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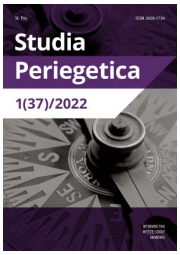

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Coping with the dark sides of online learning. A case of tourism students

Abstract. Online learning is nothing new, but during the COVID-19 pandemic, this form of education has become the preferred and sometimes the only option available as a result of social distancing and nationwide lockdowns. This unprecedented change has triggered a number of previously unknown problems and has forced students to find ways of coping with them. This study investigates the dark sides of online education and coping strategies developed by students by drawing on insights from coping theories to explain students' adaptive responses. The study is based on qualitative data collected in an online survey of 27 students of tourism from a public university in Poland. The most frequent problem reported by the respondents were technical issues occurring during classes, followed by the lack of motivation and commitment, difficulties with sustained attention and the lack of contact with peers. The majority of students coped with stress caused by the negative aspects of technology in online education by engaging in physical activity. The findings of the study could contribute to guiding the direction for effective and student-friendly adoption of online education.

Keywords: coping, online education, technology, tourism

JEL Codes: A20, I23, Z31

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1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the organization of education around the world. To contain the spread of the virus, most governments have decided to switch to a remote or hybrid mode of learning. Poland is among five European countries, with the longest-lasting lockdown in the education system (UNESCO, 2021). From the middle of March 2020 Polish universities introduced measures to prevent the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Following recommendations of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, most universities decided to opt for remote or hybrid education. New regulations in higher education were implemented in October 2020 and remained in effect until October 2021.

Since remote learning was virtually absent from Polish universities before the outbreak of the pandemic, most students were not prepared for this sudden transition to a new learning environment and experienced many problems, at least initially. Tourism education has also been affected by the restrictions and the consequences of the widespread shift to a new mode of learning. This may be surprising, given the fact that most students are digital natives, who grew up using modern ICT technologies. Yet, their proficiency with modern devices and their high level of technological competence did not protect them against negative aspects of the widespread digitization of the learning process. Already a decade earlier Afifi warned that "tourism courses with practical applications could be negatively affected by the implementation of e-learning as some skills cannot be taught without the instructor's direct contact and observation" (Afifi, 2011, p. 367). The use of new technologies in online tourism education requires in-depth research, especially with regard to students' perception of e-learning, which has not received much attention until recently (Cantoni, Kalbaska & Inversini, 2009; Abbas, 2017). Nowadays, however, the crisis-driven digitalization and students' coping strategies are becoming a very relevant topic (Reinhold et al., 2021), particularly because "not much is known about the impacts of the novel coronavirus on tourism education" (Tiwari, Séraphin & Chowdhary, 2021, p. 1).

Educational technology undoubtedly brings many benefits (Annaraud & Singh, 2017), but remote education is associated with some limitations and risks. These dark sides of the use of technology in online education at universities during lockdowns need to be investigated (Qiu, Li & Li, 2020). Another interesting area for research are students' responses to these negative aspects and their coping strategies in order to overcome problems with online education. Limited studies on this topic have been conducted among students at German and Indian universities (Reinhold et al., 2021, Chaturvedi, Vishwakarma & Singh, 2021).

The first aim of this study was to identify the limitations and adverse effects of online education. Studies exploring technological (Qiu et al., 2020), psychological (Odriozola-González et al., 2020) and pedagogical (Afifi, 2011) aspects of online education were used to identify key factors affecting its perception by students. The second aim was to understand students' strategies for dealing with the negative aspects of online education by drawing on sights from coping theories (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which provide broader constructs for describing students' adaptive responses.

2. Literature review

2.1. The dark sides of technology in online education

The use of technology in tourism education has been already received much attention, but the pandemic has added new relevance to this research area. Education based on new computer technologies has been given many different labels, such as e-learning, online learning, web-based learning, Internet-based learning, or computer-assisted learning (Ruiz, Mintzer & Leipzig, 2006; Chandra, 2020). In e-learning electronic equipment is used to bridge the physical gap between student and teachers (Annaraud & Singh, 2017). According to Afifi (2011), e-learning is the delivery of learning content through various forms of electronic media. It refers to education enabled via electronic technology (Eraqi et al., 2011). E-learning is sometimes synonymous with solutions supporting learning and teaching electronically or technologically (Annaraud & Singh, 2017). However, it should be noted that it is unjustified to apply the concept of e-learning to all forms of distance learning via the Internet.

At first, online learning was a solution for lifelong education and on-the-job training. Soon, however, it became a useful solution for students who could not participate in conventional class-based education (Afifi, 2011). During the pandemic, the most frequent form of online learning has been synchronous participation, where all learners are simultaneously present in front of their computers (Abbas, 2017). Communication platforms, such as Teams, Zoom or Meet have become a new virtual environment for teaching, lecture planning, dissemination of teaching materials, and even assignments (Tiwari et al., 2020).

Research on remote tourism education before the pandemic was highly optimistic; online education was viewed as an innovative solution with many benefits. It was argued that students learned content equally well as in face-to-face classes (Allen et al., 2002; Deale & White, 2012). Studies on this topic list advantages of

massive open online courses (MOOCs) (Annaraud & Singh, 2017; Lin, Cantoni & Murphy, 2018), investigate factors determining the effectiveness of e-learning from the student's perspective (Sigala, 2004), identify benefits of using Web 2.0 and social media in tourism education (Hajli & Lin, 2014) or assess the effectiveness of game-based learning in tourism (Chung-Shing, Yat-hang & Tsz Heung Agnes, 2020). Online classes were said to be particularly good for students who could not attend schools, in situation where classroom capacity was limited, or as a way of reducing the cost of regular higher education (Eraqi et al., 2011; Afifi, 2011). Since it was not limited by time and space, online education was also seen as an opportunity to ensure full participation of all students, improve the availability of support and enhance information transfer between learners (Deale & White, 2012).

Yet even before the pandemic, some researchers saw potential disadvantages of online education. Afifi (2011) pointed out that e-learning could be too focused on delivering information, while education is more than merely the provision of information. According to Eraqi et al. (2011, p. 332), "reduced social and cultural interaction can be e-learning drawbacks." Even though technologically advanced digital platforms could provide students with higher learning immersion levels and interaction, it is impossible to fully replace the teacher in the classroom (Chan, Chan & Fong, 2020). Eraqi et al. (2011) and Deale and White (2012) found that the main disadvantages of e-learning in tourism include more possibilities for academic dishonesty, the lack of sufficient IT infrastructure, reduced social and cultural interaction. Moreover, "the lack of fluidity and conversational language negatively influenced learning" (Deale & White, 2012, p. 5). A 2013 study on the use of online education in the field of tourism in Poland reported generally positive attitudes on the part of university authorities, teachers and students as well as objective barriers to its implementation, including legal, economic and technical ones (Napierała & Szkup, 2013).

Studies conducted during the pandemic have revealed new themes and new problems resulting from the widespread and long-term use of online education. The optimism and enthusiasm expressed in earlier studies have been replaced by a more skeptical and critical approach. This change is also a reflection of decreasing levels of students' satisfaction with university education during the pandemic compared to the period before the pandemic (Lee et al., 2021).

Months of online learning have led to the emergence of problems hitherto not identified in the literature. Students have been faced with new technological challenges, such as, e.g. the fact that full participation in online classes requires a fast Internet connection. This particular problem was already recognized before (Afifi, 2011) but has become more acute during the pandemic (Baloran, 2020; Rizun & Strzelecki, 2020). Although students commonly use communication technologies in their private lives, they may lack the necessary skills to use online tools, such as learning platforms (Tang et al., 2021).

Another serious challenge students have to confront is the need to organize their learning activities. The shift from face-to-face lectures to online classes, which are often asynchronous requires a lot more self-study. According to Lehmann, Hähnlein and Ifenthaler (2014), digital learning requires a higher level of student autonomy. A high level of self-regulation expected from students during the pandemic was the subject of a study by Reinhold et al. (2021). A study by Chaturvedi et al. (2021) found that in addition to self-discipline problems, online learning makes it more difficult for students to develop social skills due to the lack of peer-to-peer interactions. This aspect is particularly important in tourism education. During online courses, "some skills (e.g., guidance, food services, cooking) can hardly be taught without the instructor's direct contact and observation" (Afifi, 2011, p. 366).

During the pandemic communication has shifted from face-to-face to virtual interactions (Mheidly, Fares & Fares, 2020), limiting opportunities for nuanced, open discussions and debates. Lee et al. (2021) found that while interactions between teachers and students during the pandemic were perceived as effective, the quality of relationships and interactions between students suffered. Afifi's study of higher education in tourism in Egypt (2011) found that the lack of interaction makes e-learning less attractive and potentially less functional. Also, other pre-pandemic studies indicated that online students might lack a sense of community (Deale, 2013). A study by Aucejo et al. (2020) shows significant pandemic-related adverse effects, e.g., 13% of students have delayed their graduation, 40% have lost a job, internship, or a job offer, and 29% expect to earn less at age 35.

Psychological problems are a significant negative consequence of the excessive use of technology in education. They stem from changes in daily routine, including the lack of outdoor activity, disturbed sleeping patterns, and social distancing (Chaturvedi et al., 2021). As a result, the pandemic-driven digitalization of education is a source of stress. Kar, Kar and Kar (2021) found that respondents in their study "had moderate to severe anxiety (21.2%) and depression (15%)" and that students, among other groups, were more vulnerable to stress related mental health problems. Students' psychological well-being is also negatively affected by increased expectations they have to meet. Another cause of stress and fatigue is the large amount of time spent in front of the computer screen (Mheidly et al., 2020). In Spain, symptoms of mental health disorders were reported by 20-35% of students (Odriozola-González et al., 2020). According to Lee et al. (2021, p. 169), "a sense of fatigue among all involved in online learning and teaching continues to grow."

Some studies have also identified desirable student characteristics for online learning to be effective, which include maturity, accountability, responsibility, self-discipline, flexibility, time management skills, self-directedness, initiative, problem-solving skills, reading comprehension skills, and basic technology skills (Deale & White, 2012). Not all students have these qualities, and the lack of

mental preparedness for online self-study can lead to serious self-esteem problems and be a cause of constant stress. The prolonged use of computers and continuous stress can cause physical health problems (Mheidly et al., 2020), such as neck pain and sleep disorders (Chaturvedi et al., 2021).

In response to the negative consequences of online education, students develop strategies to cope with the stress and make the best use of their time. As Lee et al. (2020) found, they can be more resilient than is often assumed.

2.2. Appraisal and coping strategies

According to Kar et al. (2021), "having effective coping strategies for stressful situations is important as these may prevent experiences leading to stress-related psychiatric disorders". In general, coping is the process of executing a response to a potential threat (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). It refers to "the cognitive and behavioral efforts that people adopt to deal with stressful events" (Zheng, Luo & Ritchie, 2021). Coping begins with an appraisal. According to Folkman (2013), "appraisal refers to the individual's continuous evaluation of how things are going concerning his or her personal goals, values, and beliefs" (Folkman, 2013, p. 1913). "Stress appraisals include harm or loss, which refer to damage already done; appraisals of threat, which refer to the judgment that something bad might happen; and appraisals of challenge, which refer to something that may happen that offers the opportunity for mastery or gain as well as some risk" (Folkman, 2013, p. 1913). "Appraisals generate emotions that vary in quality and intensity according to the person's evaluation of personal significance (primary appraisal) and options for coping (secondary appraisal)" (Folkman, 2013, p. 1914).

Coping strategies refer to attempts to manage specific situational demands, which are complex and stressful (Thoits, 1995). There are three general approaches: problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and meaning-focused coping (Carver, Scheier & Weintraub, 1989; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000; Guo, Gan & Tong, 2013). Emotion-focused coping attempts to reduce the stress related to the situation (Carver et al., 1989) and includes adaptive strategies, such as distancing, humor, and seeking social support, or maladaptive strategies, such as escape-avoidance and blaming others (Folkman, 2013). Problem-focused coping involves attempts to alter the stressful situation and includes seeking advice, information gathering, negotiating, and problem-solving. Meaning-focused coping consists in reframing or reappraising situations positively and amplifying positive moments (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000; Folkman, 2013; Guo et al., 2013).

Reinhold et al. (2021) found that a positive general attitude towards learning involving information technologies is the critical element influencing students' ability to cope with the learning challenges during the pandemic. Chaturvedi et

al. (2021) identified activities undertaken by students to cope with the stress of remote education. The most commonly reported ones included: listening to music (19% of respondents), watching web series (13%), sleeping (9%), cooking (7%), meditation (5%). The most frequently used strategy identified in a study by Kar et al. (2021) was hoping for the best, while other common strategies included remaining busy in activities, problem solving, sharing feelings, talking to others. Interestingly, "humor as a coping strategy was significantly less likely to be associated with anxiety" (Kar et al., 2021, p. 3). Savitsky et al. (2020) identified five main coping strategies among nursing students in Israel: resilience, seeking information and consultation, mental disengagement, spiritual and not scientific sources of support, and humor. In a study by Baloran (2020), students listed coping strategies such as relaxation activities, meditation, sports, exercise, music, chatting with family and friends to relieve stress and obtain support, and using social media and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, TikTok, YouTube.

Research on the negative aspects of online education and coping strategies in this regard is still in its infancy (Tiwari et al., 2020; Reinhold et al., 2021). The following section presents the research method used in the study conducted by the author to investigate the negative aspects of remote education and how students cope with them.

3. Method

The study is an example of qualitative research typically undertaken to study new and emerging problems (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Given the pandemic situation and limited opportunities of direct contact with respondents, the survey was conducted online using Google Forms. According to Kaushal and Srivastava (2021), online surveys are becoming commonplace in qualitative research and are the most appropriate option in the current circumstances. The use of online surveys in qualitative research was justified by Braun et al. (2020, p. 642), who emphasize that "qualitative surveys are compatible with research embedded in broadly qualitative research values or paradigms."

The survey was conducted among 2nd and 3rd-year students of tourism at the Poznan University of Economics and Business (PUEB), one of Poland's oldest and most well-known schools of economics. From March 2020, the University suspended onsite classes and switched to online education. The link with an invitation to participate in the study was sent via the Microsoft Teams platform, which is the primary tool for conducting classes at PUEB.

27 students (24 females, 3 males) attending courses in the summer term of 2021 responded to the invitation, which accounts for 68% of the target group.

14 respondents were students of the 2nd year, 13 were students of the 3rd year. Their mean age was 21.37 years. Theoretical saturation (Goulding, 2002) was reached at 19 interviews, since the remaining questionnaires did not contain any new significant data.

The survey questionnaire was based on previous studies on the topic (Tiwari et al., 2020; Reinhold et al., 2021) and consisted of the following open-ended questions: (a) What are the negative aspects of online education? How do you cope with them? (b) What do you think about the technical aspects of remote education, e.g., the software used? (c) What do you do to improve your online learning? What are your strategies for success? Are they different from traditional learning (in the classroom)? An additional question was included to measure the overall level of satisfaction with online education using a 5-point Likert scale.

The students' opinions about the dark sides of online education and their coping strategies were examined by means of thematic analysis (Nowell et al., 2017), which helps to detect patterns in qualitative data. Analysis was carried out with the Atlas.ti software (version 8.4.5), which was used to categorize, code, and count dark sides of technology and methods of dealing with them listed by the respondents. The following procedure described by Nowell et al. (2017) was used to ensure thematic analysis was trustworthy:

1) Familiarization through repeated reading of the raw data to detect patterns.

2) Initial codes were generated by two researchers to simplify the problems encountered by students during online classes and their coping strategies.

3) The search for themes involved sorting and collating all relevant coded data into themes.

4) The themes were reviewed against the data by two independent researchers to find any inadequacies and make sure no important details were omitted.

5) The themes were defined and named. Following Chiou, Tien and Tang (2020), the dark sides of online education were categorized into three stages: before classes, during classes, and after classes.

6) The results were described in the final report including quoted fragments of original responses. To ensure any potential bias, the findings and interpretations were also reviewed by an external researcher.

4. Results

In general, the students were rather dissatisfied with online education ($Mean = 2$, $SD = 1$). The most frequently reported problem were technical issues occurring during classes ($N = 19$), followed by the lack of motivation, commitment, and attention ($N = 15$), and the lack of contact with peers ($N = 10$). The negative as-

pects identified at each stage were ranked in descending order from the most serious to the least important.

Stage 1. Before classes

This stage comprises factors that determine online education and are linked to conditions in which education occurs.

Difficult learning environment. Students emphasized that some of the problems with remote learning stem from the inadequacies of the environment where the learning takes place. They often share space with other people, which makes it difficult to concentrate. *If you live with your family, you often get distracted during classes by external noises e.g. a neighbor drilling behind the wall or nearby construction work on a new building* (Student 20).

Blurred boundaries between university and home. Students highlighted the problem of clearly separating the functions of space. They pointed out that the blurring of boundaries between what happens during classes and at home causes chaos and makes it difficult to taken on the role of a student: *For me places have certain functions, for example, home is the place of rest, where I switch off and forget about all my responsibilities. Because remote learning takes place in the same space, home becomes the place of work* (Student 12). This mixture of functions causes more stress and weakens students' motivation and engagement in classes. A second-year student noted *a disruption of the boundary between university (associated with exploring, learning, development, friends, fun) and home (which stands for peace, family, rest, relaxation)* (Student 27).

Stage 2. During classes

This stage includes factors resulting from the nature of online classes or arising during classes.

Technical problems. The students said they generally coped well with the technical aspects of remote education (high self-efficacy). However, problems occur when e.g., someone accidentally switches on the microphone, when the connection is interrupted or the application crashes: *During one lecture, the presenter froze at regular intervals for about 1-2 minutes. In such moments I couldn't hear what was being said. I was annoyed because it was an extremely interesting lecture* (Student 10). There were also situations where technical problems led to difficulties in completing the course or prevented students from demonstrating their knowledge or skills: *Half an hour before the exam, I lost my internet connection; I hoped they would restore it, but they didn't (...) it was very stressful* (Student 14). *The technical issues are a big problem. I have a very poor Internet connection at home, and I often lose it during classes. It is very annoying and distracting* (Student 12).

Lack of contact with peers. Regret over lost social relationships lost widespread. This problem is more often experienced by students living in small towns,

who have effectively been cut off from social, cultural, and community life: *The absence of this opportunity will certainly have a negative impact on our ability to build relationships with others* (Student 17). *As a person living outside of Poznań, I feel even more isolated from the university and new friends I have met* (Student 27).

Lack of motivation, commitment, and attention. The students' difficulties with full engagement in online classes were another serious problem, which was regarded as a negative aspect of remote education. The home environment is not conducive to concentration on the content delivered remotely. Online learning often coincides with family life and professional activities, which distract students' attention during classes and reduce the effectiveness of learning. After a few hours already spent in front of a laptop students find it difficult to persevere throughout another lecture, and the lack of personal contact with the lecturer and other people in the room just makes things worse. When their attention drops after a certain point, students are more likely to be distracted and focus on other activities.

Distractors. The presence of various distractors adds to the difficult learning environment. Distractors include the company of other household members, the ability to access entertainment easily (e.g., movies, internet), and the telephone. As a result, *it is also hard to find the motivation to turn on the laptop and listen to the class when I am at home and find many other things to do* (Student 9).

Lack of academic atmosphere. The students felt that the current situation did not allow them to discover the delights of studying thoroughly: *I hardly feel the 'atmosphere' of studying*, emphasizes a third-year student (Student 14).

Stage 3. After classes

This stage includes the effects of distance education. The respondents expressed concerns about the impact of remote education on their personal and professional lives.

Physical and mental fatigue, health problems. The students complained about eye strain and back pain. They also reported suffering from migraines, permanent fatigue, and psychological problems, such as a sense of meaninglessness, depressive states, mood swings and aversion to classes.

Decreased educational results. The students complained that online learning was much less effective and that they acquired less knowledge and fewer skills. They also said that practical activities planned in the program (in the form of a study tour) did not occur, negatively affecting their preparedness for future tourism work: *Online learning is not for me. It takes away my motivation and makes it difficult to assimilate knowledge* (Student 12). *Usually, the classes are in the form of a monologue, and we do not practice the presented content, which means we have to spend much more time to understand the topic on our own* (Student 19). Inferior results are also due to the fact that students do not put as much effort into remote education as they do in traditional education. A second-year student said it felt like

not learning at full capacity, not with the same intensity as it used to be while studying at the university (Student 27).

Stress is not only the consequence of specific negative situations caused by technical problems (stressors) but also the result of the sustained lack of a clear division between the space for learning and rest. Stress present during assignments and knowledge tests is normally caused by concerns about evaluation itself, but in online settings, it is exacerbated by potential technical problems that may make exams more difficult or even impossible to take. The realization that this situation is outside their control makes students even more stressed.

Another part of thematic analysis consisted in identifying the strategies for dealing with the negative aspects of online education. The most commonly used strategies included physical activity (N=15), using proven offline learning systems (N=9) and focusing on the positives (N=8).

Physical activity. The most frequently used coping strategy to deal with the negative aspects of remote education was physical activity, particularly long walks, daily exercise, and keeping fit. *After lectures, I try to go out for a walk, relax in the fresh air, exercise at home* (Student 11). Outdoor physical activity helps students cope with the most important adverse effects (problems with engagement and concentration). It also protects them against long-term negative consequences of continuing remote education, i.e., stress and physical and mental health problems. One way to cope with the monotony of online classes and the resulting fatigue is to participate in classes outside: *sit in the fresh air listening to lectures on your phone* (Student 21). Students indicated that even minor physical activity between classes was an excellent way to restore concentration and attention: *physical exercise helps to 'refresh' the mind* (Student 16).

The use of proven offline learning systems. One way to cope is to apply the learning methods developed in traditional education. Some students said that took conventional notes using pen and paper: *I try to take traditional notes the way I did in conventional classes, i.e., on a piece of paper. It is a substitute of normality for me* (Student 10); *Handwritten notes are the only effective way for me to learn* (Student 16). *I find it best to write in a traditional notebook and study away from the computer, which simply distracts me with the possibilities it offers* (Student 17). Another way is to print out class materials so that one does not have to read off the screen and can let eyes get some rest (a way of dealing with 'screen fatigue')

The focus on the positives. Another way of coping is to make a conscious effort to concentrate on the positive aspects and not worry about the disadvantages of remote education. This means e.g. studying in your favorite armchair with a cup of your favorite tea without having to worry about your appearance, which is a form of compensation for the disadvantages of online education. The students appreciated the advantages of remote education and enjoyed the opportunities they did not have when studying in classrooms. One student said: *for*

many months I have been able to work more and not only at weekends; I can listen to some lectures on my headphones while making dinner or cleaning (Student 22). They also appreciated the opportunity to improve their technological competence in remote education. They are aware that employers will increasingly require good ICT skills, and *remote learning was like a crash course in the use of modern technology* (Student 17). Sometimes the only consolation is that despite a challenging year with online education, *it's best to focus on the prospect of coming back to university in October* (Student 20).

Engagement in social activities. To compensate for the negative social aspects, the students reported limited participation in social activities. They usually meet their peers outside or organize small house parties. They also keep in touch using instant messaging and social media.

The pursuit of passions. One of the less commonly used strategies is using free time to pursue one's interests. A second-year student said: *I plan my holidays with the hope of being able to travel; I look for new hobbies, or I come back to those that have abandoned* (Student 27).

The support from other students. One way of dealing with technical problems is to get support from other students, in situations when a student cannot complete an assignment due to technical difficulties: *I often get in touch with friends from the faculty, and we quiz one other and explain the content we don't understand* (Student 18).

A clear separation of spaces. One strategy for dealing with the blurring of educational and leisure spaces is to clearly separate the educational space from other areas. (e.g., the desk is to be used for work, and the sofa is associated with relaxation). Headphones used during the lecture also help students to cut themselves off from the outside world. A second-year student said: *I pay a lot of attention to study/workspace hygiene - the room is for studying, the kitchen is for eating, without mixing things up* (Student 27).

Internet troubleshooting. The answer to an unstable fixed-line Internet connection is to use Internet access offered by mobile network operators. This is also a way to deal with emergencies where the loss of Internet connection would make it impossible to take an exam.

5. Discussion and conclusions

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed so much in people's lives. The post-pandemic landscape will be profoundly different from what was known and familiar before. The new normality is an opportunity to reshape the old ways and create a new order. Despite the recent proliferation of studies on e-learning in the

post-COVID era, there is still much room for research on the negative aspects of online learning and how students cope with them.

The results of the survey described above provide an indication of a certain dissatisfaction with online classes, which contrasts with the findings of studies conducted before the pandemic, whose participants were more optimistic about the online method (Chan et al., 2020). This shift in perception is the result of previously unobserved dark sides of remote learning. According to the survey, remote instruction fails to fully achieve educational goals in the field of tourism. The students said they missed practical activities (field trips), which were replaced by written assignments. These results seem to confirm earlier findings by Afifi (2011). In tourism studies, field visits are essential for creating real-world experiential learning opportunities in the natural environments of destinations (Chung-Shing et al., 2020).

Moreover, the lack of relationships with peers was regarded by the respondents as one of the most significant drawbacks of online education. These results are consistent with the study by Wong (2020), who found that the basic learning needs of relatedness are not met through online learning and the findings of Lee et al. (2021), who concluded that "the lack of face-to-face contact came to significantly and negatively affect students' sense of community and overall satisfaction." (Lee et al., 2021, p.3). Following the classification of stress appraisal proposed by Folkman (2013), students' assessments of online education focus on perceived harm or loss, i.e. the lack of contact with peers, and on threats connected with the necessity to master new technical skills.

One of the objectives of the study was to understand coping strategies used by the students. The survey revealed that physical activity was the main form of relieving stress associated with online education. In line with the findings of Chaturvedi et al. (2021), the students said they tried to enjoy their lives, pursue their hobbies and engage in social relations. Moreover, they tried to see the bright side of online classes, a strategy also reported by Reinhold et al. (2021). The strategies mentioned in the survey are consistent with the main approaches recognized by coping theories (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000; Folkman, 2013; Guo et al., 2013). They represent both problem-focused coping strategies (troubleshooting, clearly separating spaces for education, support from other students), emotion-focused coping (engaging in social activities, pursuing passions, physical activity), and meaning-focused coping (focusing on the positives).

The study contributes to the literature in various ways. Firstly, much of the research in online tourism education has focused on the advantages and benefits of the new approaches (Annaraud & Singh, 2017; Lin et al., 2018). The disadvantages of remote education identified in this study arise from the fact that online classes continued for a long period of time as an exclusive mode of instruction. By addressing the negative aspects of online education the study fills a significant

research gap in this area. Furthermore, it contributes to the discussion on how to organize tourism education in the post-COVID world. Future changes, including potential steps to strengthen the role of technology and distance education, should consider the dark sides of online classes and indicate possible ways to mitigating these negative effects.

The results of the study have important implications. First, they suggest that students would like to see a quick return to the traditional way of teaching. The study also shows that, to a large extent, after a year of online education both teachers and students have learned to make the most of it. The perceived drawbacks of online education stem from their intrinsic characteristics and there are relatively few ways to eliminate them. Second, students want to keep as much semblance of normality as possible (a clear separation between home and university space), e.g. by cultivating old-fashioned methods of taking notes and learning. Third, they expect changes from instructors. They believe that traditional form of monologue lectures is not well suited to online settings because of multiple distractions in the learning environment, which make it difficult to focus. In these circumstances, more interactive and engaging methods are preferable. Students also expect more opportunities to work in groups, discussions in a less formal atmosphere, and quizzes and games.

In view of potential new waves of the pandemic and other phenomena that may cause future shifts to remote education, more research is required to understand what can make online education more effective. The unprecedented experience of the lockdown period can be used to understand and address the key concerns associated with online education. It seems that observed behavior patterns and their causes cannot be explained without some kind of a theoretical framework, like the one provided by coping theories.

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Radzenie sobie z ciemnymi stronami kształcenia zdalnego na przykładzie studentów turystyki

Streszczenie. Nauczanie zdalne nie jest niczym nowym, ale w czasie pandemii COVID-19 z powodu konieczności zachowania dystansu społecznego stało się jedynym sposobem przekazywania wiedzy. Ta bezprecedensowa zmiana okazała się źródłem nieznanych dotąd problemów i zmusiła studentów do reakcji na nie. W artykule zbadano ciemne strony edukacji online i strategie radzenia sobie z nimi podjęte przez studentów. Podstawą teoretyczną przeprowadzonego badania i wyjaśniania reakcji adaptacyjnych studentów są teorie radzenia sobie (*coping*). Zastosowano jakościowe podejście badawcze, w ramach którego przebadano 27 studentów turystyki jednej z publicznych uczelni w Polsce. Najczęściej zgłaszanym przez studentów problemem były kwestie techniczne pojawiające się w trakcie zajęć, następnie brak motywacji, zaangażowania, trudności z utrzymaniem uwagi oraz brak kontaktu z rówieśnikami. Większość respondentów radziła sobie ze stresem spowodowanym przez negatywne aspekty edukacji zdalnej poprzez aktywność fizyczną. Uzyskane wyniki mogą przyczynić się do dyskusji nad sposobami wdrażania efektywnego i przyjaznego dla studentów nauczania zdalnego.

Słowa kluczowe: radzenie sobie, edukacja online, technologia, turystyka