



Student's Assessment of Digital Education in Economics at UNWE

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to present the results of studies conducted through surveys among the economics students of UNWE under the project 06 - 45/7 entitled "DIGITALIZATION". ON THE LEARNING PROCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION - A MODEL FOR IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT", financed by the Scientific Research Fund (SRF).

The questions answered by economics students groups of specialty "Intellectual property" and "Creative industries and business" of UNWE are the following: advantages, disadvantages, overall assessment and academic suggestions.

The answers presented by students in Economics allow the following generalizations:

- *advantages: accessibility from any geographical point; great convenience in implementation, receiving by tutors lectures and training materials online;*
- *disadvantages: absence of collegial communication in an academic environment; impossibility of using educational literature on paper difficulty or impossibility to implement/ complete collective tasks, studies and other academic forms.*

The general assessment of students in Economics /more than 70% of the surveyed students/ is a preference to a hybrid form, combining the advantages of both forms: on-site at a university and online. The recommendations they give are oriented in a direction into taking into account the individual interests and opportunities of the students, to realize a hybrid education in economics.

These results are presented in the final stage of project implementation.

Keywords: *higher education, digital education*

1. Introduction

In the conditions of the modern educational and business environment, characterized by a global character and technology, the digitization of the educational process is an essential factor for achieving and maintaining the competitiveness of higher education institutions.

In the last 6-8 years, higher education has faced a number of challenges related to the introduction of digital forms and content, times of pandemic and distance learning. The focus of this report is on the evaluations, interests and expectations of students - the user of the educational service. The goal is to direct the attention of the management to the students - informed, with a high digital culture and with high expectations for the offered forms and ways of communication in the study process at the higher schools.

In the context of the scientific based and practically realized surveys for the 3 consequences academic years is focused on the students assessments of the digitalization of learning process in 3 specialties: stream "Economics", specialties "Intellectual property and business", "Creative industries and business, "Entrepreneurship", master degree. The study is realized in the main aspects of digital learning process: positive and negative sites, advantages and disadvantages, suggestions made by students. The object of research in this article is the students' assessment of the educational process and the importance of the digitization of the educational process in higher schools. The goal is:



reporting the results of the research and their applicability in a model for managing the digitization of the educational process in the modern conditions of the educational market - global and digitalized.

2. Main Methodological Points

2.1. Theoretical Review

The purpose of the study is complex and it is structured into the following tasks:

- to identify the level of digitization of the learning process in the study of economics ...,
- to take into account the evaluations of economics students ...,
- to take into account their wishes regarding the conduct of studies.

As a final result: to present a methodologically justified strategy for managing the digitization of the educational process in the Higher Education Institution.

This complex management process started with analytical phase which

1. University is to improve its competitive position on the educational services market
2. University is to consolidate its position in the market segment in the professional direction and to look for new ones
3. University is to consider implementing forms of educational franchise or other forms of scientific cooperation in established and new scientific and academic networks.

This scientific frame is based on the research project entitled "DIGITALIZATION" ON THE LEARNING PROCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION - A MODEL FOR IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT", financed by the Scientific Research Fund included the already published papers: Stoyanova, Ts., M. Markova, Researching digitalization of the education - a case study of Bulgarian universities, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability, Issues, 2022, Vol10_No1, indexed in Scopus. Markova, , Stoyanova, Ts., A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE DIGITALIZATION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS IN HIGHER SCHOOLS and patent application published within Patent office: METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR ANALYSIS, EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE DIGITALIZATION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS IN HIGHER SCHOOLS.

2.2. Interview Questions And Results

DIGITAL LEARNING PROCESS SURVEY comprises of the following simple and brief questions:

1. What benefits do you identify in digital learning?
2. What negatives /shortcomings do you identify in digital learning?
3. Overall assessment:
 - preferred form of education
 - not a preferred form
4. Suggestions: please present your point of view for future digitally based educational process

The students responded to the list of questions for this study to present their evaluations and suggestions for the educational process with willingness, commitment and high communicativeness.

Analysing the whole list and applied student's papers with applications/suggestions we may present following results in a table below:



Year/ Number of students answered to the questions	general positive score for online learning	general positive score for on-site at a university	highest score for a hybrid learning	presented notes/suggestions
2021/ 64	24	2	48	5
2022/ 72	16	4	52	20
2023/ 66	12	4	50	44
Total 202	52	10	150	69

Table 1

Analysing answers and suggestions of students in Economics in UNWE we may make general conclusions and summarised results:

Quantitative results:

More than 70% of the answered students of these questions/proposals students prefer categorically hybrid form of learning process. due to the following factors:

1. Receive a collection of materials for each of academic courses.
2. Communicate with teachers and colleagues in an academic environment, exchange opinions and discuss issues from the discipline.
3. Use on-site educational research literature.
4. Have more time for self-preparation and research on assigned tasks.
5. Realize other personal tasks and hobbies outside the university.
6. Lower costs for transport, accommodation and food.

Qualitative superstitions made by students:

1. To mix two educational forms on-site training and distance training, as 50:50 during the academic year.
2. To create platform with tutor's lectures and Q@A window/communication.....
3. To create options for exam in 2 forms:
 - at the academic room - on-site exam;
 - digital form based on the platform used in lecture time – ZOOM, Teams, others.

3. How May Use Results of This Survey by University Management?

There are many significant aspects presented and well based by students in their answers with applications for the University management. Some of these, most important are the following



3.1. To identify and evaluate periodic academic sites of the presented matter:

- knowledge, skills and assurance of the University in information and administrative service of the educational process
- degree of digital knowledge and skills of the users and staff, who are provided with work methodology and management models;
- optimization of online training in higher schools regarding characteristics and indicators of this training, included data bases of lectures on digital holder offered to students accompanied by information of intellectual property rights and requirement for a personal use and legally approved citing of sources.

3.2. To provide high level and speed of wireless access to the Internet and Intranet in classrooms, laboratories, offices, centres, as well as Wi-Fi connection within the university campus, for used platforms, models for accessing and storing Internet-based content provided by the higher education institution and lectures for the learning process.

3.3. To update periodically competence of the administrative staff in the educational process; in the educational process – digitization of training in regular and distance learning; degree of digitization during current control; degree of digitization of the exams - Directorate "Educational Activity"; in accompanying activities – digitization of the study schedule.

3.4. To digitalize supporting educational process academic activities: digitization of student evaluation, digitization of library activities - Directorate "Information Technologies" and "University Library", Directorate "Organization of Security" in the administration - digitization of processes for application and admission of students to the university - digital submission of documents, approval, admission to an exam and conduct of an entrance exam; ranking of admitted students and processing of examination results.

Summary: The application of the model for managing the digitization of the educational process in a higher school leads to the following positive results:

1. Unification of the process for analysis, evaluation and management of the digitization of the educational process in higher schools.
2. Enables comparability of indicators for all higher schools and alternativeness when applying evaluation indicators.
3. Better competitive position among higher education institutions in Europe

Conclusion: The indicated research with results leading to the imposition of the students' sought-after hybrid educational process model is an element of the digital culture and educational market. Higher education institutions must take these trends into account in order to be competitive on the educational market in Europe.

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