The effectiveness of online learning during COVID-19 Pandemic

Online learning main issues for DSV's students during COIVD-19

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1   Introduction

The educational system all over the world has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to the near-total shutdown of schools, universities and colleges (UNESCO, 2020).

As an attempt to stop spreading the virus, most governments around the world have temporarily closed schools and universities (UNESCO, 2020). UNICEF monitoring says that 46 countries are currently implementing nationwide closures and 27 are implementing local shutdown, impacting about 72.9 per cent of the student population in the world. School shutdown has an impact not only on students but also has consequences on the economy and the society, and that includes student debt, digital learning, food insecurity and homelessness (UNESCO, 2020).
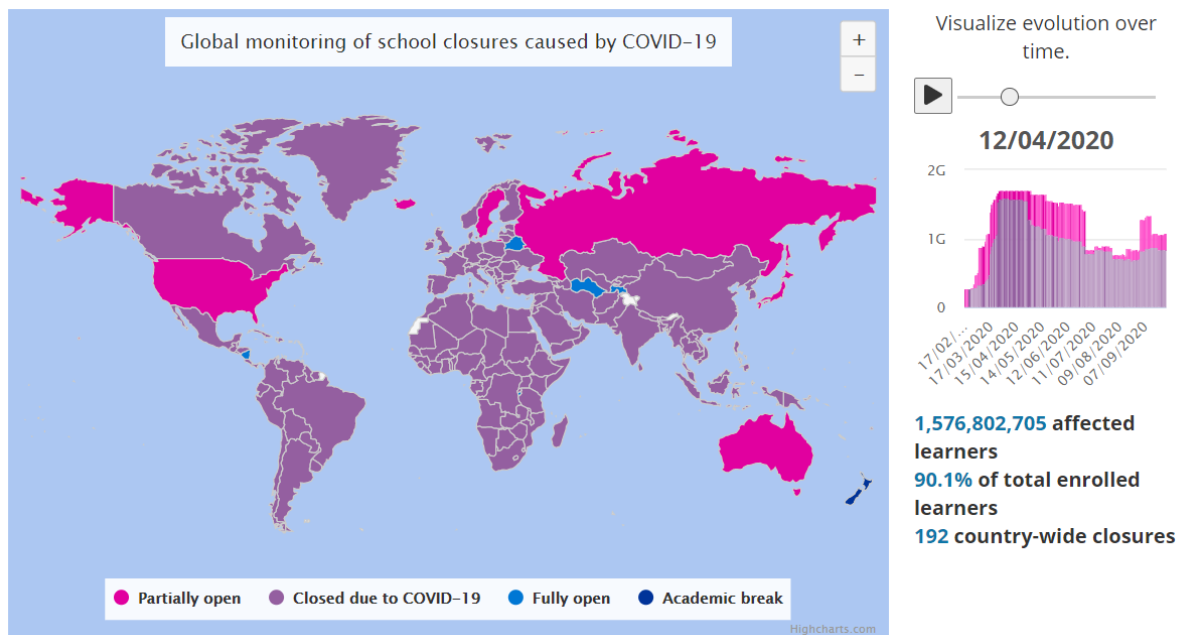

Figure 1 Global monitoring od school- closures during COVID-19

To overcome the educational system closures, UNESCO recommended distance learning and encouraged opening educational applications and platforms that both schools and universities can utilize to achieve the learning process (UNESCO, 2020).

1.1   Background

Since the beginning of COVID-19, most countries around the world started non-pharmaceutical intervention and preventive measures from social-distancing and self-isolating which pushed toward schools' closures (UNESCO, 2020). Closing the schools has been proven by mathematical models to be effective to slow down spreading viruses in many previous outbreaks (J, et al., 2014).

The majority of educational institutions in Europe were closed in response to Covid-19 pandemic and they switched the learning process to online platforms, and each one of them had different degrees of success (Farrington, 2020).

Sweden, as a part of Europe, took the same action in response to the coronavirus. Therefore, in March 2020, the Swedish government recommended some educational institutions like high schools, vocational schools and universities to close. At the same time, recommended those institutions to utilize remote or distance learning until further notice. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2020).

During the pandemic, an unprecedented intervention in the public interest in the autonomy of higher education institutions (HEIs) occurred. From the organisational level to the financial and academic level or even the admission and graduation issues, Furthermore, many different aspects put on hold like accreditation, assurance and evaluation, and such criteria define the quality of the education. (Farrington, 2020).

1.2   Research problem

Without any doubt, online learning has become a critical lifeline for the education process, taking into considerations the recent attempts to minimize the travel in communities around the world (Murphy, 2020). Using online learning can facilitate digital tools integration, in a way that connects time and space (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2020).

Under the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools and universities started using videotelephony software such as Zoom to conduct classes and lectures. Furthermore, a framework has been created by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development to guide an education response to the COVID-19 pandemic for distance learning and guarantee the education quality (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2020).

However, online learning has many different challenges and downsides, such as the academic integrity impact, and we mean here cheating during the exams and coursework, as well as file-sharing among students. This phenomenon has been observed strongly during COVID-19 pandemic (Eaton S. E., 2020) (Ted M. Clark, 2020).

Another issue, such as a contract cheating has raised. It means that a person pays others to complete his coursework. This type of cheating has become a common issue using online learning during COVID-19 (Eaton S. E., 2020).

The lack of experience of using online learning platforms is another issue at both sides teachers and students, and can hinder the education process (Eaton S. E., 2020). All the teachers have been asked overnight to become tutors and designers at the same time, using tools which few people have adequate knowledge about them (Chrysi Rapanta, 2020).

That being said, this small-scale study will focus on the central issues of online learning in DSV among the students and tries to highlight the difficulties and obstacles that students are facing during their study.

1.3   Aim and research question

The aim of the study is to explore the thoughts on the distance learning in DSV campus among the students under COVID-19 Pandemic.

The research questions:

How much adhere students to the academic integrity during doing the coursework?

How much effective the distance learning when compared with in class learning in DSV?

What are the difficulties and obstacles that students are experiencing with distance learning in DSV?

1.4   Delimitations of the study

During this small-scale study, some delimitations can occur, such as:

- This study is concerned about DSV's students only.
- Some student might avoid answering critical or embarrassing questions which have to do with academic integrity such as cheating.

- Teachers and lecturers are excluded from this study since this course does not give the possibility to send them any survey.

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