



CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION BASED ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

This article focuses on the perception of crisis management of case business university due to the shift from in-person learning to online or distance form based on COVID-19 and suggestions to improve university branding and competitiveness. Results are based on interviewing students enrolled at business courses during the coronavirus crisis. The aim is to identify successful crisis management practices of a university based on key factors drawn from students' feedback to ensure smooth shift to online education while maintaining efficiency and reputation. Students reactions were analysed to construct factors leading to successfully manage university's value though non-standard period. Students reflection on their experiences brings factors crucial to manage unexpected situation, i.e.: personalized communication, openness of school staff, fast reactions, alternative study possibilities, management of social impact, and alternative exams.

Keywords

Business Education, Management, University, Distance Learning, Crisis, Student

I. Introduction

The value of higher education is discussed intensely nowadays due to changes in modality caused by the universities, which hope that students are satisfied with the quality of education they received in the online and hybrid modalities. This is affecting higher education

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across the globe and many students and prospective applicants are asking specifically what is being gained from the investment in time and costs associated with the educational process. Currently, there are still lack of studies focusing on these sudden changes and their impact on student outcomes. Higher education institutions [HEIs] are currently struggling with these new approaches and to demonstrate that they are still achieving the same level of student learning outcomes. As well as to ensure that students are receiving the skills, competences to reach in their personal and professional growth these days. While universities have tried to satisfy students expectations mainly by moving online, they also need to address non-standard situation related to also psychological problems, isolation, different ways of living and studying. Because Marton, Saljo (1976) and many others identified intentions and expectations as important factors to predict students' behaviour and also impact study retention, success of student education, we need to focus on students' perception and expectations during online and distance education caused by changes related to COVID-19 and related social distancing. Based on research by Kuh (2003) we already know that teachers are the key as they are able to impact students directly and create stimulating environment motivating students to participate in lessons. Engagement of students as the key to retention and filled expectations was referred also by (Horstmannshof, Zimitat, 2007; Lowe, Cook, 2003).

This study focuses on student perceptions of change management during period of COVID-19 at a business university. The aim is to identify factors leading to successful crisis management of university. The paper is divided into four main sections, which contain theoretical background, methods we used to conduct our study, results, their discussion and conclusions of the main findings to construct recommendations for HEIs in similar situations.

II. Theoretical Background

The complete and involuntary shift to online teaching due to the COVID-19 limitations has created a number of challenges in the field of higher education that are complex and still ongoing. The main actions were related to the implementation of remote tools and procedures in online teaching, solving issues related to the pedagogical approach, formulation and implementation of new ways to prepare students for the required skills in information and digital literacy for online teaching (de Boer, 2021; Stone, Worsley, 2021). The impact of COVID-19 was a challenge especially in the field of practical training, need to switch to online testing and in the field of teaching, online lectures had to convey theoretical and practical knowledge (Kidess et al., 2021). A very important area is the evaluation of this form of teaching by regular and periodical feedback (Kidess et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic also suspended student professional internships and caused a number of urgent and drastic changes in curricula (Silva, 2021). Universities have been forced to adapt their curricula by supplementing them with learning strategies that are compatible with virtual learning environments (Silva, 2021). Based on reported studies, online teaching of theoretical and practical subjects shows significant differences in nationality. Despite the fact that some practical subjects were moved to a virtual environment, the

level of satisfaction among students with practical teaching was lower (Day et al., 2021). This leads to the question:

P1: Students require information about alternative possibilities in teaching, examination, technical solution and practice.

The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic which led to online and distance delivery significantly impacted students' social behaviour and in some cases led to the burnout syndrome which impacted their overall mental health. University gates have closed and education had to continue through online teaching. The study by Zis et al. (2021) investigated the impact of these measures on students' mental health and the results showed that online teaching carries significant risks, especially emotional exhaustion. This aspect is also confirmed by Roig-Vila et al. (2021), who points out that the change in the format of face-to-face teaching to virtual has influenced communication with students and teacher impacting the student teacher relationship. Teachers have to rely on virtual classroom environment to teach and communicate, identifying and being aware of communication needs and barriers, and constantly working to improve communication so that students are not alienated (Roig-Vila et al., 2021). Roig-Vila et al. (2021) further showed that although pedagogically staff use a synchronous type of audiovisual communication, communication with students in the online environment is still imperfect and requires further improvements. Alhadreti (2021) in his study assessed the usability of online teaching aids, such as virtual whiteboards, questionnaires, etc., which could lead to improved communication with students. The results showed that communication needs to be further strengthened by other elements, because like Zis et al. (2021) and Alhadreti (2021) stated, communication within online teaching proved to be insufficient even from the point of view of academic staff. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of the impact on business university students are also addressed in Pasion et al. (2021), who examined mainly the degree of involvement in teaching, the degree of motivation and connection to the university. The authors had at their disposal the research of a group of students from the time of full-time teaching and the results of the research of the group from online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results did not show any significant group differences in the area of motivation, connection to the university and involvement in teaching in the studied groups. A slight negative effect was noted in the dimension of initiation into the taught area (Pasion et al., 2021).

P2: Students require personalized understanding communication and understanding of social impact of the crisis.

Further efforts should be made to ensure that longer school closures do not have a greater impact on these aspects. One of the paths is hybrid education, or mixed education, which combines elements of online teaching and full-time teaching. The COVID-19 pandemic also caused a number of difficulties as it relates to student learning as libraries and other academic support became unavailable. For academic libraries, the COVID-19 era meant an opportunity to expand its activities and educational events in the field of informatics, work with resources, etc. through on-form. The research pointed to the opportunity of academic

libraries as strategic partners in higher education towards strengthening the development of students' digital competencies (Zalite, Zvirbule, 2020).

P3: Students require access to library to be able to self-study.

Based on the above-mentioned, many institutions have tailored their curricula and delivery methods to achieve learning outcomes required by specialized business accreditors even in online system, because performance of individuals, especially after studies in their jobs is directly to the acquisition of competencies, skills and abilities during studies (Mocanu et al., 2014).

Crisis management of higher education institutions

The coronavirus pandemic brought about crisis in states and in organizations, at the macro level, at the organization level and at the micro level of the family (Saurin, 2021). Governments have responded to coronavirus with actions, and organizations, including universities, have responded adequately (Wang et al., 2021; Karasmanaki, Tsantopoulos, 2021). Actions taken at universities to protect staff have resulted in limited mobility, socio-economic, and physical distance, hygiene, communication and international support mechanisms, and have subsequently led to increased isolation of staff from potential carriers (Gamage et al., 2020; de Bruin et al., 2020; Baloran, 2020; Huckins et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2020; Zalite, Zvirbule, 2020; Agasisti, Soncin, 2021).

Universities addressed the situation mainly by moving teaching online to avoid personal contact (Barbosa, 2020; Mackert et al., 2020; Hew et al., 2020). It was a comprehensive measure based on the initial ambiguity of the pandemic and insufficient information (Saurin, 2021; Mackert et al., 2020). According to international research, potential students also responded to the pandemic by postponing their university entry for a year (Gamage et al., 2020).

In times of crisis, universities need to continue to fulfil their mission and functions, especially in key processes. However, the situation did not allow, as a result of government measures and the protection of employees, the implementation of activities in the classical way, and the transformation of teaching into other forms had to take place. The advantage was that the situation in terms of time created a certain time space for the implementation of changes compared to other emergencies (Agasisti, Soncin, 2021). As it was found, most universities responded in this sense, focusing mainly on online teaching; international coordination and cooperation; strong university leadership; proactive preventive measures; flexibility to verify results in terms of meeting deadlines and tests; strict hygiene; crisis communication by university leaders (Gamage et al., 2020).

P4: University has to manage timely and factual communication to stakeholders.

Even in emergency situations, the goal must be to ensure quality of academic offering, which must meet the requirements of external bodies that can control this quality (Gamage et al., 2020). One of the measures may be the creation of teams that focus on quality and its further shift, especially in the areas of learning, teaching and student accommodation (Gamage et al., 2020). Furthermore, it is necessary to ensure functioning

of the organization at the same performance level even in times of crisis. The chaos during a pandemic has to be managed by the university management and communicated with employees who work mainly from home. For teleworking, it is necessary to put in place a mechanism that control both the quality of employees' work and their performance (Aguinis, Jing Burgi-Tian, 2021). Teaching in subjects that require practical teaching methods has become a major problem. This may subsequently be reflected in a lower quality of education and work of graduates in practice after graduation (Puljak et al., 2020). To maintain the quality of education, it is recommended to use the black box method, to create a system of student support by administrative staff and to do the same in relation to teachers (Agasisti, Soncin, 2020). The positive attitude of teachers, their fast decision-making and mutual communication with students has a great influence on the level of study and its results in the environment of online teaching and also on its communication and facilitation. The processing of instructions in the form of Best Practice is also very helpful (Barbosa, 2020; Day et al., 2021; Mackert et al., 2020) and contributes effectively to the situation.

P5: Quality has to be maintained by constant feedback managed and instantly reviewed and resolved.

Yuriy (2017) and Knight, Yorke (2004) shown that higher education should also develop their abilities linked to crisis management and planning, problem solving, and continuous improvement.

III. Materials and Methods

This research used analysis of secondary sources, data gathered through questionnaire and interview investigation, data analysis of financial reports and knowledge synthesis. Secondary resources used include scientific papers in the area of quality in higher education, online and distance learning, ability to change and adapt to new environment due to unexpected changes and crises. This research is empirical in nature utilizing responses of students directly impacted by changes in their courses caused by transfer to online or distance form due to impact of Corona crisis.

Data Sample

The data for this study was collected in a primary quantitative and qualitative survey by means of a questionnaire investigation by a computer assisted web interviewing (CAWI) using internal university information system. The data collection started in spring 2020 and followed by interviews. Students were responding to the situation they face during COVID-19 related restrictions, always corresponding to the current situation at the time of completing the questionnaire in 2020.

The data were gathered from 1,184 students in business university in the Czech Republic. The sample contained all active students in spring semester. The sample was thus 100% of students enrolled in courses in 2020 (months May, June, July). The questionnaire was mandatory for all students in order to log in the information system. The evaluated

areas were related to our hypotheses stated in Theoretical Background, i.e. evaluation of change to online education, willingness to continue online or moving back to standard form of courses as soon as possible, use of alternative forms for exams and control of studies, evaluation of their abilities to achieve learning outcomes during non-standard (online only) form, evaluation of the University responses and providing information and ensuring quality. All questions were open with a space to write text answer. All answers were mandatory. The gender of the respondents is as follows: 677 (57%) women, 507 (43%) men, 59% were undergraduate (bachelor) students and 41% postgraduate (master) students.

Research Design

This study was designed to map preferences of students in conditions during compulsory changes based on closures related to COVID-19 pandemic. The research was designed based on theory and similar studies (see the theoretical background and hypotheses) utilizing a descriptive research design. Respondents' reactions to target statements and their attitudes to the situation were studied. The statements were developed based on literature search and in some cases modified according to the specifics of our study purpose to fit the conditions. Based on this design, our study results may help other institutions in their application to meet students' needs in similar crises and changes. We used studies as Lowe, Cook (2003), Horstmanshof, Zimitat (2007), Crosling, Heagney, Thomas (2009), and methods in human resource management by Anderson et al. (2019), social research analysis by Disman (2018) and qualitative content analysis by Hendl (2016).

The research question for this paper was designed to address the following: What are the preferences in study organization during shift to online teaching to be able to achieve students' satisfaction, maintain competitiveness and increase number of enrolled students and thus income?

Limitation of our paper is focus on one selected case university, the respondents are from one institution. This university was selected based on its best practices and positive student evaluation of managing the situation during COVID-19 and shift to distance education. Due to this positive evaluation, the University was able to enrol 20% students more in the following terms as a result of positive branding. Other limitations are not relevant, as 100 per cent of students enrolled in university were questioned and we used combination of methods and analyses.

Operationalization of Variables

The paper focuses on an in-depth discussion of the preferences in higher education by students given current discussion of the changes and value of online university education and impacts of COVID-19 on business university education. Qualitative data were processed and analyzed based on Hendl (2016). The content analysis of responses from open questions and interviews was conducted. Each response was coded. This was followed by the coding of the raw data according to the codebook in the data matrix and the division of the codes into several categories: positive, negative, neutral statements and objections/suggestions. The resultant tables were created from the encoded data using

IBM SPSS software and the results were interpreted according to individual categories. All qualitative data were analyzed based on the transcript of answers. This research refers to an in-depth, detailed study of individual responses resulting in a narrative description of situation during shift to online learning or experience with the nature of the distance education.

To make replicable and valid outcomes from texts, we used categories based on the matter of the contexts and their use. The method clearly identifies areas of text that are not clear in the responses at the first sight. The steps of our quantitative content analysis reflected main steps according to Disman (2018). Firstly, all responses were read and elements which could be used as statistically usable variables were defined, e.g. words, phrases or parts of text with defined meaning which were repeatedly seen in the text. In the second step, all variables were classified into categories. Mostly nouns and its synonyms were used as categories. Synonyms were merged in one category. The qualitative categories formed units for analysis. Unit is characteristic of a word or phrase which was repeatedly used by respondents. The units and their context were analyzed and attention was also paid to individual words. Logical clusters of units were recorded. Finally, 16 categories of qualitative variables were found and further used for analysis (see results in Table 3). This reduction of data and elimination of the less important variables could highlight the most important information in responses. To create system for statistical analyses, the nominal quantification was used to monitor frequencies of occurrence of each unit or category. The final number of occurrences of each unite and category was loaded. The outputs from this analysis were further studied and statistically processed. The data were inserted in tables and descriptive and two-dimensional statistical tests were run to evaluate the results. Finally, we analyzed the data firstly by means of a one-dimensional analysis based on the frequency distribution.

IV. Results

Results presented are outputs from the analysis of data from quantitative interviewing of students at case business university on the implementation of crisis management. The results show current approaches towards fast change to fully online teaching and its impact on business students. The qualitative data analysis was firstly drawn from responses related to students' evaluation of their studies at case university for the duration of the emergency based on the university response to changes, government orders, etc. The statements were divided into three categories: positive evaluation, neutral evaluation and negative evaluation.

Students evaluate their studies during the pandemic and the state of emergency mostly positively. Totally, 66.6% of positive statements were recorded. Another 8.3% of students answered neutrally. Only 5.8% report negative ratings. Less than a fifth of students (19.3%) did not have any opinion. Summary of answers is shown in Table 1.

Out of the positive answers, it is possible to further evaluate their content based on the shares which are recalculated on the basis of number of positive evaluations ($N = 789$ respondents). The largest category of positive evaluations contains generally positive evaluation of the university response 44.2% (usually one-word answers such as “good”,

“OK”, etc.), excellent evaluation was given by 14.1% of students (usually using superlatives like “excellent”, “great”). Students positively evaluated possibility of having all courses online and exams as well 10.6%. They appreciated the school’s fast reactions 7.6%, as well as excellent communication with the administration which was constantly informing students about current situation, changes and requirements or possibilities to attend in person or online only 7.4%.

Table 1: Qualitative responses on students’ evaluation of studies during the emergency

Answer	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Positive	789	66.6
No opinion	228	19.3
Neutral	98	8.3
Negative	69	5.8
Total	1184	100.0

Source: own research

The statements expressing general satisfaction were reported by 6.0% of students (usually “satisfied”). Students also stated that they could use the time to process written works, papers and projects and focused on self-study 2.8%. Students praise the possibility of extending or postponing the exam dates in 2.4% cases. Some students explicitly praise the Department of Studies and Advisory Centre which was constantly online and providing answers to students’ questions and concerns (1.6%). Other students acknowledge that the school offered meeting with students individually to solve their problems or questions (1.4%). Some students explicitly praise all school staff, especially lecturers (1.0%) and give the university an excellent rating compared to other/state universities (0.8%) which were not communicating with students or did not provide their lectures and courses online. Neutral evaluations may be evaluated as follows (shares are recalculated on the basis of total number of neutral evaluations $N = 98$ respondents). The answers mostly contained statements expressing that the situation had almost no effect on the study and students could continue studying online (37.8%). Other students reported that the situation was managed within the possibilities (21.4%). Furthermore, students stated that they are engaged in self-study, writing projects and papers in 18.4%, or devoting themselves to their professional jobs rather than studying (14.3%) or waiting till the end of pandemic or other change of the situation depending on the development of the epidemic (3.1%). Negative evaluations were given by 69 respondents which mainly addressed the fact that the situation disrupted their study or caused a slowdown in study 27.5%. Others reported that pandemic and social distancing or quarantine brought complications with exams, postponement of exams and final exams or inability to pass final exams online 23.2%. This is followed by a generally negative rating of 15.9% respondents. Furthermore, students reported personal, work problems in connection with the pandemic, which negatively affected their study in 7.2% cases.

Some of the complaints concerned insufficient information about the study 5.8%, inability to access libraries and missing literature 5.8%. A few students stated that online teaching is unsuitable for some subjects (5.8%), other students mentioned technical problems with online access (4.3%) or problems in communication with the university (2.9%). Only rarely the negative evaluation referred to the fact that students prefer personal tuition (only in 1.4%).

In total, 19.3% of respondents reported that they have no opinion, with less than a quarter of them stating that they do not answer, as they are students without loaded courses and thus no direct teaching. Another 10% of students stated that they are just finalizing their theses or they have interrupted their studies for this period.

Following these general ratings, Table 2 summarizes feedback or suggestion provided by students to future steps resulting from the current situation.

Table 2: Students' feedback and suggestions

Answer	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency (in %)
Positive	471	39.8
No opinion	459	38.8
Topic/Objection	254	21.5
Total	1184	100.0

Source: own research

The largest share of suggestions contains positive statements, expressions of satisfaction and thanks to the university that the situation was managed successfully with all lessons and courses accessible online according to the original schedules. Students appreciated how well the exceptional situation was handled by 39.8%. One-fifth of respondents (21.4%) stated some objections or suggestions. The remaining 38.8% of respondents did not provide any recommendations.

Positive feedback of students to the university in the current state of emergency prevails. Following percentage shares were recalculated on the basis of number of positive statements of $N = 471$ respondents. In this category the most frequently mentioned are generally positive evaluations of 45.9% of students. Students also stated that they prefer online teaching in 18.7% cases. General satisfaction with the university and teaching was expressed by 12.7% of students. Fast and appropriate reactions, information, communication was positively evaluated by 9.6% of students. Furthermore, friendliness towards students was positive by 5.9% of respondents. Students appreciated also possibility of alternative online exams, adjustment or postponement of exam dates (5.7%). 1.5% of students were thanking Advisory centre for their support during the period.

Totally 254 students made statements with suggestions. Mostly, their comments related to the preferences of online lectures, consultations, video learning, workshops, electives over in-person form. Respondents prefer the online environment even in the future after the end of the pandemic in 29.9%. Other topics addressed their increased concerns, e.g. students were asking for postponement of deadlines, exams, defences and possible extension of

lectures to the period after the mandatory quarantine will be over (13.4%). 10.6% of students would welcome a return to in-person teaching as soon as possible. Another 9.1% of students propose to introduce online exams and tests as standard. 3.1% of students suggest a discount on tuition or a free extension. Other students (2.8%) point out their inability to access to the library, study room, and access to resources and suggest solving this situation. Students also demand to speed up school responses, information, and communication even though they receive answer in three working days (2.8% of students). And 2.4% of students complained that they are bothered by completing feedback questionnaire. In connection with the overall difficult situation, students want greater tolerance 2.4%. Others demand better information for students, improved communication with the school (2.0%). There were also calls for caution not to rush to start full-time in-person teaching too soon and keep lessons and courses online to increase safety of all students and teachers (2.0% of responses). The proposal to involve students more in communication and discussion during online lectures appeared in 2.0% of cases.

Suggestions or comments that occurred rarely related to the reduction compulsory student activities student activities (1.6%), speeding up the evaluation of exams, papers and projects (1.6%), technical problems with connection or control of the application by lecturers (1.2%), increasing the amount and capacity of electives (1.2%), increase and postponement of exam dates (0.8%), retention of video consultations with lecturers and Advisory centre even after the end of the emergency (0.8%), improvement of teachers' awareness of state/government regulations regarding restrictions due to the epidemic (0.4%), possibilities to complete more subjects as projects 0.4%, improvement of the clarity of the university website (0.4%), technical problems with connection, control of the online application by teachers (0.4%). To find concrete characteristics of students answers, categories were drawn based on keywords and short phrases which were repeatedly used by respondents. Defined qualitative categories are listed in the Table 3.

Students were mostly mentioning reaction of university (480 occurrences) and positive evaluation (528 occurrences) of move online (to fully distance education) when the restrictions related to COVID-19 started. On the other hand, 257 students had no comments or opinion on the change. Some 47 students were comparing previous situation to current or talking about future (they expressed mostly their wish to have more lessons online in the future; others wanted to combine it or get back to normal). Additionally, 241 students were referring to online or video lessons and courses while 32 students wanted to get back to in person lessons as soon as possible. The same number of students (32) were describing the situation as negative, stressful or problematic. Overall, students were mentioning positive effects of distance education, such as more available time due to no need for travelling (16 occurrences), more time for self-study or writing seminar papers or theses (62 occurrences).

Students were thankful to Information centre or Study department for sending information or responding their questions (92 responses). On the other hand, academicians were mentioned only in 37 cases. Teachers were not the crucial part of managing the process of change. Totally 169 students mentioned exams. Mostly positive, as they had alternative possibilities online. Some of them were complaining that they prefer standard exams

and tests. 209 students were commenting on restrictions by the government and following regulations at university. The mostly appreciated fast reactions and sending most important information immediately by short text message (SMS) to their phones.

Table 3: Qualitative categories

Category of qualitative variables	Characteristics of category	No of occurrences
Online education	More online, video lessons, video courses	241
Personally	In person, on site	32
Successful move	Plus, positive, good, right, excellent, great, sufficient, thank, ok	528
No comments	Nothing, none, I don't know	257
Problems	Complication, stress, negative	32
Fast response	Fast, exact, corresponding, order, adequate	321
Self-study	Self-study, work on thesis or papers, seminar papers	62
Information dept.	Information, explanation, Information centre, Study dept.	92
University	Education institution, school, university	480
Academicians	Teacher, tutor, lecturer, academic, supervisor	37
Time	Future, actual, before, in the past	47
Exams	Test, exam, final exam, state exam, defence	169
Change	Shift, move, change, alternative, help	133
Rules	Procuration, government, regulation, order, limitation, restriction	209
Technology	Technology, technical, modern, innovative	38
Travelling	Commuting, travelling	16

Source: Authors

Following the content analysis, the answers were sorted according to the area they describe into five categories: social impact, self-study, online education process, exams and information. The most characteristic comments were selected into each category.

In the area of social impact, comments such as the following were mostly found:

New students were able to start their studies. On the other hand, they lack social interaction: *“Everything was nicely explained and I was able to orient myself. The only downside is that I haven't been able to meet anyone in person yet, including my classmates, but that will probably change soon. So far, the school has made a positive impression on me.”* Some students had to stop their studies, as they were called into the public service: *“Unfortunately, there was no time left to study, given that I am also a civil servant involved in state security.”* Students mentioned problems with practical research of their thesis as

some companies were closed, culture and events were not taking place and their thesis and research were devoted to it: "(...) greater problems occurred when writing my thesis, where the practical part is difficult to write when there is no possibility of, for example, mass cultural or sporting events." Students positively evaluated online lessons which could be always attended without excuses: "I evaluate my studies rather positively, as I could not make excuses (not go to school) and participated in the vast majority of lectures/lessons." Further, students welcomed additional possibilities online: "I also welcomed the offer of workshops that I have visited several times." Finally, students appreciate possibility to watch lessons later if they cannot attend live: "I very much welcomed the possibility of lectures on the YouTube channel and the possibility to watch them any time."

In the area of self-study students appreciated video-learning: "It is possible to see video-learning and script to study, so I don't mind the necessary restrictions." Students appreciated meaningful use of their time: "I try to take advantage of the situation and pay maximum attention to my study obligations. Distance learning suits me very well." Or: "I have a very positive time to study for the tests, to write written presentations and more time for personal life, I would like it like this." Similarly: "I have time to write a written paper and learn for tests."

Students evaluated online education process mostly positive: "In person questioning of students cannot be completely replaced, because it is possible to answer more questions and work more with a specific topic compared to a video lesson." On the other hand, students evaluated attendance on video courses as higher and students as more active: "In addition, it seems to me that there is more participation in lectures and students are more active."

Exams during COVID-related closures were also evaluated mostly positively: "The possibility of an alternative test was great; I would certainly welcome such a form even after the end of the emergency." Or: "Students were allowed to take the exams in a different way, which was beneficial for me as well. Alternative online lectures I found suitable and not less interesting."

To get information on time was crucial. Students had these typical comments: "Willing staff of the Information Centre always advised me and cleared information in response to government orders." and "Reaction was great, the first necessary info came by text message, the rest in the student's IS." Fast and responses were praised: "The Rector's Decrees responded to changes in teaching. I needed to ask at the beginning of the epidemic about the textbooks I borrowed and I called the study department without problem." Suggestion came to improve Social network communication: "All right, I would improve communication on the social networks."

The answers of students show that online teaching is not only satisfactory in the state of emergency but they would prefer online teaching even after end of epidemic, either completely or increasing the share of online teaching. The reasons for online learning are usually time flexibility, work responsibilities or no need to travel long distance from the place of residence to the university.

V. Discussion

The time period affected by the COVID-19 pandemic brought a number of changes to the field of higher education. Universities were compelled to respond to the inclusion of online teaching and thus provide an alternative to existing teaching (Stone, Worsley, 2021). To describe this process, we conducted our case study. As Kidess et al. (2021) stated, all students were forced to use universities e-learning application and participate in education and examination online.

Generally, three groups of barriers may be addressed in case of online delivery: (1) technical and technological, (2) limits on the side of educators and educational institutions and (3) barriers on the part of students themselves (Al-Balas et al., 2020). To address these barriers, our study came with solutions: (1) focus on constant technical education and personalized technical support, (2) fast reactions and communication with respect to social impact and (3) alternative possibilities for lessons, exams and study.

If we were to compare traditional face to face teaching from the point of view of our students, for most of theoretical business subjects it is perceived as equal, which is in line with Jere (2020). The practical subjects and library access may be a limitation to online delivery.

On the other hand, contrary to Kuh (2003) our study found that in crisis communication management and administrators play the most crucial role to resolve unexpected situation and to inform students. Engagement of students is the key, as referred also by (Horstman-shof, Zimitat, 2007; Lowe, Cook, 2003).

As Gore, Cross (2006), Fryer et al. (2016) and Wharton et al. (2014) stated, students want to continue their studies in turbulent times to increase their employability and chances and possibilities at labour market. Thus, the non-standard education has to follow the Houle's division of motivators to study: (1) goal-orientation (getting courses and exams done to obtain the diploma at the end); (2) activity-orientation (learning process itself, social interaction), and (3) learning-orientation (information on knowledge and skills development) (Merriam, Brockett, 2007). It is possible to state that the main focus of crisis management of higher education institution during unexpected changes are timely and sufficient information, ability to guarantee access to literature and sources, offer alternative variants possibilities for courses where distance delivery is not suitable, support everyone with knowledgeable technical help line and ensure direct and personalized communication with respect to social impact. Therefore, all five prepositions were confirmed.

Focus on revealed factors brings, according to data of studied university financial department, additional income of approximately 20% above average enrolled students paying tuitions and it also resulted in elimination of losses based on drop offs of unsatisfied students which on average reach from 5 to 30% of income.

VI. Conclusion

Academic institutions focusing on adult business university education and training need to focus on students' perceived outcomes resulting from changes of instruction during the pandemic period. This study identified and evaluated factors that are crucial to succeed during pandemic situation and shift to online delivery due to the need of social distancing. Data showed that students appreciated the most personalized online video-meetings, friendliness and openness of school staff with regard to social impact, excellent communication, university's fast reactions, alternative study possibilities (papers, projects, self-study), and extending or postponing exam dates, or alternative exams.

The analyses suggest practical implication to divide students into three groups: (1) those who are satisfied with online learning and easily manageable, (2) students who refuse any kind of online delivery and need to be managed carefully (three per cent of our sample). Approximately fifteen per cent of students are at risk with drop off or prolongation of their studies due to job overload. Almost half of students seem to continue their studies and do not need special support, and (3) students who dropped courses and waited for a return to in person instruction. One result that very dominant is that students need to be involved in communication on news, possibilities and new approaches. All students at risk need to be addressed, all opportunities have to be communicated carefully and students should be offered personalized support and help. The data shows association between satisfaction with online delivery and willingness to enrol in more courses online in the future. Thus, constant addressing of students who are not sure about their situation is necessary. The study found differentiated needs of groups of students and suggests managing them separately, timely and using personalized messages based on their concerns. This increases the level of satisfaction and commitment. All five prepositions were confirmed.

This paper provides an insight into the role of efficient crisis communication to students and stakeholders. Economically, our suggestions eliminate losses based on drop offs of unsatisfied students which may reach 5 to 30% of income based on data of case university, and brings value due to positive evaluation of students which improves university's branding which leads to additional income of approximately 20% additional students paying tuitions.

As the debate on the value of online university education currently continues, this study shows how students perceive it. Most of the students stated that education and studying is great use of their time during social distancing.

A limitation of this study is a narrow focus on selected business university. However, the results are presented as a case study, and shown findings may help other HEIs. Further, this paper provides an insight into the importance of perceived quality and the role of efficient crisis communication to stakeholders.

Promising avenues for further research are as follows: the suggestions pointed out by students may be surveyed separately to validate their impact on quality of teaching-learning process in educational institutions to design and manage the most suitable learning process.

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