

Chapter 1

The Effect of the COVID-19 Lockdown on Learning and Teaching: Evidence From a Survey of Academics and Students

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown on learning and teaching at the University of Sunderland in London from the lenses of both students and academic staff using a quantitative approach. Thus, quantitative data was collected from both staff and students using a cross-sectional online survey. The chapter concludes that the challenges faced by students during the transition to online teaching included insufficient IT skills, inadequate IT equipment, poor internet connectivity, and inconvenient space at home. The chapter also concludes

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that from both staff and students' perspective, student learning, engagement, and attainment was negatively affected during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown at the University of Sunderland in London. These findings have policy implications for the management of the University of Sunderland in London in particular, and the UK higher education sector in general.

INTRODUCTION

Unquestionably, the outbreak and spread of the Covid-19 pandemic caused enormous and widespread disruptions across all countries and sectors of the global economy. However, evidence from current studies suggests that the effect of the pandemic on teaching and learning in the higher education sector is unclear as outcomes of El Said (2021), Alhammadi (2021) and Dutta and Smita (2020) are mixed. For example, El Said (2021) found that there was no statistically significant association between the coronavirus pandemic lockdown and student attainment as the assessment marks of students during the lockdown in selected higher education institutions in Egypt were similar to pre-pandemic attainment. Besides, El Said (2021) found that student learning experience was rather positive at the time of the Covid-19 lockdown, despite the move from face-to-face to online teaching. Similarly, Alhammadi (2021) examined the effect of Covid-19 pandemic lockdown on student learning and teaching activities in the higher education sector in Kuwait and surprisingly found that the move to online teaching and learning delivery significantly improved student engagement and attainment. The question therefore is “what has been the effect of the coronavirus pandemic lockdown on student engagement and attainment at the University of Sunderland in London”? An investigation designed to answer this question will not only be interesting but aid our understanding of the wider impact of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown on student learning and teaching at the campus.

Further analysis of existing studies that have attempted to examine the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown on teaching and learning activities in the higher education institutions across the world, have shown that the lockdown impacted negatively on those activities. Dutta and Smita (2020) for example, investigated the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown on teaching and learning activities in some selected higher education institutions in Bangladesh and found that the motivation of students and their engagement in learning activities significantly reduced due to the Covid-19 lockdown and other disruptions caused by the pandemic. Besides, analysis of Dutta and Smita (2020) and Alhammadi (2021) suggest that both learners and teaching staff faced many challenges during the pandemic which negatively affected learning and teaching and overall student experience during the coronavirus pandemic. Therefore, it may be the case that both students and academic

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