

Title

Will we ever go back to normal? An international exploration of the impact of Covid-19 on tourism teaching in 5 countries

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic imposed an online teaching and learning environment around the world which impacted lecturers and students alike. Both had to navigate uncertain waters to deliver higher education which appeared to be a forgotten sector by governments, as well as dealing with life during the pandemic and changes to lifestyle not witnessed in this generation. Tourism lecturers also faced the near devastation of 'their' industry, while students saw their chances of employment in the industry dwindle.

The research project used a mixed methods to gather data from 5 countries during the pandemic and from 19 countries following the pandemic. The data included surveys of staff and students during the pandemic including 26 staff interviews, student videos and focus groups that were undertaken in the early stages of the pandemic, as well as following the return to 'normal' during the academic year 2021-22 and a survey with respondents from 19 countries. The methods sort to explore questions centred around how adaptations to the remote and to the hybrid learning environment were made by staff and students. The research team aimed to understand the differences to the learning environment and the impact on lockdowns in different countries. We sought to understand the impact of remote and hybrid teaching and learning and the possibilities for the future, following what was perceived as a return to normal in the academic year 2021-22.

The paper offers insights into the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic, benefits and challenges of remote and hybrid delivery and reports on different institutional and country approaches taken, and the return to campus. In particular the research explores the concerns raised about increased workloads, isolation and diminished motivation, as well as some of the benefits for students such as the increased flexibility of the learning environment.

Keywords: Hybrid learning, tourism education, Keyword1, Keyword2, Keyword3...

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