various educational and pedagogical dimensions. This concept has witnessed significant development, especially after the rapid advancement of information and communication technologies, which have resulted in the emergence of new and diverse information services, most of which aim to promote different levels of education, including university education. After universities relied on traditional education, which determines the physical presence of both teacher and learner, e-learning emerged as a new method of education that does not recognize the spatial presence of either the teacher or the learner. It relies on information technology open to multiple technical media, contributing to its widespread adoption. In most cases, e-learning is adopted alongside traditional education, in what is called blended learning.

**Keywords:** education, traditional education, e-learning, information technology

### Introduction:

Education and teaching are among the fundamental pillars in building and developing societies, as they contribute to the transmission of knowledge and the development of individuals' intellectual and scientific abilities. Traditional university education has long been the dominant model in the educational process, as it relies on direct interaction between the professor and the student within the university setting. However, the scientific and technological developments witnessed worldwide, especially in the field of information and communication technologies, have led to the emergence of new forms of education, most notably e-learning, which relies on digital media and electronic networks to deliver knowledge. In light of this transformation, the need has emerged to conduct a comparative study between these two educational modes in terms of their methods, the roles of the actors involved, and their effectiveness in achieving educational objectives. This is what this article seeks to address by presenting a comparison between traditional education and e-learning in the university context.

## 1. Problematic:

Education is considered one of the most important fields that has received great attention from scholars and thinkers due to its central role in the development of societies and in building an individual capable of contributing to positive change, which ultimately ensures the stability and balance of social structures.

It is noted that various developed and advanced countries, such as Singapore and Finland, owe their progress to their focus on science and education, as they are considered the two main pillars in achieving comprehensive development. Education is not limited to being a simple process of transmitting knowledge only. In the social sciences, for example, and sociology in particular, education is viewed as a comprehensive social and cultural process that goes beyond routine knowledge transmission. Rather, it aims to transmit values, norms, and skills from one generation to another in order to achieve socialization and social integration, thereby preserving the cohesion and harmony of societal systems.

This is what traditional education embodies, as it relies primarily on face-to-face interaction between the teacher and the learner to transmit knowledge, experiences, and values, and to enhance critical thinking, creativity, and discussion among learners.

However, the rapid scientific and technological development, accompanied by the revolution in information and communication technologies, has led to the emergence of new forms of education, represented by e-learning, which relies on digital media and electronic platforms to deliver educational content. This, in turn, develops technological skills and self-learning among learners while providing flexibility in time and place for the student.

This mode of learning was adopted in parallel with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic that swept across the entire world, imposing itself as a necessary alternative to ensure the continuity of the educational process. Various universities, across different disciplines, adopted it, including the field of social sciences with its various departments, among them the Department of Sociology (Houchine, 2020, p. 393).

However, the question that arises here is whether e-learning will develop the spirit of discussion, (critical thinking), and sociological and epistemological analysis among students in these disciplines, or whether this mode of learning is more suitable for certain fields than others.

From these questions emerges the following main inquiry: What teaching method do students of the Department of Sociology prefer—the traditional method or the electronic one? And why?

## 2. Definition of Concepts:

The main concepts addressed are as follows: teacher, learner, traditional education, and e-learning.

a. **Teacher:** The teacher is defined as the person who represents the community in educating and teaching its members. They are employed by the state, which represents the interests of the community, and receive a salary in return for performing this task. The teacher is considered the central figure and (core) of the educational process (Salmi, 2022, p. 546).

b. **Learner:** The learner is the (center) of the educational process and is prepared for attention and comprehension, with the teacher ensuring continuous support for their interests and

reinforcing them in order to promote their natural development, as required by their readiness for learning (Ben Qaouqaou, 2016, p. 13).

**c. Traditional Education:** Traditional education is considered one of the oldest methods used in the field of education. It is based on the meeting of the teacher and the learner at the same time and place to carry out the teaching-learning process. This mode is also known as face-to-face education, where direct communication combines both audio and visual interaction, allowing greater opportunities for human interaction and contributing to the development of the learner's emotional and affective aspects, which are essential components of education (Lafqir, 2024, p. 129).

**d. E-learning:** E-learning is a teaching method that relies on the use of modern communication technologies, such as computers and the internet, in addition to various communication tools including audio, images, video, and graphics, as well as storage media, search mechanisms, software, electronic libraries, educational platforms, and web portals. This mode of education does not require the physical presence of the teacher and learner in the same geographical location or within a classroom, making it a virtual alternative to traditional face-to-face education. It is based on the use of digital technologies in various forms to deliver knowledge to the learner, enabling them to acquire it and improve their academic performance more quickly, from any location, with less effort and greater efficiency (Lafqir, 2024, p. 129).

### 3. Theoretical Approach (Functional structuralism

is based on the concepts of structure and function in its deconstruction of the structure of society and the functions it performs, and in its analysis of social phenomena and the interdependence of the functions arising therefrom, where the first concept refers to the part or element constituting any system or unit or social structure, whilst 'functional' refers to the role and contribution made by each part within the overall structure (ibid., p. 129). The success of the educational process requires) integration between

its functional chains and links, represented by the teacher and the learner. The teacher is regarded as a representative of the state and the moral values of society, serving as a role model within the classroom, whilst the learner

is the essence of this educational process. However, with the adoption of e-learning as a necessity imposed by health conditions, educational roles have changed, being reshaped to alter the functions of the teacher and the learner. In this e-learning model, the teacher's educational role is

merely that of a facilitator and guide in the educational process, whilst the learner has become the centre of the educational process and the primary agent in the construction of knowledge

#### **b. Symbolic Interactionism:**

Symbolic interactionism is considered a form and an aspect of interpretive sociology, and it belongs to American sociology. This contemporary theory focuses on complex issues and problems such as the study of behavior and interaction, situations and emotions, and other multiple concerns. It can be said that symbolic interactionism is a process of social interaction in which the individual is connected to the minds of others, as well as their needs and latent desires. It represents the interaction that occurs between different minds that characterize human societies. It is based on two important principles: it focuses on the unit of analysis,

namely interaction, and it relies on symbols and meanings. In other words, social relationships among individuals in society are the result of symbols and meanings (Ben Tami et al., 2017, p. 189). It is observed here that the interactive learning process between the teacher and the learner has changed significantly. In traditional education, the teacher is the main actor, the primary pillar, and the controller of the academic content, while the learner’s role is limited to acquiring the knowledge, meanings, and symbols provided by the teacher. In contrast, in e-learning, the educational pattern has shifted from a traditional mode to an electronic one, thereby transforming the roles of educational actors. After education was face-to-face and based on direct interaction between the teacher and the learner, it has become purely electronic, relying on remote interaction through group chats and forums.

**4. Research Hypothesis**

**Hypothesis:** Traditional face-to-face education contributes to better academic achievement compared to e-learning.

**5. Methodology and Tools**

**A. Study Population:** The study was conducted among students from the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, specifically master’s students in the Department of Sociology at Akli Mohand Oulhadj University – Bouira.

**B. Study Sample:** The study population included over 840 students, of whom approximately 165 were master’s students. From this group, 20 students from various specializations (Education, Organization, Crime) were selected.

**C. Data Collection Tools:** The questionnaire was used as the main tool for collecting data, as it is the most suitable method for this study.

**6. Results and Discussion**

**A. Presentation and Analysis of Hypothesis Data:** Traditional face-to-face education contributes to better academic achievement compared to e-learning.

**Table 1: Students’ Preference for Traditional Education vs. E Learning**

Mode of Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
E-Learning	7	35
Traditional Education	13	65

65% of the study sample preferred traditional education, while only 35% favored e-learning. This is attributed to the fact that traditional education provides advantages and benefits that e-learning sometimes cannot fully offer, including direct interaction between the teacher and learner, which enhances immediate understanding, allows for live questioning, discussions, and error correction during the same session. Traditional education also provides a structured social environment that promotes socialization, as students learn values such as discipline, teamwork, and respect for rules within the educational setting.

The preference of students for traditional education is attributed to the many difficulties and obstacles that hinder effective academic achievement in e-learning. These include the lack, in

most faculties, of even basic equipment such as computers and projectors. In addition, the curricula are outdated, despite being revised several times, and remain unsuitable for e-learning. There is also a lack of electronic communication between the teacher and the student, as well as issues related to internet connectivity. Furthermore, university students are still assessed using traditional evaluation methods that do not allow for an accurate determination of their true abilities and capabilities.

**B. Table 2: Degree of Interaction between Teacher and Learner in Traditional Education and E-Learning**

Traditional Education

Total	Excellent	Good	Average	Weak
13	3	9	1	0
%	23	69	8	0

E-Learning

Total	Excellent	Good	Average	Weak
7	0	3	3	1
%	0	43	43	14

69% of the study sample indicated that the degree of interaction between teacher and learner in traditional education is “good,” whereas in e-learning, the interaction was rated between “average” and “good” by 43% of the participants. This difference can be explained by students’ preference for face-to-face interaction, including discussions and questions with the teacher, which enrich the learners’ knowledge and scientific understanding, increase learning motivation, and strengthen comprehension.

It is believed that no matter how much science and its technologies advance, traditional education cannot be dispensed with, as it possesses advantages that no other educational alternative can provide. Among its most prominent advantages is the face-to-face meeting between the teacher and the learner. As is well known in communication studies, such direct interaction represents the strongest means of communication and transmission of information between two individuals, one of whom possesses the knowledge and the other seeks to acquire it. In this context, image, sound, feelings, and emotions come together, all of which influence the message and the entire educational situation, and are in turn influenced by it. This allows for the adjustment of the message, which consequently leads to behavioral modification toward desired outcomes. As a result, growth occurs and the learning process is achieved. Thus, traditional education is based on a conventional culture that focuses on the production of knowledge, where the teacher constitutes the foundation of the learning process (Abdelmajid & Al-Ani, 2014, p. 59).

In contrast, e-learning weakens human interaction between the teacher and the learner (Boulkhtout, 2022, p. 76).

**C. Table 3: Students’ Evaluation of the Quality of Traditional Education vs. E-Learning**  
*Traditional Education*

Total	Excellent	Good	Average	Weak
13	5	8	0	0
%	38%	62%	0%	0%

*E-Learning*

Total	Excellent	Good	Average	Weak
7	1	4	1	1
%	14%	58%	14%	14%

Sixty-two percent of the study sample indicated that the quality of traditional education is rated as “good.” This is attributed to the fact that traditional education increases learners’ achievements and comprehension. Additionally, it teaches them methods of dialogue, discussion, and the exchange of opinions and ideas, which further enhances its quality. It also develops learners’ moral values and social abilities, as interaction with peers teaches them to accept differences, participate effectively in discussions, and respect the opinions of others (Al-Azri, 2023, p. 146).

Beyond content acquisition, social sciences teachers are required to develop students’ social awareness and thinking, as well as encourage discussion and dialogue within the classroom, which support this objective. They help students acquire listening skills, problem-solving abilities, and reflective thinking about issues in their surrounding environment. Students not only need to understand what they learn but also how what they learn affects them. Importantly, lessons should remain engaging, instill critical thinking skills, and stimulate curiosity so that students are motivated to continue learning new topics. In the social sciences, emphasis is placed on acquiring knowledge, using it, transmitting it, developing and changing attitudes, and employing skills that can lead to behavioral change. This is the aim that traditional education seeks to achieve through its curricula and programs (Hassiba, 2015, p. 173).

Similarly, for e-learning, 58% of the sample rated it as “good,” due to the diversity of references it provides, the enrichment of comprehension methods, and the ease of access to information.

**D. Table 4: Degree of Information Comprehension in Traditional Education vs. E-Learning***Traditional Education*

Total	Excellent	Good	Average	Weak
13	4	7	2	0
%	31%	54%	15%	0%

*E-Learning*

Total	Excellent	Good	Average	Weak
7	1	1	4	1
%	14%	14%	58%	14%

Fifty-four percent of the study sample indicated that the level of information comprehension in traditional education is “good,” whereas 58% of them rated comprehension in e-learning as

“average.” This is because face-to-face presence in the classroom creates direct interaction between the teacher and the learner. Immediate feedback, for example, plays a role in consolidating meanings and deepening understanding. Collective discipline and direct supervision also enhance focus and reduce distractions in the classroom. Feedback received from the teacher in person is clearer and more effective than feedback from the internet, as the teacher can use visual cues to assess whether students have understood the lesson and can provide additional explanations or ask questions to students whose understanding is uncertain. Face-to-face education provides students with an interactive environment that fosters deeper understanding of the content, builds self-confidence, and offers better opportunities for asking questions and participating (Majzoub, 2024, p. 315).

Furthermore, e-learning is not suitable for all academic disciplines, such as technical or applied fields, due to the nature of their content, which often requires practical programs and field studies in real-world settings (Ben Taleb, 2021, p. 198).

**E. Table 5: Students’ Time Management in Traditional Education vs. E-Learning**

*Traditional Education*

<b>Total</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
13	3	1	9
%	23%	8%	69%

*E-Learning*

<b>Total</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
7	0	1	6
%	0%	14%	86%

Eighty-six percent of the study sample indicated that e-learning helps in time management, especially for working students, as it enables them to balance work and study effectively. Similarly, 69% of the sample reported that traditional education also assists in organizing time, as it reinforces social discipline and requires learners to respect scheduled class times. Effective time management allows individuals to postpone less urgent tasks, achieve better results, and develop self-discipline. This skill supports goal achievement, prevents avoidance of responsibilities, and enables the completion of more tasks in a shorter period, thereby creating additional free time for learning new things, reducing stress, improving focus, and ultimately contributing to professional success (Raji, 2020, p. 217).

E-learning also provides students with numerous opportunities to access educational materials, allowing them to benefit from online information sources anytime and anywhere they find convenient. This flexibility enables students to work more productively, take advantage of diverse information sources and teaching methods, and save time and effort in acquiring knowledge.

## 7. Hypothesis Results

Based on the data presented for the hypothesis, it was confirmed that traditional education is superior to e-learning, with a preference rate of 65%. The degree of interaction between teacher and learner in traditional education was higher than in e-learning (69%), due to the advantages of face-to-face interaction and discussion, which enrich learners' knowledge and scientific understanding.

Additionally, students rated the quality of traditional education at 62% compared to 58% for e-learning. This is because traditional education enhances learners' achievements and comprehension, while also improving skills in discussion and knowledge exchange. Furthermore, information comprehension in traditional education was rated as "good" by 54% of the participants, whereas in e-learning it was rated as "average" by 58%, which can be explained by the fact that in-person presence and interaction create a dynamic environment for direct teacher-learner engagement.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, despite the rapid scientific and technological advances and the emergence of new digital teaching methods and tools, most university students still prefer traditional education. This preference is due to the advantages that traditional education provides, which e-learning often cannot fully replicate. Therefore, it can be concluded that e-learning may serve as a continuation, complement, and reinforcement of traditional education, but it can never completely replace it. Relying solely on e-learning under the pretext of living in an era of scientific and technological development is insufficient.

Based on the results of the study on traditional and e-learning, it was found that traditional (face-to-face) education is much more effective for both teachers and learners. It allows teachers to receive feedback on students' comprehension and understanding of the lesson, ensures better understanding of content, and facilitates greater interaction between teachers and learners. Traditional education also enables the implementation of more diverse activities, such as group work, pair work, and direct discussions, in addition to ensuring better monitoring of students' progress.

On the other hand, e-learning does not guarantee effective student monitoring, may create a virtual learning environment that reduces the seriousness of learning, and does not always ensure deeper understanding of the content. Teachers may also face technical issues if the platform is weak or internet connectivity is poor. Despite these drawbacks, e-learning offers some advantages: it provides students with some free time, reduces costs as students save expenses related to traveling to their educational institutions, and employs better technologies through virtual classrooms, lesson recordings, and access to these recordings at any time.

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## **CORPS & PSYCHISME**

**P-ISSN : 2496-4476 E-ISSN : 2273-157**

**Volume 13/ Issue 1/ 2026**

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