

TECHNOLOGY USE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC AMONG STUDENTS OF OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

UPOTREBA TEHNOLOGIJE OD STRANE STUDENATA SPECIJALNE EDUKACIJE TOKOM PANDEMIJE KOVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Due to COVID-19 pandemic faculties were closed and online educational platforms were used, which caused the process of transferring from conventional learning to online learning at majority of higher educational institutions across the world. The aim of this research was to examine types of technology students of Faculty for special education and rehabilitation own, types of technology their faculty owns, self-perceived level of proficiency in using certain programs, students' satisfaction with certain services or spaces provided to them by their faculty, students' belief in usefulness of certain aspects of technology use at their faculty, perception of usefulness of particular technologies at their faculty, as well as their opinions about technology use during lectures. The sample included 156 students and the survey distributed to respondents was a survey designed by Honeychurch & McCluckie (2007). Almost all respondents own smartphone (97.4%) and a computer, while only 26.3% of the sample owns tablet device. The programs that students believe their level of proficiency in using is excellent are internet (53.2%) and email (41%). The students are not satisfied with faculty spaces and services. Majority of the sample believes that using technology can help them in all aspects of their studies and that technology is the most useful in making them feel more connected to their peers. We recommend replicating this research again now, since the study was conducted when the COVID-19 pandemic started. We believe it is important for students, as well as teaching staff to be properly trained on how to use technology.

Key words: technology, faculty, satisfaction, students.

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SAŽETAK

Usled KOVID-19 pandemije, fakulteti su bili zatvoreni i korišćene su onlajn edukativne platforme, koje su dovele do prelaza sa tradicionalne nastave na onlajn učenje na većini ustanova za visoko obrazovanje širom sveta. Cilj ovog rada je da ispita koje tipove tehnologije poseduju studenti Fakulteta za specijalnu edukaciju i rehabilitaciju, koju tehnologiju poseduje njihov fakultet, samoevaluaciju njihovih veština korišćenja određenih programa, zadovoljstvo studenata sa određenim servisima i prostorijama na fakultetu, njihove stavove o korisnosti primene određenih uređaja u sklopu njihovog fakulteta, kao i njihova mišljenja o primeni tehnologije na nastavi. Uzorak je obuhvatio 156 studenata i upitnik je preuzet od Haničurča i MekKlakija (Honeychurch & McCluckie, 2007). Skoro svi ispitanici poseduju smart telefon i kompjuter (97.4%), dok samo 26.3% uzorka poseduje tablet. Studenti veruju da odlično znaju da koriste internet (53.2%) i imejl (41%). Studenti nisu zadovoljni fakultetskim servisima i prostorijama. Većina uzorka veruje da primena tehnologije može da im pomogne u svim aspektima studija, a da najviše može da doprinese osećaju povezanosti sa ostalim studentima. Preporučujemo replikaciju istraživanja, imajući u vidu da je ovo istraživanje sprovedeno na početku KOVID-19 pandemije. Smatramo da je važno da studenti i nastavničko osoblje na fakultetima imaju adekvatnu obuku o primeni tehnologije.

Ključne riječi: tehnologija, fakultet, zadovoljstvo, studenti.

INTRODUCTION

In March 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic Faculties were closed (Ewing & Cooper, 2021) and online educational platforms were used, in order to allow students to continue their education, which caused the process of transferring from conventional learning to online learning at majority of higher educational institutions across the world (Ratnaningsih et al., 2021). This change affected up to 82% of students, who now had to attend some form of online education (Bašić et al., 2020). Even though remote online education was already present in many higher educational institutions (Heradio et al., 2016) due to technological development that characterizes twenty-first century (Bašić et al., 2020; Bernard et al., 2009), for majority of faculty members and students this was the first time to use the online teaching platforms.

COVID-19 pandemic brought different problems in different life aspects to everyone (Ahorsu et al., 2020; Pappas et al., 2009), however in the educational domain, it brought fear to university professors and students about the imposed use of technology (Saeed Al-Maroof et al., 2020). Teaching personnel at universities, as well as students were challenged with the use of technology in higher education, because of their insufficient proficiency level in programs used (Li et al., 2018). The research conducted by Ratnaningsih et al. (2021) with the aim of examining the knowledge of students of using certain types of technology that were used in their educational institutions in the time of pandemic. The results of his study showed that students do not have enough knowledge and need to improve their technological literacy skills.

Some faculties have undergone the process of adopting technology use in the process of teaching students for the first time and professors had the challenge of learning how to engage students during virtual classes (Shenoy et al., 2020).

Faculty professors were not sure on how to know if the student is engaged in classes and how to keep them interested (Ewing & Cooper, 2021), even though some authors claim that this can even increase student engagement in classes (Shenoy et al., 2020)

In a research conducted in our region prior to COVID-19 pandemic that was focused on students of Special education and rehabilitation, more than 78.4 % of students stated that they would find very useful if they could access recordings of the classes that they already attended (Maćešić-Petrović et al., 2020) and if technology was used in their classes. However, this new imposed situation was sudden and the insufficient knowledge about the use of those online learning systems caused fear to students about this new educational environment and how it could reflect to their educational success (Mac Callum & Jeffrey, 2014). The research conducted by Saeed Al-Maroof et al. (2020) with the aim of examining feelings towards the use of technology and online teaching at universities during COVID-19 pandemic showed that many students had fear that they will fail at their education because of technology use. The research also showed that main factors that contributed to that fear were self-perceived proficiency of the students in using some of these online study platforms and online teaching programs.

The research conducted in India by Shenoy et al. (2020) included 20 faculties about the emotions towards use of technology in higher education. Authors claim that even though the use of technology in this amount in higher education was imposed due to COVID-19 restrictions, it can be viewed as a revolutionary change which made students and professors adopt the technology as a normal way of teaching and it can be viewed as something that can bring nice changes in the future of higher education. They also state that this change possibly can lead to the change of mindset of faculty members and more frequent use of technology in teaching in the future, even after the pandemic is over.

The aim of this research was to examine types of technology students of Faculty for special education and rehabilitation own, types of technology their faculty owns, self-perceived level of proficiency in using certain programs, students' satisfaction with certain services or spaces provided to them by their faculty, students' belief in usefulness of certain aspects of technology use at their faculty, perception of usefulness of particular technologies at their faculty, as well as their opinions about technology use during lectures.

METHOD

Sample

The sample included 156 students of Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, 14 male (9%) and 142 female (91%). Age distribution of respondents is given in Table 1.

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Table 1. Age distribution of the sample

	f	%
Less than 20 years old	36	23.1%
21-25 years old	118	75.6%
26-30 years old	2	1.3%

Instrument

The survey distributed to respondents was a modified survey designed by Honeychurch & McCluckie (2007) and it contained of seven parts.

The first part examined if students own certain types of technology. The list consisted of four technology types and students had to mark if they own if or do not and if they did not own it, they had to mark if they plan on buying the mentioned device in the next 12 months or not.

The second part of the survey contained same types of technology as the first part, but the question imposed to respondents was if their faculty owns any of those devices with dichotomous yes and no responses, and if yes, do they use their own device or the one provided by their faculty.

The third part of the survey examined students self-perceived level of proficiency in using certain programs and contained of the list of 13 different programs and the responses were recorded on a five-step Likert type scale (1 = I do not know how to use it, 2 = I know a little, 3 = Medium level, 4 = Good and 5 = Excellent).

The fourth part of the survey examined students' satisfaction with certain services or spaces provided by their faculty. The list included 25 items and the students could mark if their faculty owns this service/space or not. If they marked that the faculty owns it, they had to rate them on a five-step Likert type scale (1 = Bad, 2 = Not bad, 3 = I do not have an opinion, 4 = Good and 5 = Excellent).

The fifth part of the survey measured students' belief in usefulness of certain aspects of technology use at their faculty. It consisted of seven items listed as statements and they had to mark on a five-step Likert type scale their level of agreement with those statements (1 = Do not agree, 2 = Mostly do not agree, 3 = I do not have an opinion, 4 = Mostly agree and 5 = Agree).

The sixth part measured students' perception of usefulness of particular technologies at their faculty. This part consisted of 23 items also listed as statements where they had to mark on a six-step Likert type scale their level of agreement with those statements (1 = Not at all, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = I do not have and opinion, 4 = Useful, 5 = Very useful, 6 = I do not know).

Last part of the survey consisted of 14 statements regarding respondents opinions about technology use during lectures and their answers were recorded on a six-step Likert type scale about their level of agreement about those statements (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree, 6 = I do not know).

In addition to the mentioned survey, we included questions regarding their gender and age.

Survey distribution and statistical analysis

The survey made in *Google Questionnaire* program was distributed to the students through their email addresses at the time COVID-19 pandemic started (March 2020). The students were told that their involvement in the study is anonymous and voluntary and that data collected will be used for research purposes. After one week, students' responses were gathered and extracted to SPSS Program (*Statistical Package for Social Sciences*). Descriptive analysis of respondents' responses was conducted and we presented results as frequencies and percentages for every part of the survey.

RESULTS AND DUSCUSSION

Results regarding students' access to certain types of technology are presented in Table 2. Almost all respondents own smartphone (97.4%) and those who do not own it, do not plan on buying it at all. A large number of students own a laptop computer (89.1%) and out of those who do not own it, majority plans on buying it in the future (7.1%). Since most respondents indicated they own a laptop computer, it is reasonable that they do not own two computers (laptop and desktop one) and do not even plan on buying the desktop computer in the future (39.7%). Results regarding tablet device are interesting, with only 26.3% of the respondents owning tablet device and out of those who do not, most of them do not even plans on buying it (69.2%).

Table 2. Students access to certain types of technology

Do you own	Y	Yes		lan on buying xt 12 months	No, and I do not plan to buy it	
these devices	f	%	f	%	f	%
Desktop computer	92	59%	2	1.3%	62	39.7%
Laptop computer	139	89.1%	11	7.1%	6	3.8%
Smartphone	152	97.4%	/	/	4	2.6%
Tablet	41	26.3%	7	4.5%	108	69.2%

Majority of students state that their faculty owns desktop computers (66.7%), while other types of technology are less prevalent. Perhaps this number of students indicated that their faculty does not own majority of these devices, because they did not know if devices are owned by faculty or professors themselves (Table 3).

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Table 3. Faculties access to certain types of technology

Does your faculty own	Yes		,	am using my own		No	
these devices	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Desktop computer	104	66.7%	17	10.9%	35	22.4%	
Laptop computer	8	5.1%	9	5.8%	139	89.1%	
Smartphone	2	1.3%	3	8.3%	141	90.4%	
Tablet	3	1.9%	1	0.6%	152	97.4%	

The programs that students believe their level of proficiency in using is excellent are internet (53.2%) and email (41%), but still it is surprising that less than 50% of the sample believes they can use email, which is something necessary for effective studying. Internet was also something that no one claimed not to know how to use it, as well as programs for text processing. None of the students believe they have excellent proficiency in using sound editing programs and 1.3% of students believe they can excellently use programs for making web pages. More than half of the sample stated that they do not know how to use programs for graphic design (57.7%), as well as webpage development programs (62.2%). The results regarding all programs listed in the survey and students self-perceived level of proficiency are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Students self-perceived level of proficiency in using certain programs

Rate your skills in the use of the following programs	I do not know how to use	I know a little	Medium level	Good	Excellent
Programs for text processing (eg. Microsoft Office Word)	/	9%	32.7%	42.3%	16%
Programs that are based on					
tables (eg. Microsoft Office	10.9%	33.3%	30.1%	19.9%	5.8%
Excel)					
Programs for making presentations (eg. Microsoft	1.3%	9%	21.8%	42.9%	25%
Office PowerPoint)	1.570	770	21.070	72.770	2570
E-mail	0.6%	1.3%	14.1%	42.9%	41%
Internet	/	3.8%	6.4%	36.5%	53.2%
Databases	10.3%	19.9%	32.7%	30.1%	7.1%
Programs for making multimedia content	30.1%	27.6%	24.4%	13.5%	4.5%
Programs for graphical design	57.7%	23.7%	12.8%	3.2%	2.6%
Programs for sound editing	59%	24.4%	13.5%	3.2%	/
Programs for video editing	38.5%	37.8%	14.7%	6.4%	2.6%
Program for making web pages	62.2%	24.4%	9%	3.2%	1.3%
Program for online studying	30.8%	30.1%	23.1%	10.9%	5.1%
Social networks, blogs, YouTube (web 2 tools)	4.5%	13.5%	12.2%	37.8%	32.1%

Table 5 shows the results regarding students' satisfaction with services or spaces provided by their faculty. Almost all services were graded excellent by less than 3% of the students, with the exception of faculty web page (8.3%), but still this is still the small number of students who are satisfied with it. The students are least satisfied with access to internet at their faculty (44.2%) and the internet speed (41.7%).

Table 5. Students' satisfaction with services or spaces provided by their faculty

Rate your experiences with the following services or spaces provided by your faculty	Bad	Not bad	I do not have an opinion	Good	Excellent	Faculty does not own this service/space
Lecture halls	9%	25%	16.7%	42.3%	7.1%	/
Classrooms with computers	19.2%	25%	25.6%	16.7%	1.9%	11.5%
Faculty e-mails	9%	27.6%	25.6%	30.1%	2.6%	5.1%
Programs for online studying	23.1%	7.1%	38.5%	3.8%	1.3%	26.3%
Web page	10.9%	25%	15.4%	40.4%	8.3%	/
Internet speed	41.7%	18.6%	19.9%	9%	/	10.9%
Access to Internet Virtual online	44.2%	23.1%	16.7%	5.8%	/	10.3%
technologies (eg. cloud storage)	16%	19.2%	44.2%	3.8%	0.6%	16%
Access to software	14.1%	17.3%	46.2%	5.8%	/	16.7%
Free access to software needed for lectures	17.3%	16%	41%	7.7%	0.6%	17.3%
Device maintenance	12.8%	25.6%	41.7%	9%	1.3%	9.6%
Access to databases	10.9%	21.2%	46.8%	9.6%	1.3%	10.3%
Graphic data display software	14.1%	14.1%	53.8%	3.8%	0.6%	13.5%
Software for references or citations	13.5%	14.7%	49.4%	5.8%	1.3%	15.4%
Plagiarism detection software	11.5%	12.2%	56.4%	4.5%	0.6%	14.7%
Base for sharing research papers	10.9%	14.7%	53.8%	7.1%	1.3%	12.2%
Online magazines	15.4%	13.5%	45.5%	7.1%	/	18.6%
Online books	17.9%	17.3%	36.5%	12.8%	1.9%	13.5%
Online citations software	12.2%	13.5%	52.6%	5.8%	0.6%	15.4%
Bibliographic databases	11.5%	10.9%	57.7%	7.7%	1.3%	10.9%
Online newspapers	14.1%	13.5%	49.4%	3.8%	2.6%	16.7%
Online PhD dissertations base	10.3%	13.5%	55.8%	7.7%	1.9%	10.9%
Patent databases	13.5%	10.3%	59%	1.3%	/	16%
Online conference proceedings	9.6%	15.4%	53.8%	7.1%	1.3%	12.8%
Statistical databases	10.3%	15.4%	57.1%	4.5%	1.3%	11.5%

Majority of the sample believes that using technology can help them in all aspects listed in Table 6. They believe technology can help them get better results in their subjects (35.3%), will help them understand subject matter better (37.2%), make working on subjects more efficient (39.7%). However, students believe that technology will motivate them to research different topics (38.5%) (Table 6).

Table 6. Students' belief in usefulness of certain aspects of technology use

I want to use technology in my	Do not	Mostly do	I do not	Mostly	Agree
studies because it	agree	not agree	have an	agree	
			opinion		
Will help me get better results	9.6%	14.1%	26.9%	14.1%	35.3%
in my subjects					
Will help me understand the	9%	15.4%	18.6%	19.9%	37.2%
subject material more deeply					
Makes it more convenient to	12.8%	9.6%	21.2%	16.7%	39.7%
complete work in my subjects					
Will motivate me to research	10.9%	10.9%	17.3%	22.4%	38.5%
different topics					
Will enable better cooperation	12.2%	13.5%	17.3%	14.7%	42.3%
with students from my faculty					
and other faculties					
Will improve my	13.5%	13.5%	11.5%	20.5%	41%
IT/information management					
skills in general					
Will improve my career of	11.5%	8.3%	24.4%	16.7%	39.1%
employment prospects in the					
long term					

Over half of the sample believe that technology could be very useful in their faculty for accessing audio or video recordings of their lectures (50.6%) and in receiving administrative information about their courses (56.4%). The least useful for them would be to keep their own blog as a part of course requirement (25.6%), contribute to other blogs (21.2%), design and build web pages (15.4%) and develop Wikipedia pages (14.7%) (Table 7).

Table 7. Students' perception of usefulness of particular technologies at their faculty

Table 7. Students' perception of t						
I think it will be useful in my	Not	Sometimes	I do not	Useful	Very	Do
university studies to	at all		have and		useful	not
3			opinion			know
Design and build web pages as part of	15.4%	16%	17.3%	27.6%	17.9%	5.8%
your course	13.470	1070	17.370	27.070	17.570	3.070
Create and present multimedia shows as	5.8%	7.7%	8.3%	31.4%	46.2%	0.6%
part of your course requirements		,.	0.07.0			
Create and present audio/video as part of	4.5%	14.1%	9.6%	39.1%	30.8%	1.9%
your course requirements						
Download or access online audio/video	2.6%	10.9%	5.8%	30.8%	48.1%	1.9%
recordings of lectures you did not attend						
Download or access online audio/video	1.3%	9%	5.1%	32.1%	50.6%	1.9%
recordings to revise content of lectures						
you have already been to	4.00/	-	0.04	27.004	44.00	4.00/
Download or access online audio/video	1.3%	7.7%	9%	35.9%	44.2%	1.9%
recordings of supplementary content						
material	1.9%	5.8%	12.2%	30.1%	48.1%	1.9%
Online access to faculty services Accessing faculty services via mobile	1.9%	5.8% 5.8%	8.3%	35.3%	48.1% 46.8%	1.9% 1.9%
phone	1.970	3.670	0.570	33.370	40.070	1.970
Use instant messaging/chat on the web to	1.3%	5.8%	16%	35.9%	38.5%	2.6%
communicate/collaborate with other	1.570	2.070	1070	33.770	30.370	2.070
students in the course						
Use instant messaging/chat on the web to	3.8%	6.4%	18.6%	41.7%	28.2%	1.3%
communicate with lecturing and						
administrating staff from the course						
Use social networking software on the	1.9%	5.8%	14.1%	41.7%	35.9%	0.6%
web to communicate/collaborate with						
other students in the course						
Use microblogging to share information	7.7%	10.3%	21.8%	34%	22.4%	3.8%
about courses	25.60/	12.20/	20.50/	15.00/	C 40/	0.20/
Keep your own blog as part of your	25.6%	12.2%	29.5%	17.9%	6.4%	8.3%
course requirements Contribute to another blog as part of your	21.2%	14.1%	33.3%	16.7%	5.8%	9%
course requirements	21.270	14.170	33.3%	10.770	3.6%	970
Use the web to share digital files related	0.6%	6.4%	11.5%	39.7%	41%	0.6%
to your course	0.070	0.470	11.570	37.170	71/0	0.070
Use web conferencing or video chat to	9%	10.9%	32.1%	27.6%	17.3%	3.2%
communicate/collaborate with other	- / -			_,,,,,		
students in the course						
Receive administrative information about	0.6%	5.8%	9%	28.2%	56.4%	/
the courses						
Receive administrative information about	6.4%	5.8%	15.4%	25.6%	45.5%	1.3%
the course via text message on your						
mobile phone						
Contribute with other students to the	14.7%	12.2%	28.8%	24.4%	17.3%	2.6%
development of the wiki as part of your						
course requirements	10.00/	7.70/	17.20/	26.00/	21 40/	4.50/
Receive grade/marks from your lecturer	12.2%	7.7%	17.3%	26.9%	31.4%	4.5%
via text message on your mobile phone	00/	7.70/	10.70/	22 10/	20.00/	2.00/
Receive pre-class discussion question	9%	7.7%	18.6%	32.1%	28.8%	3.8%
from your lecturer via text message on your phone						
Receive information about grades/courses	3.2%	6.4%	10.9%	31.4%	44.9%	3.2%
via personal web page on the web page of	J.2/0	U. T /0	10.7/0	J1.7/0	TT. 2/0	2.2/0
the faculty						
Use online portfolio system to record	3.2%	3.8%	19.9%	39.7%	32.7%	0.6%
achievements throughout your studies						

The statement regarding students' opinions about technology use during lectures that most students strongly agreed with refers to the fact that they believe that technology makes them more connected to their peers (23.7%). On the contrary, 17.3% of the respondents strongly disagree with statement that technology use interferes with their ability to focus during lectures (Table 8).

Table 8. Opinion about technology use during lectures

How much do you agree with the following statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	I do not know
I am more engaged in courses	5.1%	20.5%	37.2%	25.6%	5.8%	5.8%
that use technology	3.170	20.370	37.270	23.070	3.670	3.070
I would miss classes if we had	5.8%	31.4%	27.6%	21.8%	9.6%	3.8%
online video recordings of	3.070	31.470	27.070	21.070	7.070	3.070
lectures						
When I enrolled my studies I	4.5%	12.8%	28.8%	33.3%	13.5%	7.1%
was properly prepared for using	1.5 70	12.070	20.070	33.370	13.370	7.170
technology						
The use of technology makes	3.8%	13.5%	24.4%	37.8%	12.8%	7.7%
me more involved at the	2.070	10.070	2,5	671676	12.070	,,,,,
lectures						
The use of technology makes	1.9%	3.8%	20.5%	47.4%	23.7%	2.6%
me more connected to the other						
students						
The use of technology makes	1.9%	6.4%	26.9%	44.9%	15.4%	4.5%
me more connected with the						
professors						
The use of technology interferes	17.3%	46.2%	18.6%	9.6%	5.1%	3.2%
with my ability to concentrate						
during lectures						
I worry that advances in	8.3%	32.1%	28.8%	12.8%	7.7%	10.3%
technology may invade my						
privacy						
I worry about internet security	4.5%	24.4%	30.8%	26.3%	8.3%	5.8%
(password protection, hacking)						
When I use my mobile phone	3.2%	26.9%	28.8%	28.8%	9%	3.2%
while I am attending the lecture						
I cannot focus						
When I use my mobile phone	5.1%	17.9%	27.6%	28.2%	7.1%	14.1%
while on the lectures, I believe						
it bothers my professors						
Using tablets or laptops	2.6%	14.7%	29.5%	34%	4.5%	14.7%
improves my commitment to						
lectures	7.10/	22.10/	20.00/	20.50/	5 10/	C 10/
Using technology devices	7.1%	32.1%	28.8%	20.5%	5.1%	6.4%
sometimes interferes with my						
ability to focus on preforming						
important tasks	1.00/	2.20/	24.40/	47.40/	15 40/	7.70/
I would like my professors to	1.9%	3.2%	24.4%	47.4%	15.4%	7.7%
use and integrate technology						
into their lectures						

It is important to highlight that the sample distribution did not include a lot of male respondents, because Faculty for special education and rehabilitation, as well as other faculties in the humanities field have more female students (Arsić et al., 2021). Therefore, we did not compare the results in terms of gender, because the gender distribution was not representative.

Since technology is present in many peoples' lives, it is not surprising that most of the students own a smartphone and computer. However, tablet is not something that was owned by students. This is possibly because economic situation does not permit them to have a range of technologies. In order to address economical differences among students, some Faculties provided free access to some of the online teaching platforms, as well as free internet access to students (Ratnaningsih et al., 2021), which is a great thing that emerged due to COVID-19 changes.

The results regarding students self-perceived level of proficiency in using certain programs are not surprising, since the sample consisted of students of Faculty for special education, since there are no subjects in the faculty curriculum that focus on developing students computer skills. However, it is surprising that majority of the students from the sample do not believe they have high proficiency level in using some programs that are necessary for computer literacy in general, such as internet use or email use and those skills are necessary for their future success at finding a job, since those are the skills necessary for every job in the 21st century. Therefore we recommend that faculty curriculum includes teaching students those necessary computer literacy skills.

We believe that students stated that majority of the services or spaces provided by their faculty listed in Table 5 are nonexistent, because they probably never used most of those services and therefore are not informed about them. Also, most of students stated that they do not have an opinion about those services and it should be further examined why they provided such answer.

Students also indicated that they believe that if they use technology more during their studies, they will have the opportunity to improve their information management skills in general (41%), therefore we can conclude that students are aware of their lack of computer literacy skills and have the desire to improve it. However, it is not surprising that most of the sample does not find knowledge of developing webpages useful. Students probably believe that webpage development is something that should be done by other professionals and not themselves. However, if they decide to have their private business in the future, webpage development will be something they will have to do, therefore we believe it can be useful.

Another problem imposed by COVID-19 pandemic originated from lockdown and social distancing rules that made students use technology in order to communicate with peers (Ewing & Cooper, 2021). Since most of the students believed that technology is useful during their studies because it enables their cooperation with other students (42.3%), this indicates that students were affected by social distancing restrictions inflicted on them because of the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore they value social interactions with other students the most (Table 6). The results presented in Table 8 can be interpreted also as the fact that social distancing constrictions are hard on them and therefore they have the need to feel more connected to their fellow students.

CONCLUSION

Since the present research was conducted when the COVID-19 pandemic started, in March 2020, it would be useful to replicate this research now, in 2022 in order to examine and compare how students responses and if they differ in comparison to the beginning of the pandemic. We also recommend conducing student training focused on certain program use and measuring students perceived level of skills prior and after training implementation. Another recommendation for potential researchers refers to replicating this study on a larger sample of students, as well as to replicating this research on a sample of teaching staff at different faculties.

The biggest study limitation is that sample included only student who attend Faculty of Special education and rehabilitation, therefore it would be beneficial to conduct this research on a sample of students who attend different universities as well.

Since COVID-19 pandemic showed that technology could be used in different ways in universities in the process of acquiring knowledge and teaching (Maćešić-Petrović et al., 2020) and technology can significantly enrich people's lives (Bašić et al., 2020), it is important for students, as well as teaching staff to be properly taught and trained on how to use technology.

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