

PROBLEMS ABOUT LEARNING ATTITUDE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE POST-COVID PERIOD IN VIETNAM

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Abstract

A good study attitude is one of the decisive factors leading to good academic results and the completion of the capacity and personality of any undergraduate student. However, the study attitude of most Vietnamese students today has many significant problems after being long and profoundly affected by COVID-19. By surveying 120 undergraduate students, the author analyzed the above situation using qualitative and quantitative methods. Since then, many urgent problems need to be recognized and handled as soon as possible, of which there are five typical problems: (1) The time for studying has many changes, (2), The form of assessment of subjects is more difficult, (3) Learners need to be more active, (4) The cost of studying increases (5) Limited multitasking habits, (6) There are many knowledge gaps in the online learning phase, and (7) Still need to be careful in epidemic prevention Based on that, the author has also proposed solutions for universities and families to help undergraduate students overcome those difficulties as soon as possible, in the most effective way.

Keywords: Learning attitudes; post-COVID-19 period; Undergraduate students.

Introduction

COVID-19 has affected almost every aspect of social life around the world, including education. Education has suffered significant losses and challenges (Daniel, 2020). According to the Minister of Education and Training, Associate Professor Dr. Nguyen Kim Son, in Vietnam, the COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically affected all socio-economic fields, including education and training. Nearly 20 million students and more than 1 million teachers and lecturers nationwide have been unable to go to school for a long time. Thousands of teachers are working in non-public schools without salary, life is difficult, etc. (according to the web portal of the Ministry of Health of Vietnam, November 14, 2021). When the pandemic seems to have passed, all activities gradually return to normal,

including teaching and learning activities. However, after a long time of studying online at home, all students returned to school with many surprises, even mental shock, and disturbances in daily activities (Leach et al., 2021), which Vietnamese undergraduate students are no exception. For that reason, most of the students have returned to school since the beginning of this year with many worries and difficulties in studying, such as learning with a negative attitude, losing concentration in pursuing knowledge, etc. If the above problems are not clearly identified and promptly corrected, they will face unpredictable consequences. Therefore, even if students graduate on time, it is not easy to secure enough professional knowledge and other skills to compete in the challenging labor market ahead in ahead future.

Many researchers have studied and presented students' learning attitudes in their

Literature review

works. It can be mentioned as Kashem's study on the influence of teachers' clothing on the students' learning attitudes in 2019. In this study, the author concluded that a positive impression from the faculty clothes would create a positive learning atmosphere in the students' minds. Closer to this topic, the author, Abakumova et al., 2020, mentioned university students' attitudes to distance learning in the situation of uncertainty. The article analyzes the use of distance learning technology in higher education in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and students' attitudes towards this form of education. The authors justify the urgency of the problem being studied for modern education and update the basic requirements for education in an increasingly uncertain situation. The article describes the methodological basis and origin of the development of distance learning, distinguishing the concepts of "distance education" and "distance training." The authors define the characteristics of distance learning in modern conditions and highlight the main issues and conflicts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and social isolation. Alternatively, another study on systematic literature reviews teachers' attitudes about student performance after COVID-19 vaccination (Elihami, 2022) is also a very insightful article regarding this pandemic and its impact. Another study by ELTE university to assess students' attitudes towards distance learning during the pandemic (Ismaili, 2021) also gave the author of this study much beneficial information. The results of this study show that distance learning is still in its infancy. Although the traditional classroom seems indispensable, the positive attitude and willingness of the majority of students Participation in distance classes during the post-COVID-19 pandemic show a substantial potential future for e-learning

platforms in higher education institutions. As such, there are currently no authors studying the problems university students in Vietnam face in the post-COVID-19 period and how to overcome them. Therefore, this work aims to solve that urgent problem.

Methodology

In this study, the author used qualitative and quantitative analysis methods to clarify the problems university students face after a long period of absence from school and online learning due to the impact of COVID-19. Specifically, the author has researched and synthesized information from studies and books with topics related to the content being studied. In addition, the author has surveyed 120 undergraduate students at two large universities in Vietnam, Nguyen Tat Thanh University and FPT University. This stage is done within three months through some channels such as Messenger, Zalo, and Gmail. Next, the author analyzes the obtained results and compares and contrasts the results of other related studies. The ultimate aim is to propose practical solutions so that universities and parents can help students quickly overcome those difficulties. Since then, the learning results that students get are entirely true. Besides, many other necessary skills are also cultivated, and their spiritual life is fully developed, prosperous, and has an exciting student life.

Results and discussion

Discussing the impact of the pandemic on the learning attitude of undergraduate students, the author asked the students how much they agreed with the statement "After the pandemic, my attitude to study has been greatly affected and, in general, tends to change for the worse than before the pandemic." The preliminary results are shown in figure 1 below.

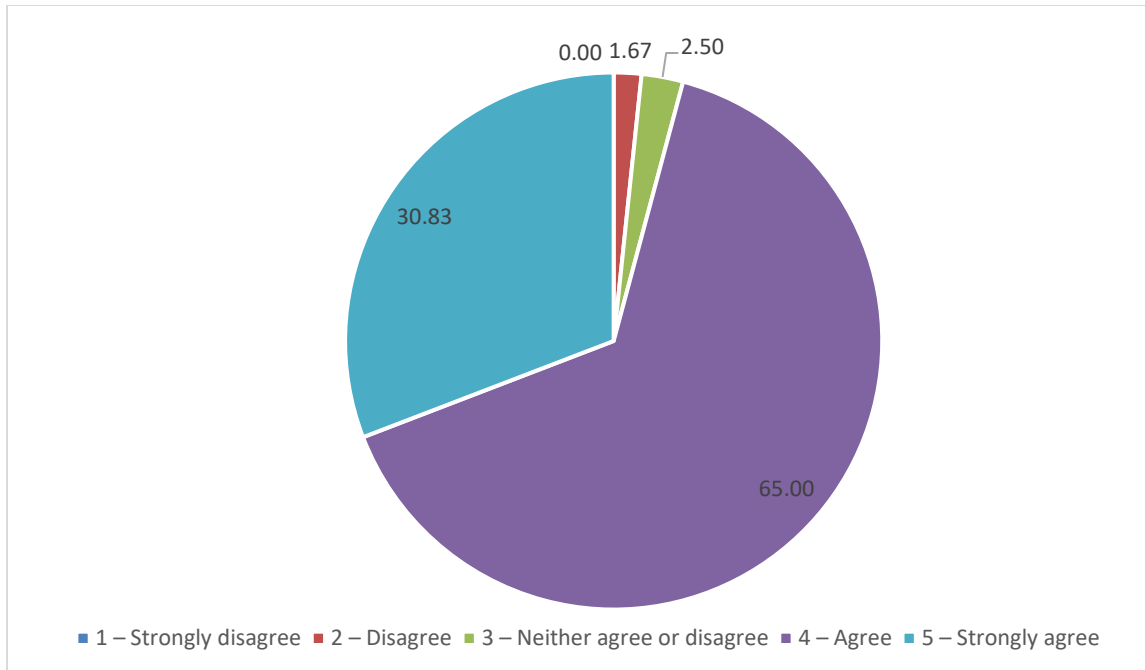


Figure 1. Levels of agreement about the negative impact of the pandemic on attitudes to learning

Accordingly, we can see that no student chooses the degree of "strongly disagree", only 1.67% (equivalent to 2 students) out of 120 students surveyed choose "disagree". Next is the level of "neither agree or disagree" with 2.5% (3 students) selected. Thus, the rest, up to 95.83% (115 students), agree and strongly agree that the pandemic has adversely affected their study attitude. This result also coincides with the study of Hermanto and Fahmi (2021), that it is because of the impact of the COVID-19

pandemic that students have to study at home, which makes students' morale uncomfortable.

This leads to a much worse learning attitude, which continues until they return to school. Next, the author had questions to clarify the problems that students encountered during this period, leading to poor learning attitudes as before the pandemic. The results are summarized and presented in figure 2 below.

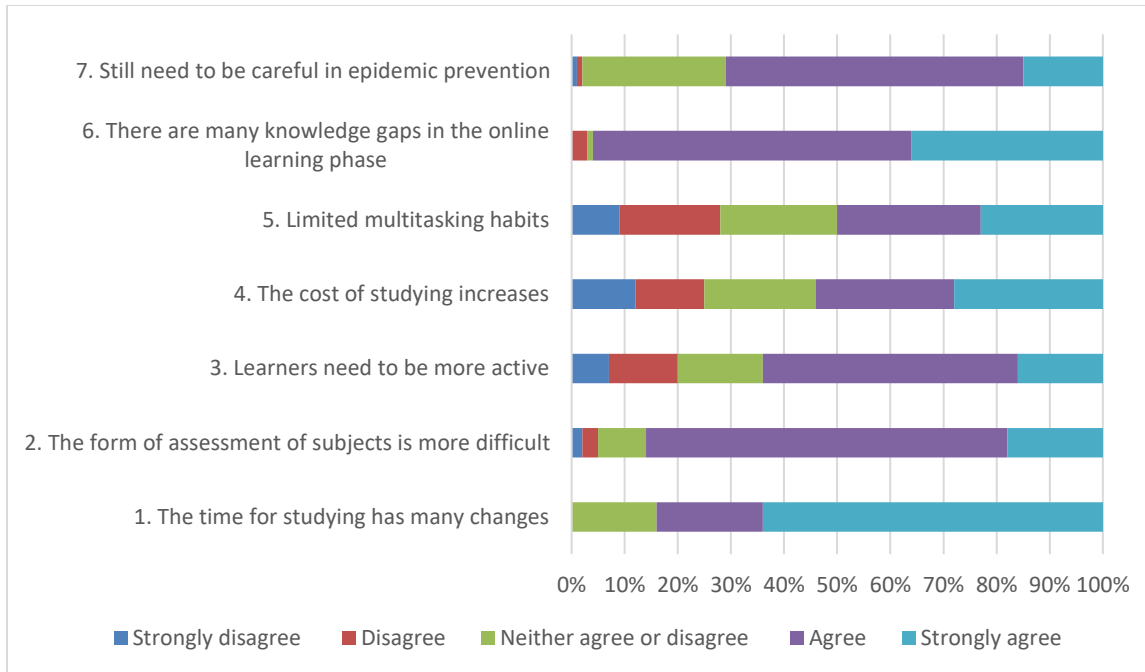


Figure 2. Levels of agreement about undergraduate students' problems when switching from online to face-to-face learning.

Overall, all seven factors selected by the author presented above have a level of agreement above 50%. Details are shown in figure 3 below. Accordingly, the most agreement issue is (6) There are many knowledge gaps in the online learning phase, 96%. This is also understandable when, for a long time, online teaching and learning were seen as a temporary measure and only a temporary solution for a short period. Therefore, the quality of learning has many limitations. This has also been studied by Fatonia et al. in their work in 2020. However, at a later stage, even the views of many educators and learners do not see online as a temporary situation; teaching and

learning also have their limitations. For example, it is difficult for lecturers to control students' learning during class by urging and reminding them. Therefore, when students are negligent and lose knowledge in a specific part, it is difficult for teachers to detect and provide timely support. The limitation of online teaching also makes students sometimes not fully understand what the lecturer conveys (Hodges et al., 2020). Once learners feel that they cannot keep up with the lesson, they will quickly pass, even get frustrated and give up. So, how can they have a good learning attitude?

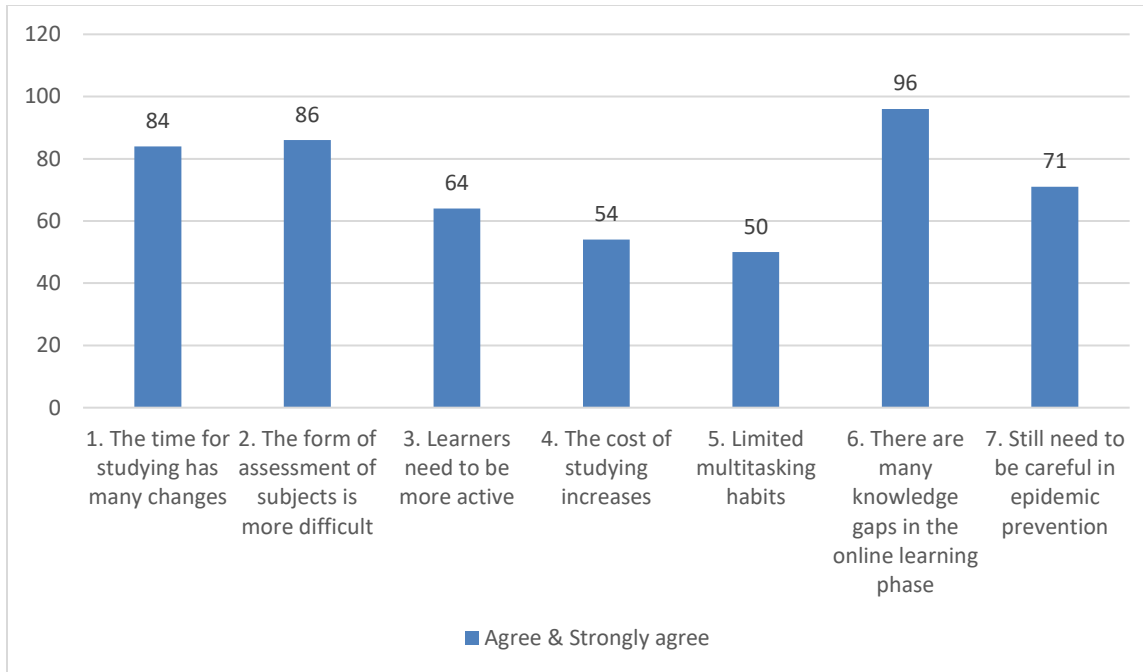


Figure 3. Percentage of agreeing about undergraduate students' problems when switching from online to face-to-face learning.

Next, there are two issues with 86% and 84% agreement respectively - (2) The form of assessment of subjects is more difficult, (1) The time for studying has many changes. One of the big problems that students face is memorizing to complete their exams (Alammari and Bukhary, 2019). However, many tests or other assessments are converted to essays or open-ended questions during the online learning phase. Therefore, as soon as they return to face-to-face learning, students will need to memorize the lesson. This makes many students obsessed with wrong impressions in high school, from which students feel tired, and their good study attitude declines along with that. In addition, as we all know, presentations are an integral part of the life of an undergraduate student (Liu and Qi 2017). This is relatively easy for learners as they can present online, and even when defending their graduation project, they do not have to face teachers or the graduation committee, helping them feel less nervous. Moreover, there is no need to memorize the lesson too carefully. Furthermore, all of this changes when students return to face-to-face

learning. This change must have brought much stress among students, who always thought that with the offline format, the assessment categories were more complicated than online. They can easily lead to an attitude of learning to cope, just trying to let it go.

Regarding the time factor, at FPT University and Nguyen Tat Thanh University, students all start their first slot at 7 am. Many students answered that they can wake up at 6:50 am if it is still online learning. However, this time will need to be at least an hour earlier because of the need for thorough personal hygiene in the morning. In addition, online learning also helps students have much free time because they do not have to spend time traveling or shopping for food, etc. Then, as students have more concerns and less time, their enthusiasm for easy learning decreases, too. Especially when in Vietnam, students have lived and studied in an online environment for nearly two years before.

Coming in at third place is issue number (7) Still need to be careful in epidemic prevention, accounting for 71%. This means

that although students can come to school to study, they still must adhere to measures such as wearing masks or distancing themselves. This causes certain limitations in communication in general and in group learning in particular. The author also researched this topic and presented it in the work "The Importance of Group Projects in Teaching Soft Skills: A Case Study at FPT University, Vietnam". That leads to boredom in learning for many learners. Accordingly, many beautiful experiences in student life are also limited or lost.

Ranked fourth is the problem (3) Learners need to be more active; the level of Agree and Strongly agree accounts for 64%. As mentioned, many students learned on laptops or phones for two years. Then it will be difficult for many students with introverted characteristics or whose academic performance is not good or good. They will always keep quiet during class time. Even for many hours, they still sit and hear or listen to their teachers or friends. Over time, it is likely to make people much more passive, even causing disease. So even though being active is a good thing for these students, Dolan and Emery have long studied this issue (2002). However, this change does not necessarily make them feel better; on the contrary, they seem to be pulled out of their familiar comfort zone. Because of that, every day going to school for them can be a heavy, stressful day with a tired attitude and wanting to give up.

The last two problems are (4) The cost of studying increases, accounting for 54%, and (5) Limited multitasking habits, accounting for 50%. When students must go to school, many expenses come back, such as transportation costs, meeting costs with friends, meals out from family, etc. However, only 54% of students choose this option because the rest think it still costs many other fees when studying online. These can be mentioned as the costs of equipping online learning equipment, or

many students think that when studying online at home, being cramped also makes them need to order online quite a lot. Either way, it is clear that the short-term cost of many items also affects the morale and attitude of students when returning to school. Finally, psychological inhibitions when students cannot listen to teachers while surfing Facebook or e-commerce sites, cannot be in the classroom and listen to the rain falling through electronic devices to help cheer up like many of them usually do, etc. These things make students more or less uncomfortable and tired of going back to school in person. Especially for the large number of students majoring in information technology at these two universities, it is no need for further discussion.

Recommendations

First of all, it is essential that schools and families both understand the great difficulties that students and their children are facing as listed above. Of course, each student may face many other difficulties and problems. The first thing is that each university, faculty member, or parent needs to understand and understand instead of just focusing on punishment so that students can improve their learning quality. Because, in many cases, punishment only causes physical and mental harm to students and brings no other value (Sun et al., 2017).

Secondly, the school has to take professional measures to regain basic knowledge for many students who have had knowledge gaps during a long time of online learning. Of course, this is not very easy and takes time and effort. Educators need to have a strict and specific schedule for this, instead of just constantly teaching students new knowledge to keep up with the progress. In addition, when doing this, it is also necessary to pay attention to economic factors; it is difficult for schools to collect additional fees for these classes. Instead,

please encourage and support students during this difficult time.

Thirdly, college professors are full of expertise and skill sets; more than ever, this is the time for them to be ingenious and flexible. Specifically, they need to be creative in helping students re-adjust to studies, exams, time management, or participating in classroom activities like the pre-pandemic period in light and rhythmic

Conclusion

In summary, there are many burning issues related to the learning attitude of undergraduate students in the post-COVID period in Vietnam. In this article, the author has found the seven biggest problems based on a survey of 120 students of two universities in Vietnam. Since then, several solutions are also proposed for universities and students' families so that students can

Limitation of research

The paper still has some limitations; however, it would be improved in the near future.

Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest is noted in the paper.

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way. From there, students will not be shocked when they have to change promptly.

Finally, the family also needs to be a solid mental and physical support for students during this challenging initial period. Parents can pay more attention to their children, promptly detect instability, take appropriate support measures, etc.

get through this challenging period. Moreover, these practical jobs also help them have an enjoyable and memorable student experience. Of course, a good study attitude leads to good learning and training. Thus, these students will not be the victims of a worldwide pandemic but will be bright candidates for the extensive labor market in the future.

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