# Transcription of interview MMII VT19

[**SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW-FACE TO FACE. RECORDING WAS AGREED BEFORE START. CONDUCTED 2019-04-09 IN- D1-AT DSV-KISTA, 18:00.02**]

Hi how are you?

**IP:** **Yeah.. I am fine…**

I'm Shahzad Baber and I am a student of masters in Management of Information Systems.

**IP: Okay…**

And there is a research course that required semi structured interviews for qualitative analysis.

**IP: Ahha.. ha.. Ha….**

And I have to ask you some questions about distance learning courses and their pros and cons.

**IP: Okay… Fine..**

So,.... First I should brief you about…..about topic….aaa…..It’s like a….. Many of the existing universities and other institute of learning… Some of which are founded of.. Since two three centuries ago and still trying to retain the heritage, prestige.. So, they have acquired through the years..So…..these institutes the conventional method of teaching which involves face-to-face teacher versus student interaction is still highly valued…. But some high-ranking institutes are rather hesitant to give up [not clear] are there perceived values among the populace. But the purpose of the study is to how are the consumer of distance courses perceived their consuming. What are the student experience of distance learning? Has it worked well….. Are the areas that can be improved….. Applied after the distance programme or therefore.. industry to know the student perceptions of every services they provide to them…

Okay…

So the main aim of the study is to describe the user's perception of distance learning…

**IP: Ahhh…haa**

And the objective of this study is to classify use experience in to positive and negative experience and secondly to suggest possible solutions to mitigate negative experience…

**IP: Okay**

The main research question is what are the uses experience for distance learning…. So now we go forward to the interview questions….

**IP: Okay…**

So…. My first question is in your opinion what are the positive experience of distance learning with that both previous and current experience….

**IP: Okay I think you are contacted the right person… Actually I had my bachelors….with regard to distance learning course… I'm from Sri Lanka and what I want to say you is actually I done my diploma studies in Sri Lanka…. And then my 4-year Bachelor’s time I done two years in Sri Lanka and then I moved with distance learning course… with regard to University College Dublin, Ireland. Aaa…..Then I have some more pros and as well as more cons with regard to that course…Because we had the 15 modules….with the final Bachelor thesis. So with regard to my previous experience there are so many group assignments…. as well as individual assignments as well as exams… But when we listening to video lectures and so on and the course materials are that much of not fit to us… It means that…. it means that… like if you're in front of the lecture you can raise your hand and ask the questions….. what you want… if you cannot understand something…..But the case is that if we didn't understand something……we can only hear the video lecture but we cannot ask anything… and there are plenty of like notes, as well as lecture materials, whatever the Journal articles and so on.. But everything is there. But lecturers are not there.. So this is the main interruption like we had in past courses… Aaa… But we done it anyhow. So I think a little bit……I have little bit negative experience with that…**

Okay….that's a good… You explained in a very detail way… So.. my second question is in your opinion please explain what are the negative experiences of distance learning…Both previous and current experiences.

**IP: Yeah… as I said you before…..like.. I think I mention…. I already answered your question. But what I want to tell you is actually if you'd…. like students who are taking the courses with distance learning or without distance learning…. it means that you can go to the campus and you can learn the things…. But students are going for distance learning because of some reason…. Because mainly if they are working or they are attending something…. They are otherwise they are…. migrating with someone and their parents living in another country and so on things. So in that cases you can have the…..I mean the better knowledge…. But you cannot have the knowledge wise…. IF you,.. There is a difference between the knowledge gaps and at the same time there's a little bit….academic knowhow also.. Because if you're comparing the student who is going to the off…. who is going to the campus and at the same time who is doing the distance learning course… I can say you that the….a…who is studying the distance learning course student cannot have that much of better experience…. practical experiences and lab experiences and academic know how….. when it comparing to… comparing to the normal student. So I mean when if he or she will go to the normal environment.. I mean…working it would be troublesome for that student. But anyhow finally he can got graduated or whatever master or PhD…**

So you mentioned, quite few negative experienced. So have you…. can you describe any remedy for this negative experience…

**IP: I mean that if you can do like if you can add more facilities to the….. like for the forum… for the web page… and you can interact with the lecturers.. So you can schedule with the lecturers…more times and if you cannot understand something you can…. you can have… if you can have the individual lectures with the…aa..a..a… separate times individual times.. It would be more beneficial for you… Because some what some students are like in…. in class, some students are like…. don't like to ask question in front of teachers… They are,,,,They really like to go with individually and ask the questions from teachers… So likewise you can do the same…using the web and you can schedule a time with teachers and but I don't know in when it practically the time will… because the time is really value…. valuable thing for everyone… Because I don't know exactly how it practically cat be… Because every student will do the schedule and there is no time to go to interact with the students. I mean.. So sometimes it will happen… but I think we can remedy those issues and when you're doing your bachelor thesis or master thesis. Then you can interact more with your supervisor… It'll be.. really good to get the know-how and at the same time the experience and the knowledge from the teachers…**

Okay good…So the next question is why do you choose to study through distance learning instead of convention way of attending day classes?

**IP: Ahhaa…aaaa…a…[laughing…] You are asking very good question…Like you are pointing me out….Like for me in my personal case it's like… little bit upside down…. After my A-levels I have done my diploma level… Two-three diplomas and also,, I joined with one job. One government job. I think after doing the two three diplomas they put me as a… like a… you know that like a trainee… Then I worked for Road Development Authority… I initially went,,,,… as a like a I worked as a computer hardware technician… Then it comes to computer network superintendent… and Database Network administrator and so on positions… So in that case,,, I worked like six- seven years with that authority.. So in that case… I can realize that… I cannot go up… with the position and there is something discrimination happening inside of the office….. and inside of the government offices are there discrimination…. if you don't have a degree or you don't have higher education with regard to your education level. So,.. in that case I can realize that I can do the things… but I don't have the paper qualification. What should I have to do?... Then I think that because….. if I want to go to the real campus…. Then I have to resign from the office and then I have to go to the campus like 2 years or 3 years… Then after finishing bachelor's… then you have to again searching jobs. So I think that this is the better way to doing…. to do online distance learning courses and then we can have flexible time… and we can have a weekends and so on things… and we can…. if you want…. if you really want you can choose the night time for video lectures and so on… Then you can interact and you can do the both things… I mean for my case you can do your job…. as well as you can do your studies….**

Studies….Okay.. So next question is how have you benefited by choosing study through distance learning?

**IP: Yeah it was really benefited for me finally…Ahh…a…a I talk with you up to now….. It is not like…. little bit negative impact with you….. But what I really want to say you is in my perspective, I finished my bachelor's with first class honours with 3.75 GPA, and I have a good grades,, and it was really beneficial for me to apply for the scholarship and apply for the higher studies in another… countries in the world.. So in that case I think it is really beneficial for me because I already choose the subject with regard to IT perspective well as business perspective…. In that case that are no so much…no any coding or so on things. So the things that the lecturers given to us is really…… we can understand… the things and if we cannot understand something they already provided the guideline…. and YouTube links and research papers and before the exam they also provided the…like a sample questions so on things. So it is really beneficial for us to like the same like a…… normal campus students. So, I think I can say you that it is really beneficial for me in the final… I can do… very.. I can finish very good way with my bachelor's.**

Okay. So next question is what are you missing by studying through distance learning, learning than conventional method?

**IP: A…a……In that case.. I can say you that…I really like to… when my like.. in school time I really like to interact with teachers as well as instructors and so on… So I like to go… go to them and ask the…what is the…. what is very good way to implement.. what are the drawbacks… what are the opportunities I have…. Then how can be amended and so on things…. I really like to talk with teachers… But I think in that case if you are doing the course with distance learning you will lose it. You can have the online lectures. But physically teacher is not with you… That's what I,,, mainly I want to tell you. In that case so…. I think I….. I already remove that part and at the same time the collaborating with the students… if you're going to normal campus then you can have better students with very good aspects with different kind of knowledge.. You have very good culture experience…Their attitudes…you can…. you can learn some attitudes behaviours their…. culture and so on things… with interacting with the students…. I think if you are doing individual online course you will lose that things. So and at the same time but you can reduce….. you can reduce your time…. And travel time as well as the traveling time and the learning time……. if you are ……because your lectures at will be like…2.00 to 5.00 o’clock….then you have to get ready from your home…. Like…not… you cannot go like because of the traffic conjunction…. And so on things… you have to do a lot with that day… But without having anything you can have the online lecture…. A…a…it will be really good for you`.**

So do you have any concerns at all regarding qualification obtain through online or distance learning course…I mean quality issues and acceptability..

**IP: Yeah,…. I think you have… interviewing the very right person.. Because I had.. I faced so many difficulties regarding that question.**

That’s why I choose you…

**IP: [laughing]…… Thank you… Because what I meant to you is actually… I had… a lot of inconvenience….. because after I finish my bachelor's I graduated with the my bachelor's with…BSc in Management Information System with regard to University College Dublin. My transcript and my final bachelor certificate already received from University College Dublin, but in that case I went to my office administration department…..and I can…… I already gave it to them to update my personal file…… with regard to my…. because I already got my bachelor's…. I completed my bachelor's…. So this is my bachelor certificate…They said they cannot guarantee this….This is not a Sri-Lankan certificate…. Then I said that…what the hell that you are asking…I already completed my bachelors [anger attitude] This is the international recognize University… What are you talking about…. But finally what they said is… they cannot recognize it….Then I faced so many difficulties..I mailed them lot… and I have to contact them lot… how to….. how to do this. How to remedy this issue… what is the…..what is the accreditation you have…… So then they say that… okay you can do one thing… you can go to the University Grant Commission (UCG) in Sri Lanka,, and they have accredited universities in the world,,, world of medical schools… as well as World Directory of University and my university…-- University college Dublin… they already accredited the language of instruction as English and at the same time it's already indicated World Handbook of Universities….. So in that case they sent… They already gave me one letter with the certificate and they charge like 2,500 Sri-Lankan rupees likewise… But they finally they give me…. Okay your degree…We can accredit your degree… You have accepted degree… and so on then I received….. I already submitted that certificate also… without any inconvenience I can give all those all the things to my HR department…**

Okay… So what other things come to your mind when thinking about distance courses…

**````````````````````````IP: Not at all…actually I finished my bachelors in very good way….and here I'm doing my master’s also.. and there are some online courses…. Online.…online distance courses… we have had in last few months and some of the courses are negative impact and some of the courses are positive impact… by the students I heard.. by the students.. But..a…… I mean like my personal perspective is without having lecturer somewhat some subjects we cannot continue….. it means that for….. for…. Like for…. Example for Research Methodology course…. So,… if you have different kind of background and since this is kind of like a international master program….. you don't know how to do the method…. how to do the sampling… and so on things… in so it'll be a problem for….. not for every student…. for some students… I mean.**

Do you find any difference between instruction delivered during distance learning and on-campus courses?

**IP: Yeah….I saw that.. Because there are some… they delivered the online materials and video lectures and so on…. but as I mentioned you earlier… if you can really… you can ask the questions… you can raise your hand and you can go to the details.. and if there is like you want to promote these things and… you want to do.. really want to do outside of the course material you want to do something you want to research something.. you can interact with the teachers at any time in… in the campus. But you cannot do the same with online courses. I mean.**

Okay.. So the next question is what are the reason in your opinion for distance learning courses to be not so popular among student?

**IP: Yeah….I think I already answered your question. Because what we can say like… not popular… So it's really not popular because of the accreditation…like we don't have… like… if you finish your online course and you can have your transcript and so on…But after you finishing there is no any after care… It means that if your university is in your country and you can go whatever you want and then you can ask something like administration problem or academic problem or whatever… But in that case if you are doing distance learning you cannot do the same… Because you are in one country somewhat in your distance learning University is in another country. So you have to….You cannot interact with those things.. You… you have something visa problems to go there and so on…. So there are so many difficulties and at the same time with the financial constraints… I mean because people are doing online courses and distance learning courses because everyone don't have….financial constraint to do it… Somewhat the amount… amount…. of the course is very high. You have to pay with dollars or whatever…. So if you really… You are little bit like….I cannot say rich or poor… but you have good financial constraints… You can go through with that distance learning… But if you are really want to go with…[outside-sound…..] after high school…. You want to go to University then you can go to University…..But as I mentioned you earlier....there are some problems you have….. Because in my case I… I want to do the both. That's why I do the distance learning. Because I want to do my job as well as I wants to do the…. I want to do the Bachelors. That’s why I completed both in 1…..within 1-2-3 years….. That is my reason.**

Okay…fine…So my last question is about what do you recommend about actions taken by Institutes or Universities to promote distance learning?

**IP: Yeah… actually for my perspective…..you have to first of all….You have to give the intention to the students… It's like a normal university… You have to give the full brainwash.. like everything is… only… only…. the difference is online distance learning…Other than that…. that course you done by you are coming to the classes and if you are doing online courses are both same. So if the student can understand that point you can have many students… and at the same time the accreditation… like… like…for me…I explained you I had one problem with regard to my authority the government authority…. So then the student can realize that there are no any problems you didn't face with regard to your Bachelor studies… Then you will be really go with that distance learning course…. because if you are really busy with some environment but you have to do the…academic studies as well and then the distance learning courses and online courses are much more beneficial for you to go through your future….. and at the same time there are some courses you can do online and distance learning but there are some other courses for example like for agriculture you have to do much more practical….. in that case you cannot do it like… in distance learning… Because you have to go somewhere… You have to take interact with the students in labs and so on… you have to do so many things…… but for example like business or IT courses you can do it online distance learning… and you can have better grades…… you can have better results and go for master’s or PhD studies…So I mean…. and at the same time the prices of the course will reduce then the more students can registered for the particular courses…..Because somewhat in the whole country there are some continents…Everyone is not like same… the people… if the price is little bit reduce… then people are wish to…. Because so many students are on loans.. So… many things they got the loan from their financial…. banks and so on… and then they got registered for particular courses. So if the course coordinators and course administrators can look the trend and analyze the trend and reduce the cost as well as gaining more like…. Giving more information to the students.. This course is equal to the same course…. You are… you are learning in the campus… So then people can have more understanding with the courses… and then they will register with the online courses and distance learning courses.**

Okay… Great…I have sent you study guide and that includes consent form.

**IP: Okay.**

So if you like, you can sign this. This interview is purely about the research and study purposes.

**IP: Yeah.. I know…**

So.. I think you want to be anonymous.

**IP: No actually… if you want that you can put my name… but I think anonymous is good.**

Okay…okay…..So I will not mention your name.

**IP: Okay..**

So do you agree that we conduct this interview for study purposes?

**IP: Exactly…**

Okay…

**IP: Exactly… I agreed with you. Because I know the pattern that you ask the questions is really some some…… questions are really good…. Not any question…… is new to me… Everything I had with previous experience. I think you contacted the correct person.**

Thanks a lot… You answered very detailed and very passionate. Thanks a lot for your time….

**IP: Okay…[laughing]**

And, maybe we will meet in some other interview.

**IP: Okay. Thank you… Have a nice day…**

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