

Student Engagement in Distance Learning

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KLJUČNE BESEDE: vedenjska angažiranost, čustvena angažiranost, kognitivna angažiranost, pristop k študiju, študenti, študij na daljavo

POVZETEK – Angažiranost študentov pri študiju smo proučevali na podlagi modela, ki vključuje tri dimenzije angažiranosti: vedenjsko, čustveno in kognitivno. V raziskavi smo želeli ugotoviti, kako se pristop k študiju na daljavo med pandemijo covid-19 povezuje z drugimi elementi posamezne dimenzije angažiranosti študenta. V vzorec je bilo zajetih 1167 študentov Univerze v Ljubljani. Uporabili smo deskriptivno metodo raziskovanja. Hipoteze smo preverjali s Spearmanovimi rho-koeficienti, ki so potrdili obstoj statistično značilnih povezanosti med pristopom k študiju in drugimi elementi angažiranosti. Študentje, ki bolj aktivno in poglobljeno pristopajo k študiju, so pri študiju bolj angažirani vedenjsko, čustveno in kognitivno. Potrjene raziskovalne hipoteze potrjujejo tudi povezanost med različnimi dimenzijami angažiranosti in s tem doprinašajo uvid v večplastnost manifestacij angažiranosti študentov. Ugotovitve lahko predstavljajo podlago za ustvarjanje didaktičnih modelov, ki podpirajo angažiranost študentov z aktivnostmi, ki spodbujajo aktiven in poglobljen študij, ne glede na okoliščine in obliko izvedbe študija.

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ABSTRACT – Student engagement in distance learning was studied based on a model that includes three dimensions of engagement: behavioural, emotional and cognitive. In this study, the author aimed to ascertain how the approach to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic related to the other elements of each dimension of student engagement. The sample consisted of 1,167 students from the University of Ljubljana. A descriptive research method was used. Hypotheses were tested using Spearman's rho coefficients, which confirmed the presence of statistically significant correlations between the study approach and other elements of engagement. Students who study more actively and in depth are more behaviourally, emotionally, and cognitively engaged in their studies. The validated research hypotheses also confirm the correlations between the different dimensions of engagement, thus providing insights into the multiple manifestations of student engagement. The findings can serve as a basis for developing didactic models that support student engagement through activities that promote active and in-depth learning, regardless of the context or mode of delivery of studies.

1 Introduction

Engagement refers to initiative, enthusiasm, optimism, curiosity and interest in activities. Disengagement is manifested by passivity, willingness to exert little effort in the face of challenges, boredom, despair, anxiety and anger (Skinner and Belmont, 1993). In existing research, the concept of engagement has been described as a multidimensional metaconstruct (Fredricks et al., 2004; Lawson and Lawson, 2013) that encompasses a range of indicators related to various environmental, attitudinal and learning activity factors (Bond and Bedenlier, 2019). Thus, it is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather a dynamic, social and synergistic process that represents a complex interaction between individuals and their social environment (Fredricks et al., 2004; Lawson and Lawson, 2013). The way a student engages in study and the interest they show in it (Axelson and

Flick, 2010; Chapman, 2002) depends on their social circumstances (Kahu, 2013). The value of considering a student's social circumstances in terms of their engagement in their studies is that it can contribute to understanding the student's agency in the context of their position in individual circumstances and the characteristics of the time. A model that considers context and various environmental systems, and takes a holistic approach to the research of student engagement has gained traction in recent decades with contributions from a few individual studies (Bond and Bedenlier, 2019; Lawson and Lawson, 2013). This model understands student engagement in relation to an individual's varied and current circumstances, and contributes to an understanding of student engagement on a continuum from engagement to disengagement (Bond and Bedenlier, 2019). The model includes three basic forms or dimensions of student engagement, i.e., behavioural, emotional and cognitive, to highlight the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon of student engagement, which manifests itself simultaneously in students' behaviour, emotions and ways of thinking (Fredricks et al., 2004). Behavioural engagement is manifested in visible behaviours, such as students' participation in and active response to academic activities, such as studying. Emotional engagement refers to the emotional response to learning activities and the learning environment, and is manifested in interests, values, emotions, students' sense of well-being in the classroom, satisfaction, identification with the study programme and faculty, sense of belonging and connectedness with others. Cognitive engagement, for example, is demonstrated by readiness and flexibility in problem solving, constructive overcoming of challenges, reflection, motivation, and in-depth learning (Bond and Bedenlier, 2019; Bond et al., 2020; Chapman, 2002; Fredricks et al., 2004; Salas-Pilco et al., 2022). Those authors (Bond and Bedenlier, 2019; Bond et al., 2020), who emphasise the digitised environment in this model and pose the topical question of how to foster student engagement in the digital age, set the stage for researching and understanding student engagement in distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (Rossi et al., 2021). Distance learning behavioural engagement is when a student actively participates in distance learning activities; emotional engagement is when a student expresses and demonstrates a positive attitude toward the distance learning environment; and cognitive engagement is when a student is motivated to learn in distance learning (Salas-Pilco et al., 2022).

Students usually differ in whether they use a surface or a deeper learning approach (Cvetek, 2015; Solomonides, 2013; Šarić and Košir, 2012). Depending on the learning approach, students' engagement in learning also varies. The surface learning approach is characterised by students absorbing information passively and uncritically, focusing only on the requirements of the exam, and memorising and reproducing content. A deep learning approach is characterised by students attempting to understand the material, interacting with the content, connecting new ideas to existing knowledge and experiences, making judgments and drawing conclusions based on evidence (Cvetek, 2015; Solomonides, 2013).

In a study of active learning in distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, Rossi et al. (2021) conclude that the use of active learning tools in the classroom that require continuous student engagement benefits students and improves their critical thinking. A study by Perić Prkosovački et al. (2020) "demonstrated the need to build a pedagogy of learning – a pedagogy that will enable learners to learn" (p. 51). However, active teaching is inconceivable without student activity and their response to teacher

activity in their teaching approach (Perić Prkosovački et al., 2020). “This means that students are expected to work intensively intellectually, to seek and discover new solutions, in short, to be creative” (Perić Prkosovački et al., 2020, p. 54). In a departure from traditional didactic models, the teacher applies active teaching methods and the student must be willing to engage in active learning (Rossi et al., 2021). “By promoting self-directed, independent learning, the responsibility for learning is transferred from the teacher to the students” (Koprivnik and Hus, 2017, p. 118). Without paying attention to students’ activity, it is almost impossible to relate their academic achievement to classroom activities (Kuh, 2001). According to Buljubašić Kuzmanović and Gazibara (2016), “the evaluation of active learning in higher education teaching, /.../, indicates the unity of the processes of learning and teaching, their interdependence and complementarity” (Buljubašić Kuzmanović and Gazibara, 2016, p. 119). A common premise of diverse teaching approaches is “to require students to take an active role and responsibility for their studies” (Šarić and Košir, 2012, p. 137). Even in circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which fundamentally changed normal living conditions, it is necessary to emphasise the aspect of responsibility towards studies, as pointed out by Žgur and Jerman (2022). This is because the responsibility for the quality of learning is shared between the teaching approach and student engagement (Axelson and Flick, 2010; Rossi et al., 2021). The learning process “can also be influenced by students’ personal experiences and their own experience, as well as by the way they relate to others and the quality of their contact with them” (Žgur and Jerman, 2022, p. 53). The findings of this study contribute to a better understanding of student engagement in learning in the context of a pandemic and offer insights into the students’ share of responsibility for the quality of learning.

The main goal of this study is to find out how engaged students are in distance learning and how actively and in depth they study during a pandemic situation. The results can serve as a basis for developing didactic models that support students’ engagement in their studies, regardless of the circumstances and the form in which the study is conducted. Based on the goal of the research and the findings of previous authors (Fredricks et al., 2004; Salas-Pilco et al., 2022), the author of this study posed a basic research question: how did the distance learning approach relate to other elements of each dimension of student engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic? The aim is to gain deeper insights into the characteristics of an active and in-depth approach to studying. Thus, the author also posited three research hypotheses:

- H1: There is a statistically significant correlation between an active study approach and an in-depth study approach in distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- H2: There is a statistically significant correlation between an active study approach and satisfaction with distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- H3: There is a statistically significant correlation between an in-depth study approach and satisfaction with distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2 Methodology

Research sample

The purposive sample consisted of 1,424 students from the University of Ljubljana from all regions of Slovenia. The study included 1,167 students, who answered the questions about the topic of studies partially or completely. Of these, 79.4% were female and 20.6% were male. Exactly half of the students were from urban areas and the other half from rural areas. Social science and humanities students dominated (77.6%), most of whom (90%) were enrolled in first-level degree programmes. Some respondents did not answer all the questions, so the number of respondents in the results may differ due to missing values that were not substituted.

Procedure and instrument

The data were collected as part of cross-sectional research titled “The Position of Students of the University of Ljubljana under COVID-19 Conditions”, which was conducted at the Department of Social Pedagogy of the Faculty of Education of the University of Ljubljana. The research followed the quantitative method of data collection and used a descriptive research method. The data were collected using the online application Ika.si. The questionnaire, which was specifically designed for this purpose and based on single items, included demographic questions and several topics related to the students’ situation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to conducting research, the questionnaire was tested for content comprehensibility, and, based on the feedback, the weaknesses were eliminated. The participants took part in the survey anonymously and voluntarily. They were informed before starting the survey that they were free to cease participating at any time.

For the purposes of this study, the data relating to the topic of studies were relevant. The questions were designed to cover several dimensions of student engagement, i.e., behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement. Students were asked how satisfied they were with distance learning, which they rated on a four-point scale (1 – Very Dissatisfied, 2 – Dissatisfied, 3 – Satisfied, 4 – Very Satisfied). Five additional questions were asked to assess the students’ other responses to distance learning, two of which contained multiple items. Using a four-point scale (1 – Never, 2 – Rarely, 3 – Frequently, 4 – Regularly), students indicated how often the items applied to them (e.g., “I participate in discussions in my distance learning classes.”). For three questions, students indicated which answer applied to them (e.g., “I am more/equally/less present in distance learning compared to learning at my faculty prior to the pandemic.”). Students were also asked whether they felt connected to other students during distance learning and whether they felt optimistic and confident about the future. Using a four-point scale (1 – Not True, 2 – Mostly Not True, 3 – Mostly True, 4 – Absolutely True), students indicated the extent to which they thought the item applied to them (“I felt connected to other students during distance learning.”), and on a four-point scale (1 – Never, 2 – Rarely, 3 – Frequently, 4 – Regularly) indicated how often the item applied to them (“I felt optimistic and confident about the future during distance learning.”).

Data analysis

The collected data were analysed using the IBM Statistics SPSS 26.0 statistical program. Descriptive statistics (the percentages of each response, the mean, and the standard deviation) were calculated. The Spearman's rho coefficient was used for the correlations between the variables, according to the level of measurement of the variables (ordinal variables) and the distribution of responses that deviated from normality.

3 Results

Table 1 shows the mean scores of the responses to each item reflecting the behavioural, emotional and cognitive dimensions of student engagement in distance learning.

Table 1

Dimensions of Engagement with the Elements of Engagement Studied and Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

| <i>Dimensions of engagement</i> | <i>Elements of engagement</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|---------------------------------|---|----------|----------|-----------|
| Behavioural | Takes an active approach to DL ¹ | 1,164 | 1.66 | 0.78 |
| | Presence during DL (less than before) ¹ | 1,150 | 2.19 | 0.74 |
| | Listens during DLC but does not speak | 1,150 | 3.11 | 0.83 |
| | Participates in discussions during DLC | 1,153 | 2.24 | 0.91 |
| | Participates in activities during DLC | 1,152 | 2.39 | 0.95 |
| | Only logs in to DLC but does not listen, does other things | 1,153 | 2.12 | 0.80 |
| | Has a camera on during DLC | 1,155 | 2.14 | 0.90 |
| | Digital literacy (insufficient for DL) | 1,121 | 1.60 | 0.71 |
| Emotional | Satisfaction with DL | 1,167 | 2.49 | 0.92 |
| | Feels connected with other students (experiences connectedness during DL) | 1,118 | 2.00 | 0.90 |
| Cognitive | Motivation to study (lower than prior to DL) | 1,113 | 3.13 | 1.02 |
| | Student effectiveness (worse than prior to DL) | 1,112 | 2.95 | 1.07 |
| | Experiences optimism and confidence about the future | 909 | 2.12 | 0.64 |
| | Takes an in-depth approach to DL ¹ | 1,164 | 1.66 | 0.76 |

Note. N – numerus, M – mean, SD – standard deviation, DL – distance learning, DLC – distance learning classes. ¹ The minimum and maximum expression values for the item were 1 and 3; for the other items, they were 1 and 4.

The results show that over half of all students who participated in the study took a less active (52.6%) and less in-depth (51.5%) approach to distance learning than prior to the pandemic. Less than one-fifth of participating students took a more active (18.8%) and more in-depth (17.9%) approach to their studies than prior to the pandemic. The remainder indicated that their approach to studying did not change during the pandemic. In terms of their presence during distance learning classes, 39% of all the research participants indicated that they were less present, 20% were more present, and 41% were present to the same extent as prior to the pandemic. The results show that, on average (Table 1), the participating students most often (36.9% regularly and 40.4% frequently) only listened but did not speak during distance learning classes. On average, they participated significantly less in discussions and activities (Table 1). Only 12% of the participating students participated in discussions regularly and 20.4% frequently, while two-thirds participated rarely (47.3%) or never (20.4%). A slightly higher number of students participated in activities regularly (15.5%) and frequently (25.8%), but still more than half did so rarely (40.6%) or never (18.1%). Nearly one-third of the participating students (23.8% frequently and 5.2% regularly) logged into distance learning classes while doing other things. Similarly, nearly one-third had their camera on regularly (8.7%) or frequently (22.3%) during distance learning classes, and over two-thirds rarely (43%) or never (26.1%). Analysis of the results also shows that only 7.7% of respondents felt they frequently experienced a lack of digital literacy for distance learning, and only 1.9% regularly.

In terms of satisfaction with distance learning, participants' responses were split fairly equally between satisfied and dissatisfied, with slightly more than half (53.3%) of all research participants indicating that they were satisfied (40.7%) or very satisfied (12.6%) with distance learning, and slightly less than half (46.7%) indicating that they were dissatisfied (29.6%) or very dissatisfied (17.1%). The results also show that less than one-third of participating students indicated that it was mostly (22%) or absolutely (6%) true that they felt connected to other students during distance learning, while for just over two-thirds of participants, this was mostly not true (34%) or not true at all (37%).

In addition, the results show that almost 74% of the participants indicated that they were regularly (49.5%) or frequently (24%) less motivated to learn during distance learning than prior to the pandemic. However, more than 65% of participants reported that, during distance learning, their study efficiency was worse regularly (42.5%) or frequently (22.7%) than prior to the pandemic. When asked how often they experienced optimism and confidence about the future during distance learning, the most common response was rarely (64%). A further 21% experienced optimism and confidence about the future frequently, 2% regularly and 13% never.

The results in Table 2 show statistically significant correlations between approach to studying and other elements of engagement.

Table 2

Statistically Significant Correlation between Approach to Studying and Other Elements of the Engagement Variable

| <i>Dimensions of engagement</i> | <i>Elements of engagement</i> | <i>Approach to studying</i> | |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | <i>An active approach</i> | <i>An in-depth approach</i> |
| Behavioural | Takes an active approach to DL ¹ | | 0.747** |
| | Presence during DL (less than before) ¹ | -0.504** | -0.429** |
| | Listens during DLC but does not speak | 0.014 | -0.009 |
| | Participates in discussions during DLC | 0.321** | 0.270** |
| | Participates in activities during DLC | 0.367** | 0.330** |
| | Only logs in to DLC but does not listen, does other things | -0.338** | -0.317** |
| | Has a camera on during DLC | 0.190** | 0.172** |
| Emotional | Digital literacy (insufficient for DL) | -0.058 | -0.100** |
| | Satisfaction with DL | 0.523** | 0.490** |
| Cognitive | Feels connected with other students (experiences connectedness during DL) | 0.330** | 0.294** |
| | Motivation to study (lower than prior to DL) | -0.570** | -0.576** |
| | Student effectiveness (worse than prior to DL) | -0.591** | -0.604** |
| | Experiences optimism and confidence about the future | 0.173** | 0.154** |
| | Takes an in-depth approach to DL ¹ | 0.747** | |

Note. DL – distance learning, DLC – distance learning classes. ¹ The minimum and maximum expression values for the item were 1 and 3; for the other items, they were 1 and 4. ** Statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

The hypotheses were tested by calculating Spearman's rho coefficients between an active study approach and an in-depth study approach to distance learning, satisfaction with distance learning, and between an in-depth study approach and satisfaction with distance learning. These results are shown in bold in Table 2. The results confirm H1: There is a statistically significant correlation between an active study approach and an in-depth study approach in distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results show a statistically significant, positive and strong correlation between active and in-depth approaches to distance learning. The results also confirm H2: There is a statistically significant correlation between an active study approach and satisfaction with distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results show a statistically significant, positive, medium-strong correlation between an active study approach and satisfaction with distance learning. H3 is also confirmed: There is a statistically significant correlation between an in-depth study approach and satisfaction with distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results show a statistically significant,

positive, medium-strong correlation between an in-depth study approach and satisfaction with distance learning. As can be seen in Table 2, the results also show statistically significant correlations between the other elements of the behavioural dimension of engagement and the approach to studying. Only two elements of the behavioural dimension of engagement with regard to the active approach to studying, as well as one element of the behavioural dimension of engagement with regard to the in-depth approach to distance learning, did not show statistically significant correlations. The elements of the emotional and cognitive dimensions of engagement were all statistically significantly correlated with an active and an in-depth approach to distance learning. Analysis of the results, taking into consideration all the elements of each engagement dimension, shows that the statistically significant correlations between the emotional dimension of engagement and the approach to distance learning, as well as between the cognitive dimension of engagement and the approach to distance learning, were stronger than between the behavioural dimension of engagement and the approach to distance learning.

4 Conclusions

The findings of this study shed light on and contribute to a better understanding of student engagement in distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The individual elements of engagement examined allow a more detailed look at all three dimensions of engagement. Based on the results, it can be concluded that the elements of each engagement dimension reflect the characteristics of the participating students in terms of their study engagement and study experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, based on the response rates for each engagement element, it can be summarised that the participating students approached and experienced their studies differently, which may also indicate the importance of other contextual factors in relation to students' study engagement. It should not be overlooked that roughly equal proportions of students reported satisfaction and dissatisfaction with distance learning, or that roughly equal proportions of students reported worse study efficiency than prior to the pandemic and a lack of optimism and confidence about the future during distance learning. In a global study of students from 62 countries ($N = 30,383$), Aristovnik et al. (2020) examined the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' studies and daily lives and found that motivation decreased significantly as a result of studying in social isolation, which posed a number of challenges for students. Nearly 43% of students who participated in the study reported that they were worried about their future careers most or all of the time (Aristovnik et al., 2020). Other studies have also found that students are uncertain and worried about the future during distance learning (Cleofas, 2021; Kerč et al., 2021). Al-Maskari et al. (2022) point out the phenomenon of an increase in social worries and concern about academic success. According to the authors (Al-Maskari et al., 2022), this worry has a significant impact on individuals' behaviour. Pokhrel and Chhetri (2021) note that many students did not participate in their studies during the COVID-19 pandemic precisely because of their distress. Teacher support has been shown to be crucial in reducing worry (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). Emotional support from teachers is important in promoting emotional engagement and also affects the

effectiveness of learning (Salus-Pilco et al., 2022). Means and Neisler (2021) found that the greatest motivational challenge for students (N = 1,008) in distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic was to continue to perform well in the new form of learning. In courses where teachers sent students personal messages about their performance, it was significantly easier for students to remain motivated. Doolan et al. (2021) found that among European students (N = 9,196), those students who had fewer worries in general, i.e., finance, health, dealing with anxiety and studying, were also more satisfied with their studies. As the correlation of student engagement with other circumstances has already been highlighted, satisfaction with studying also depends on an individual's situation (Aristovnik et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic was a challenging time for students. In addition to coping with the unknown and the uncertain, they were also tested in their study engagement.

The exploratory focus of this study on the relationship between study approaches and other elements of each dimension of student engagement contributes to previous knowledge about student engagement. It offers insights into students' share of responsibility for the quality of learning, sheds more light on their approaches to studying, and opens up considerations of the importance of the less visible elements of student engagement to their approaches to studying. It also raises the question of how these elements can be identified and strengthened in the delivery of studies. Students who take a more active and in-depth approach to their studies are more behaviourally, emotionally and cognitively engaged in their studies. The strength of the correlations between the other elements of each dimension of engagement and approach to studying could be interpreted to mean that students' behavioural responses to studying are only partially indicative of their approach to studying, and that their emotional and cognitive responses may be more important to their approach to studying. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that student engagement is a complex phenomenon, which is consistent with the basic research in the field (Fredricks et al., 2004; Lawson and Lawson, 2013). The validated research hypotheses also confirm the correlations between the different dimensions of engagement, thus providing an insight into the multiple manifestations of student engagement, both through behaviour, emotion and thinking (Fredricks et al., 2004). The individual dimensions of engagement and their elements show how actively and in depth students approach their studying. Students' self-assessments of how actively and in depth they approached distance learning shed more light on their approaches. Bradford et al. (2016), in examining behavioural and emotional engagement, found that students who came to a learning session prepared were more active. However, emotional engagement was higher among students who found support in class, were successful, and were motivated by incentives. These findings are also consistent with the study by Cole et al. (2021) confirming that students who are more active in learning are also more engaged in their study activities. In the present study, a more active and in-depth approach to studying was found among students who reported being present during distance learning more than prior to the pandemic, who participated more frequently in discussions and activities in classes, and who had the camera turned on more often during classes. A less active and in-depth approach to studying was found among students who reported only logging into distance learning classes, not listening, and doing other things during the classes. A less in-depth approach to studying was also found among students who indicated that they tended to not have the digital skills for distance

learning. Although the participating students indicated that, on average, they mostly just listened and did not speak during their distance learning classes, no statistically significant correlations were found between this element of the behavioural dimension of engagement and approach to studying. In addition, a more active and in-depth approach to studying was found among those students who reported being more satisfied with their distance learning; who were more likely to feel connected to other students; who were less likely to experience lower study motivation and worse study efficiency during distance learning than prior to the pandemic; and who were more likely to feel optimistic and confident about the future. The correlation between student engagement and academic performance is supported by the findings of a previous study (Rossi et al., 2021) that students who were more actively engaged in a broader range of activities had better academic performance. Similarly, after reviewing studies across different samples and age groups, Fredricks et al. (2004) have confirmed the correlation between behavioural engagement and academic achievement. A correlation was also found between the need to connect with others and student engagement (Fredricks et al., 2004).

The limitations of this study are that it did not examine the impact on the individual elements of engagement and that of the individual elements of engagement on the study approach. Future research on student engagement in studies should be more complex and include more indicators of each dimension of engagement and contextual factors, which would shed more light on the phenomenon and allow for deeper research. Given the results of this study, it would be interesting to see which dimension of engagement has the greatest impact on the approach to studying and the importance of listening skills in learning. It would be worthwhile supplementing this study with a qualitative approach that would shed even more light on students' individual characteristics and circumstances. The author is also aware of other limitations of this study. These include a gender imbalance in the sample, the item-based measurement instrument used, and the limitations of a quantitative cross-sectional study in exploring such a complex phenomenon as student engagement in learning.

Student engagement in learning, regardless of the form in which it is delivered, should be a central focus of research on student learning approaches, because it provides a deeper understanding of learning as well as a valid basis for selecting didactic activities that promote an active and in-depth approach to learning. As highlighted previously by Lawson and Lawson (2013), exploring student engagement can help to profile a student's activity and study orientation in relation to their life circumstances. As noted in the aforementioned studies (Means and Neisler, 2021; Al-Maskari et al., 2022), interest in and support for students' individual circumstances and concerns contributes to increased student engagement in their studies and is also a preventative measure against disengagement (Lawson and Lawson, 2013). As Fredricks et al. (2004) suggest, engagement research should be strengthened based on the needs of the individual, as this provides an understanding of the individual in their own context. Individual needs, with their diversity, also have different implications for student activities. In the study by Buljubašić Kuzmanović and Gazibara (2016), for example, a quarter of the participating students needed only more time and additional incentives to be actively engaged. As the authors point out (Buljubašić Kuzmanović and Gazibara, 2016), "the fact that some students need a longer time to achieve the set objectives should not be ignored" (p. 126). Addressing different individual needs by adapting to the individual should be

an integral part of the modern educational process. Such factors may not have received much attention prior to the pandemic experience, but have certainly highlighted the importance of knowing and acknowledging individual needs in all their diversity. Didactic orientations to support student engagement in studies must be person-centred while promoting their integration into the group. The responses received in the survey point to these needs. Research on distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has provided insights into the field of student engagement in studies that suggest directions for further research in this area, regardless of the form of delivery of the studies. The form of studies itself does not guarantee learning. To effectively support student learning, learning activities must be designed to promote students' behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement, regardless of the form in which the studies are delivered, taking into account the specific thematic context (Salus-Pilco et al., 2022). Didactic strategies that support student engagement should contribute to positive student experiences in active learning activities, such as participation in activities or discussions (Martin and Bolliger, 2018).

Dr. Nataša Zrim Martinjak

Angažiranost študentov pri študiju na daljavo

Angažiranost študentov pri študiju smo proučevali na podlagi modela, ki vključuje tri dimenzije angažiranosti – vedenjsko, čustveno in kognitivno, s katerimi izpostavlja večplastnost pojava angažiranosti. Ta model angažiranost študenta razume v soodvisnosti od posameznikovih raznolikih in aktualnih okoliščin. Prispevek naslanjamo na zanimanje glede angažiranosti študenta pri študiju na daljavo med pandemijo covid-19. O vedenjski angažiranosti pri študiju na daljavo govorimo, ko študent aktivno sodeluje pri študijskih aktivnostih na daljavo; o čustveni angažiranosti, ko študent izraža in pokaže pozitivna stališča do učnega okolja na daljavo; o kognitivni angažiranosti pa, ko je študent motiviran za učenje na daljavo (Salus-Pilco idr., 2022). Študentje se pri učenju najpogosteje razlikujejo v tem, ali uporabljajo površinski ali globinski pristop k učenju (Cvetek, 2015; Solomonides, 2013; Šarić in Košir, 2012). Glede na pristop k učenju je različna tudi angažiranost študenta pri študiju. Rossi idr. (2021) v raziskavi o aktivnem učenju pri študiju na daljavo med pandemijo covid-19 ugotavljajo, da uporaba aktivnih učnih orodij pri poučevanju, ki zahtevajo stalno angažiranost študenta, tem koristi in izboljšuje njihovo kritično mišljenje. Vendar pa si, brez aktivnosti in odzivnosti študenta na učiteljevo dejavnost v njegovem poučevalnem pristopu, aktivnega poučevanja ni mogoče predstavljati (Perić Prkosovački idr., 2020). Učitelj v odmiku od tradicionalnih didaktičnih modelov uporablja aktivne metode poučevanja, študent pa mora biti pripravljen sodelovati z aktivnim učenjem (Rossi idr., 2021). Skupna zahteva raznolikih poučevalnih pristopov je, "da od študenta zahtevajo, da sam prevzame aktivno vlogo in odgovornost pri študiju" (Šarić in Košir, 2012, str. 137). Tudi v okoliščinah, kot je pandemija covid-19, ki je temeljito preoblikovala običajne razmere življenja, je potrebno izpostaviti vidik odgovornosti do študija, poudarjata Žgur in Jerman (2022). Odgovornost za kakovost učenja se namreč deli med poučevalni pristop in angažiranost študenta (Axelson in Flick, 2010; Rossi idr., 2021). Rezultati pričujoče raziskave prina-

šajo večje razumevanje angažiranosti študenta pri študiju v pandemskih okoliščinah in nudijo vpogled v študentov del odgovornosti za kakovost učenja. Temeljni cilj raziskave je bil ugotoviti, kakšna je angažiranost študenta pri študiju na daljavo ter kako aktivno in poglobljeno je pristopal k študiju v pandemični situaciji? Zastavili smo si raziskovalno vprašanje, kako se pristop k študiju na daljavo med pandemijo covid-19 povezuje z drugimi elementi posamezne dimenzije angažiranosti študenta?

S pomočjo spletnega orodja za anketiranje smo podatke zbirali v okviru širše presečne raziskave z naslovom "Položaj študentov in študentk Univerze v Ljubljani v razmerah covid-19", ki smo jo izvedli na Oddelku za socialno pedagogiko Pedagoške fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani. Anketni vprašalnik je bil oblikovan prav za ta namen in je temeljil na posameznih postavkah. Poleg demografskih vprašanj je obsegal več tematskih področij, vezanih na položaj študentov v razmerah covid-19. Za pričujočo raziskavo je bil relevanten del podatkov iz študijskega tematskega področja. Oblikovali smo vprašanja, ki so se navezovala na različne dimenzije angažiranosti študenta – na vedenjsko, čustveno in kognitivno angažiranost. V analizo smo zajeli 1167 študentov, ki so delno ali v celoti odgovorili na študijsko tematsko področje. Od teh jih je bilo 79,4 % ženskega spola in 20,6 % moškega spola. Natanko polovica udeležencev je prihajala iz mestnega, druga polovica iz podeželskega okolja. Večina je bilo študentov družboslovnih in humanističnih smeri (77,6%), od vseh jih je bilo največ (90%) vpisanih v programe prve stopnje.

Uporabili smo deskriptivno metodo raziskovanja. Na podlagi rezultatov smo ugotovili, da elementi posamezne dimenzije angažiranosti pokažejo značilnosti udeleženih študentov v njihovem študijskem delovanju in doživljanju študija med pandemijo covid-19. Ob tem, na podlagi deležev odgovorov pri posameznem elementu angažiranosti, lahko povzamemo, da so udeleženi študentje k študiju različno pristopali in ga tudi različno doživljali, iz česar bi lahko sklepali tudi na pomen drugih okoliščin pri angažiranosti študenta pri študiju. Nekateri predhodne raziskave (Aristovnik idr., 2020; Cleofas, 2021; Kerč idr., 2021; Al-Maskari idr., 2022) ugotavljajo vplive pandemije covid-19 na študijsko in vsakdanje življenje študentov ter povečanje skrbi in stisk med študenti, zaradi katerih mnogi študentje niso bili angažirani pri študiju (Pokhel in Chetri, 2021).

Hipoteze smo preverjali s Spearmanovimi rho-koeficienti. Rezultati so potrdili, da med aktivnim pristopom k študiju in poglobljenim pristopom k študiju na daljavo med pandemijo covid-19 obstajajo statistično značilne povezanosti. Prav tako so rezultati potrdili, da statistično značilne povezanosti obstajajo med aktivnim pristopom k študiju in zadovoljstvom s študijem na daljavo med pandemijo covid-19 in tudi med poglobljenim pristopom k študiju in zadovoljstvom s študijem na daljavo med pandemijo covid-19. Študentje, ki bolj aktivno in poglobljeno pristopajo k študiju, so bolj angažirani pri študiju, tako vedenjsko, čustveno kot tudi kognitivno. Analiza rezultatov je, ob upoštevanju vseh proučevanih elementov posamezne dimenzije angažiranosti, pokazala, da so statistično značilne povezanosti močnejše jakosti med čustveno dimenzijo angažiranosti in pristopom k študiju na daljavo ter med kognitivno dimenzijo angažiranosti in pristopom k študiju na daljavo, kot pa med vedenjsko dimenzijo angažiranosti in pristopom k študiju na daljavo. To bi si lahko razlagali s tem, da vedenjski odzivi študenta pri študijski izvedbi le deloma pokažejo njegov pristop k študiju ter da bi lahko bili njegovi emocionalni in kognitivni odzivi pomembnejši za njegov pristop k študiju. Da je angaži-

ranost študentov kompleksen pojav, zaključujemo tudi na podlagi naslednje ugotovitve, ki je skladna s temeljnimi raziskavami področja (Šimec idr., 2022, Lawson in Lawson, 2013). Potrjene raziskovalne hipoteze potrjujejo tudi povezanost med različnimi dimenzijami angažiranosti in s tem doprinašajo uvid v večplastnost manifestacij angažiranosti študentov. Posamezne dimenzije angažiranosti in njihovi elementi nakazujejo na to, kako aktivno in poglobljeno študent pristopa k študiju. Ob študentovi samooceni tega, kako aktivno in poglobljeno so pristopali k študiju na daljavo, o tem razkrivajo več oz. ga natančneje osvetlijo. Bolj aktiven in bolj poglobljen pristop k študiju smo ugotovili pri tistih študentih, ki so poročali, da so bili pri študiju na daljavo prisotni več kot prej, tistih, ki so bolj pogosto sodelovali v diskusijah in aktivnostih pri študijskih urah, tistih, ki so imeli pri študijskih urah bolj pogosto prižgano kamero, pri tistih, ki so poročali, da so bili bolj zadovoljni s študijem na daljavo, tistih, ki so pogosteje doživljali povezanost z drugimi študenti, se manj pogosto soočali s slabšo motivacijo za študij in študijsko učinkovitostjo med študijem na daljavo kot prej, ter pri tistih, ki so pogosteje doživljali optimizem in zaupanje v prihodnost. Manj aktiven in poglobljen pristop k študiju pa smo ugotovili pri tistih študentih, ki so poročali, da so se na študijske ure, ki so potekale na daljavo, le prijavi in niso poslušali ter so ob tem delali druge stvari, in pri tistih, ki so poročali, da so se bolj pogosto soočali s pomanjkljivimi digitalnimi spretnostmi za študij na daljavo.

Omejitve naše raziskave so v tem, da ni raziskovala vplivov na posamezni element angažiranosti in vplivov posameznih elementov angažiranosti na pristop k študiju. Glede na rezultate naše raziskave bi bilo zanimivo preveriti, katera dimenzija angažiranosti najbolj vpliva na pristop k študiju. Zavedamo se tudi drugih omejitev naše raziskave, kot so neuravnoteženost vzorca po spolu, uporabljen merski instrument, ki temelji na posameznih postavkah, prav tako pa kvantitativna presečna raziskava omejuje raziskovanje tako kompleksnega pojava, kot je angažiranost študentov pri študiju.

Zagotovo pa raziskava z ugotovitvami ob raziskovalnem osredotočanju na povezanost med pristopom k študiju in drugimi elementi posamezne dimenzije angažiranosti študenta doprinaša k predhodnim spoznanjem o angažiranosti študenta (Blažič, 2021). Prispeva vpogled v študentov del odgovornosti za kakovost učenja, natančneje osvetljuje njegov pristop k študiju in odpira premisleke o pomenu manj vidnih elementov angažiranosti študenta za njegov pristop k študiju. Nadalje zastavlja izzive, kako jih pri študijski izvedbi prepoznati in jih krepiti. Ugotovitve lahko predstavljajo podlago za ustvarjanje didaktičnih modelov, ki podpirajo angažiranost študentov z aktivnostmi, ki spodbujajo aktiven in poglobljen študij. Didaktične usmeritve v podporo angažiranosti študentov pri študiju morajo biti osredinjene na posameznika in hkrati spodbujati njegovo vključenost v skupino. Dobljeni odgovori nakazujejo na te potrebe. Pandemija covid-19 je pokazala na vplive aktualnih okoliščin tako na vsakdanje kot študijsko življenje študentov. Raziskovanje študija na daljavo je prispevalo uvide v področje angažiranosti študenta pri študiju, ki dajejo usmeritve nadaljnjemu raziskovanju področja, ne glede na obliko izvedbe študija. Sama oblika izvedbe študija namreč še ne zagotavlja učenja. Ob posvečanju pozornosti posameznikovim aktualnim okoliščinam so, ne glede na obliko izvedbe študija, učne dejavnosti tiste, ki morajo podpirati tako vedenjsko, čustveno kot kognitivno angažiranost študenta.

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