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Educational use of facebook in learning entrepreneurship: The case of ISET Zaghoun Tunisia

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Abstract:

Our research aims to examine the effectiveness of university teaching via “The Facebook Group,” especially in teaching entrepreneurial culture. The choice of the latter as a subject of study is explained, on the one hand, the specificity of this unit and on the other hand, the digitization of the economy and the emergence of digital startups, on the other hand. To do this, we conducted a survey of questionnaire among the students of different disciplines from Iset Zaghoun during the 2022/2023 and the 2023/2024 academic years.

Through this empirical work, we seek to explore the role that the digital social network Facebook can play in teaching “Business Creation” through online collaborative work between students from different disciplines within the same higher education institution.

Key words: Facebook group, Entrepreneurship, Active pedagogy, Apprenticeship.
JEL Classification Codes: M13, M53, L14.

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Introduction :

In the digital age, Facebook sees its functionality expanding further. In fact, the uses of Facebook go beyond dialogue to achieve learning and spread knowledge.

In addition, teaching entrepreneurship is one of the “most profitable investments” in the face of an economic crisis characterized by high unemployment among young graduates.

It is the same order of ideas that fits into this study, which questions the analysis of the effectiveness of university teaching of entrepreneurial culture via “The Facebook Group.”

The choice of the latter as a subject of study explains, on the one hand, the specificity of this unit and on the other hand, the digitization of the economy and the emergence of digital startups.

Inspired by the Bandura (1977) study on social learning that focuses on the set of individual interaction in his environment, we conducted a survey by questionnaire among students of different disciplines in ISET Zaghouan (Tunisia) for two academic years: 2022-2023 and 2023-2024.

The concepts revealed in the literature review served as a guide for analyzing the results obtained and for answering our research question: “How is the Facebook social network used and perceived in academia? How does the use of Facebook allow students to develop their business creation skills and enhance their creativity?”

We first conducted an exploratory study by taking into account the various information collected in order to better understand a young person's relationship with Facebook. To do this, we have included the uses of the social network that already exist in education while raising the benefits and limits of the university's use of Facebook.

Next, we presented the results of a survey analysis that seeks to determine if the social network site Facebook is indeed a relevant educational tool in teaching the topic of business creation.

This survey aims to measure learners' feelings about this experience (the teaching of business creation by the Facebook group) and to assess their degree of satisfaction with

the performance of the Facebook group in terms of collaborative work and knowledge acquisition.

Students were questioned about:

- 1) The functional characteristics of the Facebook group
- 2) The advantages of online learning in entrepreneurship, in particular through the Facebook Group (a tool for sharing, communication, exchange and interaction between and within the group),
- 3) The boundaries and difficulties of teaching entrepreneurship through the Facebook Group.
- 4) Possible ways to improve the teaching of entrepreneurship through the Facebook Group.

I. THEORETICAL CONCEPT

A. Getting to know Facebook

a. What is Facebook?

We note that there are several definitions that have been proposed to present social networks and especially "Facebook", among which we consider the following as the most relevant. American anthropologist John A. Barnes was among the first to define the term "social network" as a set of social interactions that unites a group of individuals on a friendly, family, and/or professional level. Facebook is the most famous social network founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. It was first dedicated to Harvard students. Then it was opened to other American universities before becoming publicly available in September 2006.

According to wikipedia, Facebook "is an online social network owned by Meta. It allows its users to post photos, photos, videos, files and documents, exchange messages, join and create groups, and use a variety of applications on a variety of devices." Bastard (2003) highlights Facebook's social-centric privacy. This means that it differs from other social networks that have a somewhat specialized logic, whether it is professional (Viadeo,

Linkedin, Xing ...) or according to the centers of interest.

b. Facebook group statistics

Kreutzer (2024) highlights that « at a continental scale, the use of social networks has seen strong growth, from around 25% of the population in 2021 to 35% in 2024. A study conducted on the degree of social media use in Africa, showed that 66% of the Tunisian population have accounts on Facebook, and that 94.6% of the Tunisian population connect to Facebook from their mobile phones A. Ebongué (2024).

According to this same study, the Tunisian age groups most associated with Facebook are, equally, 25-34 and 18-24, representing 65% of Facebook users. The use of the Facebook social network via smartphones was 97% in January 2020, more than 3% compared to January 2019. In 2023, statistics show that 98.5% of active facebook users do it from mobile devices.

A study conducted by Mohamed Jaziri in 2022 showed that the number of social network users has noticeably increased in recent years, in Tunisia and around the world. The reasons that explain the importance of this growth are in general: COVID-19, increased Internet speeds, especially on mobile phones (4G, 5G, etc.), lower prices for computers and smartphones, improvement of social media platforms and applications, etc.

According to the same study, the data of the Meta Insights platform, the number of social media users (Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp and Messenger) in Tunisia increased to 73,3% in 2023. The most popular platforms requested in Tunisia are Facebook and YouTube.

Statistics show that Facebook, Youtube and Msn are the three platforms where young people engage in cultural activities (Mercklé and October, 2012, p.3 and p.7). Young people frequent social networks especially Facebook to build an identity and maintain and strengthen their relationships with their friends, to share elements of their centers of interest.

B. Uses of the social network Facebook in education

Facebook is increasingly being used in educational practices because it is considered the

"most complete social network" (Maisonneuve et al., 2015, p.3). According to Lampe, Wohn, Vitak, Ellison and Wash, 2011, a facebook group is a place for collaborative learning as well as institutional platforms. Several studies have addressed issues related to the positive impact of ICT use on active pedagogy and more specifically on social networks and especially the Facebook group.

Vozaro and Al (2012) requested a study with a population of 2,640 teachers and 15,020 students from 12 Quebec universities. This study focused on learning methods and students' use of information and communication technology. These students accepted the use of the Facebook group while studying and appreciated the positive impact of integrating ICT on their learning.

Facebook provides its users with optional features called "apps," which support learning. These applications allow the student to provide information to other learners who will visit his/her page and exchange information and even documents with them. This is an example of a "wall" that allows learners to leave small messages to which the student can respond. The choice of applications to display is left to the learner, who can add, delete or change their layout after consulting the catalog.

Facebook makes learners dynamic and able to adapt mutual information to turn it into knowledge (Loiseau et al., 2011, Arnaud, 2012, p.3, Dikhaté and Akam, 2015, p.16).

In general, through Facebook, students create meaning through collaboration (Lampe et al., 2010, p. 3), and help each other accomplish activities assigned to them (Aslan, 2016, p. 8). Briefly, the social network "Facebook" can be used as a mechanism for the collective building of knowledge. In addition to its role as a means of communication and exchange within and between the group, it can provide instructional support to organize lessons, allowing a better integration and stronger motivation for students.

c. Advantages and limitations of Facebook as an educational tool

a. Advantages

Facebook has a range of advantages that make it attractive to the majority of students. We cite some of them hereafter. The Facebook group is a particularly attractive and natural tool compared to other educational tools (Diakhate, Akam, 2015, p.16). This is how the Facebook group appeals to students more and encourages them to learn online (BenRebah and Dabove, 2017, p. 4).

The Facebook group encourages learning that uses mobility related technological tools such as phone, tablet and computers. Moreover, it is easy to access compared to other social networks thanks to notifications. (Diakhate and Akam, 2015, p.16, Mélot et al., 2015, p.4 and p.11, Lampe et al. 2010, p.19

According to the study by Lampe and Al. (2010), the Facebook group also promotes interactions between students and the desire to exchange and collaborate together. Indeed, the exchange of information and opinions on diverse topics enables a collaborative process of knowledge building (Mélot et al., 2015, p.4, 11-13). This makes it possible to expand discussions on a much larger number of topics much better than in the case of face-to-face courses (Maisonneuve et al., 2015, p.6).

Arnaud (2012) talks about another advantage regarding the rapid assimilation of the course content. In fact, resorting on memorization and reorganization of the information collected and the appropriation of knowledge reassures the learner (Arnaud, 2012, p. 8).

The Facebook group is highly adapted to the requirements of the Generations Y and Z, which have "great adaptability to the digital world, [...] multitasking capabilities". These generations are characterized by a growing preference for "drawings over text, interaction over individual work, writing over handwriting, and doing knowledge" (Maisonneuve et al., 2015, p.3-4).

The Facebook group provides access to a variety of interesting resources in the context of active pedagogy "Problem-based learning, practice exchange group, case study, real life situation, virtual reality, serious game, role-playing, and simulation" (Maisonneuve et al., 2015, p. 10). This tool can support the student in preparing for their course as part of a

pedagogical approach in a "flipped classroom" setting using online discussions or when the student needs to enrich his or her course outside the classroom (Maisonneuve et al., 2015, p. 6). The Facebook group demonstrates the ability to combine a variety of digital tools into one space: "RSS (Really Simple Syndication), electronic bulletin board, blog, email, forum, broadcast, instant messaging using text, audio, video and podcast sharing" (Mélot et al. al., 2015, p.2-3).

b. Limits

Using Facebook presents certain limits that must be defined and dealt with before starting an active pedagogy based on this tool. Some of these limitations are mentioned below.

Diakhaté and Akam (2015, p.19, Arnaud, 2012, p.4-5, Maisonneuve et al., 2015, p.7) see that optimizing the use of a Facebook group depends on a prior preparation, initial training, and support for learners and their professors; in order to enhance their participation in the learning process from the beginning of teamwork (Ben Rabah and Dabof, 2017, p. 9).

This idea is reinforced by Damani and Rinaudo (2011) who discussed the confusion of professional and private spaces through "dilution of professional space and time" which is a major limitation to the smooth operation of teaching with this tool.

One barrier to note in order to make Facebook an effective educational tool is the relevance and reliability of information in a social network that is "open to all and with little control" (Mélot et al., 2015, p.5). The possibility of distraction using chat, games, videos, etc, while teaching, is also judged harmful to educational activity (Ben Rebah, Dabove, 2017, p.9, Mélot and Al., 2015, p. 5., Deschreever and Al., 2009, p. 3). Facebook can carry a negative 'hilarious' image of relaxation and rest (Diakhate and Akam, 2015, pp. 14-15) which makes it destabilizing in its educational use (Mélot et al., 2015, p.2-3).

II Empirical study

Our study focuses on analyzing the effectiveness of teaching the material of business creation via 'The Facebook Group'. This experience is meant to improve entrepreneurship learning and students skills development in the context of information digitization.

A. Experiment description

Our experience adapts and matches the requirements of the environment. In fact, the latter is characterized by the increasing visibility of start-ups in the digital economy and creative industries. Bandura (1977) emphasizes the game of interaction of an individual in his environment in terms of social learning. To do this, we surveyed 87 students during the 2022-2023 academic year and on 81 students during the 2023-2024 academic year. These students are from different management disciplines (production, finance and accounting) and information technology taught at Iset Zaghouan.

The survey was sent to students by e-mail through the Google Forms tool. We asked the students to review the questionnaire in class and ask for clarification in case of ambiguity. However, students were free to answer the questionnaire on their own time, outside of class, in order not to influence them and to ensure the credibility of the results.

Through this empirical work, we seek to explore the role that the digital social network Facebook can play in teaching "Business Creation" through online collaborative work between students from different disciplines within the same higher education institution.

The administered questionnaire aims to measure learners' feelings about this experience (learning the subject business creation by the Facebook group) and to assess their degree of satisfaction with the performance of the Facebook group. This survey covered the following topics:

- Facebook Group Functionalities
- The advantages of online learning in creating a business, especially the Facebook group (a tool for sharing, communication, exchange and interaction between and within groups).
- Limitations and difficulties of teaching business creation by Facebook group

With this survey, we aim, on the one hand to estimate the impact of using a Facebook group on promoting entrepreneurship and improving skills. On the other hand, we are looking for ways to better overcome the difficulties faced by some learners who express dissatisfaction with the use of a Facebook group as a method of teaching.

By promoting online education in entrepreneurship, we can also encourage students to invest in the digital market at a modest entry cost. The examples in this case are numerous, as is the case for some well-known companies such as Amazon in the book business, Uber in the urban transportation sector, taxis and Airbnb in recreational accommodation. The Facebook group can then create new entrepreneurial opportunities that can lead the student to form new innovative companies.

Developing students' entrepreneurial skills through the social network "Facebook Group" can help them in their future professional projects (Normi and Paseo, 2007). In fact, students will see themselves developing an entrepreneurial spirit, capable of furthering their future careers and ensuring the acquisition of attitudes and behaviors necessary to prepare them to seize opportunities (Wilson, 2009). Therefore, teaching via Facebook Group is an ideal context to test and develop their entrepreneurial skills.

Oosterbeek and his collaborators (2007) stated that an appropriate upbringing education as the subject of our study, associated to a nurturing environment, can contribute to economic growth, community development and individual well-being. This must be true whether or not the individual starts the business.

B. The context and the field of study

Our research question is related to students' representations and reactions from different disciplines in relation to teaching business creation via a Facebook group: "How do students interact when they use this social network in the business creation cycle? What is the effect of using Facebook on skill acquisition and development in terms of an entrepreneurial culture?"

The research context is the context of the business creation cycle presented in the Iset of zaghouan in Tunisia. The study extended for the last two semesters of the academic years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. The main objective of the pedagogical use of the Facebook group was based on the development of the interactive, relational and communicative skills of the learners. It was about teamwork and interaction on questions related to the main themes

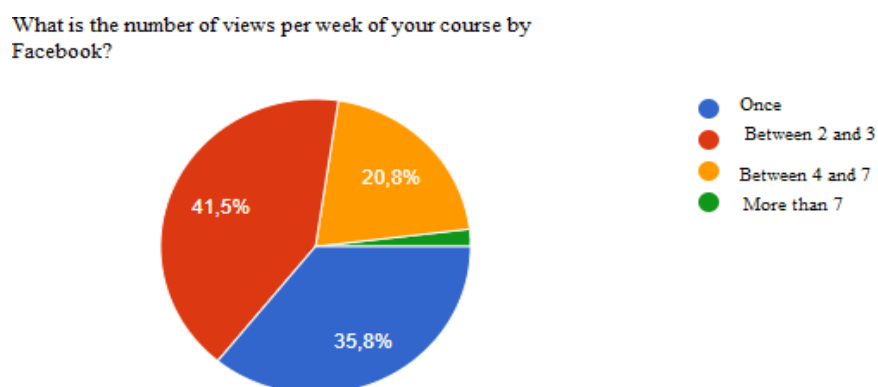
Business Model Canvas and Business Plan.

On Facebook, we record various reactions in the form of messages, comments and reviews as well as the interactions posted on the Facebook group page after a weekly class is delivered. These reactions are assimilated with the indicators confirmed by a survey targeting students from different disciplines of the department of economics and management and the department of computer science.

C. Analyzing the survey results

Analyzing the frequency of consultations of a business creation course posted in a facebook group, the majority of students surveyed said they consult the course between 2 and 3 times a week (41.5%). 20.8% of them do so between 4 and 7 times however 35.8% do that just once a week. It can be concluded that the students are interested in this unit.

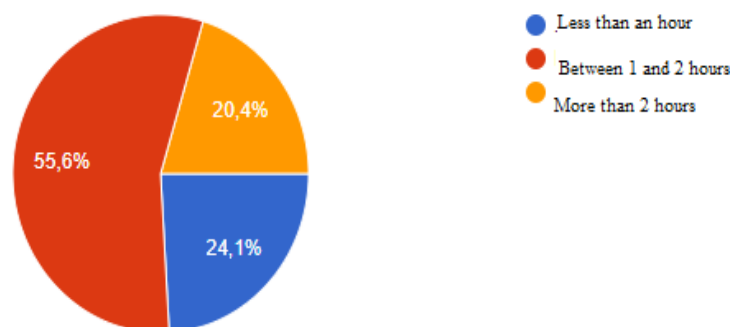
Figure (1): The number of consultations of the business creation course via Facebook group



According to statistics, more than half of the sample spends between one and two hours to consult an online business creation course. It is not far from the official duration of the face-to-face course, which is an hour and a half per week.

Figure (2): The duration of the course consultation via Facebook per week

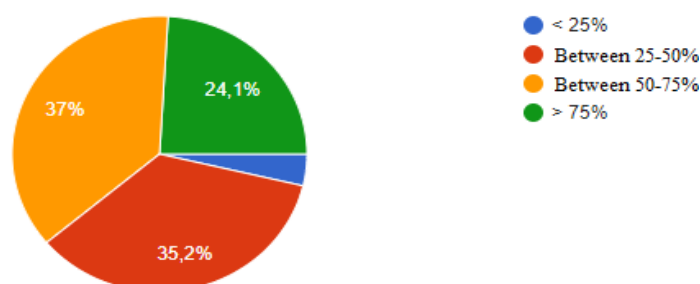
How long do you connect on average per week to Facebook to consult your course?



Students were asked about the degree of their participation in the business creation course via the Facebook group. 37% of the interviewees consider participating and interacting in this online module between 50% and 75% of the material uploaded on the facebook group.. That is, they only participate in the activities displayed on the Facebook group in the above proportions. While the most active part that contributes more than 75% in the online business creation course is about 24.15% of the sample. The activities shown on the Facebook group can be videos to watch and comment on, discussion forums, peer-reviewed exercises, etc.

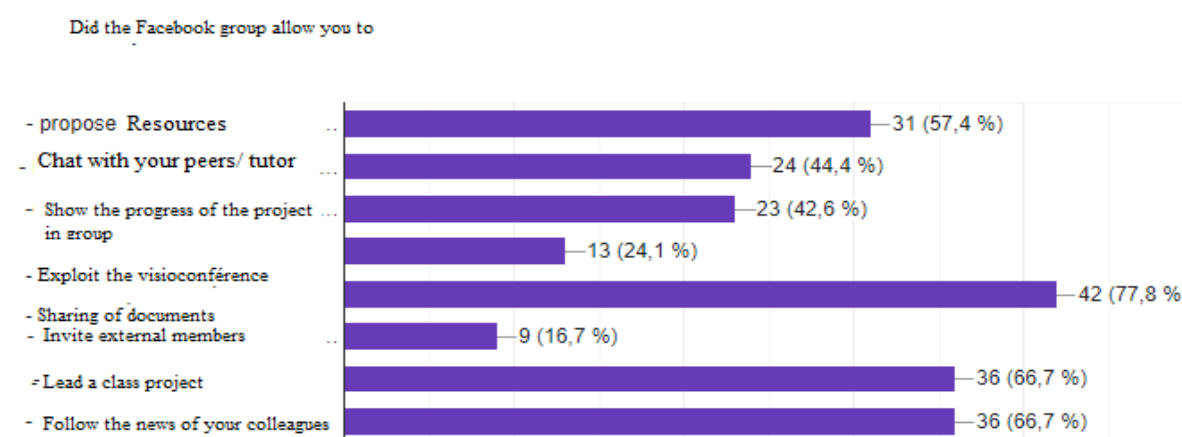
Figure (3): Proportion of course participation via Facebook group

What is the proportion of your participation in this course?



About the benefits gained from the facebook group learning, 77.8% of students put sharing documents above all the benefits. Conducting a class project with colleagues and following up on group news to promote exchanges between group members are the next two advantages that are enumerated by 66.7% of students. Third, it is the resources provided within the group that motivate the students to interact in the group (66.7%). Discussion with colleagues and teachers in the forum as well as presentation of the progress of an educational project are the benefits sought by 44.4%.

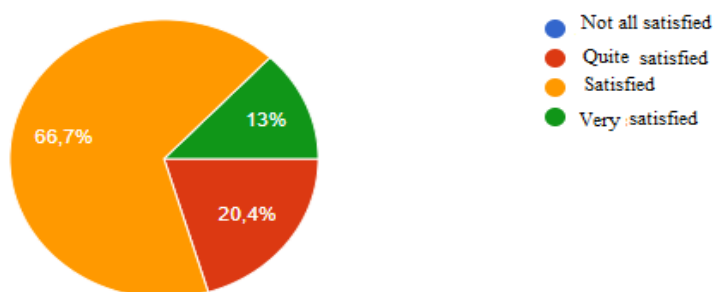
Figure (4): The role of the group Facebook Referring to the level of satisfaction of students



About the facebook group performance, 66.7% of students declared being satisfied.

Figure (5): The level of satisfaction with the performance of the Facebook group

What is the level of satisfaction with the performance of the Facebook group

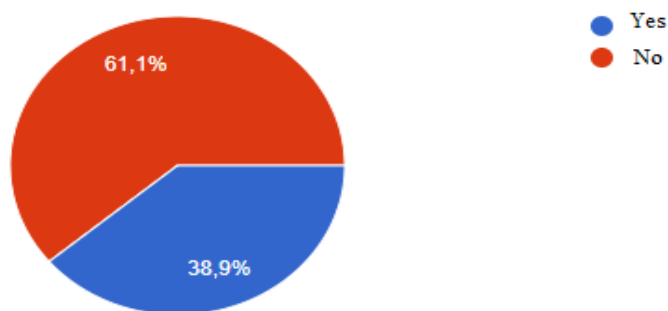


Concerning the follow-up of the course 61.1% of the members of the group did not find any difficulty in doing so. This did not prevent certain difficulties from being encountered

by 38.97% of the students.

Figure (6): Possibility of difficulties related to the Facebook group

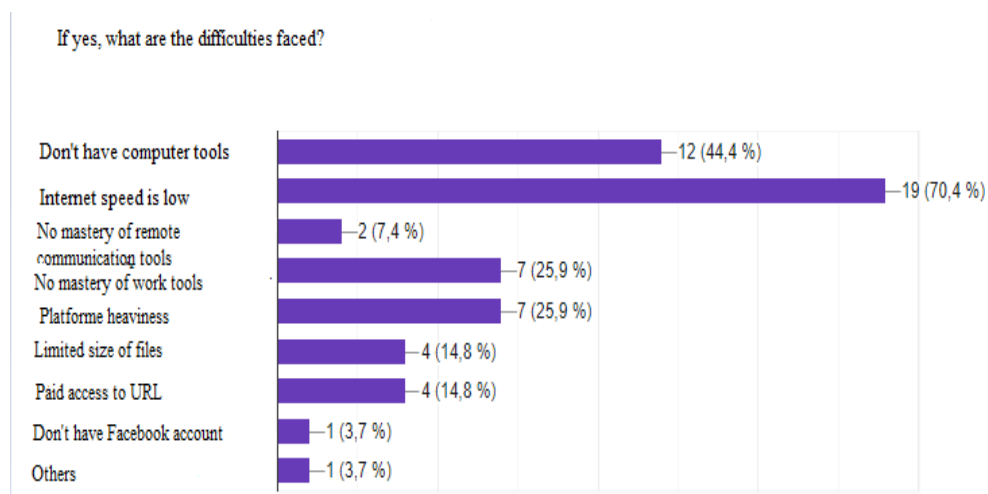
Did you find it difficult to follow "business creation" course from a distance?



The use of Facebook Group while teaching the topic of business creation has enhanced the collaborative learning process among students. However, the investigation reveals that there are some difficulties that affected the results obtained at the end of this experiment, which deserve to be emphasized.

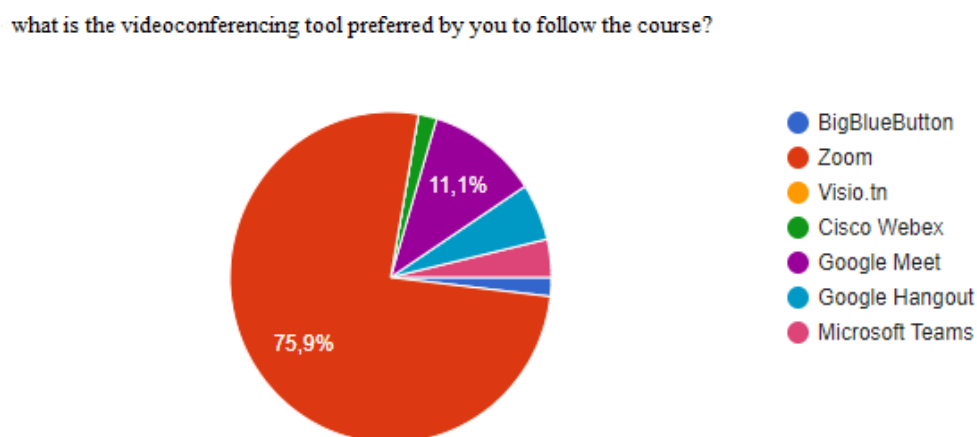
Among the difficulties found, we note that 70.4% of the interviewed students complain of low Internet speed, and 44.4% do not have laptops. 26% of the sample have technical difficulties either because they are not proficient in remote working tools (Google Drive, Google Docs, Coggle, canvas board, etc...) (25.9%) or the platform offered is too heavy (25.9%).

Figure (7): The list of difficulties related to the Facebook group



To fully understand the content of the business creation cycle, the majority of the sample declared that they sometimes need a concurrent session. Video conferencing was chosen as the preferred method of communication by more than half of the students (52.9%), and Zoom was chosen as the best platform for taking the course remotely (75.9%).

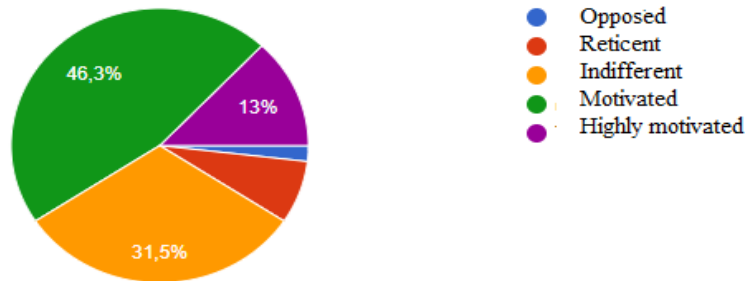
Figure (8): Most Favorite Video Conferencing Tool



After trying the online learning course for the "Building a Business" course via Facebook group, we notice that 59.3% of students are split between motivated (46.3%) and very motivated (13%) to do so, however only 9.2 % of them are divided between reticence and opposition.

Figure (9): Reaction to the use of the Facebook group

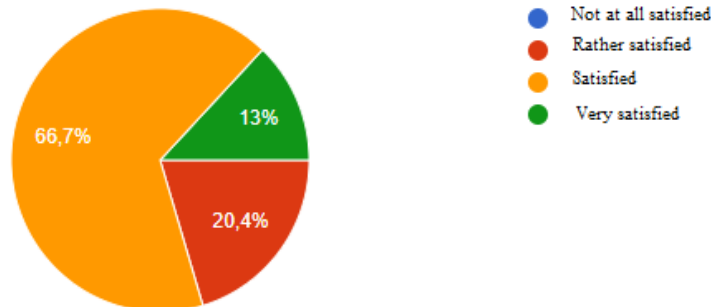
Today, after the experience of distance learning of the "business creation" course via the facebook group. You are:



According to data analysis, we find that 79.7% of students say they are satisfied with the performance of the Facebook group (internet speed, usability, etc.) compared to only 20.4% who are rather satisfied.

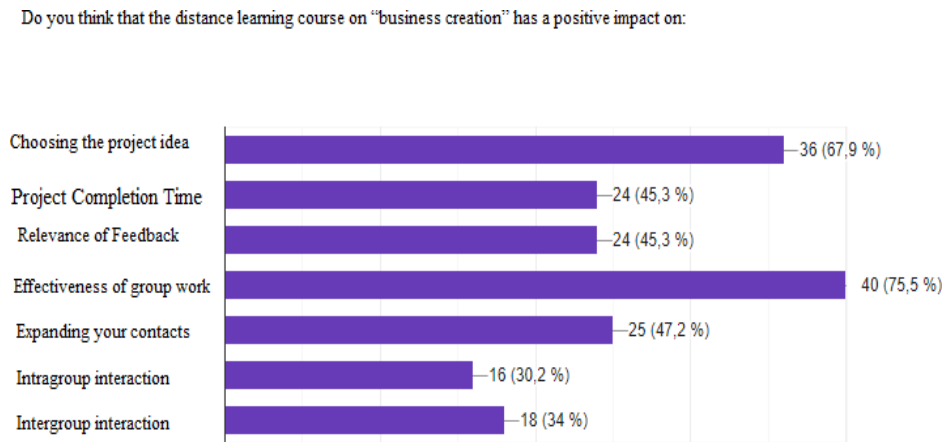
Figure (10): The degree of satisfaction with the performance of the Facebook group

Assess your level of satisfaction with the performance of the facebook group(internet speed, ease of use)



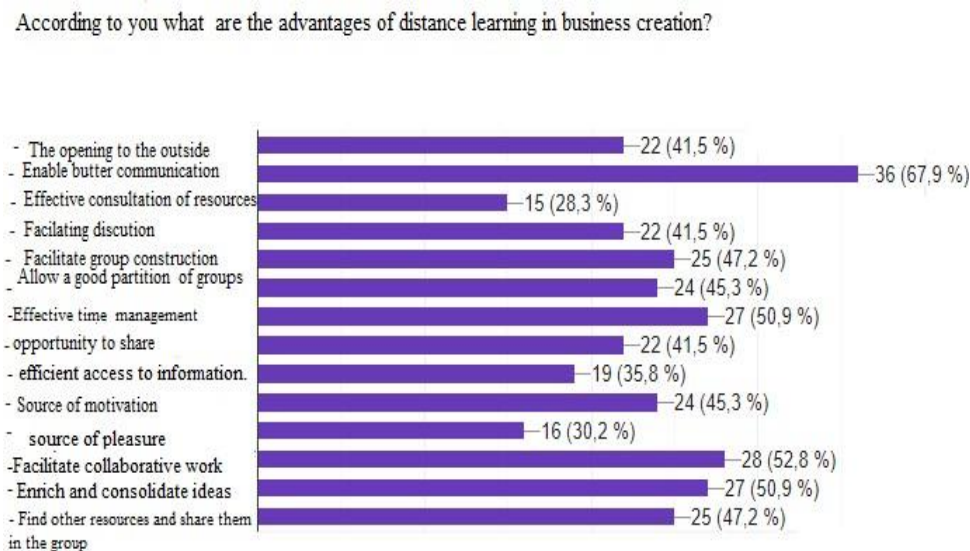
Referring to the questionnaire, we show that effectiveness of teamwork (75%), choice of project idea (67.3%), time constraints to complete work(44.2%) as well as extension of communication (46.2%) are the first elements that seem to be positively affected by online learning for "Business creation" cycle followed by intergroup (32.7%) interactions and intragroup interactions (28.8)% as well as interest in comments from the group (44.2%).

Figure (11): The impact of the online learning course on “business creation”



The main advantages that students offer regarding online learning (via a Facebook group) for the topic of business creation are: allowing better communication (67.9%), facilitating collaborative work (52.8%), enriching and consolidating ideas and allowing optimal time management (50.9%), motivating the group (45.3%) as well as enabling to follow the discussions in the group forum (41.5%).

Figure(12): The benefits of teaching business creation through the Facebook group

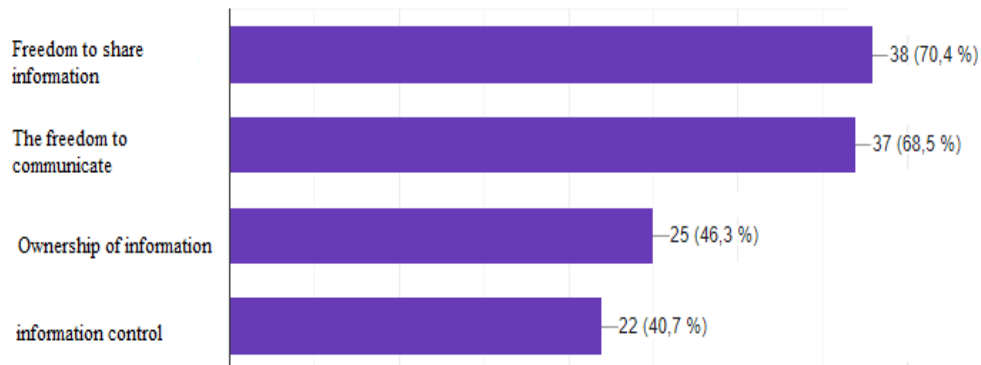


By questioning them about respect for certain principles when studying online the topic of creating an online business, students primarily

emphasized this respect on the freedom to share information (69.8%) and the freedom to communicate (67.9%).

Figure (13): The specificities of teaching via the Facebook group

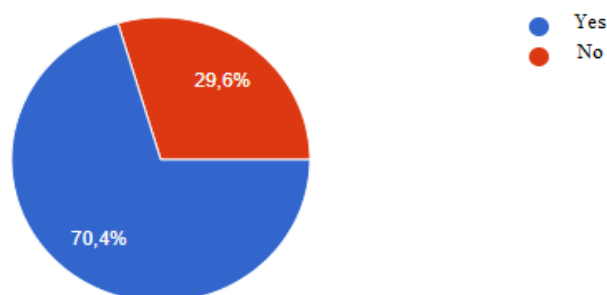
Does the distance learning course for this subject respect the following principles:



We notice that teaching business creation via the Facebook group allows to expand the list of contacts of the project leader, which subsequently promotes the expansion of the list of promising young clients. Besides, it evolves through its ability to increase market share by targeting potential customers while developing Facebook's marketing strategy.

Figure (14): Expanding contacts via the Facebook group

Does the distance course participate in enlarging your contact list?



D- Discussion

The survey reveals that, apart from some of the difficulties inherent in online

learning that can greatly affect the course of collaborative work, Facebook remains an effective educational medium that encourages a conducive environment to fostering an entrepreneurial culture. Therefore, other than some factors that can affect online teaching, such as having a good internet connection and having the appropriate computer facilities, we can conclude that a teacher via Facebook can achieve the expected performance.

By using the Facebook Group in entrepreneurship learning, the student can ensure the acquisition and development of three complementary skills: one related to personal development, the other to an entrepreneurial project, and the third knowledge related to marketing skills, justified by the acquisition of communication, business and relational skills via social networks.

Teaching entrepreneurship through the Facebook tool will serve the student in his future career, especially when the student aims to embody the project of creating a business by seeking to meet the needs of potential and virtual clients in an economic and health crisis.

Conclusion:

We believe that educational use of Facebook enhances the creation of an effective collaborative learning process. The effectiveness of a Facebook group depends primarily on the quality of interactions between students, which creates sufficient synergy to promote their business creation ideas and contribute to the collective production of cognitive, technical and behavioral skills. This encourages the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture in the university environment.

The acquisition of these skills will serve in the production of a website by each student at the end of the educational activity to sell the idea of creating a business. The students will then be able to create their project space for free to move forward.

In particular, they can create their business plan from a template to be completed online employing all the advice posted on the platform provided.

Of course, this information is safe in their personal space.

However, it should be noted that some prerequisites for the success of such a method are necessary, such as having a good Internet connection and having suitable computer terminals. Finally, it would be interesting to conduct further research in order to study the effects that the integration of social networks, especially Facebook, can have on openness to external outlets.

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