

Chapter 2

Comparative Studies on Inclusive Digital Teaching in Higher Education in Light of COVID–19

Andreas Ahrens

Hochschule Wismar, Germany

Parulkumari P. Bhati

Nirma University, India

Alena Leshchenko

Kherson State Maritime Academy, Ukraine

Jeļena Zaščerinska

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4664-8593>

Centre for Education and Innovation Research, Latvia

Olga Gukovica

Centre for Education and Innovation Research, Latvia

Mihails Zascerinskis

Centre for Education and Innovation Research, Latvia

Anastasija Aleksejeva

Centre for Education and Innovation Research, Latvia

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the higher education sector, which is a critical determinant of a country's economic future. The aim is to compare the views of teachers and students on inclusive digital teaching in higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The meaning of “inclusive digital

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teaching” and “view” are studied. The empirical study was carried out in September-November 2020. Forty respondents from Germany, Latvia, India, Ukraine, and South Africa participated in the study. The data were collected via a semi-structural interview. The theoretical findings allow defining inclusive digital teaching and its criteria and indicators. The positive views on inclusive digital teaching in higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic were expressed by the university teachers. The students’ views were more negative. The novel contribution of this chapter is the implications on inclusive digital teaching in higher education. Directions of further research are formulated.

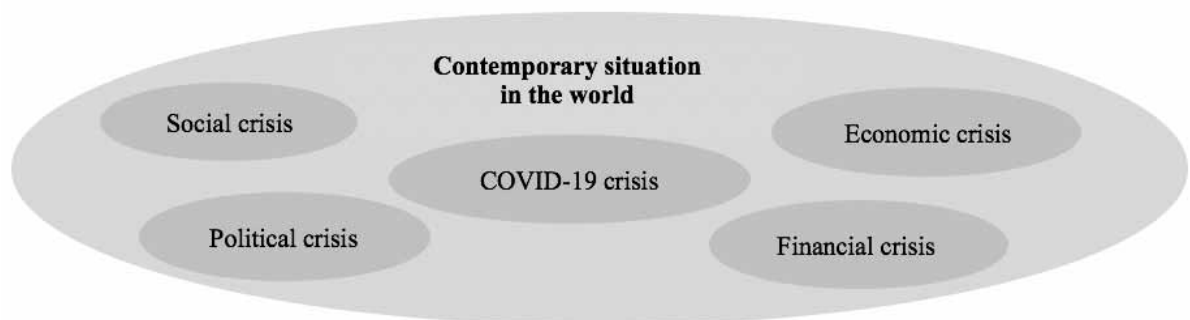
INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread over the whole world. It was the first identified in Wuhan, China, on December 31, 2019. The first death by COVID19 was the 61-year old man in Wuhan, China, 2020. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a pandemic on 2020. February 11, 2020, WHO proposed an official name of the virus as COVID-19.

The outbreak of COVID-19 in the world has led to the unprecedented changes in people’s lives. A lot of people have experienced rapid transformations in many aspects of their lives: working conditions, education, shopping, travelling, finance, etc (Zascerinska, Aleksejeva, Zascerinskis, Gukovica, & Aleksejeva, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has compelled the human society to maintain social distancing (Ahrens, & Zascerinska, 2020). The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted the higher education sector which is a critical determinant of a country’s economic future. The occurrence of COVID-19 has impacted more than 120 crores of students and youths across the planet.

Many people consider the COVID-19 pandemic to be a crisis among others (i.e. political, economic, social, financial, etc) as depicted in Figure 1 adopted from Zaščerinska and Ahrens (Zaščerinska, & Ahrens, 2015).

Figure 1. The relationship between the contemporary situation in the world and crises
Source: (Zaščerinska, & Ahrens, 2015)



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