

PPSP STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE LEARNING IN PANDEMIC CONDITIONS

Keyword: *student, e-learning, face-to-face learning, pandemic*

Abstract

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cessation of face-to-face courses and many schools opted for education using online learning platforms. Using data obtained from students specializing in Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy (PPSP), this research estimates the causal effects of online learning on student performance. Using the differentiated approach of current education with classical education, we want to observe the efficiency of the current educational approach carried out online on various platforms.

Among the advantages of e-learning would be the access to online materials, the advantage of staying at home and the possibility to record a meeting and the disadvantages are reduced interaction with the teacher, technical problems, lack of interaction of colleagues and social isolation. Compared to e-learning, face-to-face learning is still perceived as extremely effective when it comes to accumulating knowledge, pedagogical skills and social skills.

1. Review of literature

Starting with March 11, 2020, following the decision of the Ministry of Education and Research to suspend face-to-face courses in Romania, the education system is reoriented towards new communication and cooperation practices to ensure continuity of learning and organizational functioning. The measures instituted by the state of emergency reveal to us different, sometimes unique, ways of being and acting. Adults and children were put in the situation to discover new ways of social connection and to continue their professional, social, cultural, playful and leisure activities. Thus, the use of virtual technologies and platforms has increased. All these elements certainly have an important area of evolution and social development, but the fact that everything happened suddenly put society in front of a huge challenge. As a result, government institutions, schools, NGOs and private companies, education and tech professionals have found themselves at a roundtable of debates (often online, at a distance) to find solutions, putting expertise, ideas, resources, portals, tools and eLearning platforms. Although it must be said that speed and quantity are not always guarantees of a quality process, we can still speak here primarily as a favorable context for reflection and permanent adaptation (Botnariuc et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic caused the greatest disruption of education in history, already having an almost universal impact on students and teachers around the world, from preschools to middle schools, educational and technical and vocational training (VET) institutions, universities, adult learning institutions and skills development. By mid-April 2020, 94% of students worldwide were affected by the pandemic, representing 1.58 billion children and young people, from preschool to higher education, in 200 countries. (UN, UN SG, UNSDG, 2020, p. 5).

Switching to online learning is a challenge, even for students who have felt ready, as the study conducted by Pinkus shows (Pinkus, 2000). Almost nine out of 10 (86%) consider this transition

to be disruptive and only 37% are extremely or very prepared to move to an online learning environment. Even among those students who are most prepared for online learning, over seven out of 10 (71%) find their school experience disrupted by this transition. Less than half of students maintain a regular schedule now that they are at home most days or every day (47%). In fact, only 16% have a set schedule each day and this drops to just six percent among those who feel unprepared for online learning.

The arguments associated with e-learning are accessibility (including rural areas), flexibility, a less rigid pedagogy, lifelong learning, it is considered to be a relatively cheaper way of education in terms of lower transport costs, accommodation and the overall cost of institution-based learning. Flexibility is another interesting aspect of online learning; a student can schedule or schedule time to complete the courses available online. Combining face-to-face lectures with technology gives rise to blended learning or the creation of blended learning rooms, which can increase the learning potential of students and pupils, pupils and students can learn anytime and anywhere, thus developing new skills in the process that leads to lifelong learning (Clark et al., 2020), (Dhawan, 2020, p. 2).

2. Methodology

Objectives

The present research aims to highlight the way students relate to learning in pandemic conditions compared to the previous conditions.

Thus, we set out to highlight the factors that matter in this learning framework, factors such as the effectiveness of learning in terms of increasing knowledge, the effectiveness of learning in terms of increasing pedagogical skills, the effectiveness of learning in terms of increasing social skills, the effectiveness of learning in terms of increasing knowledge, one's own involvement in the

learning process, the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning and the general attractiveness for learning.

Hypotheses of quantitative research

The research topics are the following:

- students adapt quickly to new forms of learning;
- technical problems and aspects related to social collaboration are solved on the fly or as a minimum of experience is gained in learning approaches in pandemic conditions;
- there are also unexplored advantages of online learning;
- uncertainty about online learning outcomes is fragile

Hypotheses of the research:

We assume that the efficiency of online learning is lower at this stage;

We estimate that pedagogical skills are better developed in online learning;

We admit that social skills are better developed in the online environment;

We assume that increasing knowledge in online learning is not exactly effective;

We assume that the involvement of students in the process of effective online learning is lower.

Variables

The research variables were: gender, age, year of study, domicile, skills in using technical devices and online platforms and participated in any type of e-learning before the pandemic.

Methods, Tools and Population

I used and adapted a questionnaire designed and applied by Bączek (Bączek et al., 2020). The questionnaire was applied through Google Forms during November 2020. From the

perspective of group composition, the situation was as follows for the 57 subjects studied (Figure 1).

3. Results and Discussions

The presentation of the results will be made in the order of the items in the questionnaire:

- What do you think are the benefits of e-learning? Choose everything you think is true (Figure 2).
- What are the disadvantages of e-learning? Choose everything you think is true (Figure 3).
- On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = extremely inefficient, 5 = extremely effective) evaluate the effectiveness of learn in terms of increasing knowledge (Figure 4).
- On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = extremely inefficient, 5 = extremely effective), evaluate the effectiveness of learn in terms of increasing pedagogical skills (Figure 5).
- On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = extremely inefficient, 5 = extremely effective), evaluate the effectiveness of learn in terms of increasing social skills (Figure 6).
- On a five-point scale (where 1 = extremely inactive, 5 = extremely active), describe your activity while learning (Figure 7).
- On a five-point scale (where 1 = extremely unpleasant, 5 = extremely pleasant), evaluate how much you like e-learning courses (during the pandemic) (Figure 8).

In Doolan's research, the students were largely satisfied with the way the supporting lecturers have appeared since the cancellation of classes on the spot. They were less satisfied when it came to organizing seminars and practical courses (Doolan et al., 2000). Abbasi's research, in agreement with other research, found that 84% of students appreciated that in e-teaching student-teacher interactions are limited (Abbasi et al., 2020),

The COVID-19 pandemic has strongly affected the emotional well-being and therefore the mental health of people around the world [14,30,40,93] - either directly in terms of health problems or indirectly in relation to its economic consequences, and social (Brooks et al., 2020), (Wang, C.; Zhao, H. , 2020), (Shuja et al., 2020).

The online activity has the obvious advantages but also limits in the teacher-student relationship. These limits have a negative impact on effective learning because an important side of face-to-face teaching cannot be done virtually or does not have the same efficiency if it is conducted online. Explainable, the support they traditionally provided to students with special needs or learning difficulties is difficult to provide online, given the implicit technological limitations. In reality, in the online environment, each student can represent for the teacher a possible situation of learning difficulty, thus making it difficult to identify those with real problems. Even if the teacher knows his class and students well and knows who needs additional support, this could possibly be done after the online teaching activity, through individual counseling. It is very difficult to have a personalized interaction with a specific student in the context in which the contact is not direct, the teacher is followed online by an entire class and each student asks for his attention. Online educational platforms, streaming platforms, in general, facilitate real-time communication between the teacher and his students. However, communication in this case is very often perceived as somewhat artificial, partly due to the impossibility of obtaining real communicative feedback (which makes communication authentic), and partly due to the awkward context of placement in the virtual space. . The fact that you can be recorded, the fact that you can be heard by anyone (not just your students), without real control of the target audience, determines teachers to build a correct, consistent, fluid discourse. Nonverbal communication and mediated use of paralanguage complete the difficult paradigm of online communication if

communication is through instant chat, and some clues that good nonverbal communication could produce to support verbal communication are now lost through specific interruptions or blockages. these sessions in conditions of limited bandwidth capacity or loaded traffic (Botnariuc et al., 2020). The authors of other studies and reports came to such preliminary ideas (Zewde et al., 2020), (Aristovnik et al., 2020).

4. Conclusions

Students adapt with some regrets to new forms of learning. Usually, face-to-face learning is perceived from a different perspective in the current context and is somehow romanticized. The technical problems are more acute now or especially at the time of the course and the aspects related to social collaboration are felt quite strongly and negatively. In general, these shortcomings of social collaboration are attributed to technology and are recognized as requiring a minimum of experience in online approaches. Online learning has the advantage of participating in any location and therefore saves more time and also has some advantages not sufficiently explored. Uncertainties about online learning outcomes are on the part of both students and teachers. It is probably the variable that will be most intensively researched in future studies.

Research has shown that the effectiveness of online learning is lower at this stage. Effective involvement in the proper conduct of the course is more difficult to achieve remotely and in the absence of an environment that stimulates students in this direction. pedagogical skills are better developed in online learning or there is a need to develop other skills than those present in traditional learning. Also, social skills are better developed in the online environment due to the fact that isolation is felt at the level of personal comfort. Hence the increase in the need for socialization through the technological means available and finding

strategies to maintain these relationships in the virtual environment. increasing knowledge in online learning is less effective due to several factors. The countless distractions during online education are not beneficial. The lack of total involvement in a course is limited due to an environmental environment devoid of pedagogical connotations. Thus, the effective involvement of students in the online learning process is lower.

The main advantages of e-learning are: access to online materials, the advantage of staying home and the possibility to record an appointment. The disadvantages of e-learning surprised by the student are: reduced interaction with the teacher, technical issues, lack of peer interaction and social isolation. Compared to e-learning, face-to-face learning is still perceived as extremely effective when it comes to knowledge accumulation, pedagogical skills and social skills. Also, in the context of active participation in courses, face-to-face learning is considered much more effective.

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Tables, figures and appendices

Gender		Age		Year of study		Domicile	
Male	3 (5,26%)	18-20	20 (35,09%)	PPSP 1st year	19 (33,33%)	Rural	35 (61,40%)
Female	54 (94,74%)	21-35	19 (33,33%)	PPSP second year	17 (29,82%)	Urban	22 (38,60%)
		36-53	18 (31,58%)	PPSP third year	21 (36,84%)		

How would you describe your skills in using technical devices and online platforms?		Have you participated in any type of e-learning before the pandemic?	
Advanced	8 (14,04%)	Yes	11 (19,30%)
Middle	35 (61,40%)	No	46 (80,70%)
Beginner	14 (24,56%)		

Figure 1. Population

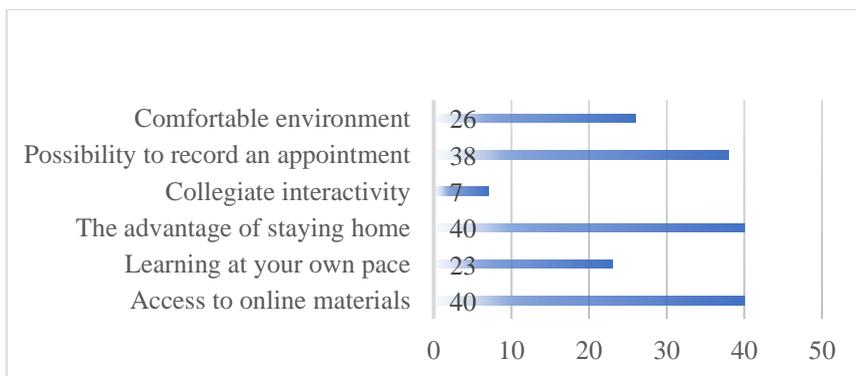


Figure 2. Benefit of e-learning

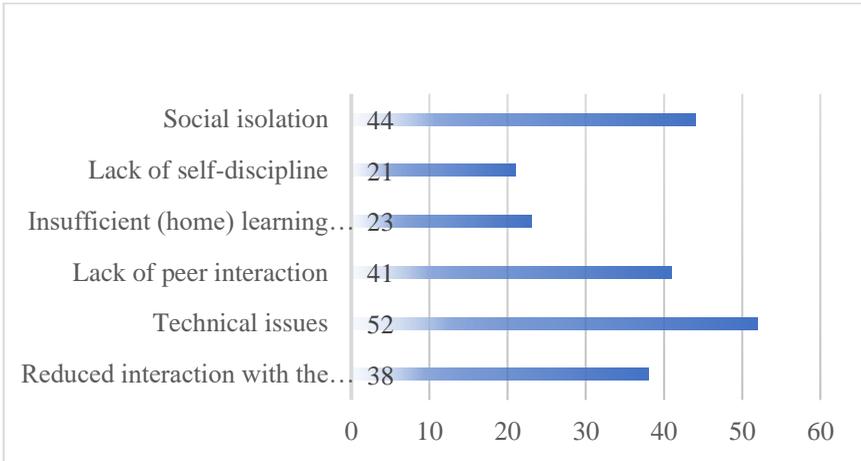


Figure 3. Disadvantages of e-learning

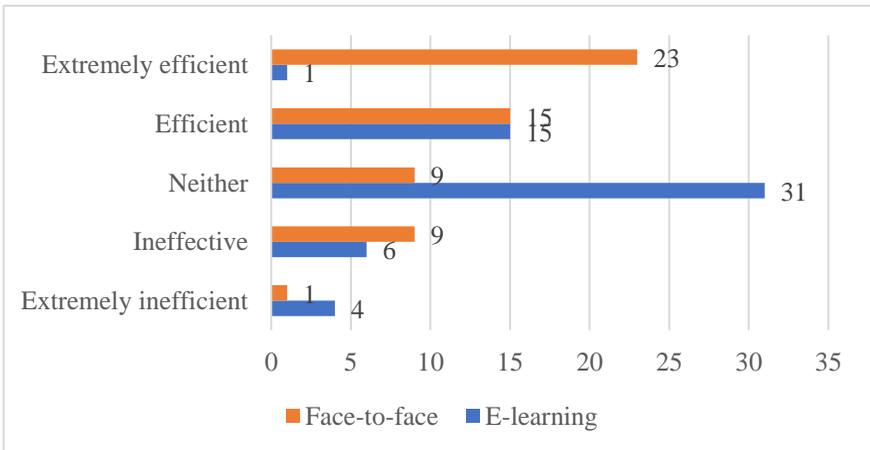


Figure 4. Effectiveness of e-learning – knowledge

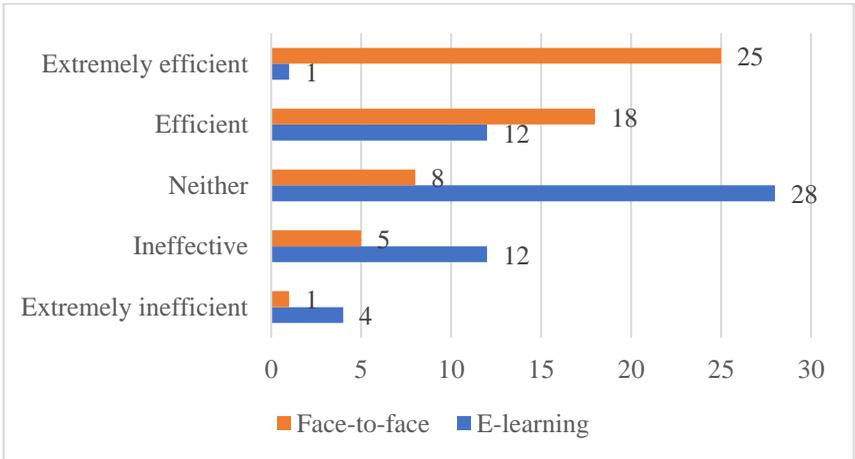


Figure 5. Effectiveness of e-learning – pedagogical skills

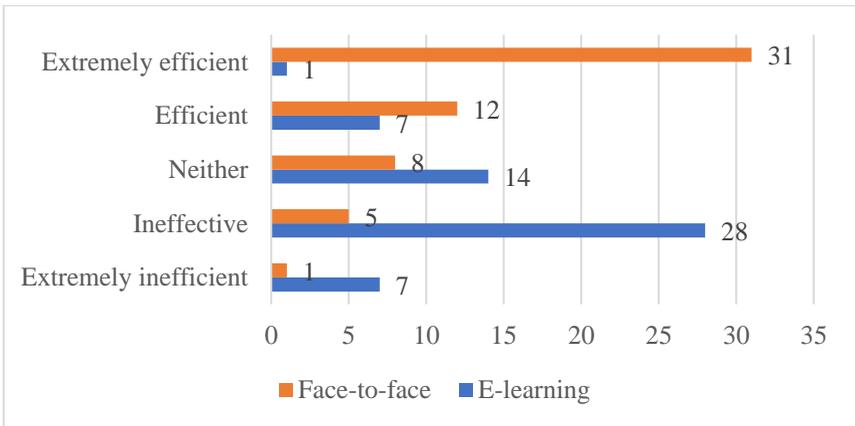


Figure 6. Effectiveness of e-learning – social skills

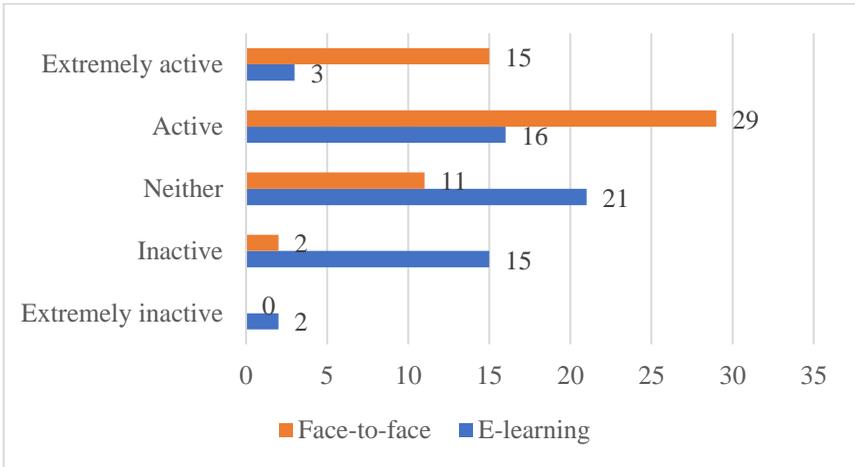


Figure 7. Activity while learning

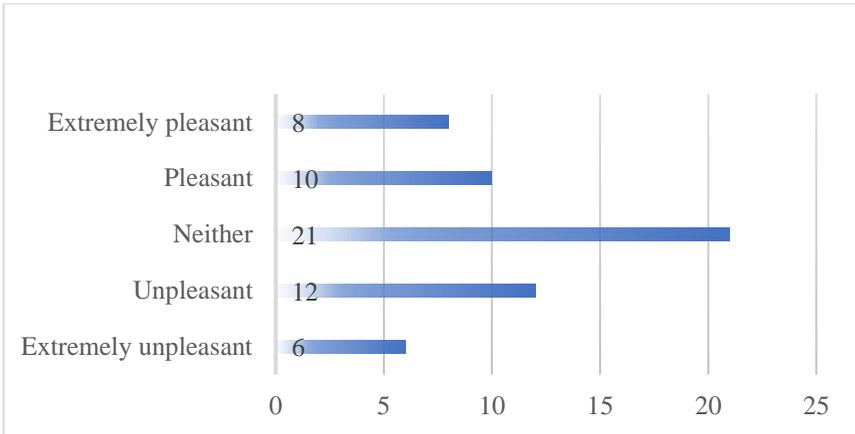


Figure 8. Pleasant learning