The “Comfort Zoom”: Preservice Teachers’ (PTs’) Perceptions on Distance Learning During the Pandemic

Yonit Nissim
Department of Education and Teaching, Tel-Hai College, Israel, yonitin@telhai.ac.il

Eitan Simon
Department of Education and Teaching, Tel-Hai College, Israel, eitans@telhai.ac.il

The study aims to evaluate in real time the level of PTs’ satisfaction with distance learning in three main aspects: lecturers, college’s functioning and self-appraisal of learning practices with distance learning in a teacher training campus. It can be defined as an action research, to understand and improve the quality of the educative process in an agile way during the crisis. Through the lens of performance improvement theory, we sought to determine if Preservice Teachers satisfaction with learning remotely would change over time because of institutional preparedness and faculty support. The sample group consisted of n=183 PTs ‘in the first semester (31% Return percentage), N=193 in the second semester (32% Return percentage) and N=284 (47% Return percentage in the third semester (out of 600 Preservice Teachers’). The findings indicate both challenges and successes. In the second and third semesters, PTs’ reported higher levels of motivation, desire to learn, concentration taking an active part in class, and interest in the studied material, focusing on the lesson and ignoring distracting factors compared to the first semester. Preservice Teachers’ coping with distance learning during the third semester were significantly better than the previous two semesters. Their evaluation of the lecturers’ at third semester was significantly higher. Preservice Teachers has perceived the lecturers’ role as an anchor of stability in the sea of change. The findings indicate the speed at which PTs’s adopted the innovative changes during the crisis. However, their evaluation of the college at the second semester was better than at the first and third semesters. These findings are important, as they shine a spotlight on associations between PTs’ satisfactions during times of change.

Keywords: comfort zoom, distance learning, Covid-19, teacher training, teacher satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic forced all PTs’ and educators around the world to move to distance learning (Winthrop, 2020: Altbach & de Wit, 2020). A situation no academic institution
had been able to predict. This was the first time that institutions of higher education had to handle an emergency that created such extensive change. Until the pandemic, teaching in most institutions of higher education in Israel, were traditional, face-to-face on campus. A new, surprising situation that was the driving motive for this research during the outbreak and the ongoing pandemic. To understand the pandemics effect on teachers training, especially on PTs’s satisfaction. The implementation of the transition to distance learning was a topic that occupied us as researchers. We try to explore the factors that influenced it.

In addition, this study aimed to draw practical conclusions that can be assimilated to improve the distance teaching and learning during the complex period.

The outbreak of the pandemic has led to a wealth of research about PTs’ handling of ERT (Edelhauser & Lupu-Dima, 2020; Liu et al., 2020; Olmos-Gómez, 2020; Peloso et al., 2020; De Pietro, 2020). As well as extensive research on distance learning during the pandemic (Lase et al., 2022; Mastan et al., 2022; Syvyi et al., 2022).

However, there remains a lack of research on the viewpoint of preservice teachers during these continuous periods. This study examines PTs’ perceptions in a teacher training college. The term "comfort zoom," describes in two words the central argument of this study, that as long as the distance learning continued, the PTs’ felt comfort in distance learning in the zoom environment. The satisfaction improvement processes that led to PTs’ comfort in distance learning via zoom platform. It aims to evaluate in real time the level of PTs’ satisfaction regarding the unexpected distance learning in three main aspects: lecturers, college’s functioning and self-appraisal of learning practices with distance learning in a teacher training campus in Israel. The research would focus on answering the following questions:

1. Has PTs’ satisfaction changed over time? This question focuses on three main dimensions: PTs’ attitudes towards ERT and distance learning, their evaluation of the teaching, and the role of the college.

2. Is there an association between PTs’ emotions and how they cope with distance learning, and their evaluation of teaching and the role of the college? If so, how meaningful is this evaluation, and what impact does it have on PTs’ commitment to the learning processes

The main goal is to examine change and improvement in the PTs’ satisfaction in this complex period in accordance with the approach of performance improvement theory (Vits & Gelders, 2002). This process provides practitioners with new knowledge about how to improve educational practices or resolve significant problems in educational using a systematic process, bridging the gap between research and practice in teacher training (Hine, 2013, Lombardi, et. al. 2022). The research conclusions can contribute to the understanding and the lack of research on distance learning in education at times of crises.
Literature Review

The pandemic forced educational institutions around the world to move to distance learning within their homes (Winthrop, 2020; Altbach & de Wit, 2020). Institutions focused on finding digital solutions for the continuity of the learning (Eder, 2020). Maintaining learning and teaching processes (Bao, 2020; Dietrich et al., 2020; Hodges et al., 2020; Zhu & Liu, 2020). All these processes had an impact on preservice teachers in their studies.

In Israel, since March 2020 and for a year and a half, institutions of higher education have had to manage widespread, ongoing disruption for three consecutive semesters. Teacher training programs shifted to distance learning, closing their campus gates. (Cohen, Davidovich et al., 2020; Donitsa-Schmidt & Ramot, 2020; Frei-Landau & Avidov-Ungar, 2022; Authors, 2021). Teacher training in Israel is a four-year academic, theoretical, pedagogical and practical study. Preservice teachers are developing different teaching skills, increasing their readiness for the teacher’s role (Maskit & Mevarech, 2013; Whitford & Barnett, 2016; Zuzovsky & Donitsa-Schmidt, 2017). Until the pandemic distance, learning had a minor part in this processes.

Emergence Remote Teaching (ERT) and Distance Learning

The term ERT became central during the pandemic, a sharp transition to ‘different learning’ in online teaching (Hodges et al., 2020). Research on ERT suggests that it enabled teachers to interact with their PTs’ through a variety of platforms by remote technological means (Baker et al., 2020; Edelhauser & Lupu-Dima, 2020; Liu et al., 2020; Carrillo & Flores, 2020). This temporary transition to teaching in an alternative manner because of the sudden crisis required alternative, improvised solutions for classroom learning (Altbach & de Wit, 2020; Stewart et al., 2022; Williamson et al., 2020). The educational system was unprepared to deal with rapid changes in teaching methods in Israel and throughout the world (Alt, 2022). Most faculty had no prior training in teaching at a distance.

There are several terms to differentiate these courses as a distinct subset of distance education; ERT (Hodges et al., 2020), emergency remote education (ERE; Williamson et al., 2020), emergency remote learning (ERL; Khalafallah et al., 2020), or emergency remote teaching environment (Whittle et al., 2020). As the pandemic continued, ERT transitioned from a technological option enriching pedagogical innovation to a forced necessity instead of an educated choice (Ali, 2021). Distance learning are completely different from planned in-classroom or hybrid courses (Branch & Dousay, 2015; Means et al., 2014). They require a significant change to learning habits and affect self-regulation (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011), as well as motivation, degree of learning, habits and advantage of resources and the timing of the studying (Sarousi et al., 2021). For distance learning to succeed, it must be planned and designing, based on pedagogical processes and teaching methods, the online instructor and PTs’, online communications, online evaluation, and the evaluation source (Agormedah et al., 2020; Branch & Dousay, 2015; Hodges et al., 2020; Authors, 2021). Evaluating the academic quality of ERT requires a focus on components that relate to the process rather than to the product (Stanger, 2020).
The “Comfort Zoom”: Preservice Teachers’ (PTs’) Perceptions …

The pandemic compelled the use of different teaching and learning approaches involving technologies, teaching skills, and learning capabilities. Educators had to find new ways to enabling ongoing learning. PTs’ had to cope with a new reality. All had to urgently and massively adapt to new methods, transitioning from in-class teaching to distance learning, mostly via the platform Zoom (Lederman, 2020a, 2020b; Wenham et al., 2020). This affected their emotional resilience and the pedagogical knowledge they had accumulated (Hodges et al., 2020). Current researches reported that while the lecturers were positive about their experience of teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, they reported the need for additional support in relation to some teaching skills, including engaging students in active learning, using their voice in class interactions, teaching values and attitudes, and implementing formative assessments. (Lombardi, et al 2022: Al-Nofli, 2022). While some transitioned successfully to distance teaching and learning others encountered obstacles and difficulties (Ali et al., 2021; Kaden, 2020).

Satisfaction with ERT and Distance Learning

The quality of distance learning is the most important factor in PTs’ satisfaction. Satisfaction” relates to a generalized evaluation of feelings and thoughts experienced by the PTs’. The variety of educational services that the institution provides to the learner. (Elliot & Healy, 2001: Nashaat et al., 2021). A range of teaching characteristics influences it: quality of the learning materials, PTs’ experience of their workloads, their attitudes towards technology, low level of skills within the pedagogical and technological environment, and general satisfaction with their learning (Baki et al., 2018; Goh & Sigala, 2020; Sarousi et al., 2021).

Examining learners’ satisfaction relates to their academic performance and accomplishments while continuously investing time and effort in their studies (Dhaqane & Afrah, 2016; He et al., 2014). That could indicate improved practices, help improve outcomes, and offer an important dimension for higher education institutions (Wang et al., 2021). Studies on PTs’ satisfaction with distance learning suggest that personal relationships between the PTs’ (Arbaugh & Hwang, 2006) and between the learners and the lecturers are very important (Pollard et al., 2014). These relationships are expressed through creating learning materials, mediating, direct teaching, and organizing the learning activities. PTs’ consider in-class interactions to be important for learning (Amir et al., 2020). Even synchronous meetings allow immediate feedback and interactions in ways similar to face-to-face meetings (Zeng & Wang, 2021).

The commitment of learners to the learning processes is another important contributor to PTs’ satisfaction. Their active participation is significant for obtaining skills and acquiring knowledge through distance learning (Babakova et al., 2021; Baker & Wick, 2020).

The lecturers’ availability and participation, adopting new methods, and applying solutions that were different from those used under routine conditions influenced PTs’ participation in digital distance learning (Karalis, 2020; Zhong et al., 2020). PTs’ involvement and commitment in the learning processes, the quality of their learning outcomes has been identified as meaningful factors in effective teaching. Creating
stability in their educational work within the technological environment during ERT (Muniz-Solaris & Coats, 2009; Stoiljković, 2020).

Distance learning may include objections to this type of teaching and learning, a lack of self-discipline, an unsuitable learning environment within the home, and feelings of loneliness, a lack of belonging to a learning group (Bao, 2020; Centers for Disease Control, 2020). Reports on an increase in anxiety, uncertainty and confusion, loss of concentration during lessons, and problems encountered at home (Durak & Čankaya, 2020; Authors, 2021). Some PTs’ expressed satisfaction with ERT because it allowed them to be flexible with their time planning, adapt their learning to their individual needs, save on travel costs, and learn from home without having to visit the university campus (Cohen, Barot et al., 2020).

The unexpected transition from frontal to distance learning rendered pedagogy secondary to technology. All the participants had to adapt themselves to a new reality with agility (Authors, 2020; Sadeghi & Kalantari, 2021). After the first semester using ERT (June 2020), we surveyed PTs’ to assess their satisfaction and to improve our practical and academic insights. We found their satisfaction to be low to medium. (Nissim & Simon, 2022). The findings led to a continuous process of improving the quality of teaching and deepening PTs’ involvement. The Teaching Quality Center was assisting college staff: training lecturers to facilitate optimal integration of technology and pedagogy and creating a Moodle course supporting distance teaching and learning, guidance videos, helpful tips, and pedagogical strategies encouraging PTs’ involvement. These processes were supposed to yield an improvement in PTs’ satisfaction as distance learning continued.

**Research Questions**

The research focused on the following research questions:

1. Has PTs’ satisfaction changed over time? This question focuses on three main dimensions: PTs’ attitudes towards ERT and distance learning, their evaluation of the teaching, and the role of the college.

2. Is there an association between PTs’ emotions and how they cope with distance learning, and their evaluation of teaching and the role of the college? If so, how meaningful is this evaluation, and what impact does it have on PTs’ commitment to the learning processes?

3. Which are the main insights through the PTs’ experiences over the three semesters?

**METHOD**

This study is the third in a series that examined changes in PTs’ satisfaction during the epidemic in three consecutive semesters (Nissim & Simon, 2020, 2022). This quantitative study conducted among PTs’ in a teacher training campus at Tel Hai College in Israel. The research toll was an attitude survey conducted among PTs’ in a teacher training college in Israel. This research tool was used in the two previous studies. This method is a process of data collection, evaluation, and intervention for improvement. The goal was to examine a positive or negative evaluative rationale and
emotional position or tendency. The questionnaire relied on validated research tools that were used and validated in previous studies and tested (Nissim & Simon, 2020, 2022). It focused on reporting an overall satisfaction (Bontempo & Morgan, 2001; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 1) and contained 16 questions grouped under three aspects: cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling), and behavioral (reacting). The network of connections between these categories will establish the degree of satisfaction of the PTs’ in all the fields individually and interwoven together. The individual satisfaction questions asks for example: “How satisfied are you with remote learning? How much do you participate in the online class? How much do you interested in the studied material? How much do the lecturers invest in remote teaching?” etc. In all questions, the PTs’ expressed their opinion using a 5-level Likert scale.

Data processing compared the PTs’ reports about satisfaction in distance learning in three consecutive semesters, focusing on general emotions regarding distance learning and distance teaching processes, evaluation of teaching methods and teachers’ attitudes toward the PTs’, and evaluation of the role of the college. In all questions, the PTs’ were asked to express their opinion using a 5-point Likert scale. After rating these items, the PTs’ could write comments verbally, which constituted a qualitative aspect.

Data were gathered via Google Drive at three different points: at the end of the first semester (T1), the end of the second semester (T2), and the end of the third semester (T3) following the pandemic outbreak.

The data were statistically analyzed using SPSS v.23 (SPSS Inc., IL). First, the data were analyzed individually for each semester; next, comparisons between the semesters were conducted for each of the three measures detailed above. The variables were validated by Cronbach’s α=0.819.

Participants

The questionnaire was sent to all 600 PTs’ on campus, who constitute a convenience sample. The research participant were in the first semester N= 183 (31% of the research population replied to the questionnaire) (84.2% women) in the second semester N=193 (32% of the research population replied to the questionnaire) (73.1% women), in the third semester N=284 (47% of the research population replied to the questionnaire) (79.2% women). The full demographic details of the study participants appear in Table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>T1: Emergency remote teaching</th>
<th>T2: Distance learning</th>
<th>T3: Planned distance learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of PTs’, N</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of women, n (%)</td>
<td>154 (84.2)</td>
<td>141 (73.1)</td>
<td>225 (79.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of age in years, mean</td>
<td>18–57 (27.47)</td>
<td>18–56 (27.47)</td>
<td>18–56 (27.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage who are single</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage studying for a bachelor’s degree in education</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The longer the distance learning continues, the more acclimatized PTs’ become to the new routine—as expressed via greater satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: The longer the pandemic situation and distance learning continues, the level of satisfaction will improve as seen through increased class participation and greater commitment to their studies.

FINDINGS

Of the three semesters, the third semester exhibited the highest significant association (r=0.724, p<0.01) between PTs’ emotions / coping with distance learning and their evaluations of the lecturers’ teaching and conduct. Thus, the more the PTs’ appreciated the lecturers’ conduct and teaching methods, the better their emotions and coping with this new reality of distance learning (Figure 1).

Figure 1
PTs’ satisfaction with lecturers’ teaching/conduct and their emotions / coping with distance learning

Table 2
Comparison of the three semesters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Semester 1 (N=183)</th>
<th>Semester 2 (N=193)</th>
<th>Semester 3 (N=284)</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotions and coping with distance learning</td>
<td>2.74 .95</td>
<td>3.43 .91</td>
<td>4.07 .76</td>
<td>133.69**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating lecturers’ teaching and conduct</td>
<td>3.12 .97</td>
<td>3.71 .92</td>
<td>4.23 .71</td>
<td>93.70**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating the role of the college</td>
<td>3.35 .94</td>
<td>3.52 .94</td>
<td>3.31 .93</td>
<td>3.04*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01.
As Table 2 shows, PTs’ emotions and coping with distance learning during the third semester were significantly better than at the end of the previous two semesters, \( F(2,657)=133.69, \ p<0.01 \). Moreover, their evaluation of the lecturers’ teaching and conduct at the end of the third semester was significantly higher than at the end of the first and second semesters, \( F(2,657)=93.69, \ p<0.01 \). However, their evaluation of the role of the college at the end of the second semester was better than at the end of the first and third semesters, \( F(2,657)=3.04, \ p<0.05 \).

Next, we analyzed the scores for each of the 16 items on the questionnaire and compared the results for the three semesters (Tables 3, 4, and 5).

Table 3
Emotions and coping with distance learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire item</th>
<th>Semester 1 (N=183)</th>
<th>Semester 2 (N=193)</th>
<th>Semester 3 (N=284)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with the distance learning?</td>
<td>2.66 1.28</td>
<td>3.64 1.27</td>
<td>4.51 .86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How motivated are you to attend lessons?</td>
<td>2.67 1.33</td>
<td>3.70 1.24</td>
<td>4.39 .91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How concentrated are you during lessons?</td>
<td>2.51 1.26</td>
<td>3.37 1.20</td>
<td>4.13 .97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what degree do you participate in class?</td>
<td>3.39 1.27</td>
<td>3.70 1.11</td>
<td>4.14 .96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what degree do you take an interest in the learning material?</td>
<td>3.17 1.29</td>
<td>3.86 1.08</td>
<td>4.21 .93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How difficult do you find the experience of distance learning?*</td>
<td>2.62 1.40</td>
<td>2.88 1.27</td>
<td>3.60 1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you easily distracted during distance learning?*</td>
<td>2.16 1.60</td>
<td>2.75 1.65</td>
<td>3.32 1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How interested are you in distance learning?</td>
<td>2.74 1.29</td>
<td>3.51 1.19</td>
<td>4.25 .98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistics following reverse scoring.

As shown in Table 3, at the end of the third semester, PTs’ were more motivated to attend class, were more focused, participated more in lessons, had a greater interest in the learned material, showed a greater interest in distance learning, and were less distracted than in the previous two semesters.
Table 4
Evaluating lecturers’ teaching and conduct

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire item</th>
<th>Semester 1 (N=183)</th>
<th>Semester 2 (N=193)</th>
<th>Semester 3 (N=284)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what degree do the lecturers invest in distance learning?</td>
<td>3.39 ± 1.23</td>
<td>3.93 ± 1.17</td>
<td>4.39 ± .81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How attentive are the lecturers to your needs?</td>
<td>3.33 ± 1.27</td>
<td>3.84 ± 1.13</td>
<td>4.21 ± .96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the level of learning through distance learning?</td>
<td>2.72 ± 1.24</td>
<td>3.50 ± 1.17</td>
<td>4.37 ± .87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The manner in which lecturers connect with their PTs’</td>
<td>3.32 ± 1.19</td>
<td>3.70 ± 1.20</td>
<td>4.19 ± .93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The degree to which lecturers talk like in a regular lecture</td>
<td>3.18 ± 1.12</td>
<td>3.74 ± 1.12</td>
<td>4.14 ± .94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The degree of variety delivered by the lecturer during distance learning</td>
<td>2.81 ± 1.24</td>
<td>3.54 ± 1.16</td>
<td>4.07 ± .96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that in the third semester, PTs’ perceive their lecturers as making greater investments in distance learning, being more attentive to PTs’ needs, and conducting the lessons using a greater variety of teaching methods than in the previous two semesters. Moreover, PTs’ in the third semester rated the level of studies and the lecturers’ relationship with the PTs’ higher than in the previous semesters. Finally, in the third semester, PTs’ stated that the lecturers talk during distance learning classes as if they are giving a regular lecture more than they did in the previous semesters.

Table 5
Evaluating the Role of the College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire item</th>
<th>Semester 1 (N=183)</th>
<th>Semester 2 (N=193)</th>
<th>Semester 3 (N=284)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the college’s conduct during the pandemic</td>
<td>3.01 ± 1.30</td>
<td>3.31 ± 1.31</td>
<td>3.48 ± 1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the classroom teaching prior to the pandemic</td>
<td>3.69 ± 1.10</td>
<td>3.73 ± 1.04</td>
<td>3.14 ± 1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows that PTs’ were more satisfied with the college’s conduct in the third semester compared with the previous semesters. However, when asked about classroom teaching in the pre-COVID-19 era, PTs’ expressed lower satisfaction in the third semester than in the previous two semesters. As shown in the table, almost all associations are significant and positive.

To validate the findings, we examined associations, using Pearson tests, between items related to emotions and to coping with distance learning, and between items related to evaluations of the lecturers’ teaching and conduct, the results are presented in Table 6. Almost all associations are significant and positive.
The “Comfort Zoom”: Preservice Teachers’ (PTs’) Perceptions of Distance Learning

Table 6
Pearson correlations between lecturers’ teaching/conduct and PTs’ emotions / coping with distance learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire item</th>
<th>Semester 1 (N=183)</th>
<th>Semester 2 (N=193)</th>
<th>Semester 3 (N=284)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with the distance learning?</td>
<td>0.575** 0.533** 0.783**</td>
<td>0.407** 0.440** 0.713**</td>
<td>0.520** 0.441** 0.685**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How motivated are you to attend lessons?</td>
<td>0.499** 0.477** 0.681**</td>
<td>0.449** 0.451** 0.700**</td>
<td>0.565** 0.517** 0.590**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How concentrated are you during lessons?</td>
<td>0.570** 0.486** 0.625**</td>
<td>0.482** 0.558** 0.747**</td>
<td>0.437** 0.424** 0.680**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what degree do you participate in class?</td>
<td>0.269** 0.281** 0.395**</td>
<td>0.345** 0.428** 0.451**</td>
<td>0.431** 0.401** 0.495**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate the level of learning during distance teaching?</td>
<td>0.554**</td>
<td>0.573**</td>
<td>0.601**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate the manner in which the lecturer connects with the PTs?</td>
<td>0.517**</td>
<td>0.409**</td>
<td>0.505**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what degree do the lecturers vary their teaching methods in distance learning?</td>
<td>0.655**</td>
<td>0.598**</td>
<td>0.665**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistics following reversed scoring.

The findings mainly conveyed that PTs’ had become accustomed to distance learning and were satisfied with this method.
DISCUSSION
The findings support Hypothesis 1, whereby the longer distance learning continues, the more PTs’ will transition from a state of disruption to one of routine, conveyed via increased PTs’ satisfaction. The findings also support Hypothesis 2, according to which the longer the distance learning continues, the greater the association between PTs’ commitment to learning and their evaluation of lecturers’ investment in the online lessons conveyed via greater participation, commitment, and satisfaction with the classes. Indeed, the values for these variables in the third semester were significantly higher than in the previous two semesters. However, PTs’ evaluation of the college’s role during this period was significantly higher in the second semester than in the first and third semesters. The findings indicate continuous improvement in the lecturers’ teaching methods, as perceived by the PTs’. Their evaluation of the lecturers at the end of the third semester were significantly higher than at the first and second semesters. This is at least partly due to initiatives introduced by the Teaching Quality Center for the benefit of the lecturers (Authors, 2022).

The college acted in an agile response. This enabled the transition from ERT to distance learning as a “new routine” under the restrictions. (Authors, 2022). The college initiated more academic, pedagogical, and technological preparations for setting up 700 hundreds courses, in planned distance learning and teaching. These steps changed the overall PTs’ satisfaction as demonstrated in the findings.

The findings are in line with previous research, whereby the academic educational system has proved that, in addition to difficulties, distance learning comprises advantages (Heled & Davidovitch, 2021). PTs’ engagement has been conceptualized as a multifaceted construct that includes emotional, behavioral, and cognitive domains (Salta et al., 2022). These findings are in line with research finding that preservice teachers who displayed resilience coped effectively with the challenges of distance teaching (Fullan, 2020). Researchers suggested that this success predicts success in future crises (Naifeld & Nissim, 2022; Nurfadillah & Suharto, 2021). Other studies however, suggested that distance teaching caused many difficulties and did not yield desirable results for PTs’ (Kruszewsksa et al., 2022; Shambour & Abu-Hashem, 2022).

CONCLUSIONS
It is easy to frame the COVID-19 era in terms of disadvantages and as an ongoing crisis combined with the loss of familiar routines. Yet it is important to also address the significant changes that have occurred in habitual processes and that have, in turn, enabled new changes.

The research illustrates the role of the lecturer in the practice of teaching, and learning at academic campus for teacher training. The processes that preservice teachers experience during their studies are the foundation for modeling for teaching and learning in different ways and platforms. The disruption that caused by the pandemic can contribute reflective thinking, practical tools for their future as teachers. The experience under the pandemic has added value for their training to become teachers. the degree of satisfaction in the changing situation indicates high levels of perseverance on the part of both lecturers and PTs’. All have entered to a new “comfort zoom”.
LIMITATIONS

The sample uses a represents of a general impression of satisfaction from a range of 700 courses in a variety of departments and disciplines. There was no focus on a specific lecturer or course. It is important to continue to examine these practices, both their positive elements implemented and their less-positive components to be improved on.

SUMMARY

This study examined PTs’ satisfaction with distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic over three consecutive semesters. The change in PTs’ satisfaction, associations between PTs’ emotions / coping with distance learning and the lecturers’ and college’s conduct. This is highly beneficial it affects the conduct of the academic institution, the lecturers, and the PTs’. All have an impact on the quality of distance learning. (Hodges et al., 2020). It is especially important in relation to teacher training programs.

REFERENCES


March 27. https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-online-learning


The “Comfort Zoom”: Preservice Teachers’ (PTs’) Perceptions


