



**Understanding National College of Ireland's International
Student's preferences during the Covid-19 pandemic.**

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Science in International Business

By

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Submitted to the National College of Ireland, August 2021

Abstract

The world is encountering an unprecedented outbreak in the name of COVID-19. There is no doubt that this virus has directly impacted everyone's lives. Education is one of the most important factors contributing to the improvement of humankind. The education sector is also one of the most heavily impacted sectors by the pandemic. COVID-19 has caused a major stir in the education sector. However, the educational needs of the world have not been hindered and the number of students has only increased since the outbreak of the pandemic. This paper aims at identifying international student's behaviours towards higher education outside of their country during the time of the pandemic. Consequently, understanding the factors that affect the decision-making process of studying abroad. This study also studies why the currently enrolled students chose the National College of Ireland over other schools to pursue education during the time of the pandemic. Moreover, the study investigates if students are satisfied or dissatisfied with the changes in the teaching approach and practices initiated due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Keywords: International Students, Pandemic, Higher Education, Covid-19 pandemic

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Acknowledgement

I received a great deal of support and assistance in this unprecedented time while writing of my dissertation.

First and foremost, I would like to appreciate my supervisor, Michelle Kelly, for her helpful ideas, remarks, and effort throughout this master thesis learning process. Her feedbacks and ideas were priceless to complete my research.

I also would like to mention the survey respondents who willingly contributed their valuable time. In addition, I would like to thank my mother for her supporting and understanding me every time of my life.

Finally, I would like to express all my loved ones, who helped me during the whole process. I will be thankful for your attention every time.

Selcuk Ahmet GUZELKARALAR

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The study examines the effects of coronavirus (Covid 19) on international students decision-making related to pursuing higher education.

A preventative response is critical to the management of any disease outbreak. However, the coronavirus caught everyone off surprise, and most countries, including international powers, were caught off guard at first. Coronavirus, one of the most devastating known viruses, has already claimed the lives of millions of people in about half of the world. (Rajagopal, 2020; OECD, 2020). Having said that, the economic development in every country has devastated. For weeks and months, the COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked chaos on a worldwide scale, with no solution in sight, affecting production, trade, human mobility and education. Major companies and retail stores have closed down especially, non-essential stores, small and medium-sized companies. Therefore, with the novel virus bringing cities and transportation systems shut down, many people stay quarantined at home. However, one of the most significantly affected areas is the education sector. (Tesar,2020) COVID-19 has affected every element of higher education. The vast number of evaluations and estimates on its potential influence on higher education focus mostly on the performance of e-learning and global student mobility, with considerably less emphasis on governance, marketing strategy, equity, and sustainability. (Altbach & Wits, 2020; Mok, 2020). The COVID-19 outbreak has had a tremendous affect on higher education growth, particularly from direct instruction to online learning and teaching style. Thus, this deadly outbreak is accepted to have rigorous effects on higher education worldwide, and especially international students have seen more unfavourable pandemic results. The Covid-19 has become a worldwide pandemic due to the rapid spread of coronavirus. The outbreak influenced over 294 thousand people in 187 countries suddenly. (World Health Organization 2020).

From elementary to university level, many higher institution have closed their doors, and international students have gone home to their parents, where they have self-quarantined. (UNESCO, 2020). In addition, most educational institutions in many nations have been closed.

For example, many schools in the United States were closed, and scheduled exams, certifications and assessment were cancelled. There are 60 million students who live in the U.S who have been adversely impacted due to the closure of a school. There is another example of the Spanish government has decided to close an educational institution. Due to the suspension of education, 11 million students impacted adversely. School closures have tremendous social, educational, and economic effects, and the disruptions. They cause affect people from all backgrounds of life. However, the influence is especially serious for disadvantaged people and their families. (UNESCO, 2020) It could also influence the academic behaviours and performance of students significantly. Thus, many actual events, as well as many social and educational activities, were cancelled.

All these results shaped student's choices throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Choice is an unavoidable aspect of human existence. Throughout one's life, he or she must make several decisions. If it is impact on the education, the choice is more crucial for their life. In the debates over higher education in the final decades of the twentieth century, the idea of consumer educational choice received a lot of attention. According to Dao and Thorpe (2015) determined nine main factors such as institution facilities and services, tuition fee, information, accessibility, structure of communication, advertising and program accession. Furthermore, quality of academic status, the level of residency, scholarship, the standard of environment, employment occasions can identified influential roles in selecting a university by graduate students (Kallio, 1995).

There is no doubt that every higher education institution considered continuing their following semester. In this way, the pandemic brought a great occasion to rethink and innovate higher education governance with an effective risk management plan to make the education sector more renewable and robust in the future. The management of higher education organization found an option to reconsider the aspect of information and communication technologies, especially virtually learning, activities and events in the institution. Educational platforms would become the new reality for educational institutions, professors, and students due to the use of technology. The technological system can help reduce the hazard of COVID-19. For example, colleagues do not need to gather in office for working resulting in helping the rate of spread of the virus. Technology allows education to be delivered from any location, even the

ease of student's own home. Teachers were required to teach electronically, and students were required to adjust to new teaching and learning approaches. The majority of academic leaders are now advocating for online education as a solution to the unprecedented issue. (UNESCO, 2020) It is critical to recognize that online education is not a one-size-fits-all replacement for face-to-face learning. Over the last decade, larger colleges have steadily moved their programs online, eliminating the need for face-to-face education. Major universities in the world, such as Harvard, Oxford, Cambridge, among other institutions, are moving in this solution (Bao, 2020; Picciano, 2017). Although online learning was thought to be a quick cure for advanced education challenges for students and lecturers. Catherine (2020) reported that there are several negative aspects concerning learning capacity and communication throughout the Coronavirus outbreak. Furthermore, with online education, numerous additional difficulties such as network troubles, insufficient power supply, distractions, low digital skills, inaccessibility, and availability concerns can all pursue practical home study. The pandemic's influence is crucial in international higher education, mainly student manoeuvrability (Altbach, Wits, 2020; Mok, 2020). Due to travel restrictions and university closures, many foreign and domestic students modified or cancelled their study abroad plans. Furthermore, higher education organizations and powerful target nations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Ireland have predicted a significant decline in arriving international students in the following semester.

1.2 Problem Statement

In the last year, the spread of Covid-19 pandemic has created how international students identified their behaviours towards higher education outside of their country and have impacted why the currently enrolled students chose the National College of Ireland over other schools to pursue education during the time of the pandemic.

With the world encountering an unprecedented outbreak in COVID-19, the use of technology has become highly important for educational and digital marketing for the management of higher institutions. However, this advancement has its disadvantages due to the lack of infrastructure and resources to support online learning. (Bao, 2020). Besides, UNESCO reported this the digital gap is a serious concern, especially for international students in rural regions. Furthermore, a common assumption is that online learning leads to negative aspects

regarding learning capacity and communication throughout the Coronavirus outbreak. Nevertheless, Duncan (2012) has confirmed that business higher education students who were studying faculty of business University in Australia performance improves during online assessments, particularly in courses that include synchronous and asynchronous interactions among students.

This research considers aims at understanding the factors that affect the decision-making process of studying abroad and why the currently enrolled students chose the National College of Ireland over other schools to pursue education during the time of the pandemic. Moreover, investigate if students are satisfied or dissatisfied with the changes in the teaching approach and practices initiated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings from this paper can be used as a reference point to formulate marketing strategies which are to be executed during an ongoing pandemic

1.3 Research Objectives

- To assess the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on student's National College of Ireland choices.
- To evaluate the effect of Covid-19 pandemic on understanding student's satisfaction.

1.4 Research Questions

The core question for this dissertation is to investigate ' Due to which factors are students enrolled and studying at the National College of Ireland during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic?' with sub-questions as follows:

- Does Covid-19 have an affect on the decision-making factors of International Students?
- Does online education system has a affect on level of satisfaction at NCI during the Covid-19 pandemic?

1.5 Research Hypotheses:

The following hypotheses will be investigated during this research:

Hypothesis One:

H₀: Corona virus has significant effect on the decision-making factors of international students.

H₁: Corona Virus has no significant effect on the decision-making factors of international Students.

Hypothesis Two:

H₂: Online education system has a significant impact on level of satisfaction at NCI during the Covid-19 pandemic.

H₃: Online Education system has no a significant impact on level of satisfaction at NCI during the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.6 Significance of Study:

The following people will benefit greatly from the findings of this study:

To the Student: It will help new and following semester students understand the colleges' level of activities and practices during a pandemic outbreak.

The management of National College of Ireland: The results of this study provide their strategy on online education platform with knowledge on the critical key performance indicators to use as a measure for improving their accessibilities and capacities.

To the Researchers: It adds to the body of existing knowledge and serves as credible reference material for numerous scholars in the digital and educational marketing and other researchers and students.

1.7 Scope of the study:

This study will understand the National College of Ireland's international student's preferences during an ongoing pandemic from this point of research. Having said that, this research will collect the information from one main question, which is that due to what kind of factors are international students enrolled and studying at the National College of Ireland throughout the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. International students in the national college of Ireland were selected as the target population because it is one of Ireland's largest higher education and Training providers.

Chapter Two: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of Corona virus Disease

Coronavirus disease is an infectious disease that first appeared in 2019 in Wuhan, China. The World Health Organization later designated it as “COVID-19,” which represents for Coronavirus Disease 2019. The Coronavirus epidemic is still regarded as one of the deadliest worldwide pandemics in decades. The fatality rate rocketed, and the ease with which it spread was alarming. According to research, older persons and those with underlying medical conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more vulnerable to acquire severe coronavirus infections. (W.H.O, 2020). Coronavirus symptoms include sore throat, runny nose, frequent coughing/sneezing, trouble breathing, and exhaustion.

Recent experiences demonstrate that changes in behaviour can benefit the control of coronavirus transmission. Some of the proposed defend to the coronavirus pandemic. These behaviours involve improved individual behaviours such as basic personal hygiene, particularly continuous handwashing with alcohol-based disinfectants, and a healthy respiratory attitude (W.H.O, 2020) . Furthermore, According to W.H.O (2020) reported that using a face mask, social distance, avoiding touching the face, and decreasing connections with others through self-isolation at home or avoiding unnecessary journeys or gatherings are all examples of protective strategies. Coronavirus is a worldwide problem requiring more action organization and worldwide collaboration to successfully manage the epidemic and deal with its affectability. As a result of that the United Nations manage the budget for 2 billion dollars to maintain global action efforts to address the pandemic. However, the pandemic problem would be more serious concern, if people do not carefully follow public health standards and guidelines.

2.2 Impact of Coronavirus Pandemic on Education

The pandemic of the coronavirus severely impacted educational organizations over the world, resulting in massive school cancellations. It caused significant interruptions in the educational program as well as professional ambitions. Many nations across the world closed schools as

part of the global campaign to combat COVID-19. Over 100 nations adopted national closures, affecting more than half of the world's student population, according to monitoring by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2020). School closures have enormous social, educational, and economic consequences, and the disruptions they produce affect individuals from all aspects of life (UNESCO 2020). However, the impact is more severe for vulnerable individuals and their families (UNESCO, 2020) and also, it would also impact the academic behaviours and performance of students significantly. In other words, if students are not occupied effectively, it can lead to laziness, which can lead to young engagement in criminal activity, lack of interest in learning, and poor academic achievement (Erika and Nicholas, 2020). There is no doubt that technology can help mitigate some of the effects of school closures, but it cannot replace the importance of face-to-face relationships between students and teachers. Furthermore, many students lack access to enabling technologies, making it difficult to utilize the capacities of learning technology throughout school closures. Given the necessity to limit the Coronavirus epidemic, the decision to close schools appears to be correct. The COVID-19 pandemic raised global demand for online education. Technology offers the ability to provide education from any place, even the comfort of one's own home. With using of technology, educational platforms would become the new reality for educational institutions, teachers, and students. During and after any pandemic, technology plays a crucial tool for providing educational, psychological, spiritual, and medical guidance or support to parents, educators, and students. Therefore, the technological system can be helpful and beneficial to minimising the risk of COVID-19. Teachers had to teach virtually, and students had to adapt to the new teaching and learning methodologies (UNESCO, 2020; WHO 2020). The move to online education provided a problem for students in nations that lacked the necessary infrastructure and resources to support online learning (Education Task 2020). The digital gap was also a significant concern, particularly for students in rural regions. This is due to the fact that students and instructors in rural regions frequently lack the equipment and knowledge required to execute remote teaching and learning (Onyema et al, 2020). Many people lack the necessary technical abilities to adopt online education. Aside from the expenditure of obtaining online education, numerous additional difficulties such as network troubles, insufficient power supply, distractions, low digital skills, inaccessibility, and availability concerns can all impede practical home study (Onyema et al, 2020). The statement also reported that there are also some challenges face of students and teachers. For example, there might be some noises which can arise internally and externally from neighbours and neighbour areas. It can be added that Poor digital capabilities, lack of digital divides, low

quality of electricity, the low standard of internet and lack of funding (Onyema et al, 2020). With all these challenges, UNESCO reported some guidelines to reduce the consequences of Coronavirus school cancellations, UNESCO created an online guide with connections to remote learning applications and other services (Catherine 2020). Students may be able to turn the problems offered by Coronavirus into an opportunity to improve their problem-solving skills and digital capabilities.

2.3 Higher Education Institution Major Countries Responses to Coronavirus Pandemic

A preventive reaction is essential to controlling any disease epidemic, but the coronavirus caught everyone off guard, and most countries, even international powers, were unprepared for the pandemic at first. Briefly, after the beginning of COVID-19, the World Health Organization provided recommendations and notifications on how to control the pandemic's transmission. Several nations implemented additional measures in addition to the W.H.O guidelines to control the diseases spread. Most of the world was shut down, and individuals were asked to work from home. Some governments have used military force to enforce coronavirus limitations and lower the number of covidots. There was a boost in demand for medical supplies such as protective gowns, sanitisers, face masks, and hand gloves. Besides, there were suspended many large gatherings events including sports, cinema including the most prestigious games and award organizations—the most effective on the education sectors. Many schools in the United States were closed, and scheduled exams and certifications and assessments were also cancelled. According to the statement, some of the schools in the United States that have been shuttered due to Coronavirus may not reopen for the remainder of the academic year (Madeline, 2020). 60 million students in the U.S have been affected due to the closure of schools. School closures in Spain impacted around 11 million students in order to slow the spread of the Coronavirus. School closures in Spain, mainly in Madrid, resulted in the suspension of job contracts for those working in the school canteen and special education (El Pais, 2020). The shutdown of schools in Spain was critical, given that the country lost 849 individuals in a single day due to Coronavirus.

The physical doors of Irish Higher Education were closed on March 12th 2020, in response to the Coronavirus pandemic around the world and as part of a national lockdown (Enterprise

Ireland,2020). Therefore, the influence on Higher Education continues to be significant. This is the unprecedented response in respect of student, academic staff and academic disciplines. With taking the decision for school closure, higher education institutions were advised to teach and support library services with online. Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, along with all other Irish higher education institutions development all associated teaching, assessment and examinations suddenly going online. (Michael 2020). Without doubt, the transition from face to face to online education teaching and implementation for all students, all subjects, and programs, as well as the rise in tension for students and especially international students as a result of the pandemic. (Burke and Dempsey 2020; Cullinane and Montacute 2020; Mohan et al. 2020).

Ireland is located in the west of Europe and a small island nation. International students choose Ireland as a cause of taking a pioneering, creative, and agile country. However, throughout this pandemic crisis, Ireland has taken some measured and supported. (enterprise ireland,2020) First and foremost, Currently, people who arrived in Ireland from another country need to stay at home for 14 days. Including high education and English Language Student. That's why every college wants students fill in the arriving document. Moreover, the government gives Pandemic Unemployment Payment is a social welfare payment for employees. An international student also benefits from this payment. (Citizensinformation,2020). Generally, many countries were closed their educational institutions. However, some counties kept their schools open as a type of contagion-control approach (Michael 2020). These are Singapore, Sweden, Brazil and Australia. The unexpected closure of schools was a helpful supporting action to prevent the spread of the epidemic, but it had some negative implications for millions of students throughout the world who were facing many obstacles in their education.

2.4 Concept of Online Education:

Technology is essential component of novel education system in the 21st century. The advancement of technology in system has evolved teachers' approaches from a conventional approach in which they were frequently seen as information dispensers to a more flexible approach in which they were seen as facilitators, trainers, and motivators to motivate students to engage and learn. (Onyema & Deborah, 2019). There are various of technology facilitates such as mobile learning, blended learning, machine learning. (Deborah, 2019). The majority

concept of education is becoming digital, and educational institutions, inclusive; students, are facing the difficulty of transitioning to online education system. The use of beneficial educational technologies develops accessibility to teaching resources such as Massive Open Online course and, multiple different learning structures to meet the need of various learners. (Onyema et al., 2019). Online education is a general category for teaching and learning online via the use of technological services and programs. The effective and success of online education system depend on factors including; the high quality of internet connections, the high standard of learning software, appropriate digital skills. Online education platforms takes a vital place for education and learning. With the high penetration of internet and mobile device technologies across the world, online system programs would be utilized to overcome educational gaps, thus decreasing the worldwide illiteracy rate (Onlineeducation.com, 2020). There are many online education platforms which can be used across the world. Some platforms are Skype.com, Google Classroom, Zoom, Whatsapp.com, Microsoft Team. With using of educational technologies, it has enhanced teaching and learning experience, course sharing, assessments, feedback, concentration, and motivation. The students wherever live can be reached. Thereby, lecturers and students can be more familiar for using educational platforms and improve their digital learning skills.

2.5 Online Learning System and the use of technology in teaching and assessment

Many comprehensive research on the benefits and drawbacks of online education for university students have been published. Online educational system is explained in the literature as “access to educational experiences through the use of some technology” (Moore et al., 2011). The introduction of the internet and the tremendous advancement of technology have highlighted the use of online learning systems, e-learning, and other kinds of remote learning based on technical solutions. (Bacow et al., 2012; Humphrey & Beard, 2014; Moore et al., 2011; Yadegari dehkordi et al., 2019). For instances, online learning systems are extremely important and provide several benefits, including enhanced technological expertise, greater instructional quality, enhanced learning outcomes, customization, and personalization. If properly implemented, it may create a perfect atmosphere for social interaction while also giving educational, social, and psychological advantages. Therefore, the technology presents many opportunities such as blogs, electronic mail, audio podcasting, video podcasting, audio and video conferences. According to survey managed by an education think-tank (2018) the

' Times Higher Education' , online education system were not able to standard teaching style in the world. The statement also says that 63% considered that many universities will be serving their graduate or undergraduate courses with online by 2030. As a result of using the technology beneficial, the universities will be reshaped by 2030. Although the e-learning system of education is noticed as approximately advanced. As reported by the survey conducted (Murphy, 2020), the online learning system will be as impressive as classroom-based methods. One other review that was released in the same year figured out that students who are taking online class had the favourable aspects of time (Murphy, 2020; UNESCO, 2020).

The use of technology and an online learning system in assessment and students' performance increases with online tests. There is a favourable and significant association between the amount of time students spend utilizing online educational programs and their final test results in the course. This result is confirmed by Duncan (2012), who discovered that higher education students' performance improves during online assessments, particularly in courses that include synchronous and asynchronous interactions among students. Furthermore, an online education program has several benefits for students and their families (Helfaya, 2019). For example, it can be said that lower tuition fee, more comfortable accessibility to instructional materials, and space constraints however, as some research has seen some obstacles. One of the statements reported that one of the highest obstacles is the high cost of implementing online learning systems (Turnbull et al., 2021). Moreover, an online education system requires a high standard of coordination by students and lecturers. Almaiah (2020) explained various challenges to online learning successful implementation, including a lack of financial assistance, a lack of confidence, management issues and technical obstacles.

2.6 Student mobility of International Higher Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic

According to the most recent UNESCO 2019 data, there were about 5.3 million foreign students globally in 2017, and these numbers have been continuously growing. In the current global health crisis, significant debates have developed to critically assess the future of internationalization of education, particularly as many begin to doubt the value and advantages that foreign education provides (Xiong et al., 2020). The COVID-19 crisis raises concerns about the future of international higher education. There is no doubt that the covid adversely

impact student mobility directly. Border barriers and travel restrictions in spring 2020 effectively ended all academic mobility, particularly student mobility, often unexpectedly, putting foreign students in extremely difficult positions. (Bilecen, 2020) The various organizations of international higher education realised the significant influences brought by coronavirus outbreaks on student mobility. According to the International Association of Universities (April 2020) has been conducted a global survey which responded approximately 90% of participants have reported that student mobility had been impacted. UNESCO (Goris 2020), research management and executive research teams have been analyzing this specific topic. In addition, the Institute of International Education (Martel,2020), British Council (Durnin, 2020) and World Education Services (Schulmann,2020). All these research structure determines at a going down of the student mobility worldwide. Marginson (2020) discusses the unfavourable effects of ongoing the pandemic on student mobility has emerged financial drawbacks to international students.

The Coronavirus enhanced the importance of each consideration of studying abroad (Marginson, 2020). According to Survey results of the British Council for Chinese Students, while asked about their main concerns when making preparations for abroad study, the percent of people 87 per cent heavily scored “personal safety” and “health and well-being” 79 per cent (Durnin, 2020). One of the most significant consequences of the sharp decline in student mobility is the economic effect on higher education institutions that rely mainly on fees from foreign students. While these are short-term or maybe even temporary problems, the Covid-19 epidemic also has long-term and long-lasting consequences. (Bilecen,2020). NAFSA (Association of International Educators 2020) recorded that the large proportion of international students’ enrolment has decreased dramatically for autumn 2020. Despite the fact that the negative impacts of the pandemic on student mobility have been recognising, some lectures and higher institutions hold positive thoughts that international student mobility will be powerful and essential after the pandemic, similar to the SARS health crisis in 2003 (Mercado, 2020).

2.7 What is the Internationalisation of Higher Education?

Globalisation has accelerated the internationalization of higher education through cross-border partnerships and student and faculty mobility. According to OECD (2010), Several factors have contributed to the increase in the number of students studying abroad since 1975. The

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report, Education at a Glance (OECD, 2010) analyses, during the early years, state efforts to develop and cultivate intellectual, cultural, social, and political relationships between nations played an important role, particularly in the framework of the European construction, where promoting mutual understanding between young Europeans was a primary policy goal.

Another source of factors of internationalization, Green et al (2010) reported several more variables influence the distribution of internationally mobile students in the future, including the physical appearance and standard of educational options in the receiving country, the performance of the coordinated national strategy to recruit international students, and the ease with which a visa can be obtained.

Commercial and economic factors may be important drivers of higher education internationalization. Shortfalls in public financing for higher education institutions by national governments may cause some to view overseas students as a strategy to adapt to future shocks. Globalisation is accelerating. (Jiang 2008). The role of this consideration believes that These organizations will define neoliberal practices in the worldwide trade of educational services across borders. The resource is knowledge and education, but the consequences for the student or institution may be underestimated.

2.8 Why Internationalise Higher Education ?

Economic justifications at the national or institutional level tend to be important considerations in seeking foreign student recruitment. However, as internationalisation grows, many higher education institutions and thinkers have sought to attack the entire notion of what they are attempting to achieve to standardise its description of it and successfully incorporate it into institutional life. Cooperation and mobility have grown into a source of income and financial advantage for organisations and national governments. The widespread availability of cross-border education delivery is a result of globalisation, as student mobility, which was previously driven by institutes in the form of exchange programs, has given way to mobility independence for students as they choose where to go when enrolling in higher education abroad (OECD 2010).

2.9 Internationalisation Of Higher education in the Irish Context

In Ireland, there are over 40 higher education institutions: 24 public higher education institutions, 7 of those are universities, 14 of those are institutes of technology, and 3 of those are special higher education colleges (HEA, 2017). International Students in higher education can consider studying in Ireland with efficient higher institution. The Ireland higher education sector serves international students effectively and sufficiently. There were 222,618 students enrolled in public higher education institutions in Ireland during the year of 2015-2016 season : 119,978 in universities, 90,150 in institutes of technology, and 12,670 in specialised higher education colleges (HEA, 2016).

According to Clarke et al (2017), there can be given some important factors why international students choose Ireland. Firstly, Ireland which is located in the Europe, it is English speaking, safe country. Moreover, the Irish higher education is headed the world class in terms of academics system. The country also is very welcoming and friendly, Dublin which is tourism attractive city, it is also capital city of Ireland. As we compare with other English-speaking countries, Ireland is quite cheaper. That is why International students choose Ireland as a result of financial situation. Furthermore, As we can added some factors such as safety, comfortable travel conditions and more flexible subject opinions.

The research reported that many international students, including EU and Non-EU, did not consider Ireland when thinking of studying foreign country initially. Actually, Some of the international students did not have any information and were not familiar with Ireland. This information particularly the fact with non-EU students. They are considered famous English-speaking countries such as the U.S.A, Canada and the U.K (Clarke et al., 2017). The study also reported that one student (EU Citizen) preferred Ireland because it was an English-speaking nation. The university had connections with the institution she chose in Ireland, had heard good things about the university before going to Ireland, and preferred to stay in the European Union. Another international student decided to study at a university where a cooperation agreement was in existence. She also concentrated on Ireland since she was aware of the country's sizeable Polish minority. Because of Brexit, she was hesitant to select the United Kingdom. International students provided a variety of reasons for studying abroad and in Ireland. They recognized that studying abroad improved their job chances, loved speaking

English and desired to study in an English-speaking nation. Ireland's position in Europe, lower tuition prices than other English-speaking nations, and the convenience of admission through institutional websites provided Ireland with an advantage over other countries (Clarke et al., 2017).

Summary

The Covid-19 issue is not simply a medical emergency; it is also an economic, political, and primarily educational problem. It has a significant influence on higher education and internationalization. This literature review has looked at the topic that identified the factors that affect the decision-making process of studying abroad during the pandemic crisis. It described the coronavirus epidemic and global responses to coronavirus abouts education sector by analysing students and their families. It also looked at how educational system has been impact of pandemic, a understanding of what it means for international students. It also described the means of internationalising of higher education and why international students prefer higher education in Ireland.

The use of technology for education seems to be at the core of any attempts to address how it will evolve in the future, especially, institutional and national resources do not have certain information about level of satisfaction and fulfilment of students with using of technology. Throughout the pandemic, the effects of the changes in education on students and which due to factors probably will be more effective in their international higher institution preference. However, as the Irish education market forces drive internationalisation, there are still several of opportunities for international students, some degree of success and flexible subjects, commercial and economic factors, physical appearance, high standard of education, and this is evident in the increasing number of student mobility to Ireland.

CHAPTER THREE: Research Methodology

3.1 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is regarded to be the core of a study. Research philosophy helps to explain the research aims by discussing the approach used to address the details. Research philosophy may also be classified as a direction for locating facts and information that are integrated with empirical declarations relevant to the study's topic (Huff, 2017). Basically, the research philosophy chosen by a researcher determines research strategy and techniques, which in part is informed by how an individual perceives the world.

For this study, the research philosophy maintained was *positivism*. Positivism is a phrase used to describe a method of studying higher education based only on scientific data such as experiments and statistics, to expose a true nature of due to which factors impact international students in the National College of Ireland during ongoing pandemic.

3.2 Research Design

The research design refers to the general approach used by a researcher to combine the different research study components logically and understandably. The descriptive survey approach was utilized to collect information from respondents using the questionnaire (Sunders, 2015). Descriptive research is one of the quantitative research approaches in which a set of variables is maintained while the rest of the variables are measured as the topic of an experiment using a scientific methodology (Sunders, 2015). This design helps the researchers describe the phenomena or activities under investigation, reporting what has occurred or is occurring and may be providing an explanation or reason for such occurrence or occurrences (Walliman, 2010).

The above viewpoints, such a design is acceptable and suitable for this study in that it allows the research to describe, evaluate and interpret the circumstances that exist in the higher institution in relation the research topic. This research design applied the quantitative method to examine international students studying at the National College of Ireland during the Coronavirus pandemic. The qualitative research aimed at understanding factors that affect the

decision-making in the pandemic of the National College of Ireland and, investigating whether international students are satisfied with changes in the learning approach and practices or not satisfied due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In other words, a descriptive research approach was used to collect data through surveys (questionnaires).

2.4 Research Method

The study used only one method by utilizing data collection via a questionnaire (quantitative). The quantitative approach was adopted to test or empirically justify their stated hypotheses.

2.5 Population of the study

A research study's population comprises all the people picked from the general population who are of interest to the researcher for a specific study. In this research, the population of a research study consists of international students who are enrolled in the National College of Ireland.

2.6 Sample size and Sampling Techniques

The basic sample size is used to solve the difficulties of surveying the whole population since it is not practicable to get the needed information due to time constraints, financial difficulties, and the population's geographical dispersion. The sample size of this study consisted of 112 international students who were studying in the National College of Ireland during this Covid-19 pandemic. The sampling technique adopted for this research study is purposive sampling, and the concept behind its use are based on randomness (Maylor, 2016).

2.7 Source of Data

The one method of data collection used were the Quantitative method. In respect of the Quantitative method, the major research instrument used was the Questionnaire.

2.8 Questionnaire

This was designed to gather the primary data for the study. The copies of the questionnaire distributed the international students were divided into three sections. Section A contained questions to assess the changing higher institution research behaviour of international students

during Covid-19 pandemic. Section B contained questions on the factors which impact on the choice of International Student. Section C contained questions on the satisfaction of International Students. The questionnaire was one structured, having close-ended questions. The copies of the questionnaire were sent to international students, accompanied by a cover letter via google-form. The close-ended questions provided a form of psychometric response scale format in which respondents determine their level of agreement to a statement in five points; (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree.

Table 3.1 Sources of Items and Statements in the Questionnaire

| s/n | | Number of Items | Source |
|-----|--------------------------|-----------------|---|
| 1 | Covid-19 Pandemic Survey | 5 | |
| 2 | Decision-making Factors | 10 | Çelik 2014; Kelimeler 2014 |
| 3 | Student Behaviours | 5 | Eskişehir University 2012; Olbertova, 2018. |
| 4 | University Behaviours | 5 | Eskişehir University 2012 ; Gregory, 2019. |

On the questionnaire, respondents were not asked to identify themselves. This privacy and informality undoubtedly increased the rate of questionnaire return and objective answer.

2.9 Method of Data Analysis

The treated and valid questionnaire copies were coded for analysis and put into SPSS. Frequency distribution, descriptive statistics, and inferential statistics were all used in data analysis (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2007).

The frequency distribution analysis was performed by calculating the number of answers attributed to each question, whilst descriptive statistics, which allowed the researcher to characterize and compare data, were relied on the descriptive analysis (Walliman, 2010).

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences 27 (SPSS) was used to perform inferential statistics on stated hypotheses.

The use of regression was adopted to evaluate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on factors of international student's preferences and the online education system impacts on the level of student's satisfaction at NCI.

2.10 Ethical Considerations

It is critical that the researcher makes it a point to ensure that the data obtained is kept anonymous, safe and only provided to the Supervisors (Panter and Sterba, 2011). The study's respondents were all made aware of their free choice to participate or decline, thus this show them confidence to explain their consent. Ethical issues such as respondents' personal privacy were considered, as were the potential risks of physical harm and unanticipated measures (Cooper,2011). Respondents' self-esteem was respected, and the core of the work was revealed to respondents before to their replies. The acquired data were examined in their entirety, and as far as feasible, objective presentation of the conclusion was kept to.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH ANALYSIS

4.0 Presentation of Data, Analysis, and Interpretation

This section focuses on results from chosen presentation, analysis, and data presentation. It begins with questions that requested replies on respondents' personal data using a questionnaire based on the study purpose.

4.1 Data Presentation

Table 4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Source: Online Survey (Google Form), 2021

| Items | | Frequency (n=112) | Percentage (%) |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Gender | Female | 47 | 42 |
| | Male | 56 | 50 |
| | Other | 9 | 8 |
| Age | 19-22 | 17 | 15,3 |
| | 23-26 | 57 | 50,9 |
| | 27-29 | 23 | 20,6 |
| | 30-33 | 7 | 6,3 |
| | 34-36 | 8 | 7,2 |
| Level of Course | Undergraduate | 29 | 25.9 |
| | Postgraduate | 83 | 78 |

Table 1 exhibits the allocation respondents' gender. A total of 112 respondents were achieved out of which 56 (50%) of them are males, 47 (42%) are females, and 9 (8%) are others. The table shows respondents age distribution. The result illustrates that majority of the participants secured for this study fell in ages range 23-26 years with 50.7%. This was followed by 27-29

and 19-22 years with 20.6% and 15.3 respectively. The table also shows that a large percentage of the respondents are postgraduate students with 83 (78%) and 29 (25.9%) of them are undergraduate students.

Table 4.1.2 Basic Information of Respondents

| Items | Frequency (n=112) | Percentage (%) |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Are you in receipt of social payment from the government during the pandemic? | | |
| Yes | 37 | 32.5 |
| No | 75 | 65.8 |
| 2. Are you in receipt of a scholarship from the university? | | |
| Yes | 46 | 40.4 |
| No | 66 | 57.9 |
| 3. Are you currently residing in Dublin? | | |
| Yes | 82 | 71.9 |
| No | 30 | 26.3 |

Source: Online Survey (Google Form), 2021

Table 4.1.2 illustrates that a total of 112 respondents were contacted for this part of questionnaire. On the social payment have been collecting by some respondents. However, majority of the respondents does not receive to get social payment during the Covid-19 pandemic; 75 (65.8%), while 37 (32.5 %) of them receipt social payment by government. Meanwhile, large sum of participants has not got any scholarship by the university with 66 (57.9%). Finally, most of respondents have been residing in Dublin with 82 (71.9%), whereas the minority of international students have accessed from their country at 30 (26.3%).

Research Question 1: Does Covid-19 have an effect on the decision-making factors of International Students?

Table: 4.1.3 Descriptive Statistics for Covid-19 Pandemic

| S/N | Items | SA | A | U | D | SD | TOTAL |
|------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Q1 | Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, international students have altered their criteria for selecting their preferred educational institution. | 15 13,4% | 42 37,5% | 23 20,5% | 24 21,4% | 8 7,1% | 112 100% |
| Q2 | I preferred to study online to avoid the various Covid-19 Conditions or effects | 14 12,5% | 13 11.6% | 21 18.8% | 39 34.8% | 25 22.3% | 112 100% |
| Q3 | I increased the time I gave for researching educational institutions after the Covid 19 pandemic started. | 34 30.4% | 31 27.7% | 8 7.1% | 25 22.3% | 14 12,5% | 112 100% |
| Q4 | Scholarships opportunities | 19 | 24 | 35 | 25 | 9 | 112 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| | provided by the various universities impacted my choice of educational institution. | 17.0% | 21.4% | 31.3% | 22,3% | 8.0% | 100% |
| Q5 | Would you agree to the statement that, “I think I did the right thing by opting to study online for my degree” | 13 11,6% | 29 25,9% | 40 35,7% | 22 19.6% | 8 7,1% | 112 100% |

Note: SA=Strongly Agree; A= Agree; N=Neutral; D= Disagree; SD= Strongly Disagree

The analysis of the COVID-19 pandemic item based on the data shown in Table 4.1.3 reveals that a large proportion of respondents agreed with the assertions that: Due to COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, international students have altered their criteria for selecting their preferred educational institution. Empirical findings also indicated that 39 (34.8%) 39 disagreed and 25 (22.3%) strongly disagreed with studying online course without Covid-19 conditions and effects. The table also exhibits that 35 (31.3 %) of the respondents neutral and the proportion of respondents in disagreed is slightly less than that of agreed with 25 (22.3%) and 24 (21.4%) respectively. Importantly, 34 (30.4%) of the participations strongly agreed and 31 (27.7%) of respondents agreed with the statement that international students have increased my browsing time during the period of Covid-19 for higher education institutions. In conclusion, when respondents were asked whether they are agreed that they think they did the right thing when I paid for an online learning service throughout the pandemic majority respondent 40 (35.7%) neutral while, 29 participations (25.9%) agreed with the claim, showing an aggregate positive confirmation of 42 (37.5%) respondents. Given the level of favourable support for the assertions, one can reasonably conclude that the appearance of the COVID-19 pandemic epidemic in international students has impacted the majority of the respondents.

Table: 4.1.4: Descriptive Statistics for Covid-19 and Decision-making Factors

| S/N | Items | SA | A | N | D | SD | Total |
|-----------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Location | | | | | | | |
| Q1 | The geographic proximity of the educational institute's country to my country or other European countries has impacted my choice. | 13 11.6% | 19 17% | 23 20.5 | 39 34.8% | 18 16.1% | 112 100% |
| Q2 | Environmental conditions and the country's lifestyle has impacted my choice | 15 13.4% | 16 14.3% | 22 19.6% | 42 37.5% | 17 15.2% | 112 100% |
| Q3 | How safe the city is where the university is located has impacted my choice. | 8 7.1% | 20 17.9% | 28 25% | 42 37.5% | 14 12.5% | 112 100% |
| Finance | | | | | | | |
| Q4 | The living expenses of the city of the school | 17 15.2% | 33 29.5% | 27 24.1% | 21 18.8% | 14 12.5% | 112 100% |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | has impacted my choice. | | | | | | |
| Q5 | Tuition fees have impacted my choice. | 25 22.3% | 41 36.6% | 19 17% | 17 15.2% | 10 8.9% | 112 100% |
| Facility | | | | | | | |
| Q6 | Social facilities (entertainment, sports, etc.) of the university campus have impacted my preference. | 6 5.4% | 29 25.9% | 20 17.9% | 40 35.7% | 17 15.2% | 112 100% |
| Q7 | The fact that there are many postgraduate job opportunities in the city where the university is located has impacted my choice. | 16 14.3% | 39 34.8% | 18 16.1% | 26 23.2% | 13 11.6% | 112 100% |
| Q8 | The level of research done in a particular institute impacted my choice of university even | 12 10.7% | 27 24.1% | 23 20.5% | 39 34.7% | 11 9.8% | 112 100% |

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | after the start of the Covid 19 pandemic. | | | | | | |
| Information & Knowledge | | | | | | | |
| Q9 | My friends' suggestions affected my choice. | 11 9.8% | 21 18.8% | 24 21.4% | 37 33% | 19 17% | 112 100% |
| Q10 | My family's suggestions and insights influenced my choice. | 14 12.5% | 35 31.3% | 23 20.5% | 22 19.6% | 18 16.1% | 112 100% |

Note: SA=Strongly Agree; A= Agree; N=Neutral; D= Disagree; SD= Strongly Disagree

The analysis of Decision-making factors item revealed the fact that most of the significant participation (foreign students) mentioned that during the pandemic: Location, finance, facility and information & knowledge are useful in making enquiries. The empirical table shows that 39 (34.8%), 42 (37.5%), 42 (37.5) of them disagreed with the claims that international students have been neglecting location factors significantly since the start of the pandemic. Importantly, the table further exhibits that a sum of 74 (66.1%) agreed and 42 (37.5%) strongly agree with the statements that they financial factors in influenced their decision-making process.

On the other hand, 40 (35.7%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that social facilities (entertainment, sports, etc.) of the university campus have impacted their preference. Finally, 37 (33%) of the respondents disagreed and 19 (17%) strongly disagreed with the statement that their friends' suggestions affected their choice while, 35 (31.3%) of them agreed and 14 (12.5%) strongly agreed with the statement that their family's suggestion

affected their choice. The statistical analysis illustrates that COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the decision-making process of international students.

4.2 Test of research Hypothesis

4.2.1 Test of Hypothesis 1:

In this section, hypothesis one produced for the study was tested using regression analysis. The result is showed below:

H₀: Corona virus has significant effect on the decision-making factors of international students.

H₁: Corona Virus has no significant effect on the decision-making factors of international Students.

| Model Summary | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Model | R | | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std Error of Estimate | |
| 1 | .618 ^a | | .382 | .377 | .45911 | |
| ANOVA | | | | | | |
| Model | Sum of Squares | | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig |
| Regression | 14.353 | | 1 | 14.353 | 68.093 | .000 ^b |
| Residual | 23.186 | | 110 | .211 | | |
| Total | 37.539 | | 111 | | | |
| Co-efficients | | | | | | |
| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| (Constant) | 1.465 | .202 | | 7.236 | .000 | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|--|-------|------|
| COVID-19 pandemic | .543 | .066 | .618 | | 8.252 | .000 |
| Independent Variable: Covid-19 Pandemic | | | | | | |
| Dependent Variable: Decision-making Factors | | | | | | |

(Source: Field 2021)

The table describes the results, which show the rate to which Covid-19 pandemic explains the variation in decision-making factors. It is represented by a R square of 0.382 and expressed as a percentage of 38%. This shows that Covid-19 pandemic accounts for only 38 percent of decision-making factors influenced amid international students, whereas the standard error estimate is .45911, which indicates error term. The table of ANOVA explained that F value is 68.093 at the level of significance of .000^b.

This implication is that Covid-19 pandemic has a significant influence on decision-making factors of international students. ($\beta = .543$; $t=8.252$; $p<0.05$). This signify that a unit change of Covid-19 pandemic will significantly lead to increase in international students' decision-making factors by 54.3%. Furthermore, the model's level of significance is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis should be refused whereas accepting the alternative hypothesis. It can thus be concluded that Covid-19 pandemic has a significant effect on international students' decision-making factors.

Research Question 2: Does online education system of University have a effect on level of international students satisfaction?

Table 4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics for Covid-19 and University and Students Behaviours

| S/N | Statements | SA | A | N | D | SD | TOTAL |
|-----|--|----|---|---|---|----|-------|
| | The Examining of University's Behaviour | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Q1 | The student support services have clear instructions and guides which work well | 8 7.1% | 47 42% | 36 32.1% | 15 13.4% | 6 5.4% | 112 100 |
| Q2 | Library service and technical support can be accessible whenever the student required it | 10 8.9% | 52 46.4% | 30 26.8% | 15 13.4% | 5 4.5% | 112 100% |
| Q3 | The website uses animation, graphics and provides high-quality information. | 15 13.4% | 42 37.5% | 31 27.7% | 20 17.9% | 4 3.6% | 112 100% |
| Q4 | The e-learning system provides me with sufficient learning content. | 9 8 | 48 42.9% | 39 34.8% | 11 9.8% | 5 4.5% | 112 100% |
| Q5 | The website and modules seem to be updated regularly | 44 39.3% | 41 36.6% | 8 7.1% | 14 12.5% | 5 4.5% | 112 100% |
| The Understanding of Student's Behaviours | | | | | | | |
| Q1 | Students experience an increasing difficulty in | 39 34.3% | 44 39.3% | 7 6.3% | 18 16.1% | 4 3.6% | 112 100% |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| | completing assignment and projects. | | | | | | |
| Q2 | Online lectures reduce motivation to learn and lead to procrastination. | 34 30.4% | 43 38.4% | 15 13.4% | 15 13.4% | 5 4.5% | 112 100% |
| Q3 | Catching up with online courses and class projects properly is difficult | 46 41.1% | 32 28.6% | 14 12.5% | 18 16.1% | 2 1.8% | 112 100% |
| Q4 | Would you agree to say that “I am satisfied with my decision to enrol for online classes?” | 13 11.6% | 41 36.6% | 32 28.6% | 22 19.6% | 4 3.6% | 112 100% |
| Q5 | Would you agree to say that “I feel that my experience with online learning has been enjoyable?” | 7 6.3% | 43 38.4% | 36 32.1% | 20 17.9% | 6 5.4% | 112 100% |

Note: SA=Strongly Agree; A= Agree; N=Neutral; D= Disagree; SD= Strongly Disagree

The table describes that the analysis of university behaviour item based on the results exhibited in Table 4.2.1 which shows a large significant number of participants supported the claims that Library service and technical support can be accessible when student required it. Statistical

results also revealed 52 (46.4%) agreed and 10 (8.9%) strongly agreed with the claim. The table also shows that a sum of 57 (37.5%) agreed and strongly agreed with the statement the higher institution’s website uses animation, graphics and provides high-quality information. Especially, 48 (42.9%) agreed while, 39 (4.8%) neutral with the statement that the e-learning system provides me with sufficient learning content. To conclude, when respondents were asked whether the website or module seems to be up date every time during online learning system; most positively confirmation distribution with 44 (39.3%) strongly agreed and 41 (36.6%) with claim.

Further, the items for student behaviours reflected that 44 (39.3%) agreed and 39 (34.3%) strongly agreed showing that out of 112 respondents. 83 (73.6%) alluded the increasing difficulty of assignment or project due to lockdown. Likewise, total of 77 (68.8%) respondents (34 strongly agreed and 43 agreed) of the participations supported that reducing motivation or procrastination in online lectures. Besides, the empirical table exhibits that 46 (41.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 32 (28.6%) of them agreed with the statement that catching up with online courses and class projects properly. Notably, a sum of 54 (48.2) respondents of them confirmed the statement that they agree to say that “I am satisfied with my decision to enrol in the online classes. Meanwhile, 43 (38.4%) respondents agreed and 7 (6.3%) strongly agreed of participations supported with the statement that they agree to say that “I feel that my experience with online learning has been enjoyable”.

4.2.2 Test of hypothesis 2:

H₂: Online education system has a significant impact on level of satisfaction at NCI during the Covid-19 pandemic.

H₃: Online Education system has no significant impact on level of satisfaction at NCI during the Covid-19 pandemic.

| Model Summary | | | | |
|----------------------|----------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std Error of Estimate |

| 1 | ,811 ^a | ,658 | ,655 | ,46482 | | |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| ANOVA | | | | | | |
| Model | Sum of Squares | | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| Regression | 45.825 | | 1 | 45.825 | 212.094 | .000 ^b |
| Residual | 23.766 | | 110 | .216 | | |
| Total | 69.591 | | 111 | | | |
| Co-efficients | | | | | | |
| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| (Constant) | .520 | .196 | | 2.645 | .009 | |
| University Behaviours | .827 | .057 | .811 | 14.563 | .000 | |
| Independent Variable: University Behaviours | | | | | | |
| Dependent Variable: International Student's Satisfaction | | | | | | |

(Source: Field 2021)

The table demonstrate the findings that showed the rate to which the variance of international students Satisfaction at National College of Ireland is explained by University Behaviours during on going the pandemic. This represented by R square which reach .658 and explained in percentage is 65.8%. This reveals that University behaviours accounts for 65.8% of international students' satisfaction at National College of Ireland during the pandemic while, the standard error estimate is ,46482 which represents error term. The table from ANOVA signifies that the importance of F is 212.094 at the point of significance of.000^b.

The implication is that university behaviours of the said items during Covid-19 pandemic have significant influence on the international students' satisfaction ($\beta=.827$; $t=14.563$; $p<0.05$).

Since the model's level of significance is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis will be declined while accepting the alternative hypothesis. It can thus be concluded that University behaviours has a significant effect on the level of satisfaction at National College of Ireland' students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Covid-19's enormous interruption has left a long lasting effect on higher education institution. It has increased the need for international students to be cautious and some essentials. Some usual habits have been changed. The effect of the pandemic is enormous on the higher institution. As we realized, the coronavirus pandemic and its long-term effects. However, it is clear that international students' attitudes and behaviours throughout the world have already shifted dramatically. Ireland, one of the countries to successfully responded the virus wave in respect of education—provides some developed insights into how students' preference and continuing education. International Student have increased to consider about health, the quality of medical system over scholarship opportunities and scientific components. Meanwhile, the responded of Covid-19 pandemic from National College of Ireland were approved. The university behaviours and online applications have been updated and useful all the time. Particularly, projects and assignments could be catch up properly even it was used online session. Finally, this dissertation concludes that National College of Ireland is striving to fill the online system gap due to lockdown. Especially, the majority of international students have been satisfied and approved the institutions reactions of this unprecedented issue and performing online education system.

CHAPTER FIVE: Discussion and Findings

Discussion

It can be interfered from the findings that effects of Covid-19 pandemic on international students and professors' engagements in online education for continued learning during the Covid-19 lockdown. Besides, the study affirms the understanding which factors that impacted on international students for selecting National College of Ireland. International students are clearly continuing educational needs and making higher education institutions struggle to keep up. To sustain the high standard of education, new online education regulations and activities are being made. It is concluded that the higher institution developed new practices to protect their educational systems and to reduce the effects of this crisis on their international students.

This research argues that the effects of Coronavirus have changed the selection criteria of international students. Several of the highlighted impacts include; lack of adequate to learning facilities such as labs, research limitation, a loss of learning motivation and interests among the students. The finding supports an earlier claim by Onyema et al., (2020) that the Coronavirus outbreak caused various issue in the education sector, resulting in reduced funding for education and inadequate facilities. It was determined from the findings that the usual habits of international students have been shaped, and some new behaviours have been added when making their choices. For example, international students considered Coronavirus Conditions, including medical system and equipment supply over the scholarship opportunities. Furthermore, international students spend more browsing time to select higher institutions. The findings also say that some of the decision factors such as facility and scientific competence of the university are no longer as important as finance and location. In addition, during the selection process of higher institution family suggestion and infusion have gained importance as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic outbreak.

The global reaction to the coronavirus has radically changed the realities of higher education institution the reaction to an event such as has resulted in an increase in technological investments such as resource accessibility and availability, as well as the need to improve creativity and innovation in learning systems to support the growing pressure on higher

education institutions. Higher education institutions that have emphasized infrastructure investment in the past will likely be able to meet this increasing demand.

It has been clearly stated that the degree of satisfaction of the students depends on the reactions of the schools during this extraordinary period. Therefore, for example, with this research, National College of Ireland's behaviours such as library service website animation and providing adequate information, technical support and module update was welcomed by the international students. These kinds of practices made the international students catching up on projects and assignments properly. As a result of that the international students in the National College of Ireland feel that experience with the online learning system has been enjoyable. Despite the fact that the number of undecided and dissatisfied students was seen at a considerable level. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that it could not prevent the increase in difficulties of their projects.

The Findings of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Corona virus has significant effect on the decision-making factors of international students.

There is a significant relationship between Covid-19 pandemic and decision-making factors. This is as a result that the majority of the respondents agree to the fact that the pandemic affected the preferences of international students. A close look at table 4.1.4 in chapter four, allows us to say that the location of campus, social facilities, scientific competence of the university, the country of geographic proximity to student's country and other European countries and suggestion of friends were not as important as they were in pre-covid times.. Besides, when we look at table 4.1.3, we realize that their preference habit such as browsing time, shifting their preference of higher institution had risen as a result of Corona virus pandemic. Thus, the higher institutions seek an increase in its the number of international students and they must see to it that mentioned factors are considered and put in place.

According to Islam and Shoron (2020), international students at both the institution put a high priority on criteria such as cost of tuition and cost of living. These findings have been advocated to our interpretation during the coronavirus pandemic. With this study, family suggestion, the rate of visiting campus significantly decrease the level of effects on international students compared to previous covid times. There is another evidence from Lewis Winsome (2019) to show our study's accuracy that the most significant factors impacting international students' decision were facility factors such as fairs, seminars and workshops. However, the effectiveness of these factors on international student decisions declined substantially due to the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak. Referencing from our interpretation in hypothesis one which can be seen in chapter 4, the findings of the study coincide with that of Onyema, Eucheria and Sharma (2020) who is of the opinion that in decision-making factors, the management of the higher institution will link to its international students preferences and their influencing factors in order to serve effectively.

Hypothesis 2 : Online education system has a significant impact on level of satisfaction at NCI during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hypothesis two result also show that there is a significant relationship between online education system and level of satisfaction of international students at the National College of Ireland. This is also seen in chapter 4 as table 4.2.1, revealed that the majority of respondents believed that university's behaviours have been taking significant steps to increase international student's satisfaction positively. It is safe to say that clear student guides, library service, technical support, using animation in website which is seen of essential of international student's behaviours affect positively. Furthermore, it can be said that the online learning system provides sufficient learning contents and updating pf module every time is significantly highlighted by the high sum of respondents who agree or strongly agree. However, the majority of respondents support the university behaviours, their motivation and difficulty of assignment is not seen as a affecting positively. Looking back at the interpretation of our hypotheses two in 4.2.1, the result has explained that it is line with that of Lin et al, (2021) who believe the rate of international student's satisfaction have impacted the university's behaviours significantly while, it is clearly to be seen that their families energy and their own activity has been lowered noticeably. In addition, referencing from Demuyakor (2020) studies, the providers of efficient

online texts, videos, audios and materials help to increase the level of satisfaction and also student perceived online education system is really helpful and useful for this time. Thereby, our interpretation is supported directly.

5.1 Research Limitations:

This study has been affected by several limitations. The first limitation is that the data was collected from small sample size from one selected institution. More significant results would be reached by a larger scale survey. The number of participations belonged to one higher institution only. In addition, all participants responded to the questionnaire via online, which is why I could not find any opportunities to talk with them face to face. As a result of that, all respondents might not represent all populations in the National College of Ireland accurately. Lastly, some of the respondents are not residents in Dublin due to the remote learning system. Therefore, there is a possibility that some respondents may not represent the international students who are currently living in Dublin in terms of location and facility factors. Due to this, some respondents were able to answer some questions which are highlighted earlier by using their prediction.

5.2 Research Implications:

The research has a variety of vulnerable applications. The findings must be of benefit to Irish educational institutions, which are located in Dublin, notably the National College of Ireland. The findings revealed some important insights and made a major contribution to understanding the motivation and satisfaction of international students when selecting a university, which will be able to assist institutions in developing policy, strategy, and implementation for attracting potential international students during this unprecedented time. Particularly, for the selected institution in this study, the research would support to increase the standard of qualities and facilities. Furthermore, the development of the college and other colleges might be able to contribute the national development of the country.

The results of the study have significant importance for the factors that international students involved in the study choose. The university implements various strategies to present students with information such as location, facility, financing, and family and friend recommendations. Thus, the management of the university would successfully develop marketing strategies at the National College of Ireland's international students.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study can say that there is a significant relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak and international students' decision-making factors; there is a significant relationship between the online education system and level of education. In view of this, the higher education institution that seeks successful online learning system during the Covid-19 pandemic. The international students' influencing factors can be turned in the positive direction of and by the educational institutions through investing effectively and improve their technological infrastructure, which is more visible and easily accessible.

Recommendation

There are some outdoor and indoor activities as maintaining precautions for Coronavirus in order to increase the motivation of students and create a friendly environment without online sessions. Therefore, the management of the higher institution should develop more social events such as city tours and meetings. Furthermore, by creating some options, including virtually city tours, online tournaments, social media activities, can keep students active even without learning sessions. In addition, with the participation of college lecturers in such trips, it can be ensured that students and lecturers communication will be better and in-class participation will be increased effectively. During these unprecedented times, the website and module can be added audio and more instructional videos to decrease any instructional problems. Besides, to influence and facilitate the decision-making factors of international students, the management of higher institutions should improve their online assistance and mentoring activities and ensure that its country can easily access their medical information through their online system such as the government website.

Appendix

Dear Participants,

My name is Selcuk Guzelkaralar and I am inviting you to participate in new research that aims to identify students' behaviors towards higher education outside of their country during the pandemic. This survey is part of the requirement for the completion of my Masters of International Business at the National College of Ireland

Research aim,

The research focuses on investigating critical factors for decision making, and it will analyse students' observation ongoing online learning system. The survey will take approximately 10 mins to complete. This research will help understand whether students are satisfied or dissatisfied with changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Besides this, the research will be a reference point to formulate marketing strategies to be executed during an ongoing pandemic

Who is eligible to participate?

Participants must be currently enrolled on the National College of Ireland and joined the online learning system. Participants also must attend some online lectures and submit an assignment

How will data be managed?

The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality. The survey does not require any personal, identifiable information such as name, email address or phone number. Also, any information which can be traced to you and participation and responses are anonymous. The data from this study will be held on a password-protected computer, to which only the researcher will have access. A report of the study will be created to meet course requirements and might be submitted for publication. However, data will be analysed on an aggregate level, and no individual participation will be identifiable

Is participation voluntary?

Yes, participation in this research voluntary. You can discontinue the study simply by closing your internet browser window. However, you will be unable to withdraw after completing the

study, as the data analysis process may have begun. As all responses are anonymous, we will not be able to identify your data.

Further Information,

If you any concerns or need clarification at any point, you can reach out to the researcher via the following email: x20163819@student.ncirl.ie (Selcuk Guzelkaralar; Researcher)

Consent for participation

By completing this survey, you consent to participate in this study and allow your survey responses to be analysed. If you do not wish to participate you can close this internet browser window.

Thank you

Selcuk Ahmet Guzelkaralar

Researcher

Demographic Description of Respondents

1-) What is you age?

2-) What is your gender?

Female Male Other

3-) What is your level of course?

Undergraduate Postgraduate

Please Tick which box is appropriate to you

1-) Are you in receipt of social payment from the government during the pandemic?

Yes No

2-) Are you in receipt of a scholarship from the university?"

Yes No

3-) Are you currently residing in Dublin?

Yes No

4-) Did you prove your English proficiency before coming to Ireland?

Yes No

The understanding Corono virus and researching Higher institution.

Responses will be measured the minimum and maximum lengths of the 5-point Likert type scale which number best reflects your situation.

| S/N | Items | SA 5 | A 4 | N 3 | D 2 | SD 1 | |
|-----|--|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--|
| Q1 | Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, international students have altered their criteria for selecting their preferred educational institution | | | | | | |
| Q2 | I preferred to study online to avoid the various Covid-19 Conditions or effects | | | | | | |
| Q3 | I increased the time I gave for researching educational institutions after the Covid 19 pandemic started. | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Q4 | Scholarship opportunities provided by the various universities impacted my choice of educational institution. | | | | | | |
| Q5 | Would you agree to the statement that, “I think I did the right thing by opting to study online for my degree”? | | | | | | |

The understanding student’s factors are enrolled and studying at university during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The questions related to this research will be gathered under the four main factors. These are Location, Facility, Information and Finance. In addition, every section will be asked questions related to its own field. Please, respond on a scale of 1 to 5 which number best reflects your situation.

Covid-19 and Decision-making Factors

| S/N | Items | SA | A | N | D | SD | |
|----------|--|----|---|---|---|----|--|
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| Location | | | | | | | |
| Q1 | The geographic proximity of the educational institute’s country to my country or other | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | European countries has impacted my choice. | | | | | | |
| Q2 | Environmental conditions and the country's lifestyle have impacted my choice | | | | | | |
| Q3 | How safe the city is where the university is located has impacted my choice | | | | | | |
| Finance | | | | | | | |
| Q4 | The living expenses of the city of the school has impacted my choice | | | | | | |
| Q5 | Tuition fees have impacted my choice. | | | | | | |
| Facility | | | | | | | |
| Q6 | Social facilities (entertainment, sports, etc.) of the university | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | campus have impacted my preference. | | | | | | |
| Q7 | The fact that there are many postgraduate job opportunities in the city where the university is located has impacted my choice. | | | | | | |
| Q8 | Due to Covid-19 The scientific competence of the university attended has impacted my preference. | | | | | | |
| Information & Knowledge | | | | | | | |
| Q9 | My friends' suggestions were effective my choice. | | | | | | |
| Q10 | My family's suggestions and insights influenced my choice. | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

The understanding the student's satisfied or dissatisfied in ongoing online class and University behaviours during the lockdown

This section will be asked some question in order to analyse your opinion about online learning and the interpretation of university services by students.. Furthermore, it will try to analyse student's experience ongoing the pandemic.

Please, respond on a scale of 1 to 5 which number best reflects your situation.

Covid-19 and University and Students Behaviours

| S/N | Statements | SA 5 | A 4 | N 3 | D 2 | SD 1 | TOTAL |
|--|--|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|-------|
| The Examining of University's Service | | | | | | | |
| Q1 | The student support services have clear instructions and guides which work well | | | | | | |
| Q2 | Library service and technical support can be accessible whenever the student required it | | | | | | |
| Q3 | The website uses animation, graphics and provides high quality information. | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Q4 | The e-learning system provides me with sufficient learning content | | | | | | |
| Q5 | The website and modules seem to be updated regularly | | | | | | |
| The Understanding of Student's Behaviours | | | | | | | |
| Q1 | Students experience an increasing difficulty in completing assignment and projects.. | | | | | | |
| Q2 | Online lectures reduce motivation to learn and lead to procrastination | | | | | | |
| Q3 | Catching up with online courses and class projects properly is difficult | | | | | | |
| Q4 | Would you agree to say that "I am satisfied with my decision to enrol for online classes?" | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Q5 | Would you agree to say that “I feel that my experience with online learning has been enjoyable?” | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

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