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Being a Lecturer during the COVID-19 Pandemic

An Exploratory Study about Ca' Foscari University's Language Department

Relatrice
Ch. Prof. Monica Banzato

Correlatori
Ch. Prof. Francesca Coin
Ch. Prof. Graziano Serragiotto

Laureanda
Moira Gallina
Matricola 856610

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BEING A LECTURER DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ABOUT CA' FOSCARI UNIVERSITY'S LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

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Abstract

The present study represents a possible response to a disproportion that some scholars have noticed in research literature regarding the impact of COVID-19 on education. More specifically, they have criticized researchers' tendency to focus more on students than on educators, thus providing only a partial overview of the phenomenon (Kim & Asbury, 2020; Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2[1]). The present dissertation will, therefore, concentrate on educators, in particular on university lecturers. On the basis of the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT; Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976; Oldham & Hackman, 2010), this study will report lecturers' experiences during the pandemic in relation to their perceived motivating job potential, work engagement, job satisfaction, and professional exhaustion. In addition, their attitudes towards e-learning and their satisfaction deriving from how well university managers tackled the emergency situation are considered in the study. As time references, the current dissertation will concentrate on the second semester of the academic year 2019-2020 and on the following academic year- i.e., 2020-2021[2]. For the purposes of the present research project, lecturers working in Ca' Foscari university's language department in Venice were selected as the convenience sample of the study, and they were asked to complete an online questionnaire. The results met the author's expectations partially. Some responses were indeed unexpectedly positive, thus raising hopes that, with adequate resources and support, the world of education- in this case, of higher education- can cope with the current health crisis and similar, destabilizing events even in the future.

Keywords: COVID-19, higher education, JCT

[1] The present dissertation makes reference to two papers written by Kulikowsky and colleagues in 2021. Therefore, they will be quoted in this way: "Kulikowsky et al., 2021-1", which stands for Kulikowsky, K.; Przytuła, S.; Sułkowsky, L., *E-learning? Never again! On the unintended consequences of COVID-19 forced e-learning on academic teacher motivational job characteristic*; and "Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2", which stands for Kulikowsky, K.; Przytuła, S.; Sułkowsky, L., *The Motivation of Academics in Remote Teaching during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Polish Universities- Opening the Debate on a New Equilibrium in e-Learning*. See the reference section for further details

[2] In order to avoid repetitions, the period of time under inspection will be mostly referred to with more generic expressions such as "during the pandemic"

Introduction

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) established seventeen goals for a sustainable development of the world also known as Agenda 2030, since they are supposed to be achieved by that year. The fourth goal concerns education, which is precisely the focus of the present paper. In particular, it invites nations to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". The COVID-19 outbreak could, however, represent a challenge for the attainment of that objective by exacerbating pre-existing educational disparities. In this paper, the effects of the pandemic on the world of education will be presented through reports by international institutions and local case studies, with particular attention to the situation of universities.

The major area of interest of the current study is probably organizational behaviour. Miner (2005) defined it as "a social science discipline" whose "concern is first with the behavior and nature of people within organizations, and second with the behavior and nature of organizations within their environments". In other words, it studies both people and institutions operating in any kind of formal setting.

> In point of fact, we all participate in various organizations such as schools, companies, and hospitals throughout our lives, and we devote a large percentage of our time to such participation. Most people would like to function more effectively in organizations and to contribute to more effective functioning of the organizations themselves. It seems logical that the more we know about organizations and the way they operate, the better our chances of coping with them adequately and of achieving our goals within them and for them. Giving us this knowledge is what theories of organizational behavior attempt to do (Miner, 2005).

More specifically, the present dissertation focuses on university lecturers' experiences during the coronavirus outbreak.

In chapter 1, the general impact of COVID-19 both all over the world and locally will be discussed mainly through reports by UNESCO, the International Association of Universities (IAU), and through context-specific studies. Provided the main focus of this paper is on education- especially on higher education, other related issues will be briefly presented, like for instance economic destabilization and gender equality. Research literature on COVID-19 will be reviewed also by highlighting the importance of strategies to face a pandemic at the

educational level and of the critical use of digital technologies in education. In addition, some scholars identified some gaps in research literature that paved the way for the current study. More specifically, they noticed that researchers tend to report more students' experiences than those of educators, thus overlooking part of the problem (Kim & Asbury, 2020; Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2). Therefore, the present dissertation will attempt to provide insight into what university lecturers went through during the pandemic.

In chapter 2, the most relevant works of reference for the current dissertation will be identified and presented. In particular, two papers play an important role within the theoretical framework of the study: Oldham & Hackman, 2010 and Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2. The former provides a complete overview of the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT), which was in turn fundamental for the identification of research variables. The latter is partially based on the former, and it was taken as a model to formulate research questions and hypotheses. In chapter 2, literature on each variable will be briefly reviewed in order to find a suitable definition.

In chapter 3, we will move from theory to practice by presenting research questions, hypotheses, and treatment of variables. The instrument employed to gather data will be described as well. It is an online questionnaire divided into six sections, where respondents could report their own experiences and opinions in relation to the research variables considered in the study. The sampling method and the sample will be described as well. Section A of the questionnaire aims to gather demographic information on participants, and such data will be used for descriptive purposes, indeed.

In chapter 4, research results will be presented. First of all, this dissertation will take remote learning during the pandemic as an independent variable and describe its impact on the other constructs. However, the present study considers also relations between variables that should exist in any situation and not only as a result of COVID-19. Such relationships will be investigated as well to discover whether the pandemic could change them or not.

In chapter 5, research outcomes will be summarized. The present study may have some pedagogical implications, which will be discussed in this part.

Last but not least, the limits of the present project will be identified and commented and some suggestions for future research will be given in chapter 6.

I. COVID-19 in Research Literature: An Overview of the Current Pandemic's Impact on Higher Education and beyond

The COVID-19 outbreak has certainly left a mark on the world of higher education and beyond. Worldwide, scholars have started to investigate the impact of such an event on the whole educational process, both positively and problematically, at the local and international levels.

Locally, case studies were undertaken in different countries and regarding different subject areas mainly with the purpose of comparing learning outcomes during the pandemic with those of the pre-covid situation. One can thus understand how the coronavirus outbreak has affected students' performance in higher education. The results of such studies were heterogeneous. In order to fully understand them, you should actually be aware of the peculiarities of the context and sample considered; each study could indeed be seen as a world apart, which deserves special attention. In this chapter, two local case studies will be presented, one with negative outcomes and one with positive outcomes.

On the other hand, institutions working at the international level have done research as well. The present dissertation considers in particular reports published by UNESCO and the International Association of Universities (IAU).

First of all, a matter of terminology needs to be highlighted, though, considering that we are addressing an extraordinary topic in the etymological sense. According to Hodges and colleagues (2020), the forced transition from face-to-face classes to online learning due to the coronavirus pandemic cannot be defined by resorting to the terms that you would normally use with ordinary e-learning experiences. Therefore, they coined a new term, namely *emergency remote teaching*. The main difference between online learning and emergency remote teaching lies in planning times. Normally, you take several months[3] in order to carefully design online courses before delivering them, whereas lecturers had actually much less time to move their classes online. Shortages of time may result in lower-quality teaching and learning when planning and implementing online courses. Besides, emergency remote teaching was meant as a temporary solution; on the contrary, online learning is the norm in some cases. Universities in which courses are exclusively delivered online did exist before the pandemic, indeed. Given the existence of a widespread e-learning tradition in higher

[3] The authors speculate a period of time from six to nine months for a fully online university course

education, one might deduce that the pandemic has not been as traumatic and destabilizing for universities as it has for school at large. Contextual factors need, however, to be taken into account. You can imagine that, in cases of little or no acquaintance with e-learning, higher education institutions are likely to encounter the same problems that schools reported in the rapid conversion to online classes. In light of all, one should consider the above-mentioned differences when evaluating emergency remote teaching experiences.
Leaving aside this terminological point, the present review of research literature is divided into three parts for the sake of clarity. Each part corresponds to a sub-chapter. Firstly, research conducted at the international level will be presented, thus providing general information on the impact of COVID-19 on education all over the world. Then, the focus will shift to local case studies, which provide insight into specific contexts. Last but not least, the third sub-chapter will be devoted to an overview of the main topics that have been studied by scholars so far, always in relation to the current pandemic and education. Gaps in research literature will be identified as well. Even though some works regarding primary and secondary education are quoted in this chapter, the focus of this paper will mostly remain on university.

1.1 International Studies: Covid-Related Destabilization of Economy, Family Life, Gender Equality, as Well as School and University Life

As already said, the present dissertation considers papers published by UNESCO and the International Association of Universities (IAU) in order to discuss the general impact of the coronavirus outbreak on education around the world, but with a special focus on universities. On the one hand, UNESCO has broached not only education but also other topics that range from economic consequences to violence against women. On the other hand, the IAU has set a narrower scope. It has indeed concentrated on higher education, which is precisely the main focus of the present dissertation as well.

1.1.1 UNESCO: COVID-19 as a Destabilizing Event

In a report published by UNESCO in August 2020, the delicate issue of the impact of COVID-19 on education in general was addressed. In particular, they highlighted the fact that

> the crisis is exacerbating pre-existing education disparities by reducing the opportunities for many of the most vulnerable children, youth, and adults- those living in poor or rural areas, girls, refugees, persons with disabilities and forcibly displaced persons- to continue their learning. Learning losses also threaten to extend beyond this generation and erase decades of progress, not least in support of girls and young women's educational access and retention. Some 23.8 million additional children and youth (from pre-primary to tertiary) may drop out or not have access to school next year due to the pandemic's economic impact alone (UNESCO, 2020-2)[4].

They also focused on the possible negative effects of COVID-19 beyond education, especially in relation to food access, economic instability, violence against women, and access to health care and psychological services.

The closure of schools and educational institutions in general has meant the loss of school meals and feeding programmes in many cases, thus "increasing hunger and nutritional deficiencies for the most disadvantaged". This is especially true for low-income countries and developing economies (UNESCO, 2020-2).

As for economics, the pandemic's impact on this sector has been probably worsened by the fact that the world's markets are interconnected in many ways, for instance through cross-border flows of goods, services, and human capital. Restrictions meant to contain the spread of the virus have had side effects too. For instance, reductions of travel have led to significant economic losses in the tourism industry. Global supply chains have been unsettled, starting from the companies depending on Chinese export. Production and demand have fallen, often resulting in factory closures and layoffs, not to mention the fact that many jobholders have been unable to work for a period of time precisely because they had been infected by the coronavirus[5]. In addition, "some panic among consumers and firms has distorted usual consumption patterns and created market anomalies". It has regarded not only the consumption of goods but also of services. Last but not least, any health crisis that affects economies as well is likely to cause investment reductions as the current pandemic has done

[4] The present dissertation makes reference to three papers published by UNESCO in 2020. Therefore, they will be quoted in this way: "UNESCO, 2020-1", which stands for UNESCO, *Education Sector Issue Note 2.2*; "UNESCO, 2020-2", which stands for UNESCO, *Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond*; and "UNESCO, 2020-3", which stands for UNESCO, *Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women*. For further details, see the reference section at the end of this dissertation

[5] In technical terms, the condition of suffering from a disease- in this case, COVID-19- is called *morbidity*

(CEPR, 2020).

Returning to education, the World Bank (2020) has estimated that countries will lose up to $10 trillion dollars in earnings because of lower levels of learning, school closures, and potential dropout. Above all, it is feared that children who are not sufficiently supported will never return to school once the pandemic is finally over (UNESCO, 2020-2).

Family life has been affected in some way as well. For instance, parents who work full time could not count on schools any longer during the lockdown period, so they probably did not know where to leave their children or to whom. Furthermore, houses were in many cases not equipped with adequate spaces and internet connection so that students could attend their classes at distance, maybe at the same time as their siblings or even as their parents, who had to work remotely. The loss of school services such as meals, the necessity to take care of children even during working hours, and the need to have adequate connectivity and devices either to work or attend classes at distance have had a bearing on parents' finances in many cases (UNESCO, 2020-2).

It is believed that the economic consequences of COVID-19 have fallen mostly on women and girls, thus worsening pre-existing gender inequalities in education and on the job market (UNESCO, 2020-3).

> Emerging evidence on the impact of COVID-19 suggests that women's economic and productive lives will be affected disproportionately and differently from men. Across the globe, women earn less, save less, hold less secure jobs, are more likely to be employed in the informal sector[6]. They have less access to social protections and are the majority of single-parent households. Their capability to absorb economic shocks is therefore less than that of men (UNESCO, 2020-3).

Due to the pandemic, the service industry has endured workforce reductions, from tourism to health care, and many women work precisely in this sector, where you risk being exposed to the virus more than in any other. Nevertheless, they have generally had less access to health services- in some cases, due to gender stereotypes or cultural taboos- and have often been

[6] The term *informal sector* or *economy* "refers to all economic activities by workers and economic units" such as households "that are- in law or in practice- not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements". This definition does not include illegal activities though, but it encompasses for instance domestic workers or jobholders in subcontracting. In any case, people who work in this sector have "unrecognized or unregulated employment relationships", which means that they are not entitled to "sick leave or compensation for injury or death". Informal economy is quite common in developing countries, and it is estimated that about 2.5 billion people are employed in this sector all over the world (ILO, 2015)

excluded from decision making. Moreover, tasks like care for children or the elderly are traditionally entrusted to women and girls, probably because of their connection with motherhood. With the lack of services due to the coronavirus outbreak, this responsibility has mostly lain on them. Such works are extremely important for societies but actually unpaid, and they limit women's opportunities to work or to complete their education. Another cause for concern is the overall increase of violence against women combined with contact and movement restrictions. The risk of being infected has indeed been used as a threat by abusers, who have exploited women's impossibility to seek help or escape. Besides, support services have often been absent or insufficient during the pandemic, because health care has become the only priority. Last but not least, the COVID-19 outbreak has limited the opportunities to make the voices of women and human rights defenders heard. Many have decided to take this humanitarian battle online, but the web alone cannot substitute concrete acts (UNESCO, 2020-3).

The closure of schools and other educational institutions has meant also the loss of health and psychological services especially for the most vulnerable children, teenagers, and adults, since such institutions can also "serve as platforms for prevention, diagnosis, and counselling. As a result, vulnerable groups are experiencing both a loss of essential services and a lack of social protection mechanisms" (UNESCO, 2020-2).

The pandemic has caused problems for teachers, lecturers, and educators at large as well.

> During the crisis, the focus of the educational response has been on ensuring learning continuity through the mobilization of a range of no-, low-, and high-tech resources and modalities, to bring learning content from school settings into learners' homes. What is sometimes overlooked is that at the heart of these responses are millions of teachers, principals, and other education personnel who are the frontline workers for the education sector in any crisis, and who demonstrated high levels of commitment and creativity in the face of COVID-19. […] UNESCO therefore advocates for the protection and support of teachers, principals, and other education personnel, and for the recognition of their efforts in the response to the current health crisis and beyond (UNESCO, 2020-1).

They emphasized the fact that educators "have had to scramble to help their students navigate the world of distance learning, often without sufficient guidance, training, support, and resources". Some factors are indeed particularly relevant in lockdown situations, namely

possession of reliable information on the workforce in order to effectively tackle issues such as personnel shortages, job security and adequate wages in order to maintain jobholders' motivation, access to professional development and support even at distance, effective technical infrastructure and connectivity, and good ICT skills. In addition, educators' well-being and social networks- in this case, their interpersonal relationships within the work environment- should be safeguarded as well. Unfortunately, social distancing and forced e-learning have reduced opportunities to interact and thus to build "socio-emotional competencies and resilience", whose absence "can lead to stress and burnout, particularly among younger, more inexperienced teachers, which in turn can lead to absenteeism and attrition and poor teaching quality". Great importance was given also to collaboration among colleagues and to participation in decision making in order to develop context-specific education responses to the current crisis (UNESCO, 2020-1).

1.1.2 The International Association of Universities (IAU): Special Attention Paid to Higher Education

Similarly to UNESCO, the International Association of Universities (IAU) studied the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on education, but with a narrower scope. First of all, they concentrated exclusively on the world of higher education; secondly, the possible negative effects beyond instruction were not part of the study. We are dealing with a survey on a global scale in which universities from 109 countries participated, divided into four geographical macro areas (Americas, Africa, Asia & Pacific, Europe). An online questionnaire had to be completed, and it was available in three languages (English, French, Spanish). Among the most salient results, one could name the fact that almost all respondents (91%) claimed to have means to communicate with their students and staff, even though problems with conveying clear and effective information were encountered. Then, it was believed that enrolment numbers for the following academic year- i.e., 2020-2021- would decrease precisely due to COVID-19 (80%), and this would in turn have negative consequences on universities' finances and on international student mobility. Two-thirds of respondents reported that face-to-face classes were moved online, and this with all the related challenges- to name but a few, connectivity issues and lack of "competences and pedagogies for distance learning", but also with the opportunity to exploit the potential of blended learning. Last but

not least, research was affected by the pandemic in many cases (80%), and international travel, conferences, and collaborations among universities were consequently reduced or even cancelled (IAU, 2020).

> Some respondents stressed that this experience offers an opportunity to better prepare their institution to deal with other or similar crises in the future. Although, in the short term, the institution is still coping with the urgency of the situation, it also can be seen as a different opportunity for institutions to learn about crisis management. It may lead to increasing the institution's resilience and agility when responding to unforeseen challenges in the future (IAU, 2020).

Similarly to UNESCO, IAU (2020) expressed the concern that the current crisis may exacerbate pre-existing inequalities in education, which can, however, be faced thanks to government intervention and research.
Generally speaking, a shared assent about the importance of the COVID-19 experience for the future of education seems to emerge from the reading of research literature.

1.2 Local Studies: Mixed Blessing in Context-Specific Emergency Remote Teaching Experiences

If you want to see the impact of COVID-19 on higher education, comparing learning outcomes before and after the introduction of emergency remote teaching seems to be a logical solution, even though some scholars sided against it, given the exceptional nature of the phenomenon under inspection (Hodges et al., 2020). The reading of a set of case studies from different countries and regarding different subject areas showed that the sudden conversion to online classes did not produce the same effects everywhere. On the one hand, some scholars reported a worsening of learning outcomes (Petillion & McNeil, 2020; Webb, 2021); on the other hand, positive case studies were found as well (Gonzalez et al., 2020; Iglesias-Pradas et al., 2021). In this sub-chapter, two of the above-quoted works will be further presented, namely the research project by Petillion and McNeil (2020), and the study undertaken by Iglesias-Pradas and colleagues (2021).
The former was conducted on the University of British Columbia's Okanagan campus in the USA. In particular, they focused on second-year students enrolled in chemistry courses. Data

were gathered through an online survey and semi-structured interviews with the purpose of seeing the impact of forced e-learning and lecturers' performance during the lockdown period on students' academic achievements, engagement, and mental well-being. In this case, the experiences reported by learners were on the whole negative. The majority of respondents claimed to be more stressed out (73%) and less engaged than before (69%). Then, they perceived difficulties with keeping attention during online classes, which negatively impacted their learning outcomes. By the way, some factors were particularly adverse, namely distractions deriving from the physical environment or technological devices themselves, and external stressors such as concerns for family members or friends. Many students (80%) claimed to be familiar with the online platforms used to teach remotely but expressed some doubts about how well lecturers employed such technologies; in other words, educators' ICT skills were not always sufficient to promote learning and engagement on the part of students. Considering that we are dealing with chemistry courses, the impossibility of scheduling laboratory activities probably exacerbated the situation. Similarly, the lack of practical activities may have had negative effects on other subject areas such as language learning. Positive factors were instead the availability of videorecorded lessons and the opportunity to attend synchronous classes, which were considered as the closest format to face-to-face classes.

Unlike Petillion & McNeil, 2020, the case study presented by Iglesias-Pradas and colleagues (2021) has positive results. They sampled all the courses of the Telecommunication Engineering Bachelor's Degree at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid in Spain. Two data sources were used, namely an open survey on management decisions made when face-to-face classes had to be moved online, and students' grades from the last three academic years (from 2017-18 to 2019-20). In the survey, the following variables were considered: class size- under or over 35 students, course type- elective or non-elective, delivery mode- synchrony or asynchrony, and digital tools used to teach at distance. By comparing learning outcomes before and after the introduction of emergency remote teaching, the authors of the study aimed to show the impact of management decisions on students' performance, and to identify effective strategies to move classes online. On the whole, they reported a substantial increase in the percentage of students passing courses- especially non-elective courses- during the pandemic (7-10 percentual points), whereas no significant difference was found when comparing the 2017-18 with the 2018-19 academic year. They noticed an overall

improvement in grades, but data showed that no significant relation could be established between class size and delivery mode. They also compared passing rates of first-semester courses- which were not implemented remotely- throughout the three academic years considered in the study, and they proved to be stable (around 80%). As a consequence, the improvement reported in second-semester courses may be the result of emergency remote teaching. You need, however, to consider some factors that could have increased the probability of success: this case study describes a context in which an efficient technical infrastructure existed before the coronavirus outbreak, the object of study being a school of telecommunication and engineering. As the authors themselves stated, the school's technical nature along with lecturers' technical skills, little change in the activities delivered, and in the technologies used may have made the transition from face-to-face classes to forced e-learning easier and less destabilizing than in other contexts.

As this sub-chapter showed, making general statements about the impact of COVID-19 on education might be tricky, given that local research projects consider very specific samples and variables. This may limit the possibility of applying their results to the general population, but, on the other hand, the format of case studies seems to be the most suitable to analyse the peculiarities of the situation under inspection, provide context-specific solutions to research problems, and offer suggestions for future investigation too.

1.3 Pre-Existing Concerns and the Pandemic: What Has Been Studied and What Needs Further Investigation

This sub-chapter is devoted to the main themes and gaps that the author identified in research literature. Despite the fact that many of the topics discussed here are not new, one could argue that they were key issues during the pandemic as well. Above all, identifying effective strategies to protect people's well-being even at distance or move classes online have worried scholars, considering that the transition from face-to-face classes to emergency remote teaching was rapid and unexpected. Under such circumstances, many educators had to reinvent themselves and their work quickly. Another burning issue is the critical use of digital technologies, given the important role that such technologies played in ensuring continuity of education. Research has, however, brought to light a lack of competence both on the part of students and educators.

As for gaps, some scholars highlighted the fact that many papers focus on students, whereas there is scanter literature on educators, who are actually the other side of the coin (Kim & Asbury, 2020; Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2). Moreover, academic procrastination and dropout in relation to the pandemic may be salient themes to investigate in future research. Changes in media consumption habits due to the emergency restrictions and their effects on people's performance could be investigated further as well.

1.3.1 Strategies to Face a Pandemic

Apart from learning achievements, scholars appear to be interested also in psychophysical well-being, engagement, and motivation of both students and educators (Elmer et al., 2020; Kim & Asbury, 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2020; Petillion & McNeil, 2020; Son et al., 2020; Kulikowsky et al., 2021-1; Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2). As for the latter, both Kim & Asbury, 2020 and MacIntyre et al., 2020 concentrate on which strategies to cope with stress educators could adopt.

Kim and Asbury (2020) sampled 24 teachers working either in primary or secondary schools and reported their experiences during the first weeks of lockdown in the UK. Participants took part in semi-structured interviews, where they were asked to describe three key scenes in their experiences of emergency remote teaching in detail: a low point, a high point, and a turning point. The purpose of such interviews was to highlight stressors and see how teachers decided to cope with them. In this regard, an important work of reference is Carver et al., 1989. The authors identified two types of coping strategies: problem-focused coping- "aimed at problem solving or doing something to alter the source of the stress"- and emotion-focused coping- "aimed at reducing or managing the emotional distress that is associated with (or cued by) the situation". Taking direct action or seeking concrete help are examples of problem-focused coping, whereas reinterpreting events in a positive way or denying the problem belong to the category of emotion-focused coping. Kim and Asbury (2020) argued that the lockdown and the consequent introduction of emergency remote teaching required especially emotion-focused coping, given that many stressors were beyond individuals' control and management of emotions was, therefore, necessary. After interviewing all the participants, they conducted a thematic analysis of teachers' narratives. Six topics were identified: uncertainty regarding the near future, finding a way to adapt to the new situation while safeguarding one's well-

being as well as students', worry for the most vulnerable pupils, importance of relationships, teacher identity, and reflections on the major challenges. The theme of teacher identity might be seen as particularly relevant for educator-focused research. Respondents identified the core characteristics of their profession- i.e., care for pupils, desire to be in a classroom, need for routine and planning, need for social interaction, desire to do their job- and expressed their sadness to see the teaching profession become an admin job. In this regard, another important reference is worth quoting, namely the narrative identity theory developed by McAdams (2001). According to this theory, people can endow their lives with unity and meaning "by constructing internalized and evolving narratives of the self", which are stored in their episodic and autobiographical memory[7]. By telling their stories, teachers emphasized how COVID-19 influenced their professional identity and tried to give meaning to their experiences, thus enabling researchers to get insight into how the pandemic affected and could affect educators in the future.

Similarly, MacIntyre and colleagues (2020) investigated teachers' strategies to cope with stress, but they focused exclusively on one subject area, namely language teaching. The authors of this study sampled 634 teachers coming from different countries- mainly from Europe (51.4 %) and North America (23.5%)- and working in different school levels through an online survey with snowball sampling. Respondents highlighted some factors that were particularly stressful in their experiences of emergency remote teaching: increased workload, concern for family health, loss of control over work, blurred lines between home and work, loss of control over personal decisions, strain deriving from forced remote teaching, irregular hours, and financial difficulties. On the other hand, the most used coping strategies were acceptance, advanced planning, positive reinterpretation, taking direct action, and using work or other activities as a distraction. All these strategies are present in the COPE Scale developed by Carver and colleagues (1989); in particular, they are all evidence of an active attitude towards coping except for turning to work or other activities in order to get your mind off things- a strategy that is called *mental disengagement* by Carver and colleagues (1989).

[7] Sometimes, the terms *episodic memory* and *autobiographical memory* are used as synonyms. However, they differ to some extent: episodic memory can be defined as "memory for events", which have specific space-time references; on the other hand, autobiographical memory "refers to one's personal history". Although the difference between these two constructs is not that clear-cut and some autobiographical memories may be classified as episodic memories (e.g., one's wedding day), "the critical defining feature for autobiographical memory is the importance of the information to one's sense of self and one's life history. The end result is that autobiographical memory consists of many different types of knowledge, and is not limited to episodes but also includes procedures and facts" (Healy et al., 2003)

This means that the majority of respondents preferred doing something to tackle stressful situations rather than avoiding the problem. Moreover, results showed that teachers who used avoidant strategies- for example, denial and mental disengagement- were more likely to experience negative emotions such as anxiety, anger, sadness, and loneliness.

Still focusing on educators, another interesting topic has been widely discussed, namely the issue of online evaluation and the related risk of cheating on the part of students (Gamage et al., 2020; Hodges et al., 2020; Petillion & McNeil, 2020; Vlachopoulos, 2020; Williamson et al., 2020).

Gamage and colleagues (2020) emphasized the concept of *academic integrity*, which is the antonym for *academic misconduct*, i.e., dishonest activities done at university including, to name but a few, plagiarism and contract cheating- "when students employ or use a third party to undertake their assessed work for them" (TEQSA, 2017).

> Detecting academic misconduct and policing academic integrity entail a number of challenges and complexities. Firstly, academic staff also lacks consensus about what constitutes academic misconduct, which results in certain acts of academic misconduct going undetected. Secondly, detecting academic misconduct is extremely difficult unless close individual attention is given to student performance and assignments. Thirdly, complexities arise in enacting academic integrity policies/laws as procedures are not clear and pronounced. These already existing challenges are heightened in the COVID-19 period where faculty operations are restricted or largely happen remotely (Gamage et al., 2020).

Besides, students themselves sometimes do not know all the dishonest practices that are comprised in this umbrella term, so they "may consciously or unconsciously tend towards academic misconduct" (Gamage et al., 2020).

Generally speaking, research has concentrated a lot on finding effective strategies for the forced transition to online classes (Di Bari, 2020-1[8]; Morgan, 2020; Snelling & Fingal, 2020;

[8] Like for the UNESCO papers, two works by Di Bari, both published in 2020, are considered in the present dissertation. Therefore, they will be quoted in this way: "Di Bari, 2020-1", which stands for Di Bari, C., *Costruire "teste ben fatte" con la didattica a distanza: riflessioni pedagogiche sugli usi della Dad, dentro e fuori l'emergenza*, and "Di Bari, 2020-2", which stands for Di Bari, C., *L'emergenza Covid-19 tra comunicazione e formazione*. For further details, see the reference section at the end of this dissertation

UNESCO, 2020-2; Vlachopoulos, 2020)[9]. Below, you can find a table with the main strategies that were proposed in the above-quoted papers. For the sake of clarity, these strategies are divided into four categories based on who is supposed to put them into practice.

Strategies for policymakers and institutions	• creating a consistent plan for the implementation of e-learning for each level of education (primary, secondary, higher), which should include the most suitable methodologies and the desired outcomes • using also non-official communication channels like social networks in order to foster the communication between students and institutions • ensuring digital equality, in the sense that everyone should be guaranteed access to online resources no matter their socio-economic status. After all, the right to education includes also connectivity • clarifying objectives and expectations to both students and staff
Strategies for educators	• maintaining the educational relations that are normally established in face-to-face classes by promoting engagement and interaction on the part of students. The latter should have an active role, which could be highlighted through alternative teaching formats such as flipped classroom and peer tutoring. After all, contemporary education is supposed to be student-centred even at distance • planning shorter lessons so that some time can be dedicated to supplementary activities

[9] See also ISTE standards for students (2016) and educators (2017). You will find all the details in the reference section

	• resorting to online forums and surveys in order to provide further insight into the topics done in class and promote constructive debates • giving advice on time management and support self-regulation and independent learning • finding time for careful planning as far as possible • educating through technology and to technology, thus developing critical thinking. People tend indeed to employ technological tools superficially, without reflecting much on what they are doing • valorising metacognition, inclusion, divergent thinking, and hypermediality • using free online resources but of good quality. However, detecting the most suitable contents is not always easy given the large number of sources available on the web • as for lecturers, working with tutors to better manage your classes
Strategies for students	• providing educators with feedback, for instance by keeping your webcam switched on, even though remote teaching cannot be compared to physically seeing students
Strategies for both students and educators	• establishing daily schedules so that your workload is distributed over time • addressing the emotional toll and practicing emotional intelligence. Pandemic situations may arouse negative feelings such as fear, stress, and anxiety in both students and educators. Taking care of oneself and of others even at distance is,

	therefore, important. Sometimes, promoting empathy, active listening, and self-knowledge can have a greater influence on success than teaching or learning lesson contents • taking advantage of emergency remote teaching to practice your ICT skills • making sure you have everything you need with you before "going" to class in order to avoid unnecessary interruptions and time losses

Table 1: transition strategies

Strategies for the transition from face-to-face classes to emergency remote teaching had to be found on a very short notice. After all, the COVID-19 outbreak was an unexpected event for which the education world was essentially unprepared.
Adapting to this new situation has been consequently hard, but if, on the one hand, the pandemic can be perceived as a challenge, on the other hand, some scholars have highlighted the opportunities it has provided as well (Di Bari, 2020-2; Ferri et al., 2020; IAU, 2020; Petillion & McNeil, 2020; Rudnick, 2020; Vlachopoulos, 2020; UNESCO, 2020-2). It could actually be an opportunity to rethink education, identify possible gaps and fill them in order to create a future based on more flexible models. Above all, you should consider e-learning as a valuable supplement to face-to-face classes, but not as a substitute, albeit with its well-known criticalities.

1.3.2 For a Critical Use of Digital Technologies in Education

Almost inevitably, the focus can actually shift from finding strategies to discussing the use of digital technologies in critical terms. This concern about the employment of technology for educational purposes is not something new, and yet it is a topical issue now more than ever, given the large amount of time that both students and educators have had to spend in front of a screen in order to ensure continuity of education. It is not only a matter of physical health, but you need also to identify technology-related challenges- like, to name but a few, inequalities in internet access or difficulties in detecting reliable sources and contents- and

think of feasible solutions to tackle them, so that you will be able to provide better-quality digital education in the future (Selwyn et al., 2019; Di Bari, 2020-2; Kawinkoonlasate, 2020; Ranieri, 2020; Williamson et al., 2020; Williamson et al., 2021). After all,

> it is clear that digital technologies are a significant factor in the ways in which our day-to-day lives are now distinctly different than they were 20 years ago. It makes sense then to expect that digital technologies will continue to be a significant part of how our future is shaped as the nature of the world's economies, politics, cultures, and societies steadily (and often unpredictably) shift (Selwyn et al., 2019).

The fact that the above-quoted paper was published before the COVID-19 outbreak is noteworthy. In retrospective, the quote reported here seems prophetic. The unpredictable shifts of "economies, politics, cultures, and societies" and the importance of technology in shaping the present time and the future are burning topics now more than ever, since the pandemic has made digital technologies essential to protect the fundamental right to education. However, the pandemic has also highlighted the overall unpreparedness of the education world before a health crisis of such proportions, the drawbacks of prolonged e-learning, and the related necessity to rethink the use of technological tools and devices in critical terms.

Pre-existing concerns have been exacerbated by the coronavirus outbreak. As Di Bari (2020-2) highlighted, the opportunities for non-experts in a certain field to produce content and upload it on the web can fuel confusion on a given subject and create a problem of source reliability. This is especially true for contemporary education and, above all, for remote learning and teaching, since digital contents have become fundamental supplements that can be used to deepen both lessons and individual study. Detecting reliable and suitable materials in this sea of multimedia information is, therefore, difficult. Another sore point is the overall lack of digital competences on the part of educators and the resulting need for training. During the pandemic, the tendency of preferring frontal teaching over cooperative learning has emerged, thus promoting only knowledge transmission and not students' involvement in learning processes. In other words, many educators have not been able to exploit the full potential of online platforms, which can actually support cooperative activities that may in turn lead to better learning outcomes (Ranieri, 2020). The lack of ICT skills concerns not only educators but students too, given that

> not all young people are the well connected, digitally savvy, "digital natives" that the rhetoric around young people and technology would have us believe. Instead, there is significant variety in the ways that young people can access, navigate and use the internet and other new technologies, with an important minority who are excluded entirely (Williamson et al., 2020).

Ensuring digital equality and adequate connectivity are probably two of the clearest challenges that the pandemic has posed, even though the problem is not new. Furthermore, COVID-19 has forced everyone to rethink personal routines, spaces, and roles. On the other hand, the coronavirus outbreak has encouraged research in the educational field. What is, however, feared is that researchers could argue that e-learning is on the whole better than face-to-face teaching, especially as far as higher education in concerned. In this way, the differences between emergency remote teaching and ordinary e-learning highlighted but Hodges and colleagues (2020) along with the unavoidable difficulties that emerge when you are faced with an unforeseen predicament are totally ignored. Objective assessment of remote instruction experiences should include these differences (Williamson et al., 2020).

> The data scientific dream of measuring learning at scale in order to develop a precise understanding of the benefits of remote instruction is clearly animating part of the effort by edtech businesses and associated researchers to utilize the coronavirus emergency as a mass data-gathering and analysis opportunity. And this might ultimately, as Zimmerman[10] suggested, lead to a consolidation of online instruction and, as a consequence, exacerbate worker precarity for educators. The possible contraction of higher education as an on-campus experience, and a shift to remote instruction and learning, is already concerning many educators (Williamson et al., 2020).

The rapid spread of the pandemic and the consequent lack of time for careful planning seem to have forced everyone to make hasty decisions, given that in emergency situations necessity could become more pressing than quality. Strategies for the transition to online classes were, nonetheless, found, and they proved to be successful in some cases too. Research has emphasized both challenges and opportunities provided by COVID-19, but the way it has questioned the effectiveness of e-learning vis-à-vis more traditional forms of education is on

[10] Zimmerman, 2020

the whole unprecedented. Continuing to research on this topic and reflecting also on its possible long-term consequences are, therefore, paramount (OECD, 2020; Williamson et al., 2021).

1.3.3 Gaps in Covid-Related Literature: A Disproportion between Student-Centred and Educator-Centred Research

The reading of research literature showed that the impact of COVID-19 on education has been studied both from the perspective of students as well as educators'. However, some scholars have lamented a lack of research regarding teachers and lecturers, if compared to the large number of papers focusing on students' experiences during the pandemic (Kim & Asbury, 2020; Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2). This problem is related not only to the present emergency situation, but it was already highlighted by pre-covid research on e-learning (Tao & Yeh, 2006; Dyment et al., 2013).

As Tao and Yeh (2006) suggested, studies in this respect usually have a narrow scope and limited sample. According to them, what is missing is "full-scale empirical research done to collect the teacher's side of the story". Moreover, Wray and colleagues (2008) criticized the tendency to compare e-learning and face-to-face instruction- i.e., the so called "comparison studies"- with the purpose of seeing whether learning outcomes differ or not. As a matter of fact, the majority of these studies show no significant difference between the two learning modalities, and therefore Wray and colleagues (2008) proposed to focus on course planning and implementation.

> As online learning continues to grow, we need to better understand how teaching changes when faculty teach online as well as- and perhaps even more importantly- some of the similarities and differences between how faculty design instruction in each format (Wray et al., 2008).

They sampled 10 professors who teach the same course both in a traditional classroom and online at a community college in a Midwestern city in the USA. They were interviewed about their preparation for both types of class with the purpose of emphasizing their perceptions of teaching the same course in different formats. The results showed that while certain strategies worked well in both cases- for instance, giving individual and group assignments, others

suited only one format. For example, presenting a Power Point to the class, brainstorming, and discussing among classmates are activities that you usually prefer doing in face-to-face classes than online. On the other hand, having weekly assignments and frequent deadlines are, according to the respondents, effective strategies to maintain students' motivation and monitor their progress in e-learning courses, whereas they are on the whole unnecessary in traditional classrooms. In short, significant differences between face-to-face classes and distance education were actually found.

Returning to research literature gaps, some scholars identified a number of topics that are uncharted waters or need further investigation as far as learners are concerned too, like for instance the phenomenon of academic procrastination or of dropout in relation to COVID-19 (OECD, 2020; Iglesias-Pradas et al., 2021).

The concept of *hysteresis*- which "usually refers to the long-term effect of unemployment on a worker's ability to find a job"- could be applied to education in order to allude "to the long-term impact of school closures on students' outcomes". Learning losses during the lockdown might indeed depend on two factors, namely the efficiency of solutions meant to ensure continuity of education and attendance rates. Apparently, "distance-learning solutions are often associated with attendance challenges and higher absenteeism", which may in turn lead to increased "risk of disengagement and dropout, especially among students in difficult socio-economic and family situations". Nevertheless, you still lack documentation on this respect (OECD, 2020).

In research literature, there is evidence of higher levels of stress among students caused by the coronavirus outbreak, which can affect learning outcomes negatively (Elmer et al., 2020; Petillion & McNeil, 2020; Son et al., 2020). The impact of external stressors such as concerns for family members and friends or the fear of the virus itself is indeed not to be underestimated; in particular, continuous access to covid-related information may trigger negative emotions like anxiety, worry, and depression (Bendau et al., 2021). Apparently, media consumption has increased in the general population precisely as a result of emergency restrictions (Lemenager et al., 2020). In this regard, the World Health Organization (2020) suggested to

> minimize watching, reading or listening to news about COVID-19 that causes you to feel anxious or distressed; seek information only from trusted sources and mainly so that you can take practical steps to prepare your plans and protect yourself and loved ones. Seek

> information updates at specific times during the day, once or twice. The sudden and near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can cause anyone to feel worried. Get the facts; not rumours and misinformation. […] Facts can help to minimize fears (WHO, 2020).

On the one hand, the internet facilitates information transmission, but, on the other hand, this risks to produce what Di Bari (2020-2) defined as an "overdose" of media content, which could in turn fuel confusion, misinformation, fear, and paranoia. Increased media consumption on the part of students may lead also to academic procrastination behaviours and addictive internet usage with the consequent worsening of learning outcomes, as Tezer (2020) suggested. There is still scant literature on this topic, though. For instance, Iglesias-Pradas and colleagues (2021) identified a potential area of interest for future research: they hypothesized that digital entertainment and synchronous classes might have been effective forms of compensation for the absence of face-to-face social interactions during the lockdown period, and, as a consequence, these factors might have had a positive influence on learning achievements.

Future research on the effects of COVID-19 on education will probably provide further insight into phenomena like academic procrastination and dropout, and identify which variables- remote learning solutions, covid-related anxiety or fear, stress, media consumption, and so on- could have favoured or penalized such behaviours.

II. Theoretical Foundation of the Study: Identification of Relevant Models and Research Variables

The present study has two main cores from a theoretical point of view: the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) or Model (JCM) developed by Hackman and Oldham[11], and a case study presented by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2).

According to the former, there is a close relationship between some distinctive features of a given job and what they call *motivating job potential*. Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) employed JCT as a theoretical foundation for their study, which was undertaken during the coronavirus outbreak; in addition, they considered other variables, namely work engagement, job satisfaction, professional exhaustion, attitude towards e-learning, and satisfaction from management throughout the pandemic. The present study does it too. A sub-chapter will be devoted to both works of reference, given the substantial number of variables considered, so that each construct can be given a clear definition within the theoretical framework of the present study. An overview of past research will be provided for all the variables apart from motivating job potential, attitude towards e-learning, and satisfaction from management throughout the pandemic. After all, motivating job potential is a specific concept that has been developed withing JCT, and it will, therefore, be defined in relation to that theory in the first sub-chapter. The remaining variables will be defined in the second sub-chapter, instead. As for attitude towards e-learning, research has shown that attitudes in general imply an evaluation of a given object, situation, or experience that could be either positive or negative (Olson & Zanna, 2015). Therefore, the present dissertation will explain what having a positive or negative attitude towards the use of digital technologies in education concretely means. A review of research literature on this subject is deemed unnecessary in this case. Last but not least, satisfaction from management is linked to the coronavirus outbreak. Given the exceptional nature of this event, the present dissertation will, therefore, rely exclusively on the definition provided by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) in their case study.

[11] The authors presented and refined their theory in several papers. See in particular Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976 and Oldham & Hackman, 2010. The latter provides a more complete overview of the theory. You will find all the details in the reference section

2.1 The Job Characteristics Theory (JCT): A Combination of Job Characteristics, Individual Features, and Social Interactions to Ensure Workers' Motivation

This sub-chapter is divided into two parts. First, the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) will be presented mostly with reference to Oldham & Hackman, 2010. Secondly, some works regarding the review of the model and its concrete application by other scholars will be named and briefly explained.

2.1.1 The Model by Hackman and Oldham

As already said, the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) establishes a connection between certain features of a given job and motivating job potential, meaning that some job characteristics may trigger a sense of work-related meaningfulness, responsibility for work outcomes, and direct knowledge of work results. These mental statuses are called *critical psychological states*, since they constitute the core of the model and can lead to positive personal and work outcomes such as self-generated motivation and job satisfaction. Experienced meaningfulness of the work means that "the individual experiences the job as one which is generally meaningful, valuable, and worthwhile". Experienced responsibility for work outcomes can be defined as "the degree to which the individual feels personally accountable and responsible for the results of the work he or she does". Last but not least, knowledge of work results is "the degree to which the individual knows and understands, on a continuous basis, how effectively he or she is performing the job". When all three mental statuses are present, jobholders' motivation is expected to be the highest (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). According to JCT, the critical psychological states depend on five fundamental job characteristics: *skill variety*, which is "the degree to which the job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work, involving the use of a number of different skills and talents of the person"; *task identity*, which can be defined as "the degree to which the job requires doing a whole and identifiable piece of work from beginning to end"; *task significance*, which is "the degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives of other people, whether those people are in the immediate organization or the world at large"; *autonomy*, in other words "the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom,

independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out"; last but not least, *job-based feedback*, which is "the degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the job provides the individual with direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance". In addition to these characteristics, individual features should be considered as well, in particular *growth need strength*- i.e., "the degree to which an individual values opportunities for personal growth and development at work"- and *job-relevant knowledge and skill* (Oldham & Hackman, 2010).

> Absent the former, a jobholder would not seek or respond to the internal "kick" that comes from succeeding on a challenging task, and without the latter the jobholder would experience more failure than success, never a motivating state of affairs. […] People who have the knowledge and skill needed to perform the job well and who value opportunities for growth and learning will be internally motivated to perform such jobs, which over time should result in greater overall job satisfaction and higher quality work outcomes (Oldham & Hackman, 2010).

In particular, growth need strength has a moderating function in the relationship among job characteristics, psychological states, and work outcomes.

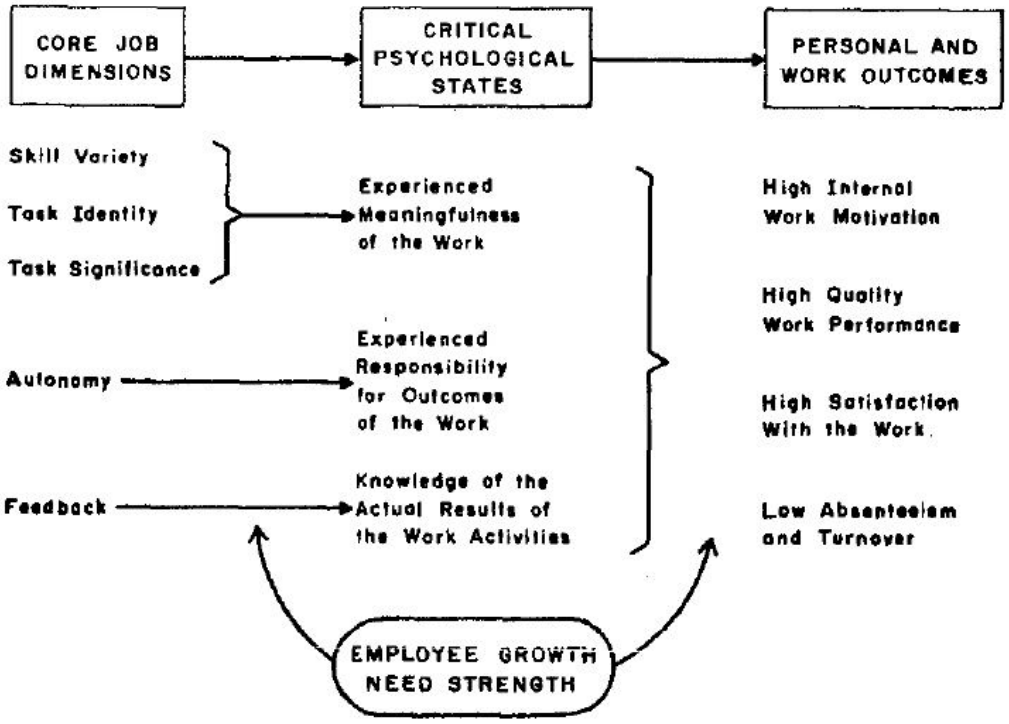

Figure 1: the Job Characteristics Model (JCM), taken from Hackman & Oldham, 1976

Last but not least, another factor is relevant according to JCT, namely the social dimension of a given job. Social sources of motivation are considered in Oldham & Hackman, 2010, but not in earlier papers on the theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976). The authors have acknowledged that the world of work has changed, and research on job design needs, therefore, to adapt to such changes. Nowadays, social interactions are more "pervasive and prominent in contemporary work organizations than previously was the case". As a matter of fact, the service industry has grown, and "even in non-service jobs, workers' activities now typically involve considerable interaction with co-workers and the clients of the work". As a consequence, social factors should not be overlooked. Actually, the kind of interpersonal relationships- when positive, of course- existing in any work environment could foster the motivating potential of a job as well as job-specific and individual features (Oldham & Hackman, 2010).

Oldham and Hackman (2010) identified other aspects that were basically underestimated and thus overlooked when JCT was formulated for the first time, namely job crafting- i.e., "the personal initiative employees exercise in shaping and customizing their own work", job redesigning- in other words, the introduction of changes after the assessment of job content, the organizational context at large- i.e., "the organization's formal properties (e.g., centralization, formalization, technology, and control systems)", and possible cultural influences on job characteristics and the organization itself. As the authors themselves asserted,

> the three psychological states that are the conceptual "motor" of JCT (i.e., the experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for work outcomes, and knowledge of the results of the work) are in fact important to individuals across nations and cultures. […] That said, it still may be that certain features of the work are more salient in some cultures than in others. […] Future research, surely, will give increased attention to those job characteristics that are of special salience in various cultures, and to their effects on jobholder motivation, performance, and well-being. Eventually, we hope, this research will generate new and broadly applicable understanding of the interdependencies between the design of work and the contexts within which it is performed (Oldham & Hackman, 2010).

JCT addresses mainly job design for individuals, but some room is, nonetheless, made for teamwork (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). However, working in teams will not be considered in

this study, since its focus is on the emergency remote teaching experiences of lecturers as individuals. After all, opportunities for collaboration among colleagues in the educational field have been probably reduced precisely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
As for job crafting and redesigning, it could be argued that changes occurring in emergency situations are the result of necessary adaptation rather than of personal initiative or assessment of job content, and, therefore, focusing on how lecturers and university managers might voluntarily introduce changes would be pointless in this case.
The organizational context could be relevant for the present research project instead, and it will indeed be considered, but in a marginal manner. More specifically, the influence of work environment and satisfaction from management on lecturers' performance will be investigated.
Last but not least, culture may be an interesting topic to address, but it could also be true that including it in this study would enlarge its scope too much. After all, culture is all-present. Besides, the coronavirus outbreak has probably been a destabilizing event everywhere, no matter your cultural background. For these reasons, the ways in which culture can affect job features and organizations at large will not be part of the present study.
In short, only the aspects of JCT that Oldham and Hackman (2010) explored in their research will be taken into account, namely job characteristics, individual features, and the social dimension in which a given job is performed.

2.1.2 Research on JCT: Concrete Applications of the Model

Generally speaking, JCT has produced hundreds of studies over the years, thus proving to be a highly influential theory in the field of job design and organizational psychology. Reviews and meta-analyses of such studies have on the whole confirmed its validity (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Humphrey et al., 2007). Some critical aspects and research gaps have, nonetheless, been identified.
Fried and Ferris (1987) highlighted the limitations of previous research on the theory. First of all, the reliability of personal perceptions of job characteristics and consequently of the subjective interpretation of the relationship between such features and the other variables of the model- i.e., psychological states and work outcomes- were often questioned. On the contrary, the authors demonstrated the validity of self-reports, and they even recommended

using questionnaires when conducting research on the model. Secondly, they emphasized the lack of systematic reviews and complete summaries of JCT, which they attempted to amend with their work. Last but not least, the narrative nature of the greater part of reviews was criticized. Narrative overviews tend to be unreliable, because they are likely to lead to distortions, errors, and vague conclusions, as Cooper and Rosenthal (1980) suggested. Therefore, Fried and Ferris (1987) recommended employing the meta-analysis technique, which is deemed more objective, since it is based on "the statistical analysis of a large collection of analysis results from individual studies for the purpose of integrating the findings" (Glass, 1976). Possible changes to the model were suggested as well. For instance, experienced meaningfulness of the work and experienced responsibility for work outcomes could be integrated into one dimension, thus reducing the number of the critical psychological states from three to two. Then, job-based feedback appears to influence all the mental statuses considered by the theory, and not only knowledge of work results. Last but not least, the artificiality of moderator effects is worth noting, even though there seems to be evidence of such effects as far as growth need strength is concerned.

Furthermore, Behson and colleagues (2000) highlighted the fact that few researchers have assessed the theory in the way it was originally conceived. More specifically, the importance of the critical psychological states- i.e., experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for work outcomes, knowledge of work results- tends to be underestimated, which has led many researchers to focus exclusively on the direct impact of job characteristics- i.e., skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, job-based feedback- on work outcomes, thus analysing a two-stage model instead of the original three-stage model. This fact has been stressed by other scholars- other than Behson and colleagues (2000)- as well (Hogan & Martell, 1987; Renn & Vandenberg, 1995). Actually, there is no empirical evidence that supports the exclusion of the critical psychological states from research on JCT, as Renn and Vandenberg (1995) suggested. In order to prove this, Behson and colleagues (2000) sampled 13 independent studies- including Hogan & Martell, 1987 and Renn & Vandenberg, 1995- and conducted a summary analysis on them. The results showed that while the two-stage model is on the whole more suitable for job design research than the three-stage model, the critical psychological states are crucial for job redesign, since increased job characteristics may have no meaning for employees, if they do not experience this improvement at the emotional level.

According to Hogan and Martell (1987), the choice of excluding mental statuses from research derives from analytical difficulties with assessing their mediating role between job characteristics and work outcomes. However, more recent papers on the theory have emphasized the necessity of including them, as shown by Behson and colleagues (2000). Saavedra and Kwun (2000) even concentrated on the affective dimension exclusively. In particular, they investigated the relationship between job characteristics and self-reported mood. Their sample was composed of 370 managers from 26 Midwestern organizations working in the service, sales, and manufacturing sectors in the USA. Data were gathered through a survey. The authors hypothesized that all the core job characteristics of the model influence jobholders' mood positively, and analysis results showed indeed that those features that enhance the motivating potential of a certain job are linked to positive affective experiences at work as well. Considering that in the model by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976) personal perceptions of job characteristics trigger psychological responses that in turn promote positive work-related outcomes such as motivation and high-quality performance, the study by Saavedra and Kwun (2000) provides further support to the inclusion of the critical psychological states in research on JCT.

The model has been largely studied with reference to concrete work environments. Scholars have applied it to a variety of jobs (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Behson et al., 2000; Humphrey et al., 2007), and some of them have also tried to expand it by considering variables that are not part of the original theory. Among the most recent studies, one can include Černe et al., 2017, Park, 2017, and Oerlemans & Bakker, 2018.

Černe and colleagues (2017) applied JCT to teamwork. As already said, the model is meant mainly to improve job design for individuals but also working in teams is considered by Oldham and Hackman (2010). The authors of the study investigated the relationship between knowledge hiding and innovative work behaviour. They hypothesized that the practice of hiding information from teammates on the part of individual employees can affect creativity and innovation efforts within the work group negatively. However, a good team-level climate may moderate this relationship when accompanied by either low task interdependence or high decision autonomy, which are job characteristics associated with teamwork (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). In short, the interplay among team-level climate, job features, and knowledge hiding was investigated. The authors sampled 240 employees and their 34 direct supervisors working in two medium-sized Slovenian companies in the sector of aluminium

manufacturing. Data were gathered through a questionnaire, which was translated from English to Slovenian and back to English. The results supported the research hypotheses: a good team-level climate along with low task interdependence and high decision autonomy can undo the negative influence of knowledge hiding on innovative work behaviour.

Park (2017) applied JCT to performance appraisal, thus extending rater motivation research by including the perspective of job design. The study employed the original three-stage model with the purpose of finding new ways to internally motivate raters and promote positive work outcomes, namely performance appraisal accuracy. Apparently, all five job characteristics have a positive influence on raters' motivation, since they make their work more challenging, multifaceted, complete, autonomous, and meaningful both to the employees they assess and to themselves as well. In addition, access to supervisors' feedback can help raters increase their accuracy. After all, enriched jobs boost improvement and motivation.

Oerlemans and Bakker (2018) expanded JCT by introducing a new variable, namely happiness at work. More specifically, they attempted to predict how changes in job characteristics may impact jobholders' happiness during daily work activities. They hypothesized that happiness at work could fluctuate due to perceived changes in the motivating features of a given job and to the extent to which similar features are normally present. You need also to consider that motivating features might differ from one activity to another, leading to possible temporal fluctuations of happiness. Moreover, Oerlemans and Bakker (2018) argued that people might react differently to the perceived presence of motivating job characteristics during work activities- a concept that they expressed with the term *trait positive affect*. In short, the importance of temporal dynamics and individual differences should not be underestimated, and those aspects were actually recognized as understudied by Oldham and Hackman (2010) themselves. The authors of the study sampled 68 participants, who needed to be proficient in English and work for at least three consecutive days a week in order to be selected. First of all, participants had to answer a general questionnaire, and then they were asked to reconstruct their workday by reporting all the work activities they had done in chronological order, and by specifying which job characteristics were present and whether they had felt happy or not while performing their daily tasks. Results showed that there is a positive relationship between fluctuations in motivating job characteristics and happiness at work only when employees can see a significant difference between changed conditions and the norm. Furthermore, individuals with high trait positive

affect tend to react more positively to the perceived presence of motivating job features than those with low trait positive affect. However, the latter seem happier with motivating job characteristics that are not present normally than with the usual ones. On the contrary, employees with high trait positive affect react positively in both cases.

Aside from work environments, JCT can be applied to educational contexts, especially to the university setting, as Kass and colleagues (2011) suggested. As a matter of fact, research on the application of the model to different school levels and higher education has been conducted, both from the perspective of students and educators. As for the former, scholars have focused on how the five core features- i.e., skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback- that are traditionally associated with job design may be implemented to promote students' motivation and satisfaction with their courses (Catanzaro, 1997; Debnath et al., 2007; Kass et al., 2011). On the other hand, educator-focused research has had a similar purpose, the only difference being the subject of study- educators and not students, of course (Fournier, 1990; Pounder, 1999; Daryanto, 2014; Kulikowsky et al., 2021-1; Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2).

For instance, Kass and colleagues (2011) addressed the issue of students' boredom at university, which is usually attributed to external causes such as lack of variety, few opportunities to use one's skills, and lecturers' pedagogical styles as well as individual differences. In other words, some students may be more predisposed to boredom than others. In particular, the study aimed to examine whether job characteristics could lead to positive results also in a classroom setting, especially behavioural (e.g., lower absenteeism, lower tardiness) and performance outcomes (i.e., better grades). The authors sampled 293 students from a public university in the Southeast United States, and participants were asked to complete an online survey where they had to rate each core feature. Results showed that there is a positive relationship between job characteristics and course satisfaction, especially as far as skill variety and task identify are concerned. The more the characteristics were present, the lower the boredom reported by students. As for behavioural and performance outcomes, no significant relation was found in terms of prediction, so data failed to support all the research hypotheses. Nevertheless, all core dimensions appear to be positively related to the affective sphere (e.g., satisfaction, lack of regret for choice of university), even though only skill variety and feedback proved to be effective predictors of students' satisfaction. The higher the satisfaction, the lower the boredom experienced by respondents. Besides, results showed that

boredom is significantly related to grades, but not to behavioural outcomes. On the whole, data analysis supported the applicability of JCT to education and highlighted the importance of enriching strategies for such context.

Enrichment through job design does not regard only students, though. In research literature, there is indeed evidence that JCT can be employed to improve educators' performance and promote their motivation and job satisfaction.

For example, Daryanto (2014) focused on the relationship among individual features, job characteristics, and career development of mechanical engineering teachers working in Indonesian vocational schools. More specifically, they selected 166 teachers through proportional random sampling, and participants had to answer a questionnaire with Likert-scaled items. It was hypothesized that individual and job characteristics influence career development positively, and that they directly affect job satisfaction. In addition, career development was expected to impact job satisfaction. Data analysis supported these research hypotheses, thus showing that the above-mentioned variables are crucial in avoiding negative work outcomes such as dissatisfaction and turnover.

Furthermore, Pounder (1999) concentrated on teacher teams by comparing teamed and non-teamed teachers on job characteristics, psychological states, and work outcomes. The study did not aim to test the validity of the model, which was indeed used just as the theoretical framework on which the comparison work was based. More specifically, the sample consisted of two middle-grades schools, one with a traditional individual teacher approach and one with a teacher team emphasis. Data were collected through a survey. Results showed that there is a statistically significant difference between teamed and non-teamed teachers in terms of skill variety, in the sense that teamwork requires a wider range of activities and abilities. Surprisingly enough, feedback levels are not higher in the case of teamed teachers. As for mental statuses, educators working in teams appear to have more opportunities to know their students' background stories than non-teamed teachers. Last but not least, teamed teachers reported greater satisfaction than their non-teamed counterparts, but no significant difference was found in internal motivation. As for other work-related variables, teamed educators reported greater professional commitment, helpfulness, and effectiveness than non-teamed teachers. Differences were found in work innovation as well, but they were not statistically significant. Even though the model focuses mainly on single employees, these results highlighted that teamwork is worth studying too, especially in comparison to individual work.

Future research will hopefully provide more insight into these aspects of work, thus enriching the theory itself with further discussion and other possible concrete applications.

2.2 Not Only Motivation: Other Research Variables

Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) presented a case study based on a sample of 202 lecturers working in three Polish universities. They used JCT to devise their first hypothesis, i.e., the motivating job potential perceived by lecturers was lower after the introduction of emergency remote teaching than before the coronavirus pandemic. In addition, they investigated the relationship between motivating job potential and other variables, namely work engagement, job satisfaction, exhaustion, attitude towards e-learning, and satisfaction deriving from how well university managers tackled the emergency situation.

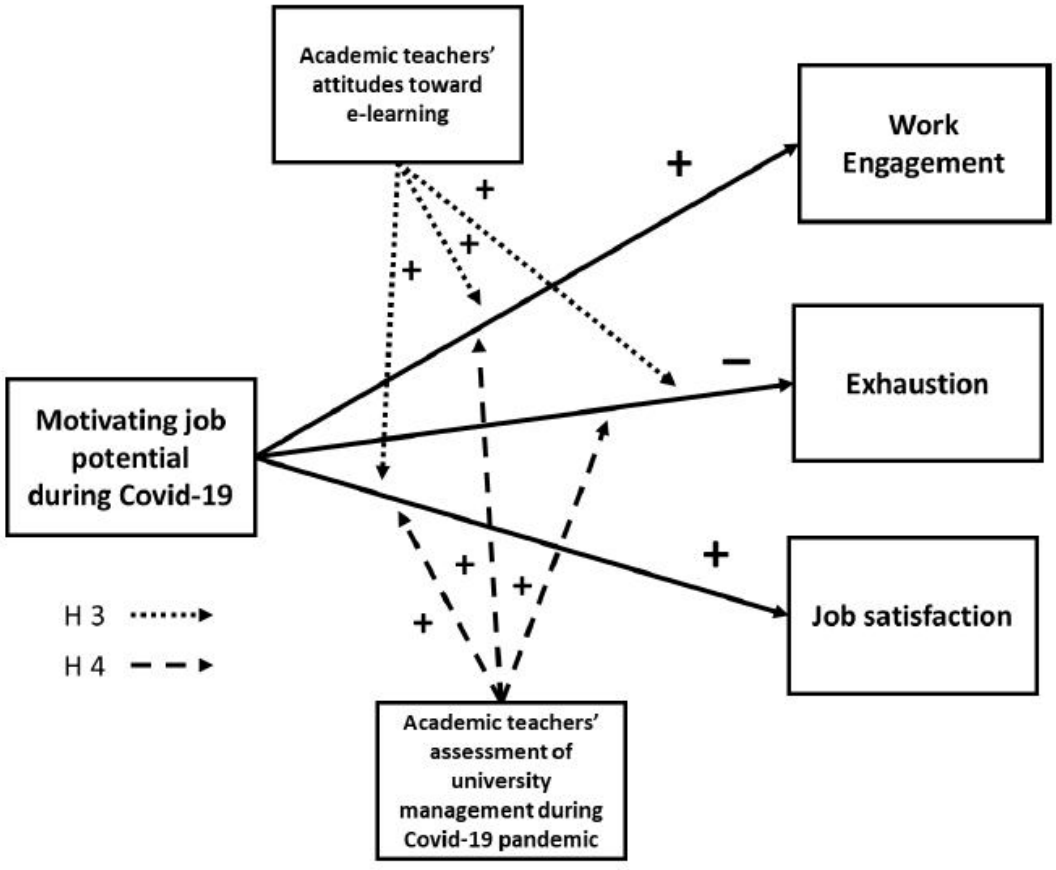

Figure 2: scheme of the research hypotheses by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2)

More specifically, they assumed that motivating job potential is directly proportional to work engagement and job satisfaction, whereas it is inversely proportional to exhaustion. In other words, the higher the motivating job potential perceived by lecturers, the higher their work engagement and job satisfaction, and the lower the exhaustion they feel. Furthermore, attitude towards e-learning and satisfaction from management were considered as moderating variables in the above-mentioned relationship.

Data were gathered through an online survey. The results provided partial support to the hypotheses. On the one hand, respondents reported a lower motivating job potential during the pandemic than in the pre-covid situation, thus proving the validity of the first research hypothesis. The positive relation between motivating job characteristics and work engagement and job satisfaction was confirmed as well. Also, some evidence of the moderating role of satisfaction from management between motivating job potential and job satisfaction was found. On the other hand, data analysis did not support the negative relationship between motivating job characteristics and exhaustion. In addition, no evidence was found neither of the moderating role of attitude towards e-learning nor of the influence of satisfaction from management on work engagement and exhaustion.

The present study has a similar framework to some extent. Its research questions and hypotheses will be presented in the following chapter. For the moment, a definition of all the remaining variables of the case study conducted by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) will be provided. First of all, work engagement, job satisfaction, and professional exhaustion will be defined by relying on review papers and meta-analyses, from which the most significant references will be made. These concepts have been described in many ways, so reviewing past research is deemed necessary in order to avoid confusion and to clarify which meaning is attributed to them in the present dissertation. Instead, the other variables- i.e., attitude towards e-learning and satisfaction from management- can be defined in a more direct way for the reasons explained above. Below, you can find a table with the main reference works per variable.

Work engagement	Main review: Christian et al., 2011 Main definition: Schaufeli et al., 2002
Job satisfaction	Main review: Zhu, 2013 Main definition: Moorman, 1993

Professional exhaustion	Main review: Korunka et al., 2010 Main definition: Demerouti et al., 2001

Table 2: main references for the definition of the research variables [12]

2.2.1 Work Engagement and Professional Exhaustion: Extremes of a Spectrum

As for work engagement, Christian and colleagues (2011) reviewed the literature with the purpose of finding "an agreed-upon definition" of this construct. Apparently, the research tradition on work engagement lacks clarity about both its theoretical explanation and its concrete application, thus causing confusion over whether it should be considered as a conceptually and empirically independent notion, and over which measurement scale should be used to assess it (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Over the years, work engagement has been mainly defined as a motivational variable and consequently as a predictor of good job performance (Christian et al., 2011).

Kahn (1990) associated it primarily with individual psychological experiences at work. He defined personal engagement as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles", whereas personal disengagement was "the uncoupling of selves from work roles". An engaged employee expresses their "preferred self", meaning that they "display real identity, thoughts, and feelings", and they do it at all levels- physical, cognitive, emotional, interpersonal. On the contrary, disengagement implies withdrawal tendencies. Being engagement a mental status, it is not a constant feature, but it is subject to "momentary ebbs and flows". Indeed, Kahn (1990) focused on transitoriness unlike Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976), who devised a model (JCT or JCM) centred on static variables instead. On the basis of this premise, he attempted to identify which psychological conditions can foster employees' engagement at work. He conducted two studies in widely different settings- i.e., a summer camp and an architecture firm- in order to produce highly generalizable data on personal engagement and disengagement. He interviewed several employees, who were asked to describe their work experiences, and tried to identify the moments in which they engaged or disengaged while doing their tasks through a category analysis. The results showed that

[12] In order to avoid repetitions, work engagement, job satisfaction, and professional exhaustion will be sometimes referred to simply as engagement, satisfaction, and exhaustion (or burnout). The present dissertation will, nevertheless, define these variables exclusively with reference to work environments

personal engagement is linked to three psychological conditions: meaningfulness- i.e., the perceived benefits a job can provide, safety- in other words, the perceived guarantees of a certain situation, and availability- suitable skills and resources that a person believes to have.

> The three conditions reflect the logic of actual contracts. People agree to contracts containing clear and desired benefits and protective guarantees when they believe themselves to possess the resources necessary to fulfill the obligations generated. That logic characterizes people's agreements to place increasing depths of themselves into role performances (Kahn, 1990).

Besides, the three psychological conditions vary from person to person. Psychological meaningfulness depends on the extent to which one feels "worthwhile, useful, and valuable- as though they made a difference and were not taken for granted". Task characteristics, role identity and status, and work interactions can influence this condition. Then, people feel psychologically safe when their personal engagement does not imply risks, in the sense that they can express themselves freely and contribute to changes. In addition, they are well aware of what is allowed and what is forbidden and of the possible consequences of their actions. Four factors could affect psychological safety: supportive interpersonal relationships, good group and intergroup dynamics, competent managers, and clear organizational norms. Last but not least, availability "measures how ready people are to engage, given the distractions they experience as members of social systems". Personal engagement may be negatively influenced by depletion of one's physical energy, depletion of one's emotional ability to engage, insecurity about one's work and status, and distractions deriving from one's non-work life (Kahn, 1990).

In short, Kahn (1990) seems to suggest that work engagement is highly dependent on contextual factors. That said, Macey and Schneider (2008) went further by identifying its possible antecedents and consequences. First of all, they emphasized the necessity of a clear definition once again. Scholars appear to have doubts on whether work engagement should be considered as a psychological state or as a behaviour. In addition, the conceptual similarity between engagement and satisfaction generates further confusion. They are, however, distinct concepts.

> Engagement is above and beyond simple satisfaction with the employment arrangements or basic loyalty to the employer- characteristics that most companies

> have measured for many years. Although satisfaction and engagement often trend together, they're different phenomena arising from different sources. Satisfaction is about sufficiency- enough pay, benefits, and flexibility to work and live. […] Engagement, in contrast, is about passion and commitment- the willingness to invest oneself and expend one's *discretionary effort* to help the employer succeed (Erickson, 2005- italics added).

In short, engagement implies voluntary activation unlike satisfaction, which refers only to the fulfilment of personal needs (Erickson, 2005). Macey and Schneider (2008) proposed to define work engagement both psychologically and behaviourally within the same framework. More specifically, engagement can be a psychological state, a behaviour, or a trait. As a psychological state, it is the direct consequence of the "inclination or orientation to experience the world from a particular vantage point (e.g., positive affectivity characterized by feelings of enthusiasm)". In other words, this inclination towards engagement might be a trait of one's personality and an antecedent of psychological engagement, which is in turn characterized by "a strong affective tone connoting, at a minimum, high levels of involvement (passion and absorption) in the work and the organization (pride and energy) as well as affective energy (enthusiasm and alertness) and a sense of self-presence in the work". Last but not least, engagement as a behaviour comprises innovation efforts, initiative, proactive seeking of opportunities to contribute, and "going beyond what is, with specific frames of reference, typically expected or required"- the latter defined as *extra-role behaviour* by Macey and Schneider (2008). Moreover, behavioural engagement serves organizational needs and aims, so it could be seen as a synonym for adaptation even when the individual attempts to introduce innovative changes. Similarly to psychological engagement, it may be influenced by personal inclinations or traits, which can contribute to work engagement along with contextual factors, whose importance was highlighted by Kahn (1990). With reference to antecedents of engagement, you might consider job characteristics and thus the theory by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976) as independent variables in this relationship. Another key reference is perceived organizational support literature (for a review, see Rhoades & Eisenberg, 2002). Managerial style and attitude can actually affect engagement, as Kahn suggested (1990). Last but not least, trust is an important source of engagement as well (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

The work by Schaufeli and colleagues (2002, 2006) is crucial for the definition of work

engagement in the sense that it considers all the above-mentioned dimensions of this construct- affection, behaviour, personality. They defined it as

> a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. [...] *Vigor* is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. *Dedication* is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. [...] The final dimension of engagement, *absorption*, is characterized by being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

On the whole, it is a stable and enduring state of mind, but it is subject to temporary fluctuations and individual differences too. More generally, work engagement might be seen as the antonym for burnout or exhaustion, which could thus be defined as "an erosion of engagement with the job" (Schaufeli et al., 2002). The definition and measurement scale- i.e., the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)[13] – adopted by Schaufeli and colleagues (2002, 2006) have been recognized as valuable also by other scholars (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Christian et al., 2011), and they will, therefore, be employed in the present dissertation as well.

As for professional exhaustion or burnout, this variable could be seen as the antonym for work engagement, as already said (Schaufeli et al., 2002). In Merriam-Webster's thesaurus, exhaustion is defined as "a complete depletion of energy or strength". Indeed, literature reviews on this subject have highlighted a connection between the construct and employees' energy (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Korunka et al., 2010). Korunka and colleagues (2010) even emphasized the metaphor of burning: you need first to be strongly engaged in your work- in other words, you burn like a fire- to be able to burn out, and enough resources have to be provided in order to keep the fire burning. In sum, the connection with energy seems to be contained in the very term burnout.

One of the most commonly accepted definitions of exhaustion has been proposed by Maslach

[13] Originally, UWES was composed of 17 items. Later on, Schaufeli and Salanova (2006) considered reducing the number of items to 9 (UWES-9) and proved the validity of this shortened scale. As the authors themselves asserted, shortening UWES was essentially a pragmatical choice, as researchers prefer using few items to measure constructs so that respondents do not feel bothered. Besides, short questionnaires reduce the likelihood of attrition

and Jackson (1981). They developed a three-component model of the construct, which was defined as a syndrome. First of all, burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion; in other words, "workers feel they are no longer able to give of themselves at a psychological level", and this condition is often accompanied by feelings of frustration and tension. Secondly, another feature of burnout is depersonalization or dehumanization. When employees feel that their energies are depleted, they may develop negative, cynical, detached attitudes towards their co-workers, customers, or towards the organization itself. They tend to treat other people as objects and not as human beings. Last but not least, exhaustion is characterized by decreased personal accomplishment, which is "the tendency to evaluate oneself negatively, particularly with regard to one's work with clients. Workers feel unhappy about themselves and dissatisfied with their accomplishments on the job". However, the third component has been seen as a rather incidental aspect and not as a key dimension by other researchers (Korunka et al., 2010). Generally speaking, burnout could have repercussions for both individuals and organizations at large. It may lead to absenteeism, turnover, and health problems both in physical and psychological terms (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). In addition, scholars appear to agree on the fact that burnout is not a sudden event, but the result of a process divided into stages, even though almost every author has proposed a different stage order (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Korunka et al, 2010). Maslach and Jackson (1981) developed also one of the most used measurement scales of exhaustion, namely the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which was originally meant to capture both frequency and intensity of burnout aspects, thus not assessing their presence or absence, but experiences in a continuum (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Another important measurement scale is the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI), which assesses both exhaustion and disengagement from work and is considered as a valuable alternative to MBI (Halbesleben, 2008). The present dissertation will partially rely on both scales with the purpose of measuring burnout in its sample.

Scholars have also attempted to broaden the definition of professional exhaustion by considering its possible antecedents and consequences. Among the antecedents, one could name job and role characteristics, organizational features, and individual differences. Jobs that require more direct, frequent, and long-lasting interactions with costumers like those in the service sector are generally associated with higher levels of burnout, since workers are supposed to be always empathetic and have to face clients' problems and demands. Excessive

workload, time pressure, role conflict- i.e., “the incompatibility of role expectations and demands” (Singh, 2000), role ambiguity- in other words, “the degree to which information is lacking about role expectations and effective performance of a role” (Singh, 2000), absence of decision freedom, and lack of feedback are other factors to consider. As for organizational features, performance-related rewards or punishments, the nature of interpersonal relations within the work environment and its physical and psychological characteristics in general may be influential factors. Last but not least, individual differences such as demographic variables (age, gender, marital status, etc…) and personal expectations about the job and opportunities for career development can affect burnout as well (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Korunka et al, 2010). On the other hand, exhaustion might lead to a wide range of negative consequences for the individual and the organization. Kahill (1988) grouped them into five categories: physical, emotional, behavioural, interpersonal, and attitudinal. Physical health problems include for instance insomnia, fatigue, and gastrointestinal disturbances. At the psychological level, burnout is usually associated with depression, anxiety, irritability, helplessness, and low self-esteem. Behavioural consequences could include absenteeism and turnover, or even bad consumption habits such as smoking and drug and alcohol use. As for interpersonal relationships, exhausted employees are more likely to have deteriorated relations with co-workers, friends, and family members. In other words, professional burnout may affect both their work and non-work lives. Last but not least, exhaustion can lead to the development of negative attitudes towards the job, one’s costumers, and the organization itself as well as a sense of dissatisfaction with oneself.

Furthermore, scholars have identified some problems with burnout research. First of all, the tendency to study the burnout phenomenon primarily in relation to the service industry has been criticized. Maslach and Jackson (1981) themselves developed their model with reference to helping professions such as teachers and nurses, given the large amount of social interactions required by such jobs. However, Demerouti and colleagues (2001) argued that burnout antecedents could be found in any profession, so the construct should be applied to a wider range of work environments. Then, another issue concerns the difference between stress and exhaustion. In fact, there seems to be confusion on whether these concepts are synonyms or not, but, as Ganster and Schaubroeck (1991) suggested, they are actually distinct. If stress is the general response to very demanding work conditions, then burnout is a type of stress that mainly affects the emotional sphere.

Generally speaking, a close relationship between work environment and exhaustion seems to emerge from research literature. This connection is made evident by the job demands-resources model of burnout. This model defines professional burnout on the basis of two concepts- *job demands* and *job resources*, which should balance each other out in order to avoid exhaustion (Demerouti et al., 2001).

> *Job demands* refer to those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical or mental effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs (e.g., exhaustion). […] The greater the activation or effort, the greater the physiological costs for the individual.

On the other hand,

> *job resources* refer to those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that may do any of the following: (a) be functional in achieving work goals, (b) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; (c) stimulate personal growth and development (Demerouti et al., 2001).

Examples of job demands are workload and time pressure, whereas participation in decision making and task variety belong to the category of job resources. In sum, any work environment with high job demands but few job resources is likely to cause stress and exhaustion (Demerouti et al., 2001). For the purposes of the present research, it is the definition of burnout provided by Demerouti and colleagues (2001) that will be adopted, given that it highlights the connection between the construct and work environment. Besides, one can make reference to the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT), which is the guiding thread that connects all the research variables of the current project. Demands and resources might be labelled as job characteristics, which are key aspects in fostering employees' motivation according to the model by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976).

In short, one might consider work engagement and professional exhaustion as extremes of the same spectrum. The former is characterized by high levels of energy and commitment at work, and it is thus the positive extreme. On the other hand, the former implies a depletion of one's energies caused by a non-supporting work environment that could frustrate individual efforts to perform well. That said, burnout can be seen as the negative extreme.

2.2.2 Review and Definition of Job Satisfaction

As for the definition of job satisfaction, Zhu (2013) identified two main traditions in research literature: on the one hand, this construct has been considered exclusively as a pleasant affective state that derives from employees' positive evaluation of their jobs in general (Locke, 1969); on the other hand, some scholars have argued that this variable has not only an affective dimension but also a cognitive component to be considered when defining and assessing it (Organ & Near, 1985; Brief & Roberson, 1989; Moorman, 1993).

Organ and Near (1985) questioned the validity of the most used measurement scales of satisfaction, which seem to "reflect primarily cognitive evaluation rather than affective state or hedonic tone", even though they are based on an affective view of the concept. In other words, the concrete application and assessment of job satisfaction are not consistent with its affection-based definition. This is what could be defined as a paradox: job satisfaction is an affective state, but it is measured mainly in terms of cognition.

Brief and Roberson (1989) proposed to consider satisfaction as an attitude. Given that the term attitude refers to "the way you feel and think about someone or something" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary), the authors clearly adopted a multidimensional perspective of the construct, which should indeed comprise both affection (i.e., feelings) and cognition (i.e., thoughts). They tested different measurement scales on a convenience sample of 144 workers and found that such measures vary significantly in the way they capture affective and cognitive aspects of job satisfaction. Another noteworthy result concerns the nature of attitudes themselves. As Watson and Tellegen (1985) suggested, the affective dimension has two subcomponents, namely positive and negative affectivity. The results of the study by Brief and Roberson (1989) showed that these subcomponents are essentially independent from each other, so they lead to different consequences and need, therefore, to be analysed separately.

In line with the multidimensional perspective, Moorman (1993) suggested that two independent dimensions of job satisfaction can be identified, namely cognition-based and affection-based. Generally speaking, employees are satisfied with their jobs when they positively evaluate their work experiences at both levels. From a cognitive point of view, job satisfaction derives from a rational assessment of working conditions, including also type of work and opportunities for personal growth and professional development. Workers are satisfied with their jobs only if these factors are in line with their individual needs. On the

other hand, affection-based job satisfaction means that a given work arouses positive emotions in the employee who performs it. The definition provided by Moorman (1993) will be adopted in the present study, since it appears to summarize research on satisfaction pretty well. Besides, it might be argued that this definition is consistent with the difference between satisfaction and engagement highlighted by Erickson (2005). In sum, the former implies a condition of fulfilment of employees' personal needs and a positive evaluation of work experiences at the affective and cognitive levels.

Last but not least, another paper on job satisfaction is worth quoting. Locke and Latham (1990) attempted to develop an integrated model of job satisfaction and work motivation on the basis of several theories. For the purposes of the current research project, it is worth noting that the authors made reference to the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976)[14]. Actually, job satisfaction and motivation are possible work outcomes according to this model. The features of a certain job should thus be considered as a source of satisfaction and as a component of its definition.

2.2.3 Covid-Related Variables: Attitude towards E-Learning and Satisfaction from Management

One might see the last two variables of the present research project- i.e., attitude towards e-learning and satisfaction from management- as directly linked to the pandemic situation, the latter in a clearer way than the former. Educators had probably an opinion about e-learning before the introduction of emergency remote teaching, but it could be equally true that the coronavirus outbreak has influenced that opinion to some extent. However, the treatment of this variable will not be discussed here but in the next chapter. For the moment, just a definition of e-learning and satisfaction from management will be provided.

As for attitude the former, this variable may affect the relationship between motivating job potential and work engagement, job satisfaction, and exhaustion to some extent, according to Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2). As already said, the term attitude refers to "the way you feel and think about someone or something" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)- in this case

[14] The other theories employed by Locke and Latham (1990) are goal setting theory, expectancy theory, social-cognitive theory, attribution theory, and equity theory. For an overview of them, see Miner, 2005. You will find all the detains in the reference section at the end of the present dissertation

about the employment of digital technologies for educational purposes, and it also implies personal evaluation, which should integrate positive and negative aspects (Olson & Zanna, 2015).

According to Ranieri (2020), there is polarization between those who support e-learning and those who categorically reject it. In this case, having a positive attitude means that technology is seen as an opportunity rather than an impediment, even in the face of difficulties. On the other hand, a negative attitude usually results in criticism and rejection; in other words, e-learning is considered of inferior quality if compared to traditional, face-to-face teaching. However, this opposition might be too simplistic and stereotypical, thus undermining constructive debates and critical thinking on this topic. Instead of lingering exclusively on either advantages or drawbacks of e-learning, one should indeed weight both critically before taking a position.

Last but not least, satisfaction from university management during the COVID-19 outbreak can be defined in relation to "the behaviour and communication of university leaders", which "might be an important factor in shaping the resilience to the pandemic crisis". More specifically, the ability to ensure continuity of education along with adequate support and clear information given and commitment to face the issues raised by lecturers are to be considered when defining this variable (Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2).

In this chapter, all the research variables were defined. The reviews presented here do not claim to be the best possible or the most accurate, but they can hopefully help to place the current study in a more precise theoretical framework and research tradition. Certainly, the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) stands as the leitmotif of this paper and as its most significant reference. In the next chapter, further insight into the theoretical basis of the present research project will be provided by presenting research questions, hypotheses, and treatment of variables.

III. The Present Study: Rebalancing Educational Research on COVID-19

Considering that some scholars have stressed a disproportion between student-centred and educator-centred research regarding the COVID-19 experience (Kim & Asbury, 2020; Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2), the present study attempts to balance this situation as far as possible. We are dealing with an exploratory study, whose focus is on a very specific context and sample. Its results may be consequently hard to generalize to a broader research population, but it could be equally true that referring to specific contexts enables researchers to thoroughly report the experiences of those who actually lived a given situation- in this case, the experiences of lecturers in the rapid, unexpected transition from face-to-face classes to emergency remote teaching due to the coronavirus pandemic. As already said in the first chapter, forced e-learning has produced different effects. It is, therefore, necessary to study contextual peculiarities rather than dwell on general reflections about the impact of COVID-19 on education, if one wants to understand the reasons behind the success or failure of emergency remote teaching and collect useful data for future research as well. After all, the feasibility and effectiveness of didactic solutions should not be taken for granted. A given methodology may produce positive outcomes in one environment and, at the same time, lead to a complete failure in another. That said, studies with specific reference situations seem to be the most suitable to capture the contextual peculiarities that can explain the divergent results found in research literature.

The present chapter is divided into three parts. First of all, the reference context of the current research project will be introduced, given the importance of its influence on the constructs considered here. Then, questions, hypotheses, and treatment of variables will be presented. In order to answer the research questions and verify the validity of the hypotheses, a sample population had to be selected and was asked to fill out an online questionnaire. Its sources, designing, and structure will be specified in the second sub-chapter. The sampling method used will be then explained in the third part. Demographic information on the sample will be provided as well.

For the purposes of the present study, Ca' Foscari university's language department was chosen as reference context. The reason for such choice lies first in the fact that the author is going to get her master degree at the same university and department. Her considerations are consequently influenced by her direct experience as a student. The study focuses on the second semester of the academic year 2019-2020- when emergency remote teaching was

introduced for the first time in Italy in compliance with Decreto-legge 23 febbraio 2020, n.6, Dpcm (Decreto del Presidente del Consiglio dei ministri) 23 febbraio 2020, and Dpcm 1° marzo 2020- and on the following academic year (i.e. 2020-2021), when the pandemic situation got better and the possibility to teach dual mode classes- in other words, a limited number of students can attend face-to-face lessons and at the same time the remaining students are connected from home- was given, in compliance with Dpcm 7 agosto 2020[15]. Secondly, case studies such as Petillion & McNeil, 2020 and Kim & Asbury, 2020 showed that practical activities and face-to-face interactions can lead to better performances both on the part of students and educators. One may thus assume that emergency remote teaching was particularly challenging in language courses, where constant practice through interpersonal interactions is fundamental. Examining a tough situation could produce relevant data even for future research.

3.1 Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Treatment of Variables

As already said, the present study is partially based on Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2 in terms of research questions, hypotheses, and variables. The author is indeed going to make some adjustments to that framework of reference. Therefore, we will go over the reasoning that Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) made when presenting the theoretical background of their study and propose changes.

First of all, the authors started from the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) to devise their research hypotheses. They assumed that forced e-learning had a negative impact on job characteristics and, by extension, on motivating job potential. For instance, emergency remote teaching may have reduced skill variety, since all class activities were moved online and, as a consequence, lecturers had to propose feasible tasks for that environment. You need to consider that the conversion to e-learning was unexpected; lecturers had devised their courses for face-to-face teaching and had to adapt them to remote education on a very short notice. The preference for frontal teaching has emerged during the pandemic, even though cooperative learning activities could be proposed even in online classes (Ranieri, 2020). One may, however, assume that lack of time for careful planning and unfamiliarity with online

[15] All the Italian laws and decrees on COVID-19 were published on *Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana*. Another important work of reference with respect to dual mode classes is INAIL, 2020

platforms influenced the choice toward more traditional and educator-centred formats. Task identity could have been negatively affected by emergency remote teaching as well, especially if you consider interruptions and changes of course programs. Furthermore, the lack of face-to-face interactions may have resulted in lower levels of task significance and job-based feedback. One can indeed imagine that the format of online classes makes it tougher for lecturers to see the concrete impact of their didactic work on their students and get information on how effective their performance was. Emergency remote teaching could have led to a perceived lack of autonomy on the part of lecturers too, since the coronavirus outbreak forced everyone to resort to e-learning regardless of their opinions on the subject and of how advanced their digital skills are. If lecturers felt that they did not possess the necessary abilities and knowledge to teach remotely, they might experience a sense of inadequacy with respect to their job, and this could in turn lead to the belief that there is no room for personal growth and professional development during a pandemic. In other words, the COVID-19 outbreak may have frustrated lecturers' growth need strength. Last but not least, forced e-learning reduced the opportunities for social contacts, which are essential sources of motivation at work according to Oldham and Hackman (2010). In light of all this, we can now present the first research question and hypothesis. The latter is analogous to that by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2), whose validity was proved by research results.

Q1: How did emergency remote teaching affect the motivating job potential perceived by lecturers?

H1: During the pandemic, lecturers perceived their motivating job potential as lower than in the pre-covid situation as a result of emergency remote teaching.

According to JCT, the five core job characteristics- i.e., skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback- can foster not only employees' motivation but other positive work outcomes and behaviours such as work engagement and job satisfaction. In the model by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976), the authors did not use the term work engagement but *low absenteeism and turnover*. However, one could argue that absenteeism and turnover are antonyms for work engagement. After all, the former can be defined as a chronic absence from work or as "the rate of such absence" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary), whereas the latter is "the rate at which employees leave a company and are replaced" (Cambridge Dictionary). If you look at the definition of work engagement provided by

Schaufeli and colleagues (2002)- which is the one adopted in the present paper, you will probably agree with the proposal to see the constructs under inspection as antonyms. After all, employees are certainly not expected to be absentees or leave their company, if their work arouses positive feelings such as vigour, dedication, and absorption in them. The presence of favourable job characteristics motivates workers and may lead to higher levels of work engagement and job satisfaction according to JCT. However, hypothesis 1 establishes a negative relation between emergency remote teaching and motivating job potential. If lecturers felt that their motivation was lower due to forced e-learning, this implies that also their work engagement and job satisfaction were perceived as lower during the pandemic than before the introduction of emergency remote teaching. These statements are the basis of the second research question and hypothesis.

Q2: How did emergency remote teaching affect lecturers' work engagement and job satisfaction?

H2: During the pandemic, lecturers' work engagement and job satisfaction were perceived as lower than in the pre-covid situation as a result of emergency remote teaching.

Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) assumed that motivating job potential and professional exhaustion are negatively related, but they found no evidence supporting this hypothesis. Therefore, the author decided not to investigate this negative relationship. Instead, one could argue that forced e-learning is a rather influential variable in this respect. The definition of burnout provided by Demerouti and colleagues (2001) clearly establishes a close connection between the construct and the environment where employees work, which is in turn characterized by certain job demands and resources. In a favourable setting, such features are well-balanced. That said, emergency remote teaching might be considered as a job demand for which the education world was unprepared at the beginning. In other words, the available resources were not enough to avoid lecturers' burnout. In light of this, the third research question and hypothesis aim to investigate the relationship between emergency remote teaching and professional exhaustion.

Q3: What kind of relationship can be established between emergency remote teaching and professional exhaustion?

H3: Emergency remote teaching and professional exhaustion are positively related.

Attitude towards e-learning is another variable considered by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2). Some considerations about it are worth making. Almost certainly, lecturers had an opinion on the subject already before the pandemic, and such opinion may have influenced their performance in online classes, but it could be equally true that emergency remote teaching changed it in some way. In other words, attitude towards e-learning might be seen both as an independent and dependent variable in the same study. Considering that the transition to online classes was unexpected and that lecturers had to adapt to the new situation quickly, the author assumed that emergency remote teaching had a negative impact on lecturers' attitude towards e-learning. This assumption is the basis of the fourth research question and hypothesis.

Q4: How did emergency remote teaching affect lecturers' attitude towards e-learning?

H4: Lecturers' attitude towards e-learning changed for the worse after the introduction of emergency remote teaching.

Some relations between the variables considered here go beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. In other words, they should exist in any situation and not only as a result of forced e-learning. For instance, the JCT asserts that work engagement and job satisfaction depend upon a motivating work environment. If employees are not motivated to perform well, they can be neither engaged nor satisfied at work. Therefore, we can now present the fifth research question and hypothesis.

Q5: What kind of relationship can be established between motivating job potential and work engagement and job satisfaction?

H5: Motivating job potential is positively related to work engagement and job satisfaction.

Moreover, Schaufeli and colleagues (2002) proposed to see professional exhaustion as the antonym for work engagement. More specifically, they defined it as "an erosion of engagement with the job". The present study supports this proposal. Indeed, these variables were presented as extremes of a spectrum in chapter 2. The proposal by Schaufeli and colleagues (2002) paves the way for the sixth research question and hypothesis.

Q6: What kind of relationship can be established between professional exhaustion and work engagement?

H6: Professional exhaustion and work engagement are negatively related.

Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) included also some moderating variables in their research project. More specifically, they attempted to highlight the influence of attitude towards e-learning and satisfaction from management on the relationship between motivating job potential and work engagement, job satisfaction, and professional exhaustion. The present dissertation will not consider any moderating variable, though. The reason for this choice lies first of all in the basic level statistical skills of the author. Verifying the moderating role of the above-mentioned variables would indeed require calculations with which she is completely unfamiliar. Secondly, data gathered by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) on a much larger sample provided only partial support to their hypotheses on this respect. In light of all this, the present study will consider attitude towards e-learning and satisfaction from management as independent variables. More specifically, it will investigate the relationship between these constructs and motivation, engagement, satisfaction, and burnout with reference to the emergency remote teaching situation. Two research questions and hypotheses with one independent variable each will be now presented.

Q7: How did lecturers' attitude towards e-learning affect their motivating job potential, work engagement, job satisfaction, and professional exhaustion during the pandemic?

H7: During the pandemic, positive attitude towards e-learning was positively related to lecturers' motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction. On the contrary, a negative relation could be established between this construct and professional exhaustion. It was the other way round in case of negative attitude towards e-learning.

Q8: How did lecturers' satisfaction from management affect their motivating job potential, work engagement, job satisfaction, and professional exhaustion during the pandemic?

H8: During the pandemic, satisfaction with how university managers were tackling the emergency was positively related to lecturers' motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction. On the contrary, a negative relation could be established between this construct and professional exhaustion.

Below, you can find a table that summarizes all the hypotheses presented in this sub-chapter.

Dep. variables / Ind. variables	Motivating job potential	Work engagement	Job satisfaction	Professional exhaustion	Attitude towards e-learning
Emergency remote teaching	H1 -	H2 -	H2 -	H3 +	H4 -
Motivating job potential		H5 +	H5 +		
Professional exhaustion		H6 -			
Attitude towards e-learning	H7 Pos. + Neg.-	H7 Pos. + Neg.-	H7 Pos. + Neg.-	H7 Pos. - Neg.+	
Satisfaction from management	H8 +	H8 +	H8 +	H8 -	

Table 3: scheme of research hypotheses. For every relationship among the research variables, the scheme specifies the hypothesis (H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H8) that presents it and the kind of relation the reference hypothesis establishes, positive (+) or negative (-). "Pos." stands for positive and "Neg." for negative

In addition to the above-mentioned variables, the present study will rely on demographic information on the sample as well. More specifically, the following independent variables will be considered: age, subject area, years of experience, position within Ca' Foscari university, and number of classes per semester.

3.2 Instruments: A Questionnaire to Capture Personal Evaluations

The typical instrument used in survey research is the questionnaire, which is based on the idea that you can describe the peculiarities (e.g., features, opinions, behaviours) of a large research population- in this case, university lecturers- by interviewing a much smaller sample that is

supposed to be representative of that population. Therefore, the present study relies on an online questionnaire created with Google Form in order to gather data from the participants previously sampled.

In a book edited by Mackey and Gass (2012), Dörnyei and Csizér gave advice on how to design a good questionnaire. Their work focused on second language acquisition, but some considerations may be applied to the present context. Their recommendations were indeed useful in designing the questionnaire for the current research project. First of all, they suggested proposing more than one item per topic, so that you can cover different aspects of it. Since all the research variables considered in the current study are multidimensional apart from attitude towards e-learning and satisfaction from management, at least one item per dimension was proposed. Questionnaires should not be too long tough, so concentrating only on the most relevant issues for your research is highly recommended. As Schaufeli and Salanova (2006) suggested, long questionnaires increase the risk of attrition. However, the present study comprises many variables and consequently requires an adequate number of items to assess them properly. As a consequence, suggestions about questionnaire length could not be followed. A useful piece of advice concerns space economy, instead. It may be true that respondents prefer short questionnaires, but one should not make the pages full just to save space; the layout would probably appear crowded and uninviting otherwise. Dividing your questionnaire into different sections could be a good solution in this respect, and it was actually done when designing the instrument for the current study. The way in which items are written is important too. For instance, you should avoid negative constructions as far as possible, because they tend to be misleading, especially when participants want to give a negative answer to them. Last but not least, Dörnyei and Csizér suggested proposing different types of questions (e.g., closed-ended, open-ended) in order "to create a sense of variety and to prevent respondents from simply repeating previous answers". In this case, the closed-ended format was employed the most, but multiple-choice questions, checkboxes, and open-ended items were included as well. Open-ended questions are not compulsory, though. It was assumed that not all respondents would be willing to produce free writing, and that is precisely the reason for such choice.

As for the questionnaire structure and features, the instrument is composed of 83 items- 75 compulsory, 8 optional- and divided into 6 sections. Considering that it is meant to capture lecturers' personal evaluations of their experiences in relation to the research variables, the

Likert scale was adopted for the majority of the questionnaire items. It belongs to the closed-ended questions category and consists of one statement about which respondents are asked to express their degree of agreement or disagreement. In this case, the available answers range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. Section A aims to gather general information on the sample. More specifically, it focuses on the demographic variables mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, namely age, subject area, years of experience, position within Ca’ Foscari university, and number of classes per semester. Section B is devoted to motivating job potential, which depends on job characteristics (i.e., skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job-based feedback), individual features (i.e., growth need strength and job-relevant knowledge and skill), and on the quality of interpersonal relationships at work (Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). Section C concentrates on work engagement, which is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption according to Schaufeli and colleagues (2002). Section D is devoted to job satisfaction, which can be assessed both at the cognitive and affective levels (Moorman, 1993). Section E focuses on professional exhaustion, which occurs when job demands and resources are disproportioned, as Demerouti and colleagues suggested (2001). Last but not least, section F assesses both attitude towards e-learning and satisfaction from management. Probably, the last two constructs have the strongest link to COVID-19, and they may influence the other dependent variables- i.e., motivating job potential, work engagement, job satisfaction, professional exhaustion- directly, as assumed in hypotheses 6 and 7. Each section is introduced by a short definition of the targeted construct. In addition, respondents are asked to generally evaluate their experiences related to the research variables by comparing the emergency remote teaching situation to the pre-covid context, with the only exception being satisfaction from management. After all, this construct is specific to the pandemic situation, so focusing on a comparison before and after the coronavirus outbreak is deemed pointless in this case.

As for the items, many were adapted from the questionnaire used by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) in their study. Besides, they were either taken from measurement scales or written ex novo on the basis of the definitions provided in chapter 2. Below, you can find a table with all the works consulted for the adaptation of the questionnaire items.

SECTION B: Motivating job potential	Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2

SECTION C: Work engagement	UWES (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) OLBI (Oldenburg Burnout Inventory; Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005)[16]
SECTION D: Job satisfaction	OLBI
SECTION E: Professional exhaustion	MBI (Maslach Burnout Inventory; Maslach & Jackson, 1981), OLBI
SECTION F: Attitude towards e-learning and Satisfaction from management	Kulikowsky et al., 2021-2

Table 4: sources consulted to adapt the questionnaire items

3.3 Participants: Analysing a Difficult Situation for Future Improvement

Lecturers working in Ca' Foscari university's language department in Venice were contacted by e-mail, and 37 of them accepted to complete the questionnaire. They thus constitute the convenience sample of the present study.

Convenience or opportunity sampling is a non-probability sampling method based on the resources available to the researcher. In other words, participants are selected when they meet practical criteria such as geographical proximity or easy accessibility. In addition, they must possess key characteristics for the purposes of the research project (Mackey & Gass, 2012). Indeed, the choice of convenience sampling was prompted primarily by the desire to analyse a situation where the introduction of emergency remote teaching might be problematic, so that strengths and weaknesses can be highlighted with reference to a specific context, and useful data can be gathered in order to improve for the future. It may be true that some solutions are effective in more than one situation, but the peculiarities of a given context should not be overlooked. Besides, one could assume that forced e-learning was particularly destabilizing where courses are normally designed for face-to-face teaching, as in the case under inspection. Higher education boasts a widespread e-learning tradition, but during the pandemic online teaching was probably uncharted waters for many lecturers, nonetheless. Making general considerations on the impact of COVID-19 on education is useful for

[16] As far as the adaptation of items from measurement scales is concerned, an interesting work of reference is Sinval et al., 2019. You will find all the details in the reference section

research, but relevant data and concrete action proposals may derive from the analysis of specific cases as well. Furthermore, the most destabilizing effect of the pandemic on education was probably the restriction of social contacts, and one may consequently assume that performance in language-related subjects was particularly undermined by emergency remote teaching. After all, linguistic skills need to be coached through social interactions, and digital environments may be perceived as inadequate to do it because of negative factors such as bad internet connection or students' tendency to keep their cameras off. In light of all this, the convenience sample selected for the current study appears to be a valuable source of information to rebalance and enrich educational research on the coronavirus outbreak by including the emergency remote teaching experiences of the targeted lecturers.

As already said, the present study includes demographic information in the pool of its independent variables. Data in this respect were gathered through the items in section A of the questionnaire. In the last part of this chapter, the sample will be described in relation to such information, whereas possible influences of demographic data on the dependent variables- i.e., motivating job potential, work engagement, job satisfaction, professional exhaustion, attitude towards e-learning- will be discussed in the next one.

The first demographic variable considered here is age. In order to simplify data collection, five age ranges were offered instead of a question asking the precise age of participants. Besides, it was assumed that tapping your age range would be perceived as less invasive than indicating your exact age, even though data were gathered in anonymous form. Below, you can find a table and a pie chart reporting the sample's age-related data.

< 30	1	2.7 %
30-40	4	10.8 %
41-50	11	29.7 %
51-60	11	29.7 %
> 60	10	27.0 %

Table 5: number of respondents per age range and percentage of the total (37)

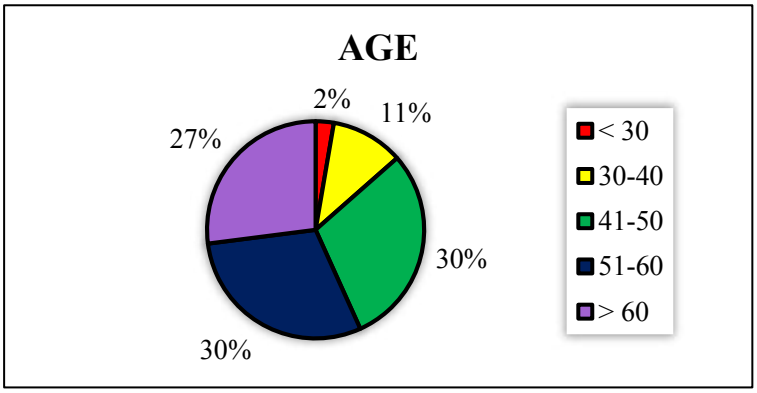

Figure 3: pie chart representing the distribution of age-related data

As you can infer from the table and the pie chart above, the age of the majority of respondents (22/37; 59.5 %) ranges from 41 to 60.

The second demographic variable considered in the current research project is lecturers' subject area. Three main domains were identified before administering the questionnaire, namely language teaching, linguistics, and literature. Two items were devoted to subject areas. In the first one, participants were asked to tap either one of the three main fields or the option "other"- the latter in case they do not teach one of the main subjects of the department. In the second item, respondents who had answered "other" to the previous question had the possibility to specify what they teach. As the pie chart below clearly shows, only 19% (7/37) of participants do not deal with the main fields identified beforehand.

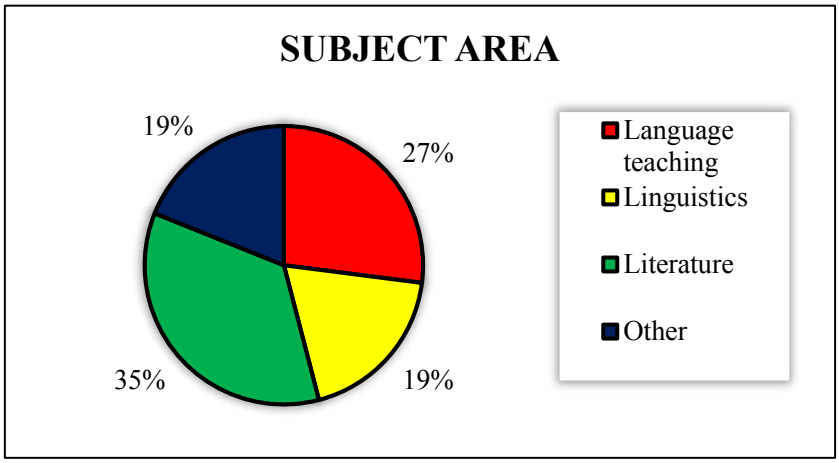

Figure 4: main subjects (i.e., language teaching, linguistics, literature) vs other domains

Below, you can find a table with the detailed distribution of data regarding lecturers' subject areas.

Language teaching	10	27.0 %
Linguistics	7	18.9 %
Literature	13	35.1 %
Culture and oral tradition regarding deafness	1	2.7 %
History	3	8.1 %
Translation studies	2	5.4 %
Political and economic geography	1	2.7 %

Table 6: number of respondents per subject and percentage of the total (37)

As you can infer from the table above, the field that is mostly represented by the sample is literature (13/37; 35.1 %).

Thirdly, the years of experience that lecturers have accumulated are taken into account. As with age, year ranges were offered in order to simplify data collection. The related questionnaire item referred to lecturers' experience in general terms, thus including possible working periods in universities other than Ca' Foscari. The table and pie chart below report experience-related information gathered from participants.

< 1	1	2.7 %
1-5	7	18.9 %
6-10	3	8.1 %
11-15	4	10.8 %
16-20	2	5.4 %
> 20	20	54.1 %

Table 7: number of respondents per year range and percentage of the total (37)

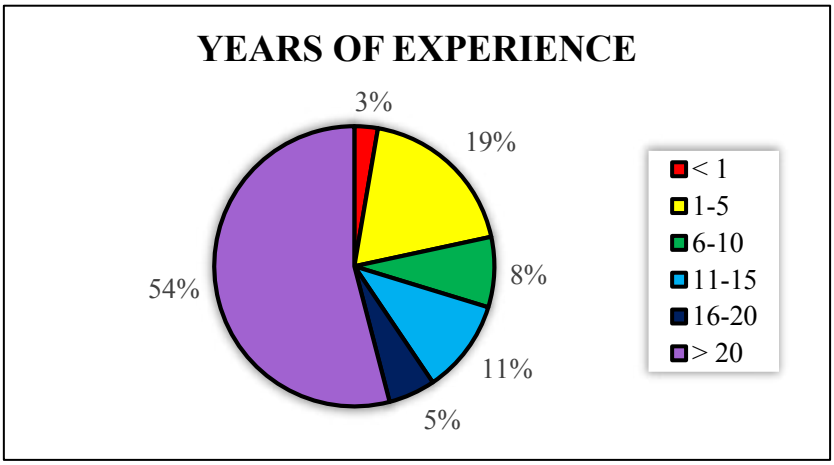

Figure 5: pie chart representing the distribution of experience-related data

Clearly, the majority of the sampled lecturers (20/37; 54.1 %) have been teaching for more than 20 years, thus proving to have a certain experience.

Fourthly, participants were asked about their position within Ca' Foscari university. Five roles were identified in the sample: CEL, researcher, full professor, adjunct professor, associate professor. Before showing position-related data, a brief definition of each role with reference to Italian universities will be provided. The acronym CEL (Collaboratore ed Esperto Linguistico) indicates a lecturer who is usually a native speaker and who assists a full professor in teaching a certain language (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia). Researchers are graduates hired with the task of contributing to university-level scientific research and of carrying out integrative teaching activities. Full professors or "di prima fascia" are chairs of a given subject. Adjunct professors are appointed through a fixed-term contract by a given

institution, usually for supplementary courses, but they are not chairs of the subject they teach. Last but not least, associate professors or "di seconda fascia" are intermediate figures between researchers and full professors, and they have different rights if compared to the latter (Treccani)[17]. Below, you can find a table and a pie chart that report position-related data gathered from the sample.

CEL	5	13.5 %
Researcher	9	24.3 %
Full professor	9	24.3 %
Adjunct professor	7	18.9 %
Associate professor	7	18.9 %

Table 8: number of respondents per position and percentage of the total (37)

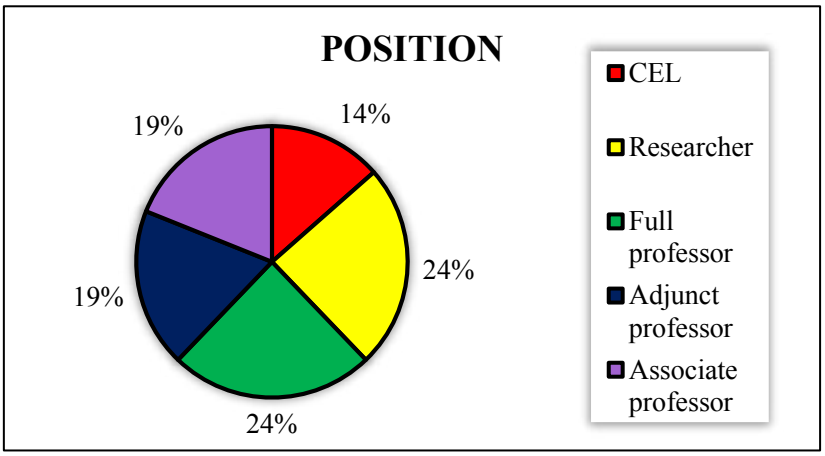

Figure 6: pie chart representing the distribution of position-related data

As you can infer from the table and the pie chart above, the majority of the sampled lecturers (18/37; 48.6 %) are either researchers or full professors.

Last but not least, participants were asked to indicate how many classes per semester they taught during the coronavirus outbreak. Below, you can find a table and a pie chart that report data in this respect.

1	8	21.6 %
2	13	35.1 %
3	9	24.3 %
> 3	7	18.9 %

Table 9: number of respondents per number of classes and percentage of the total (37)

[17] Another useful source with reference to academic roles is MIUR (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca)

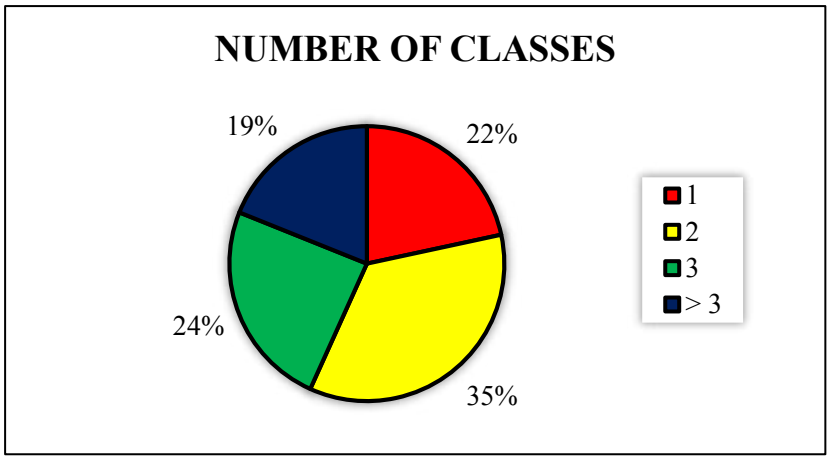

Figure 7: pie chart representing the distribution of data on how many classes per semester lecturers taught

As the table and the pie chart above clearly show, the majority of respondents (13/37; 35.1 %) had 2 classes per semester during the pandemic.

IV. Research Results: Some Light at the End of the Tunnel

In this chapter, data analysis and results will be presented. The discourse will follow the table with the research hypotheses presented in the previous chapter line by line. Three main topics were identified, and a sub-chapter will be devoted to each of them.

First of all, this dissertation will focus on the major change introduced to face the pandemic, namely emergency remote teaching. Its influence on motivating job potential (H1), work engagement (H2), job satisfaction (H2), professional exhaustion (H3), and attitude towards e-learning (H4) will be discussed in the first sub-chapter. Data from the related sections of the questionnaire will be presented. In addition, a cross-analysis on the above-mentioned variables and demographic information will be conducted.

Secondly, hypothesis 5 and 6 will be verified. As already said, they establish relationships among variables that go beyond the current emergency. These relations will, therefore, be investigated in a separate section of the present chapter. Hypothesis 5 is grounded in the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) and aims to provide support to this model, as Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) did in their study. On the other hand, hypothesis 6 will test the negative relation between professional exhaustion and work engagement to see whether these variables are related not only in theoretical terms but also operationally.

Last but not least, a sub-chapter will be devoted to attitude towards e-learning and satisfaction from management as independent variables. In other words, hypotheses 7 and 8 will be tested in this part. Hypothesis 7 is particularly complex, in the sense that it considers two scenarios with opposite outcomes. Given its complexity, devoting a separate section of this chapter to it was deemed necessary. The term “attitude” is quite generic per se, but it may have either a positive or a negative connotation. In light of this, hypothesis 7 considers both possibilities. Instead, hypothesis 8 focuses on a construct that is positively connoted, namely satisfaction from management. In order to test it, answers to the related questionnaire items will be first analysed and then compared to the data set in order to verify the actual influence of satisfaction from management on the dependent variables. The possible influence of demographic information on the construct will be discussed as well. Section F includes also some general questions on lecturers’ experience of emergency remote teaching, and the related responses will be analysed in the third sub-chapter.

Since the questionnaire is composed of open-ended questions as well, the analysis of them will be included in the present chapter. The majority of its items is based on a Likert scale

ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, instead. When using this measurement scale, you need to assign a score to each type of answer so that you can sum points and discover how participants feel about a given topic. Scores are inverted when items express a negative position in relation to the construct they aim to assess. The score for the current research project ranges from 1 to 5 points. Below, you can find a table that specifies which score was assigned to every type of answer.

	Positive items	Negative items
Strongly disagree	1	5
Disagree	2	4
Neither agree nor disagree	3	3
Agree	4	2
Strongly agree	5	1

Table 10: points assigned to the Likert-scaled answers

4.1 The Great Change: The Effects of Emergency Remote Teaching

As already said, the introduction of emergency remote teaching was probably the most destabilizing event for the world of education during the COVID-19 pandemic, mainly because it was rapid and unexpected. We had all to adapt to this new situation regardless of educators’ opinions and skills, lack of time for careful planning, and institutions’ means in order to preserve people’s health.

In this sub-chapter, data gathered from all the questionnaire sections will be presented and analysed with the purpose of answering research question 1, 2, 3, and 4. More specifically, the focus will be on emergency remote teaching as an independent variable and on how it affected respondents’ motivating job potential, work engagement, job satisfaction, professional exhaustion, and attitude towards e-learning.

4.1.1 Motivated despite the Pandemic

The Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) defines motivating job potential as the result of favourable conditions at work. In particular, it considers positive job characteristics, individual features, and social interactions as fundamental factors in ensuring workers’

motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). In light of this, hypothesis 1 establishes a negative relationship between forced e-learning and lecturers' motivating job potential, which is based on the assumption that the pandemic caused a general decrease in all the above-mentioned factors. Data gathered from section B of the questionnaire were analysed in order to test this hypothesis.
First of all, participants were asked to make an overall assessment of their motivation during the coronavirus outbreak by comparing it to that of the pre-covid situation.

B1. On the whole, would you say that your motivating job potential was higher before or after the introduction of emergency remote teaching?

- Before
- After
- I perceived no difference

As the table and pie chart below clearly show, the majority of respondents (23/37; 62.2 %) did not perceive a change in their motivation, neither in positive nor in negative terms.

	N answers	Percentage	Mean
Before	11	29.7	3.5
After	3	8.1	3.8
No difference	23	62.2	3.6

Table 11: answers to item B1, percentage of the total (37), and means

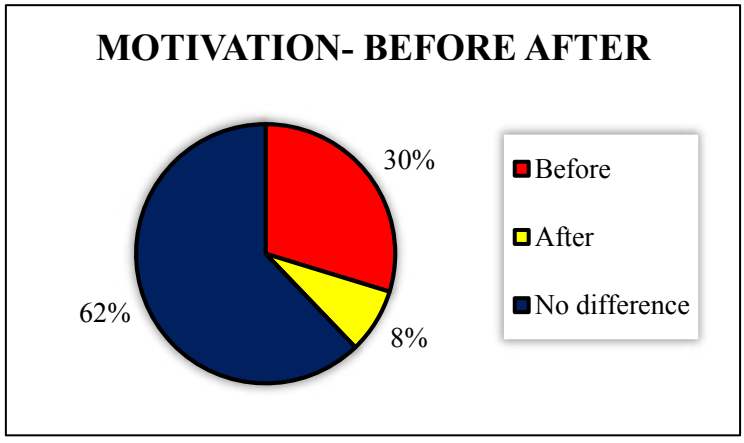

Figure 8: pie chart representing respondents' general evaluation of their motivating job potential

This result may challenge the validity of hypothesis 1. If you conduct a cross-analysis between the responses to item B1 and the average scores that participants got in section B, the

mean of those who claimed to be more motivated after the introduction of emergency remote teaching is quite predictably the highest, namely 3.8. Interestingly enough though, the respondents who answered "I perceived no difference" have a slightly higher mean than those who answered "before". In light of this, one may deduce that they were enough motivated before the pandemic and that their experiences of forced e-learning succeeded in maintaining a certain standard, at least. The fact that their level of motivation at work did not decrease is a positive outcome per se.

The analysis of the fifteen Likert-scaled items of section B can further refute hypothesis 1. The table below reposts mean and mode of each question.

Item	Topic	Mean	Mode
B2	Design and implementation of class curricula	4.0	4
B3	Completion of class curricula	3.8	4
B4	Didactic work and learning outcomes	3.6	4
B5	Useful learning	3.9	4
B7	The potential of online platforms	4.0	4
B8	Required skills	4.2	4
B9	Skill use	3.5	4
B10	Feedback	3.1	2;4
B11	Students' performances	3.5	4
B12	Autonomy	3.1	3
B13	Self-organization	3.1	4
B14	Stimulating challenges	2.8	4
B15	Learning from the COVID-19 experience	3.4	4
B16	Social dimension	3.3	4
B17	Importance of interactions	4.5	5

Table 12: mean and mode of the Likert-scaled items of section B

The overall mean of section B is 3.6 and its mode is 4, which are both high, and they clearly imply that respondents were on the whole motivated despite the emergency restrictions.

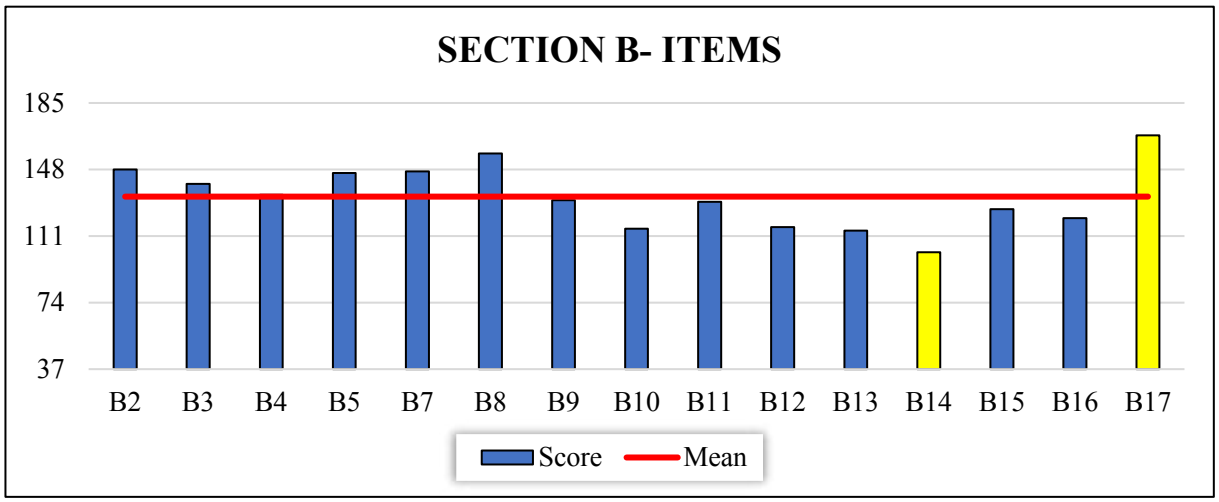

Figure 9: column chart reporting the scores of each Likert-scaled item and the mean (132.9). In yellow, the highest (167/185; 87.8 %) and the lowest score (102/185; 43.9 %) of section B[18]

Furthermore, responses were divided into three categories- namely, positive, negative, and neutral- and summed. Given that all the questions of section B are positive in relation to motivating job potential, the options "agree" and "strongly agree" were included in the first category, "strongly disagree" and "disagree" in the second one, and the answer "neither agree nor disagree" was considered neutral. Below, you can find a table and a pie chart that report the number of responses per category and the related percentages.

Positive	346	62.3 %
Negative	94	16.9 %
Neutral	115	20.7 %

Table 13: types of answer to section B's items and percentage of the total (555)

[18] Considering that the minimum score that could be assigned to each response is above 0, percentages were calculated with reference to the possible range of points, so that the minimum score (i.e., 37 points) would correspond to 0.0 % and the maximum score (i.e., 185 points) to 100.0 %

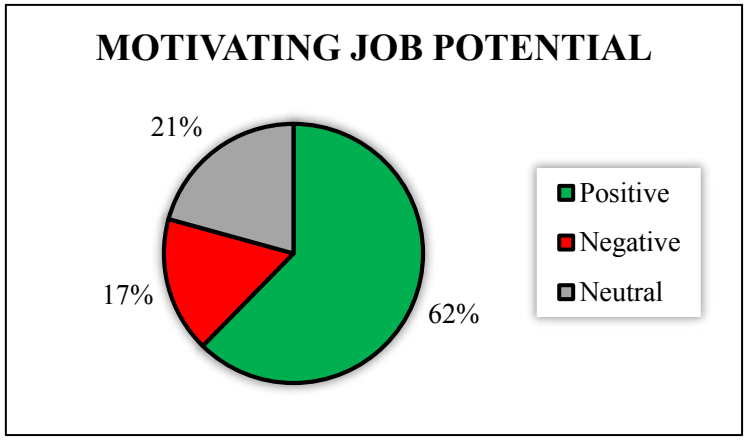

Figure 10: pie chart reporting the percentage of answers per category with reference to section B

Clearly, the majority of answers (346/555; 62.3%) are positive.

As already said, motivating job potential is the result of different types of factors according to JCT. One could thus compare the percentage of positive, negative, and neutral answers per factor in order to discover which aspects were mostly affected by emergency remote teaching, both in a positive and negative sense. Data on this respect are reported in the table below.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Skill variety	77.0 %	10.8 %	12.2 %
Task identity	79.7 %	10.8 %	9.5 %
Task significance	67.6 %	6.8 %	25.7 %
Autonomy	39.2 %	24.3 %	36.5 %
Feedback	47.3 %	25.7 %	27.0 %
Growth need strength	47.3 %	33.8 %	18.9 %
Knowledge and skill	78.4 %	2.7 %	18.9 %
Social dimension	70.3 %	13.5 %	16.2 %

Table 14: percentage of answers per motivating factor

As you can infer from the table above, the feature with the highest percentage of positive responses is task identity (79.7 %), namely "the degree to which the job requires doing a whole and identifiable piece of work from beginning to end" (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). In other words, lecturers managed to design, implement, and complete class curricula despite the shortage of planning time and other obstacles caused by the pandemic. On the other hand, many did not feel autonomous in their work. Autonomy is actually the characteristics with the lowest percentage of positive answers (39.2 %). After all, lecturers had to move their classes

online whether they wanted it or not, and select suitable methodologies, contents, and materials for digital environments, no matter their proficiency and opinion on e-learning. As far as negative responses are concerned, growth need strength is the feature with the highest percentage (33.8 %), which means that emergency restrictions frustrated lecturers' opportunities for personal and professional development. On the other hand, many felt that they possessed the necessary knowledge and skills to provide quality teaching even from remote. Indeed, job-relevant knowledge and skill is the characteristic with the lowest percentage of negative answers (2.7 %). On the whole, neither negative nor neutral responses outnumber the positive ones as far as any motivating factor is concerned.

In light of all data analysed so far, one can deduce that hypothesis 1 is not valid. Emergency restrictions such as forced e-learning did not erode lecturers' motivating job potential; on the contrary, the sample seems pretty motivated, nonetheless. This result is in sharp contrast with what Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) found in their study, where they could confirm the negative relation between emergency remote teaching and motivating job potential.

A cross-analysis on the influence of demographic variables on motivating job potential was conducted as well in order to report data relying on a more thorough categorization of the sample. Participants were divided into categories based on their responses in section A, and the average score of each group was calculated with the purpose of making comparisons among categories. The table below presents the results of such calculations. Only groups that include at least two participants were taken into account for the analysis.

	Category	N participants	B
AGE	30-40	4	3.7
	41-50	11	3.6
	51-60	11	3.6
	> 60	10	3.5
SUBJECT	Language	10	3.6
	Linguistics	7	3.5
	Literature	13	3.6
	History	3	3.4
	Translation	2	3.9
EXPERIENCE	1-5	7	3.7
	6-10	3	3.9
	11-15	4	3.3

	16-20	2	3.6
	> 20	20	3.5

POSITION	CEL	5	3.7
	Researcher	9	3.6
	Full	9	3.3
	Adjunct	7	4.0
	Associate	7	3.5

N CLASSES	1	8	3.8
	2	13	3.6
	3	9	3.3
	> 3	7	3.6

Table 15: cross-analysis of section A and B of the questionnaire

As the table above shows, a negative relationship can be established between age and motivation at work. The more advanced the age, the less lecturers felt motivated during the pandemic. The majority of respondents are either in the range from 41 to 50 or from 51 to 60 years, and these age groups have the same average score (i.e., 3.6), but the overall trend of age-related data is nonetheless negative.

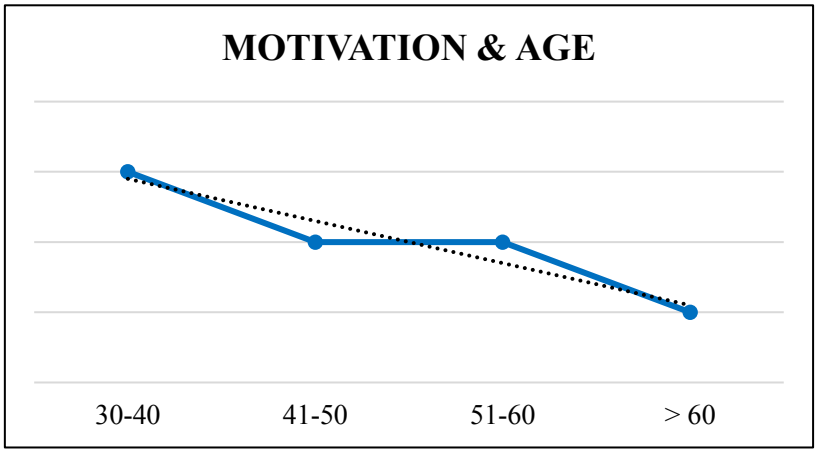

Figure 11: line chart showing the trend of age- and motivation-related data

As for subject areas, the category with the highest mean (i.e., 3.9) is that of translation studies, whereas history lecturers were the least motivated of the sample, with an average score of 3.4. Surprisingly enough, the language teaching group has a rather high mean along with literature, namely 3.6. One might indeed hypothesize that language teaching was penalized the most by forced e-learning due to limited face-to-face interactions, whereas subjects based

more on knowledge transmission rather than on interpersonal exchanges such as history were less affected. However, it does not seem to be so, at least as far as the sample of the current study in concerned.

Experience-related data show a less linear pattern if compared to the categorization by age, but the overall trend is always negative. The mean reaches the peak (i.e., 3.9) in the range from 6 to 10 years of experience, then it plummets with the next category, which has an average score of 3.3 points. It soars again with the range from 16 to 20 years of experience, and eventually shows a slight decrease with the last category. The last two categories have an average score of 3.6 and 3.5 respectively. In an attempt to explain the drastic decrease between the second and the third category, you can cross experience-related data with information on the other demographic variables. Academic position and number of classes per semester might provide useful information. The majority of the respondents whose teaching experience ranges from 11 to 15 years are either full professors or had three classes per semester during the COVID-19 pandemic, and these groups have the lowest means within their categorization, namely 3.3.

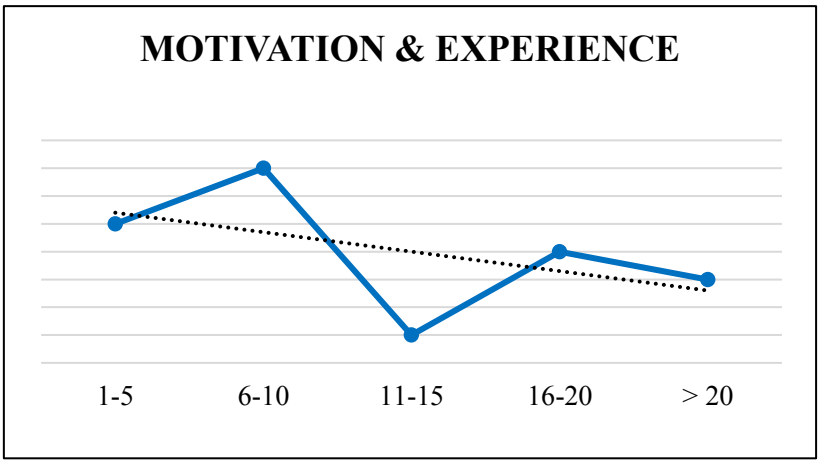

Figure 12: line chart showing the trend of experience- and motivation-related data

The cross-analysis between motivating job potential and academic positions produced interesting results. As already said, full professors are the least motivated, with an average score of 3.3. On the other hand, adjunct professors have the highest mean, namely 4.0. The latter have a less solid position if compared to the former, since they are appointed through a fixed-term contract and they are not chairs of the subject they teach (Treccani), and yet they appear to be more motivated than full professors.

Last but not least, data on how many classes per semester lecturers taught and motivating job

potential show a predictable pattern only to some extent. One could expect motivation and number of classes to be inversely proportional to each other, and indeed it appears to be so with those lecturers who had one, two, or three classes per semester. What is, however, unexpected is the mean increase that characterizes the last category. Basically, lecturers with more than three classes seem to be more motivated than those with only three classes per semester. Again, a cross-analysis between number of classes and the other demographic variables was conducted with the purpose of finding an explanation for such an unexpected result. Participants with more than three classes teach one of the major subjects of Ca' Foscari university's language department- i.e., language, linguistics, and literature, which were not the most penalized by emergency remote teaching, and this fact may justify their high mean. In addition, experience could be an influential variable in this respect.

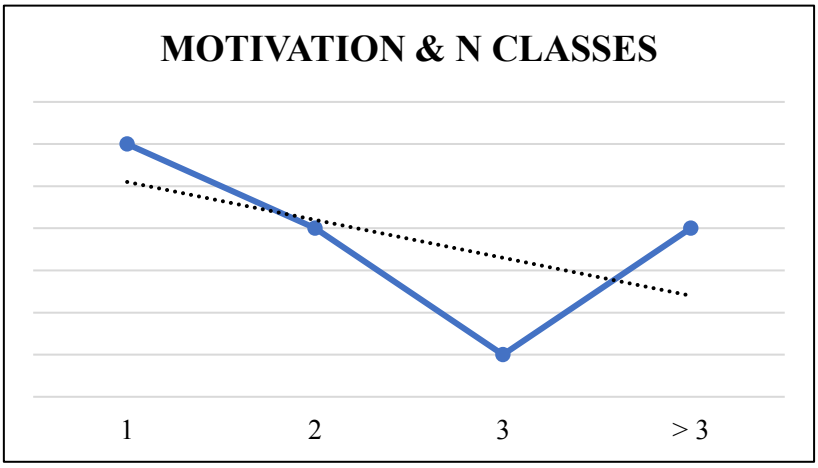

Figure 13: line chart showing the trend of data regarding lecturers' motivation and number of classes per semester

As the line chart clearly shows, the overall trend of data is negative. Actually, all the quantitative categories into which the sample was divided- i.e., age, years of experience, and number of classes- appear to be more or less characterized by the same pattern. On the other hand, the cross-analysis between lecturers' average scores in section B and information deriving from qualitative categories- i.e., subject area and position within Ca' Foscari university- produced interesting and unexpected results.

To conclude the present excursus into the influence of emergency remote teaching on lecturers' motivating job potential, we will now analyse the responses to the only open-ended question of section B, namely item B6.

B6. In your opinion, who may benefit from the results of your work apart from your students? And why?

The item above refers to the characteristic of task significance, which describes the impact of a given job both in the immediate work context and beyond (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). As already said, open-ended questions were not compulsory, so item B6 was answered by 17 participants and not 37. A thematic analysis was conducted on the responses and two main themes were identified: people at university and people outside university. The table and pie chart below report data on this categorization.

At university	10	58.8 %
Outside university	7	41.2 %

Table 16: thematic analysis on item B6

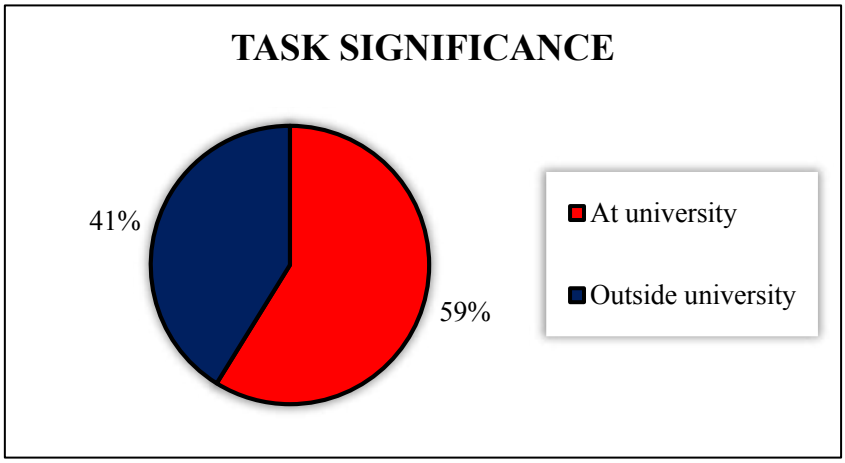

Figure 14: pie chart reporting the percentage of answers per category with reference to item B6

Apparently, the majority of respondents (10/17; 58.8 %) believe that the main beneficiaries of their work are people at university, including themselves. Other lecturers, researchers, and students who are interested in the same subject area should be particularly affected by it. Despite the fact that item B6 is quite general, some participants made reference to current pandemic when answering it. Few of them highlighted the benefits that their work brough to them in the first place. Due to forced e-leaning, lecturers had to schedule their work differently, but they had also the opportunity to experiment new teaching methods and formats and to become more familiar with online platforms. As for people outside university, some respondents stressed the importance of motivation and academic education for future

professional careers in language-related areas such as teaching, translation, and book industry, as well as linguistic and developmental disorders.

4.1.2 Engaged, Dissatisfied, and Exhausted

One could logically expect motivation, engagement, and satisfaction at work to be affected by emergency restrictions in the same way, but it may not be so. Besides, working in an emergency situation might be exhausting. Even though the negative relation between forced e-learning and motivating job potential was not confirmed by data analysis, you can still demonstrate the validity of hypothesis 2 and 3, which focus on work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout as separate constructs. In order to test these hypotheses, responses to the items of section C, D, and E will be analysed in the present sub-chapter.

As for work engagement, participants were asked whether they had felt more engaged in their work before or after the introduction of emergency remote teaching, and the majority of them (20/37; 54.1 %) answered "I perceived no difference". Furthermore, only 5 respondents out of 37 (13.5 %) claimed to be more engaged before this event. These results alone seem to question the negative relation between forced e-learning and engagement that is established by the second research hypothesis.

	N participants	Percentage	Mean	Mode	SD
Before	5	13.5	3.4	4	1.27
After	12	32.4	3.1	4	1.15
No difference	20	54.1	3.7	4	1.13

Table 17: answers to item C1, percentage of the total (37), and descriptive statistics

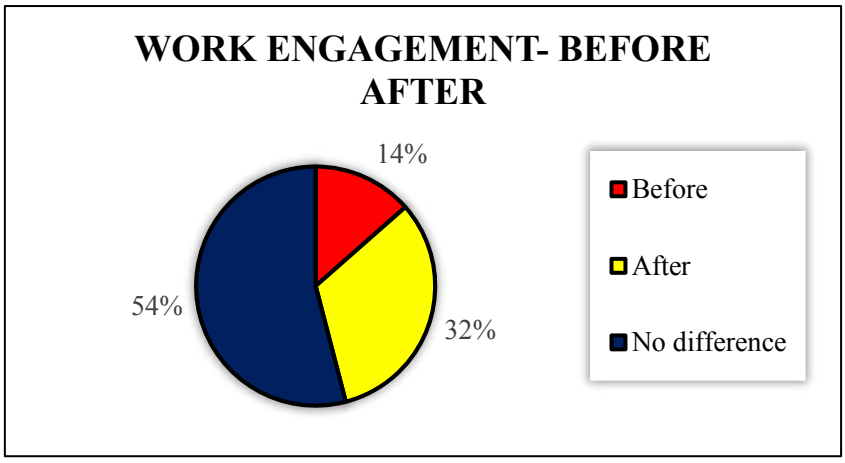

Figure 15: pie chart representing respondents' general evaluation of their work engagement

If you compare the average scores in relation to participants' overall assessment of their work engagement, an unexpected datum immediately catches the eye: the mean of those who answered "after" to item C1 is the lowest, namely 3.1. Other statistics indexes were taken into account in order to find a possible explanation for this unexpected result. Modes do not provide useful information in this case, since the most frequent datum is 4 in all categories. This mode is, however, evidence of an overall positive attitude towards engagement-related emergency remote teaching experiences, and this in sharp contrast with hypothesis 2. Standard deviation may provide salient information, instead. Actually, the category with the highest degree of variety is the first one, which implies that some participants evaluated their work engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic rather positively despite how they answered item C1. Indeed, if you look at individual scores, the majority of the respondents under inspection (3/5; 60,0 %) got more that 50% of the maximum score. In light of all this, one could assume that even those lecturers claimed to be more engaged in their work before the introduction of emergency remote teaching, their experiences of forced e-learning did not undermine their work engagement too significantly.

	N11	N13	N15	N35	N36
Score	56	44	59	41	57
%	68.3	48.3	73.3	43.3	70.0
Mean	3.7	2.9	3.9	2.7	3.8
Mode	4	2	5	2	4

Table 18: individual scores and descriptive statistics of those participants who answered "before" to item C1

If you analyse the responses to the Likert-scaled items of section C, you become even more aware of the fact that emergency remote teaching had not a negative impact on lecturers' work engagement.

Item	Topic	Mean	Mode
C2	Going to class despite the pandemic	2.9	4
C3	Energy	2.6	3
C4	Perseverance	4.3	4
C5	Working for long	3.4	4
C6	Effort	4.2	4

C7	Challenge	2.8	4
C8	Dedication	3.3	3
C9	Meaningfulness	3.7	4
C10	Time	3.5	3
C11	Absorption	4.0	5
C12	Happiness	3.1	3
C13	Working mechanically	3.7	4
C14	Disengagement	4.1	5
C15	Work tasks	2.6	2
C16	Ideal job	3.5	4

Table 19: mean and mode of the Likert-scaled items of section C

The overall mean and mode of section C are 3.4 and 4 respectively, and this in sharp contrast with hypothesis 2.

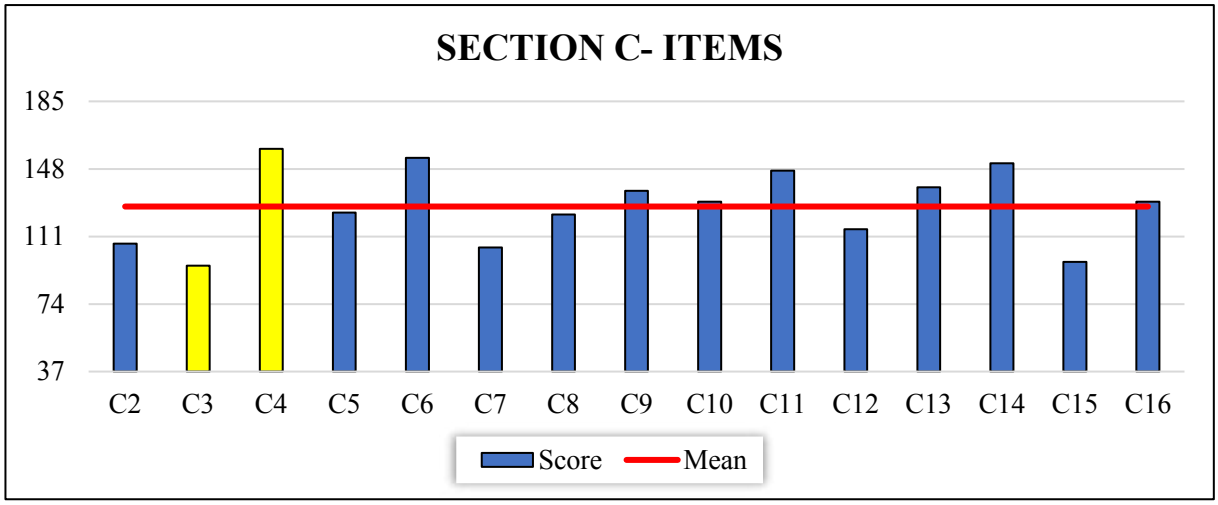

Figure 16: column chart reporting the scores of each Likert-scaled item and the mean (127.4). In yellow, the highest (159/185; 82.4 %) and the lowest score (95/185; 39.2 %) of section C

Similarly to what was done in section B, participants' responses were labelled as positive, negative, or neutral and summed. In case of negative questions, the options "strongly disagree" and "disagree" were interpreted as positive responses, while "agree" and "strongly agree" were considered positive answers. The table and pie chart below show the results of such categorization.

Positive	303	54.6 %

Negative	131	23.6 %
Neutral	121	21.8 %

Table 20: types of answer to section C's items and percentage of the total (555)

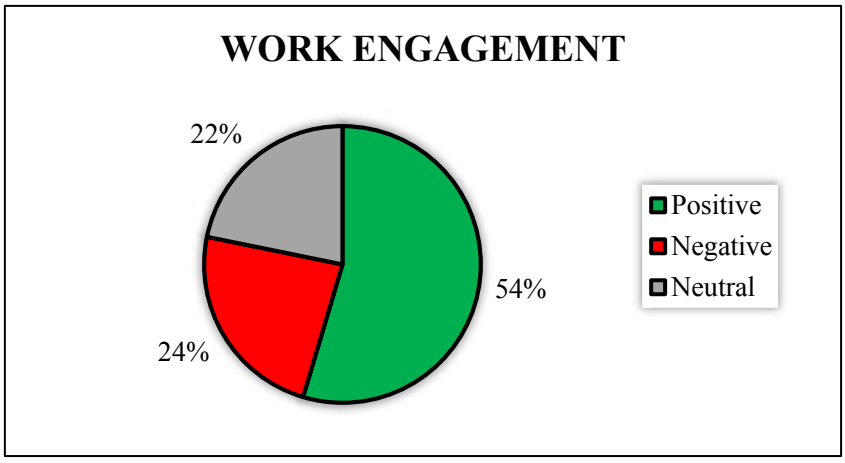

Figure 17: pie chart reporting the percentage of answers per category with reference to section C

Clearly, the majority of answers (303/555; 54.6 %) are positive.

When defining work engagement, Schaufeli and colleagues (2002) stated that it is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption. An analysis of participants' responses in relation to these dimensions was conducted in order to identify which aspects were affected the most by forced e-learning, both positively and negatively. The table below reports the percentage of positive, negative, and neutral answers per dimension.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Vigour	63.5 %	20.3 %	16.2 %
Dedication	43.6 %	32.4 %	23.9 %
Absorption	64.9 %	11.5 %	23.6 %

Table 21: percentage of answers per engagement-related dimension

As the table above clearly shows, the dimension with the highest percentage of positive answers (i.e., 64.9 %) is absorption, which has the lowest percentage of negative responses as well (i.e., 11.5 %). On the other hand, the aspect that seems to be the most penalized is dedication, which has the lowest percentage of positive answers (i.e., 43.6 %) and the highest percentage of negative responses (i.e., 32.4 %). In light of all this, one could infer that during the pandemic lecturers managed to maintain high levels of concentration while working, whereas the found their job less meaningful and positively challenging than before. In addition, they felt on the whole less inspired, enthusiastic, and proud at work if compared to

the pre-covid situation. Anyway, neither negative nor neutral answers outnumber the positive ones in any of the dimensions under inspection. Generally speaking, the negative relation between emergency remote teaching and work engagement was not confirmed by data analysis.

Similarly to what was done in section B, a cross-analysis on the influence of demographic variables on work engagement was conducted by comparing the average scores that participants got. The table below reports the means of respondents for every demographic category identified beforehand. Again, only groups with at least two participants were taken into account for the analysis.

	Category	N participants	C
AGE	30-40	4	3.9
	41-50	11	3.4
	51-60	11	3.5
	> 60	10	3.2
SUBJECT	Language	10	3.4
	Linguistics	7	3.2
	Literature	13	3.4
	History	3	3.9
	Translation	2	4.1
EXPERIENCE	1-5	7	3.8
	6-10	3	3.8
	11-15	4	2.8
	16-20	2	3.7
	> 20	20	3.3
POSITION	CEL	5	3.4
	Researcher	9	3.4
	Full	9	3.3
	Adjunct	7	4.0
	Associate	7	3.1
N CLASSES	1	8	3.8
	2	13	3.6
	3	9	3.1
	> 3	7	3.2

Table 22: cross-analysis of section A and C of the questionnaire

As far as age is concerned, data show a less linear pattern than was expected. Surprisingly enough, those lecturers whose age ranges from 51 to 60 have a slightly higher mean (i.e., 3.5) than those belonging to the second category (41-50; 3.4). If you compare age-related data and the other demographic variables, information on lecturers' subject areas may be useful to explain this unexpected result. A couple of respondents deal with history and translation studies, and these categories have a rather high average score, namely 3.9 and 4.1 respectively. Given that the number of respondents in both groups is equal, the slight mean increase between the second and the third age range may be depend on the points that those lecturers gained. Besides, in the age range from 41 to 50 there is only one participant who teaches one of the subjects with the highest means, namely history. The overall trend of age-related data is negative.

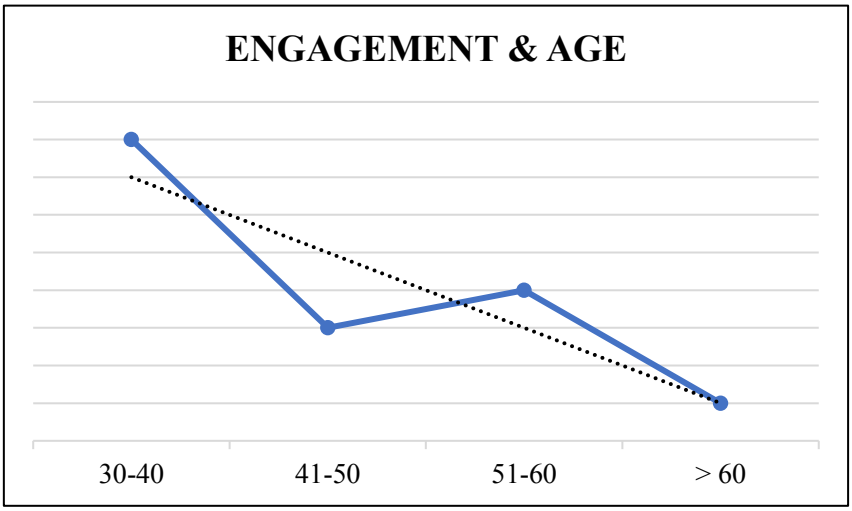

Figure 18: line chart showing the trend of age- and engagement-related data

As for subject areas, the table above clearly shows that the group with the highest average score (i.e., 4.1) deals with translation studies, whereas linguistics has the lowest mean (i.e., 3.2). Language and literature lecturers have a rather low mean as well, namely 3.4. On the one hand, they were pretty motivated to perform well despite the emergency restrictions; on the other hand, forced e-learning undermined their work engagement. This datum may be evidence of the fact that motivating job potential and work engagement could be affected differently by the same independent variable- in this case, emergency remote teaching and subject area.

As for years of experience, data show more or less the same pattern than those deriving from the cross-analysis on motivation: again, the average score plummets with those lecturers

whose experience ranges from 11 to 15 years. Crossing experience- and subject-related data led to relevant results in this case. Participants teach either linguistics or literature, and these categories have a rather low mean, namely 3.2 and 3.4 respectively. Academic positions and number of classes per semester might provide useful information as well. The majority of the respondents whose teaching experience ranges from 11 to 15 years are either full professors or had three classes per semester during the COVID-19 pandemic, and these groups have a rather low mean indeed, namely 3.3 and 3.1 respectively. Anyway, the overall trend of experience-related data seems to be evidence of a negative relationship between years of experience and work engagement.

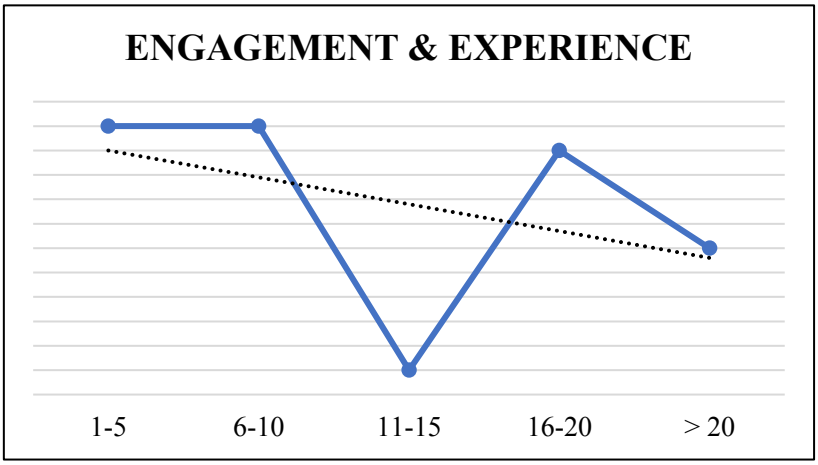

Figure 19: line chart showing the trend of experience- and engagement-related data

As for position within Ca' Foscari university, adjunct professors were the most engaged in their work during the pandemic, with an average score of 4.0. On the other hand, associate professors have the lowest mean, namely 3.1. As with motivation, full professors appear to be scarcely engaged despite having a more solid position if compared to adjunct professors. The majority of full professors teach literature and can boast a teaching experience of more than 20 years. These groups are characterized by low means, indeed (i.e., 3.3).

Last but not least, data on how many classes per semester lecturers taught during the pandemic show the same pattern as those of section B: again, the mean of the participants with more than three classes is higher than those who had only three classes; their average scores are 3.2 and 3.1 respectively. The difference is, however, slight in this case. Therefore, a cross-analysis on the other demographic variables was conducted with reference to both categories. Age provides useful information, since the group with three classes per semester includes many participants who are more than 60 years old, and a negative relation between

age and work engagement seems to emerge from data analysis. The cross-analysis on academic position led to salient results as well. The group with only three classes includes more full professors than the one who taught more than three classes per semester, and full professors are a category whose work engagement was significantly penalized by forced e-learning. The overall trend of data is negative, as the chart below clearly shows.

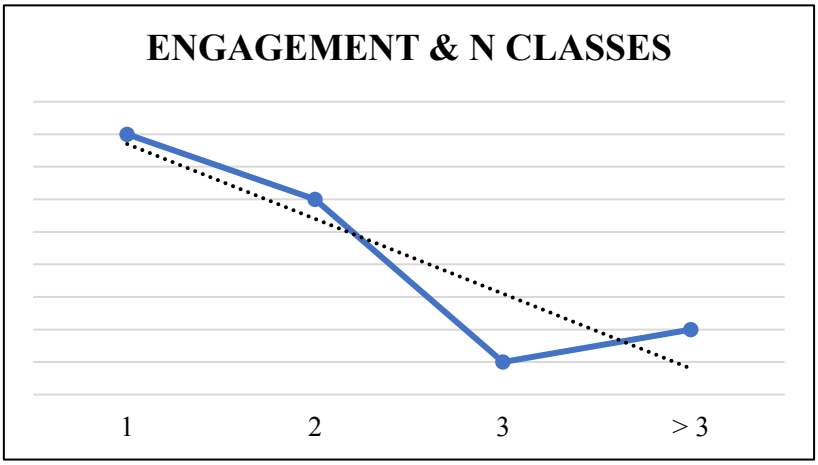

Figure 20: line chart showing the trend of data regarding lecturers' work engagement and number of classes per semester

On the whole, the cross-analysis on section C produced similar results if compared to section B. Data from quantitative categories show an overall negative trend. As for qualitative categories, the categorization by subject and the comparison of means produced interesting outcomes: while lecturers who teach the main subjects of the department were well motivated, forced e-learning had a more negative impact on their work engagement.

Moving on to the analysis of section D of the questionnaire, participants were first of all asked to generally evaluate their job satisfaction in the period of time under inspection by comparing it to the pre-covid situation. Interestingly enough, the majority of them (23/37; 62.2 %) claimed to be more satisfied with their work before the introduction of emergency remote teaching, which provides support to hypothesis 2 unlike the analysis of engagement-related data. Moreover, only 2 respondents out of 37 (5.4 %) affirmed the contrary.

	N participants	Percentage	Mean
Before	23	62.2	2.7
After	2	5.4	3.5
No difference	12	32.4	3.7

Table 23: answers to item D1, percentage of the total (37), and means

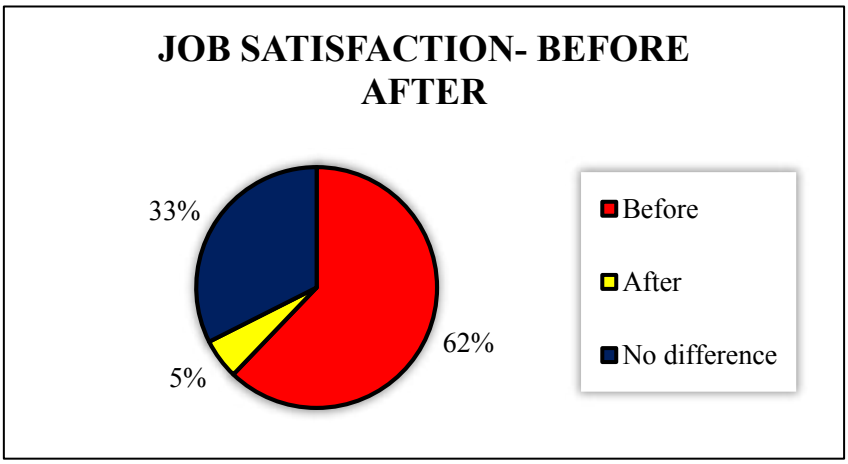

Figure 21: pie chart representing respondents' general evaluation of their job satisfaction

The mean of those lecturers who answered "before" is lower if compared to the group who chose "after" as response option, namely 2.7 and 3.5 respectively. Furthermore, the remaining category has the highest mean, i.e., 3.7. From this datum, one may deduce that these lecturers were pretty satisfied with their work in the pre-covid situation, and the forced conversion to online classes did not affect their overall job satisfaction, neither in positive nor in negative terms.

The analysis of the ten Likert-scaled items of section D could challenge the validity of hypothesis 2, which establishes a negative relationship between emergency remote teaching and job satisfaction.

Item	Topic	Mean	Mode
D2	Effectiveness	3.7	4
D3	Working conditions	2.9	3
D4	Growth	3.2	4
D5	Quality teaching	2.9	3
D6	At ease while working	3.0	4
D7	Tough situation	2.8	2
D9	Important role	2.8	3
D10	Appreciation	3.2	4
D11	Schedule	2.8	4
D12	Negative opinions	3.1	2;3

Table 24: mean and mode of the Likert-scaled items of section D

Actually, 4 is the most frequent score, but the overall mean is, nonetheless, low (i.e., 3.1).

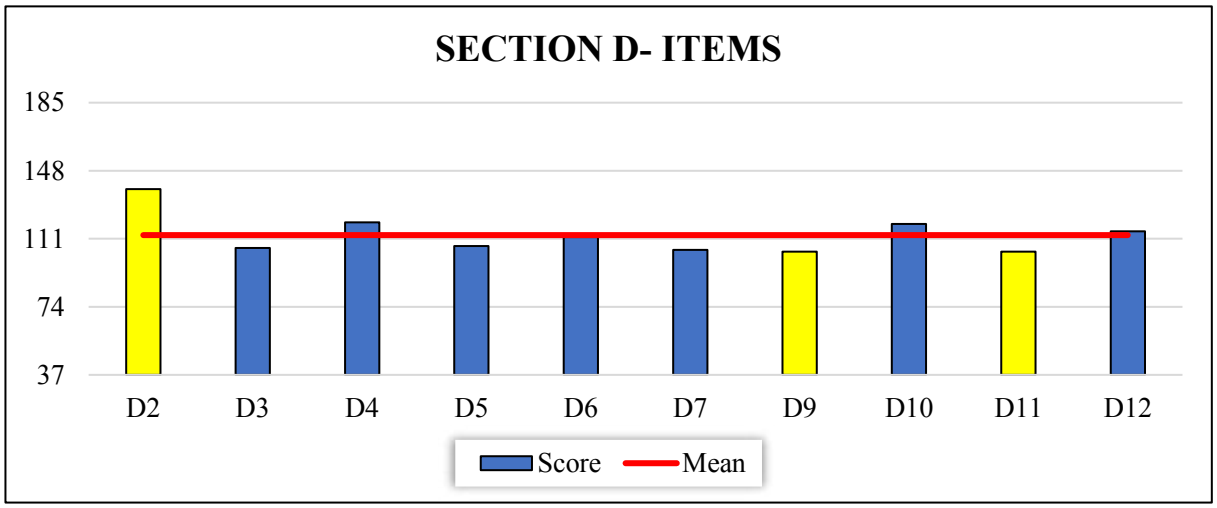

Figure 22: column chart reporting the scores of each Likert-scaled item and the mean (113.0). In yellow, the highest (138/185; 68.2 %) and the lowest score (104/185; 45.3 %) of section D

The percentages of positive, negative, and neutral responses were calculated. As the table and pie chart below clearly show, the majority of responses (153/370; 41.4 %) are positive.

Positive	153	41.4 %
Negative	122	33.0 %
Neutral	95	25.7 %

Table 25: types of answer to section D's items and percentage of the total (370)

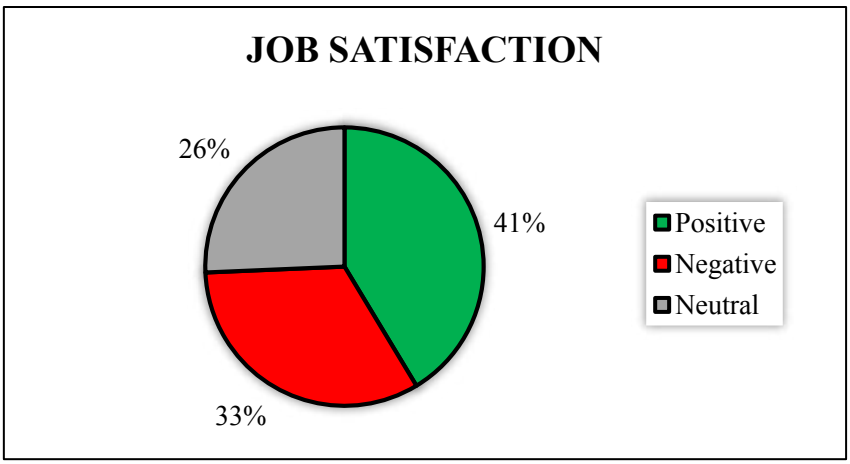

Figure 23: pie chart reporting the percentage of answers per category with reference to section D

Apparently, lecturers' experience of forced e-learning in relation to their job satisfaction was on the whole positive, even though the majority of them (23/37; 62.2 %) affirmed to be more

satisfied before the COVID-19 outbreak. One might, however, argue that job satisfaction was more penalized by emergency remote teaching than motivating job potential and work engagement. If you compare the percentages of positive and negative answers of section B, C, and D, you can notice a gradual decrease of the former and a specular increase of the latter. Even though most responses are positive in all three cases, job satisfaction is the only variable with a percentage below 50%. Moreover, the difference between positive and negative answers is rather slight if compared to motivation- and engagement-related percentages.

	B	C	D
Positive	62.3	54.6	41.4
Negative	16.9	23.6	33.0
Difference	45.4	31.0	8.4

Table 26: percentages of positive and negative answers of section B, C, and D and differences

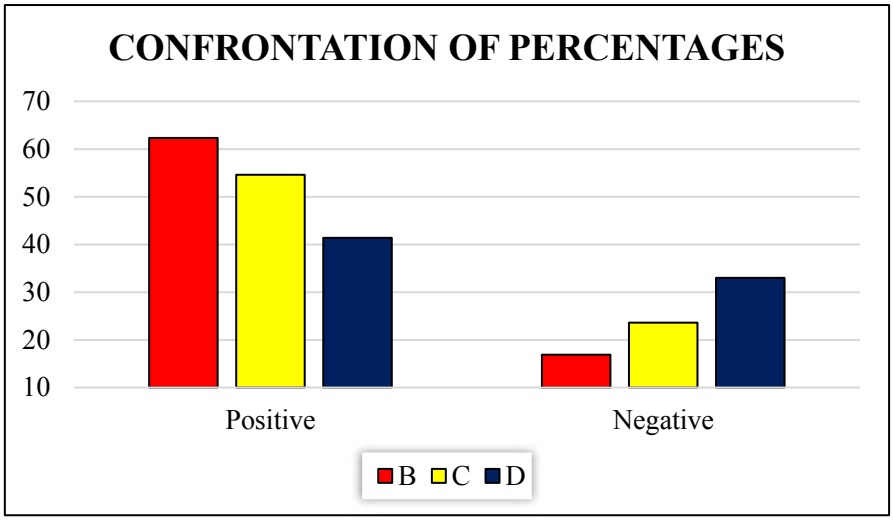

Figure 24: column chart with the percentages of positive and negative answers of section B, C, and D

When defining job satisfaction, Moorman (1993) stated that the construct could be assessed both at the cognitive and the affective level. A cross-analysis between these dimensions and the responses to the Likert-scaled items of section D was conducted, and it produced relevant results. The cognitive sphere has a higher percentage of positive answers (i.e., 47.6 %) than the affective one. Interestingly enough, great part of the sample appears to be equally split into two as far as their affection-based job satisfaction is concerned. In other words, there is the same percentage of positive and negative answers, namely 35.1 %. Probably, work conditions were considered adequate by many lecturers, and this despite the emergency

restrictions. On the contrary, affection-related responses seem to highlight a rift within the sample: working in an emergency situation aroused opposite emotions, and emotionally speaking lecturers' experiences of forced e-learning were too heterogeneous for a general trend to emerge.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Cognitive	47.6 %	30.8 %	21.6 %
Affective	35.1 %	35.1 %	29.7 %

Table 27: percentage of answers per satisfaction-related dimension

In light of all, one might state that hypothesis 2 is on the whole confirmed by data gathered in section D of the questionnaire. The overall mode and the number of positive answers are dissonant outcomes, but, as already said, the percentage difference is rather slight, especially if you compare this datum to what was found in section B and C. To sum up, hypothesis 2 establishes a negative relation between emergency remote teaching and work engagement and job satisfaction, but only the latter was confirmed by data analysis, thus providing only partial support to the related hypothesis. Future researchers may consider investigating the dependent variables under inspection through separate hypotheses.

As it was done in the previous sections, demographic information and construct-specific data were crossed. The table below reports the means of each category into which the sample was divided in order to investigate the possible influence of demographic variables on job satisfaction. Again, only groups with at least two participants were considered for the cross-analysis.

	Category	N participants	D
AGE	30-40	4	3.8
	41-50	11	2.9
	51-60	11	3.0
	> 60	10	2.9
SUBJECT	Language	10	2.8
	Linguistics	7	2.8
	Literature	13	3.2
	History	3	3.1
	Translation	2	3.8
EXPERIENCE	1-5	7	3.6
	6-10	3	3.3

	11-15	4	2.3
	16-20	2	3.2
	> 20	20	2.9

POSITION	CEL	5	2.5
	Researcher	9	3.3
	Full	9	2.6
	Adjunct	7	3.7
	Associate	7	3.0

N CLASSES	1	8	3.7
	2	13	3.3
	3	9	2.6
	> 3	7	2.5

Table 28: cross-analysis of section A and D of the questionnaire

First of all, age- and satisfaction-related data show a pattern that is similar to that of work engagement: the mean plummets with the second category (41-50; 2.9), then it slightly increases with the following group (51-60; 3.0) and eventually decreases again. The second and the fourth category have the same average score, namely 2.9. The slight mean increase that characterizes the third group may depend on the categorization by subject areas. One respondent deals with translation studies, so they belong to the group with the highest average score (i.e., 3.8). Besides, almost all the participants whose age ranges from 41 to 50 teach one of the main subjects of the language department, which have not the highest means. Given that the number of respondents in the second and third group is the same (i.e., 11), the points gained by the translation lecturer could explain the slight mean increase. Generally speaking, the overall trend of data seems to be evidence of a negative relation between age and job satisfaction, as the line chart below clearly shows.

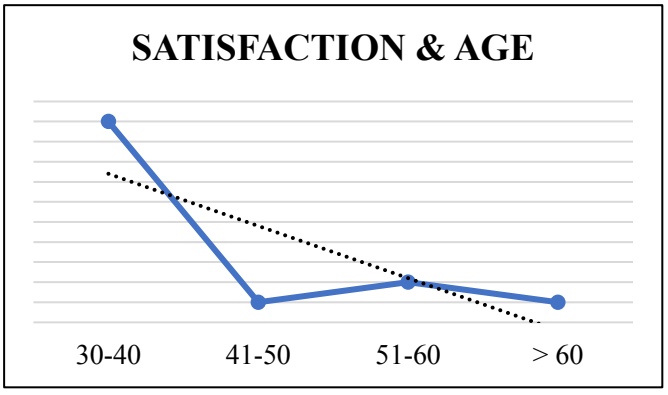

Figure 25: line chart showing the trend of age- and satisfaction-related data

Moving on to subject areas, the category with the highest mean (i.e., 3.8) are translation studies, just like it was found in section B and C. On the other hand, language lecturers are the least satisfied along with the linguistics group, with 2.8 as their average score. Foreign languages have not the lowest means as far as motivating job potential and work engagement are concerned, but, apparently, they were significantly penalized in terms of lecturers' job satisfaction.

As for years of experience, the first three categories- namely, 1-5, 6-10, and 11-15- are characterized by a decreasing trend. Then, the mean soars with the next category, which has an average score of 3.2. Eventually, it decreases again with those lecturers who have been teaching for more than 20 years. Participants with 11-15 years of experience were the most penalized by forced e-learning, just like it was found in section B and C. Again, their low mean may be influenced by their belonging to other penalized categories. For instance, all respondents have an age that ranges from 41 to 50 years, and this group has the lowest mean within the categorization by age indeed, namely 2.9. Besides, half of the participants under inspection teach linguistics, which was one of the most penalized subjects, with an average score of 2.8. The categorization by position and number of classes per semester provided useful information as well, since participants whose experience ranges from 11 to 15 years belong to categories with rather low means (2.6), namely full professors and lecturers with three classes. In sum, the drastic mean decrease of the third category can be explained by relying on all the other demographic variables. The overall trend of data is negative.

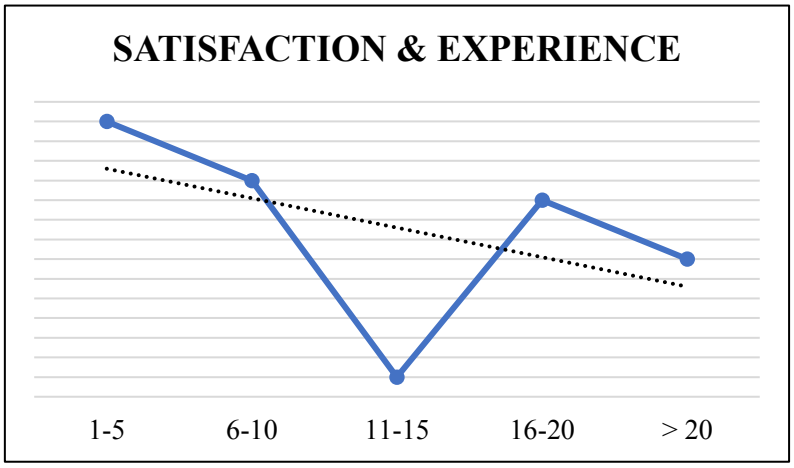

Figure 26: line chart showing the trend of experience- and satisfaction-related data

As for academic positions, adjunct professors were the most satisfied with their work during the period of time under inspection, with an average score of 3.7. Again, there is a significant

difference between adjunct and full professors: despite having a more solid position than the former, they appear to be scarcely satisfied, with an average score of 2.6. The group with the lowest mean (i.e., 2.5) are CELs, and this datum could be explained by taking the other demographic variables into consideration. Actually, the sampled CELs belong to penalized groups as far as any other demographic categorization is concerned: they are all at least 51 years old, they teach foreign languages, they have gathered more than 20 years of experience, and they had at least three classes per semester during the coronavirus outbreak.
Last but not least, data on the number of classes per semester show a predictable, decreasing pattern. Lecturers who taught only one class were the most satisfied with their work, with an average score of 3.7, whereas respondents with more than three classes per semester have the lowest mean (i.e., 2.5).

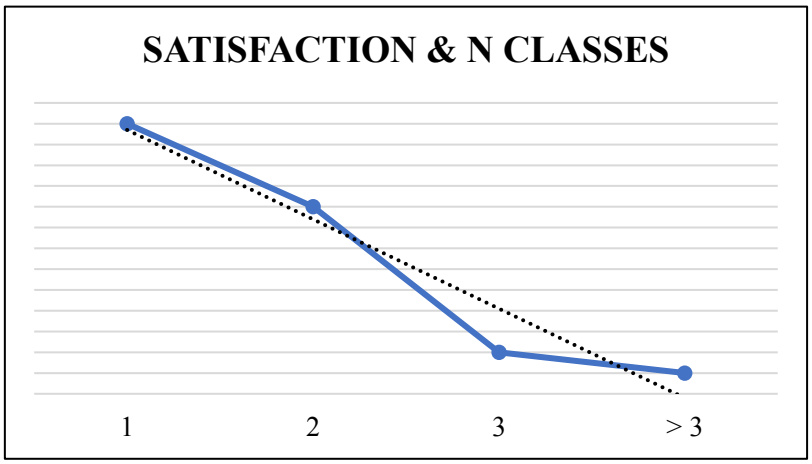

Figure 27: line chart showing the trend of data regarding lecturers' job satisfaction and number of classes per semester

On the whole, the cross-analysis between satisfaction-related data and demographic variables produced similar results if compared to the previous sections of the questionnaire. Quantitative categories confirmed the negative relationship between the dependent variables under inspection and demographic information. As for qualitative categories, an interesting datum is the low mean of language lecturers, whose job satisfaction was significantly undermined by forced e-learning unlike their motivation and engagement.
Section D comprises also an open-ended question on lecturers' expectations about the introduction of emergency remote teaching, namely item D8.

D8. As far as your work is concerned, what did you expect right before the introduction of emergency remote teaching? Did the actual working situation live up to your expectations?

The thematic analysis conducted on the responses to the question above highlighted that lecturers' expectations were on the whole not met. 20 participants answered this optional question, and the majority of them (11/20; 55.0 %) stated so.

Met	5	25.0 %
Not met	11	55.0 %
Uncertain	4	20.0 %

Table 29: number of answers per category and percentage of the total (20) with reference to item D8

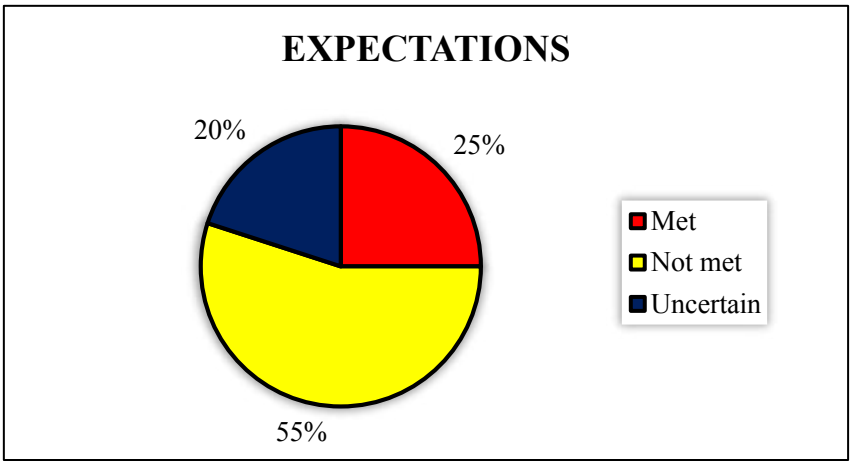

Figure 28: pie chart showing the percentage of answers per category with reference to item D8

Some respondents criticized the way in which the emergency situation was managed, which had an impact both at the individual and organizational levels. They expected also to receive more support from their organization. For instance, participant number 2 answered

> I expected to implement my teaching but the way in which the emergency was handled challenged rather than facilitated the implementation.

On the contrary, some lecturers were pretty satisfied with university management. Interaction difficulties are another recurring theme. Remote education was necessary to preserve people's health, but, on the other hand, the social dimension of the university experience was significantly penalized. As respondent number 26 stated, "teaching at distance, watching recorded videos, and so on, are only a poor substitute of a real learning experience". The format of online or dual mode classes affected learning outcomes as well, especially in language classes, as participant number 11 highlighted.

> As a language teacher, despite having breakout rooms on Zoom, students had little opportunity to improve their speaking skills as it was difficult to interact. This was further worsened by hybrid teaching.

On the other hand, emergency remote teaching could be perceived as an opportunity to improve your digital and communicative skills in order to better adapt to the situation or to be able to face unexpected difficulties. For instance, that is the opinion of participant number 9.

> I realised I would have to quickly improve my digital skills and that proved to be the case.

Interestingly enough, respondent number 6 claimed that they had no expectations, since the experience of teaching at distance during a pandemic was totally unprecedented. Last but not least, no one would have expected the pandemic to last that long.

The last part of the present sub-chapter will be devoted to section E, so to professional exhaustion. Hypothesis 3 establishes a positive relationship between emergency remote teaching and burnout; in other words, lecturers are expected to be more exhausted than in the pre-covid situation. As in the previous sections of the questionnaire, the first item focuses on a general evaluation of the construct during the pandemic that is based on a comparison with face-to-face classes. The majority of respondents (23/37; 62.2 %) claimed to be more exhausted after the introduction of emergency remote teaching indeed, which provides support to hypothesis 3. In addition, only one participant out of 37 (2.7 %) affirmed the contrary.

	N participants	Percentage	Mean	Mode
Before	1	2.7	/	/
After	23	62.2	3.7	4
No difference	13	35.1	2.4	2

Table 30: answers to item E1, percentage of the total (37), and descriptive statistics

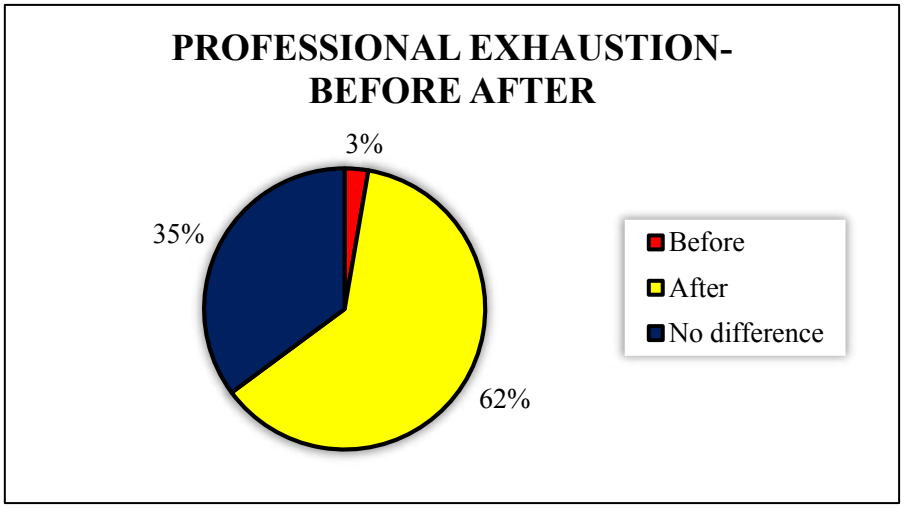

Figure 29: pie chart representing respondents' general evaluation of their professional exhaustion

So far, only groups that comprise at least two participants were taken into account for the confrontation of means, and no exception will be made in this part. As a consequence, just those lecturers who answered either "after" or "I perceived no difference" to item E1 were compared to each other in order to get better insight into the latter. Quite predictably, those lecturers who claimed to be more exhausted after the conversion to online classes have a higher mean (i.e., 3.7), which seems to imply that those who chose the option "I perceived no difference" were not that burned out neither during nor before the pandemic; they have a rather low mean indeed, namely 2.4. The confrontation of modes may prove the validity of this assumption. Indeed, the first group- i.e., those who answered "after"- has a much higher mode than the second one (4 and 2 respectively).

The analysis of the seven Likert-scaled items of section E provided further support to hypothesis 3.

Item	Topic	Mean	Mode
E2	Exhaustion before work	3.4	4
E3	Relaxation time	3.5	4
E4	Tough work	3.7	4
E5	Energy for leisure	3.3	4
E6	Workload management	2.7	2
E7	Time pressure	2.6	3

E8	Emotionally draining work	3.2	2

Table 31: mean and mode of the Likert-scaled items of section E

The mode of section E is 4, while the overall mean is 3.2. Even though the latter is rather low, the former seems to provide evidence of the positive relation between forced e-learning and professional exhaustion, as established by hypothesis 3.

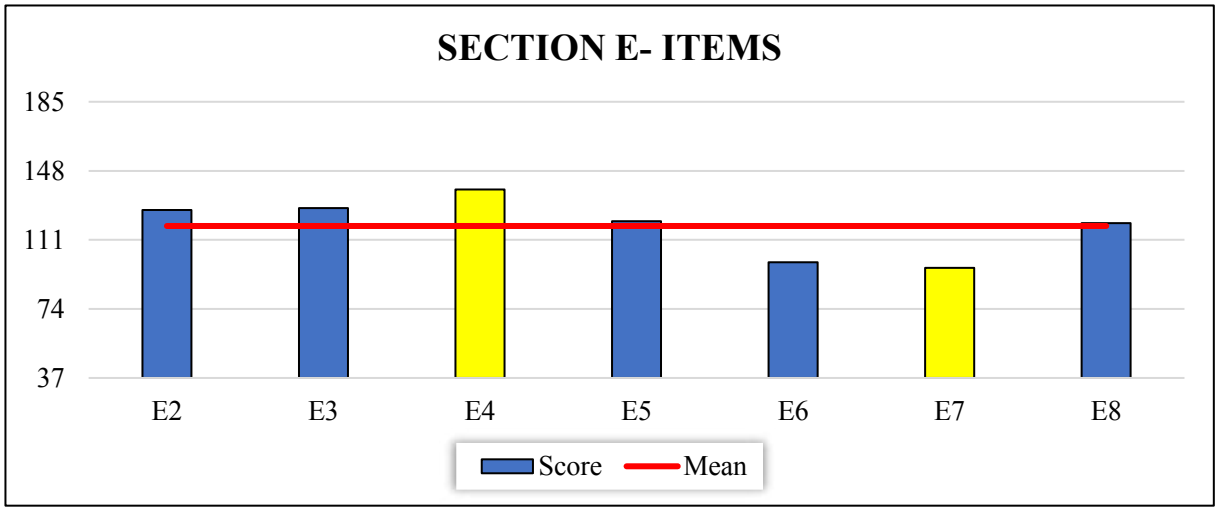

Figure 30: column chart reporting the scores of each Likert-scaled item and the mean (118.4). In yellow, the highest (138/185; 68.2 %) and the lowest score (96/185; 39.9 %) of section E

Answers were divided into three categories- positive, negative, neutral- and summed. As the table and pie chart below clearly show, the majority of responses (112/259; 43.2 %) are positive, which is not a reassuring result though, since it means that emergency remote teaching was a challenging experience in a negative sense. After all, the construct that section E aims to assess has a negative meaning.

Positive	112	43.2 %
Negative	82	31.7 %
Neutral	65	25.1 %

Table 32: types of answer to section E's items and percentage of the total (259)

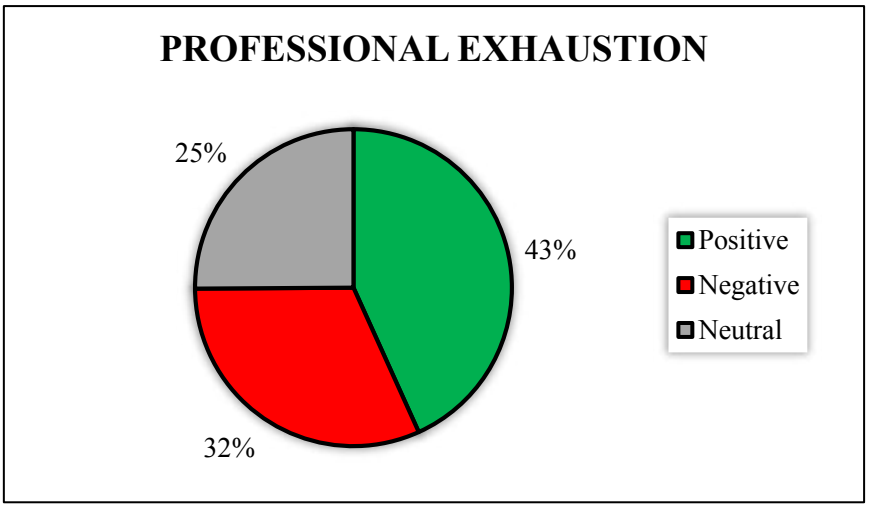

Figure 31: pie chart reporting the percentage of answers per category with reference to section E

Similarly to job satisfaction, the percentage difference between positive and negative answers is low (11.6). In that case though, it was a dissonant datum; in section E instead, the percentage difference does not change the fact that the majority of answers are positive, thus providing support to hypothesis 3, even though no categories reach 50 %.
Demerouti and colleagues (2001) defined professional exhaustion as the result of a disequilibrium between job demands and job resources. If you calculate the percentage of positive, negative, and neutral responses in relation to these two dimensions, you will discover that demands have a higher percentage of positive answers (i.e., 44.6 %) than resources (41.4 %), which could imply that they were particularly high during the pandemic. On the other hand, questions about job resources received more negative answers (35.1 %) than those about job demands (29.1 %). One might thus assume that many lecturers thought that the available resources were on the whole insufficient to avoid burnout. These outcomes can be taken as a further confirmation of the validity of hypothesis 3.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Demands	44.6 %	29.1 %	26.4 %
Resources	41.4 %	35.1 %	23.4 %

Table 33: percentage of answers per exhaustion-related dimension

In light of all, one may infer that hypothesis 3 is true: as far as their work is concerned, great part of the sample felt that they were more exhausted during the pandemic than before the introduction of emergency remote teaching. The positive relation between forced e-learning

and professional exhaustion was thus proved by data analysis.

As it was done in the previous sections of the questionnaire, data on the construct under inspection- in this case, professional exhaustion- and demographic variables were crossed in order to investigate the possible influence of the latter on research results. The table below reports the means vis-à-vis each demographic categorization. Again, only groups that comprise at least two participants were considered for the cross-analysis.

	Category	N participants	E
AGE	30-40	4	2.8
	41-50	11	3.6
	51-60	11	3.1
	> 60	10	3.1
SUBJECT	Language	10	3.5
	Linguistics	7	3.7
	Literature	13	2.9
	History	3	2.8
	Translation	2	2.9
EXPERIENCE	1-5	7	3.0
	6-10	3	3.3
	11-15	4	4.1
	16-20	2	3.4
	> 20	20	3.1
POSITION	CEL	5	3.7
	Researcher	9	3.1
	Full	9	3.5
	Adjunct	7	2.8
	Associate	7	3.0
N CLASSES	1	8	2.7
	2	13	3.1
	3	9	3.4
	> 3	7	3.7

Table 34: cross-analysis of section A and E of the questionnaire

Exhaustion- and age-related data do not show a regular pattern. The mean reaches the peak (i.e., 3.6) with the second group, whose age ranges from 41 to 50 years. Then, it unexpectedly plummets with the following category (i.e., 51-60), which has an average score of 3.1 just like

the last age range. The significant mean decrease between the second and the third group may be influenced by participants' belonging to other demographic categories. Subject areas provided useful information to explain this datum. The age range from 51 to 60 years comprises two participants who deal with subjects where the phenomenon of burnout was not very present, namely history and translation studies, which have an average score of 2.8 and 2.9 respectively. On the other hand, only one participant has this characteristic in the second age group. In addition, many respondents in this category have gathered 11-15 years of teaching experience, and this group has the highest mean within the related categorization, namely 4.1. The majority of lecturers whose age ranges from 51 to 60 years have been teaching for more than 20 years instead, and this category has a rather low mean, namely 3.1. The general trend of data seems to be evidence of a positive relation between professional exhaustion and age.

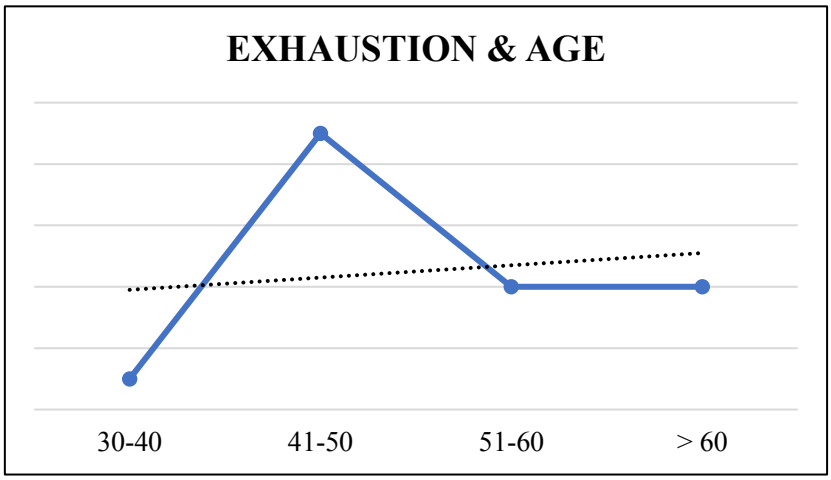

Figure 32: line chart showing the trend of age- and exhaustion-related data

As for subject areas, the group with the highest mean (i.e., 3.7) teaches linguistics, whereas those lecturers who deal with history were the least exhausted during the pandemic, with an average score of 2.8. Interestingly enough, language teaching and linguistics are among the major subject areas of Ca' Foscari university's language department, and they were characterized by higher levels of burnout if compared to minor subjects such as history and translation studies.

As for years of experience, data analysis produced unexpected results. The first three categories show an increasing trend, which was predictable. Considering that in the other sections quantitative categories provided proof of a negative relationship between the related construct and demographic information, data on professional exhaustion are supposed to show

an opposite pattern, since it has a negative meaning, while motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction are positively connoted. Moreover, it was assumed that burnout and engagement are antonyms. However, the mean decreases with the last two experience-related categories. A cross-analysis on the last three groups was conducted in order to explain the unexpected trend of data. Those participants who belong to the third and fourth group have an age that ranges from 41 to 50, but the lecturers in the last category are all 51 years old at least, which could explain the mean decrease, since the former have a higher mean (3.6) than the latter (3.1). As for subject areas, they do provide useful information, but only to justify the low mean of those respondents with more than 20 years of experience, since many of them teach literature, and literature lecturers were on the whole scarcely exhausted during the coronavirus outbreak. In order to explain the mean decrease between the third and the fourth group (11-15 and 16-20 respectively), one may rely on how many classes per semester they had. The former comprises lecturers with more than three classes indeed, while the latter taught no more than three classes. Quite predictably, those participants who had more than three classes were the most burned out, with an average score of 3.7. To sum up, the number of classes per semester is an influential variable as far as the third and fourth experience-related categories are concerned; on the other hand, the mean decrease that characterizes the last group can be explained by looking at the age and subject of the participants under inspection. The overall trend of data is positive, as the line chart below shows.

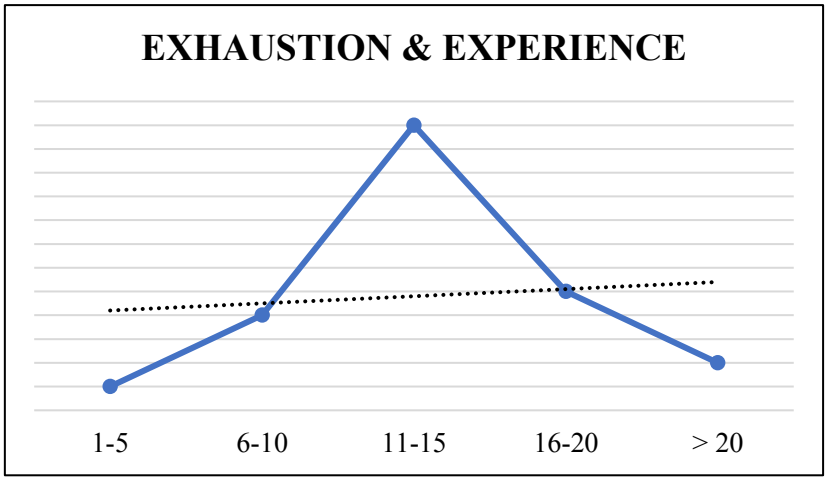

Figure 33: line chart showing the trend of experience- and exhaustion-related data

As for academic positions, CELs were the most exhausted, with an average score of 3.7. This is not surprising though, since they teach the major subject of the language department-

namely, foreign languages- and consequently had many classes per semester during the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, the group with the lowest mean (i.e., 2.8) are adjunct professors. Furthermore, full professors have a higher average score (i.e., 3.5) than adjunct professors. Being chair of the subject you teach may imply greater responsibilities and a higher number of classes per semester. While many adjunct professors sampled for the present study had only one class, great part of the full professors taught three or more than three classes during the pandemic, indeed.

The categorization by number of classes shows the most linear pattern of data, thus proving to be a highly influential variable in determining burnout levels. Quite predictably indeed, the group with the lowest mean (i.e., 2.7) had only one class per semester during the coronavirus outbreak, whereas participants with more than three classes were the most exhausted, with an average score of 3.7. The overall trend of data is positive, which means that professional exhaustion and number of classes per semester are probably directly proportional to each other.

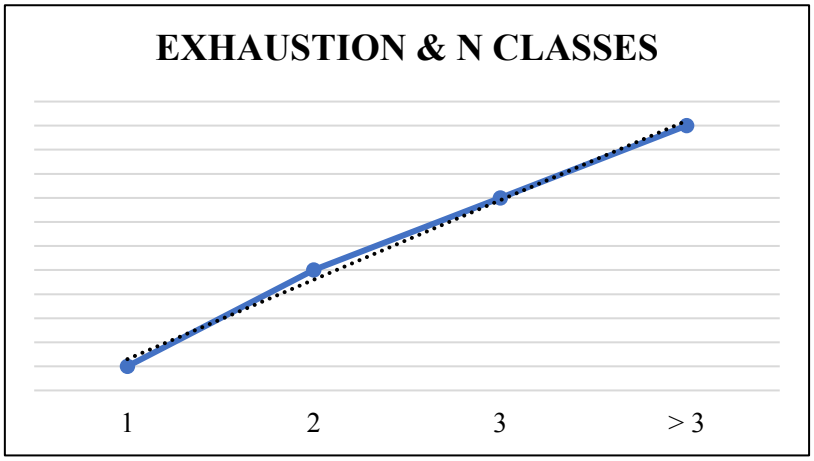

Figure 34: line chart showing the trend of data regarding lecturers' professional exhaustion and number of classes per semester

Generally speaking, the cross-analysis highlighted a positive relation between burnout and quantitative categories. Motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction are characterized by an opposite trend, but, as already said, they have a positive meaning unlike exhaustion. As for qualitative categories, foreign languages and CELs were significantly penalized by emergency remote teaching, in the sense that forced e-learning was a trigger for exhaustion. In this respect, academic position and number of classes per semester are rather influential variables as well.

To conclude the present sub-chapter, we will now analyse the last questions of section E, which focus on job resources. As already said, job resources are supposed to counterbalance job demands, thus creating a favourable environment for people to achieve their work goals and grow both personally and professionally (Demerouti et al., 2001). Item E9 was written in the format of checkboxes. It provides a series of resources, and respondents were asked to tick those they deemed particularly helpful in an emergency remote teaching situation.

E9. In your opinion, which job resources may be helpful in an emergency remote teaching situation?

- ☐ Feedback from students and/or colleagues
- ☐ Job control
- ☐ Job security
- ☐ Participation in decision making
- ☐ Personal traits (e.g., mental resilience, organizational skills)
- ☐ Rewards
- ☐ Support from your organization
- ☐ Task variety
- ☐ Other

The table and column chart below report the number of answers per option.

Feedback	26
Job control	2
Job security	6
Decision	19
Traits	18
Rewards	10
Support	29
Task variety	9
Other	3

Table 35: answers to item E9

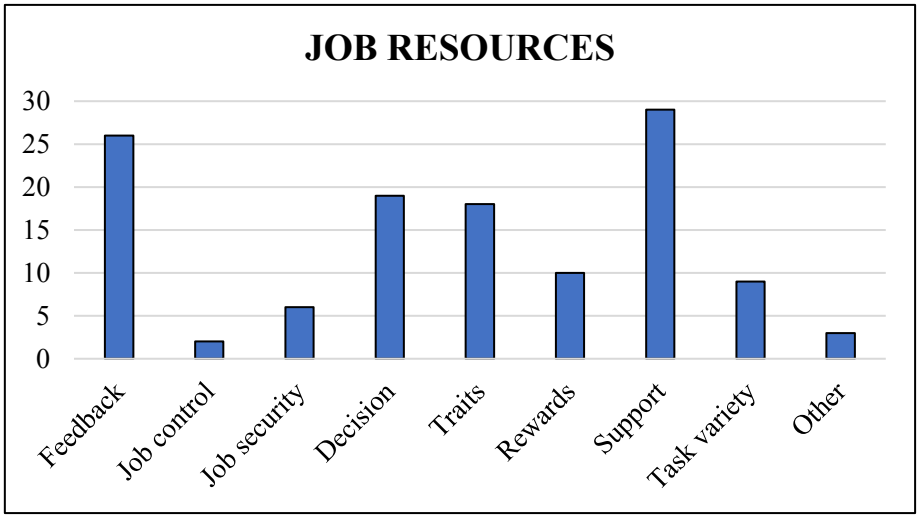

Figure 35: column chart reporting the number of answers per option with reference to item E9

Clearly, the opportunity to get feedback from your students and colleagues on your performance along with support received from university management are the most important job resources for many respondents. On the contrary, job control and security were deemed helpful only by much fewer participants. The ability to affect what happens in your work environment, your consequent degree of autonomy, and the sense of security deriving from a stable job are all aspects that focus on employees as individuals. Interestingly enough, the sampled lecturers highlighted the importance of help relations at work instead, as they ticked the options "feedback from your students and/or colleagues" and "support from your organization" more than "job control" and "job security". Probably, the COVID-19 pandemic has made people particularly aware of the importance of human connection, especially in an emergency situation that, at the beginning, caught everyone unprepared, thus fuelling a sense of disorientation. Participants were also given the opportunity to indicate other job resources to be added to the list provided by item E9, and they offered time and scientific research. In addition, respondent number 26 gave a very interesting answer:

> the university and all its stakeholders' acknowledgement that all the university lecturers' tasks are performed in an emergency, and so they should not be evaluated as if there was no emergency. They expected research output and administrative commitment to be exactly the same as before, if not even higher. It was unfair.

In short, they highlighted the necessity to acknowledge the exceptionality of the pandemic situation. Last but not least, participants were asked whether there were enough job resources during the coronavirus outbreak.

E11. In your opinion, were there enough job resources during the COVID-19 outbreak? And why?

Item E11 was not compulsory, and it received 19 answers. As the table and pie chart below show, the majority of respondents (9/19; 47.4 %) affirmed that the available resources were enough to work in an emergency situation.

Enough	9	47.4 %
Not enough	8	42.1 %
Balanced	2	10.5 %

Table 36: answers to item E11 and percentage of the total (19)

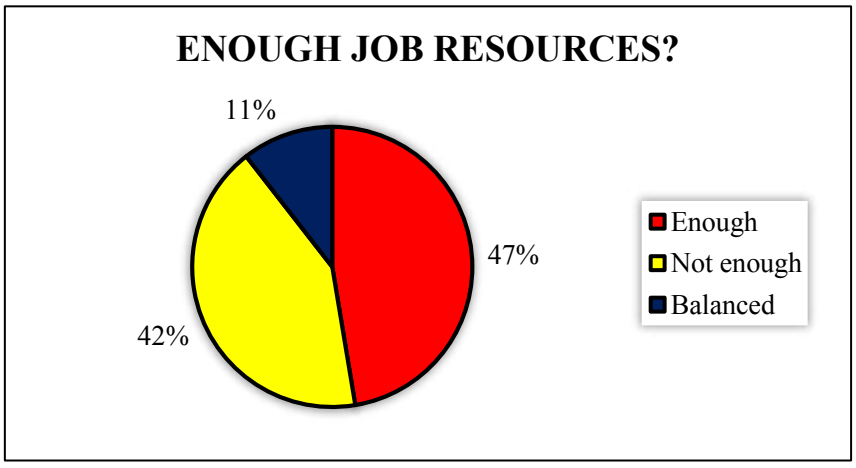

Figure 36: pie chart showing the percentage of answers per category with reference to item E11

Despite this datum, the percentage difference between the first and the second category is rather low (i.e., 5.3), which means that many lecturers thought that job resources were lacking during the pandemic. In particular, they highlighted the lack of instructions from university managers, so they felt on the whole abandoned to themselves. As participant number 20 stated,

> we had to manage all with our own devices at home and in the very beginning we learned everything on our own by asking and "teaching" colleagues. Only after a while the university gave instructions to us.

On the other hand, many lecturers were pretty satisfied with how Ca' Foscari university managed the emergency, also if compared to what other institutions did.

> In my opinion, considering that I have worked in 3 different universities in Italy, Ca' Foscari gave us plenty of opportunity to work in the best conditions, in spite of the difficult situation (participant number 12).

> The resources I needed the most were library books. Luckily, we were able to access the university libraries even in the emergency. The biggest part of our job (in terms of time per day) is devoted to research (more than to classes): without books we can do nothing. Also, remote teaching was well organized, both on-site and from home. Adequate assistance was given, too. So, I'm satisfied with how Ca' Foscari managed the emergency (participant number 10).

Two respondents provided a more balanced view into the issue of job resources, in the sense that they considered pros and cons and the evolution of the situation over time. Furthermore, respondent number 25 emphasized the lack of time for research:

> there was a lot of technical support for online teaching, but my working time was absorbed almost completely by teaching and exams and by the myriad of technical and organizational problems that one had to resolve. Only little (or even no) time was left for research, which was very frustrating.

4.1.3 Emergency Remote Teaching: A Challenge to the Perceived Validity of E-Learning

Hypothesis 4 establishes a negative relationship between emergency remote teaching and attitude towards e-learning. In other words, it is assumed that lecturers' approach changed for the worse during the pandemic as a consequence of the forced transition to online classes. In order to test this assumption, the questions of section F devoted to attitude towards e-learning were taken into account.
First of all, respondents were asked what they thought of e-learning before the pandemic.

F1. How was your attitude towards e-learning before the pandemic?

- Positive
- Negative
- Neutral

As the table and pie chart below clearly show, the majority of participants (18/37; 48.6 %) claimed to have a neutral attitude towards online education before the COVID-19 outbreak.

Positive	13	35.1 %
Negative	6	16.2 %
Neutral	18	48.6 %

Table 37: answers to item F1 and percentage of the total (37)

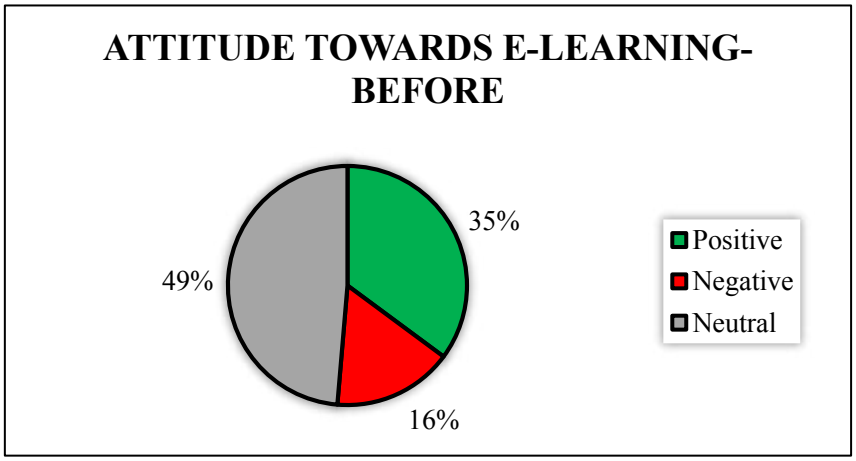

Figure 37: pie chart reporting the percentage of answers per category with reference to item F1

Moreover, respondents were asked whether the introduction of emergency remote teaching affected their opinion on e-learning in some way.

F2. Has your attitude towards e-learning changed due to the pandemic?

- Yes and for the better
- Yes but for the worse
- No

Great part of the sample seems to be split into two: 14 participants (37.8 %) affirmed that their opinion improved, and 14 participants stated that their attitude did not change due to forced e-learning. As far as the latter are concerned, half of them kept a neutral approach in the period of time under inspection. The table below reports data on lecturers' attitude change, whether it occurred or not.

Better	14	37.8 %
Worse	9	24.3 %
Always positive	6	16.2 %
Always negative	1	2.7 %
Always neutral	7	18.9 %

Table 38: cross-analysis on the responses to item F1 and F2 and percentage of the total (37)

The categories presented in the table above could be reduced to three- namely, positive, negative, and neutral- in order to compare lecturers' attitude towards e-learning before and after the pandemic. Those participants whose opinion improved and those who kept a positive approach were, therefore, included in the first category (i.e., positive); similarly, those respondents whose attitude changed for the worse and the only lecturer who had always a negative view on e-learning were comprised in the second category (i.e., negative). The tables and column chart below report data on this categorization.

	N participants	Percentage	Mean
Positive	20	54.1	3.2
Negative	10	27.0	2.6
Neutral	7	18.9	2.8

Table 39: number of participants per attitude, percentage of the total (37), and mean

Attitude	Before	After
Positive	35.1 %	54.1 %
Negative	16.2 %	27.0 %
Neutral	48.6 %	18.9 %

Table 40: percentage of respondents per attitude before and after the introduction of emergency remote teaching

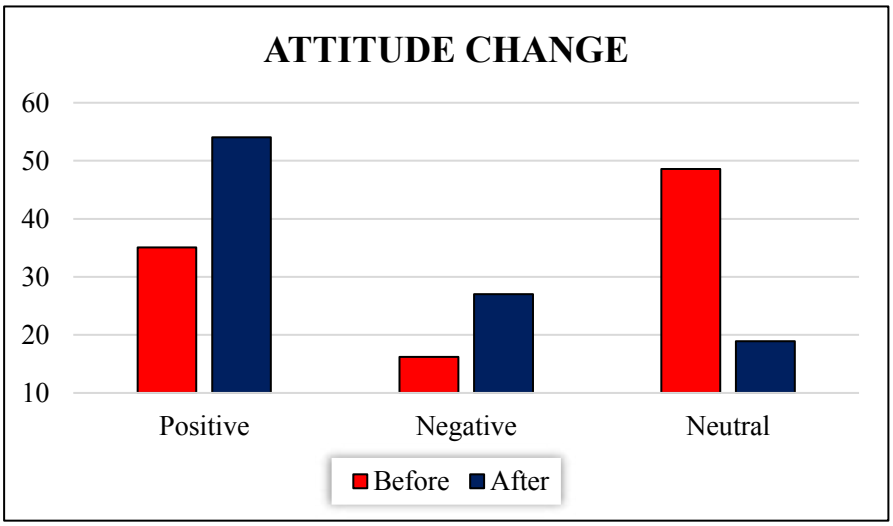

Figure 38: column chart comparing the percentage of respondents per attitude before and after the introduction of emergency remote teaching

Apparently, emergency remote teaching had a significant impact on lecturers' attitude towards e-learning, in the sense that it made many of them take a clearer position on this topic. Actually, the percentage of neutral participants decreases drastically if compared to the pre-covid situation. Both the number of respondents with a positive and a negative approach increases, but the former is higher than the latter in any case. This datum could challenge the validity of hypothesis 4. If you calculate the average score of lecturers with a positive, negative, and neutral opinion on e-learning in relation to the pandemic, the mean of the first group is quite predictably the highest, namely 3.2. Besides, those respondents who kept a neutral approach have a higher mean than those with a negative attitude (i.e., 2.8 and 2.6 respectively). The gap between the first and the third group is greater than that between the third and the second category. In light of all this, one might infer that those participants with a neutral attitude towards e-learning got medium-low scores. Indeed, if you look at the points that single respondents earned, only one participant out of 7 (14.3 %) reaches 50 %, and only one participant got a score that is higher than 50 % of the maximum one, which corresponds to 27 points.

	N4	N7	N17	N25	N27	N29	N33
Score	26	21	22	22	27	33	23
%	47.2	33.3	36.1	36.1	50.0	66.7	38.9
Mean	2.9	2.3	2.4	2.4	3.0	3.7	2.6
Mode	3	1;3	2	2	2;3;4	3;4	2;4

Table 41: individual scores and descriptive statistics of those participants who kept a neutral approach during the pandemic

The analysis of the Likert-scaled items of section F that focus on attitude towards e-learning may provide support to hypothesis 4.

Item	Topic	Mean	Mode
F3	E-learning as supplement	4.2	5
F4	Benefits of blended learning	3.9	4
F5	Attractiveness	2.1	2
F6	Learning outcomes	3.1	2
F7	The future of higher education	2.4	2
F8	Use opportunities	2.8	2

F9	Comparison between remote and traditional teaching	1.9	2
F10	Implementation of e-learning	2.8	4
F17	Influence on performance	3.3	3

Table 42: mean and mode of the Likert-scaled items of section F (e-learning)

Indeed, both the general mode and mean are rather low (2 and 2.9 respectively), which provide support to hypothesis 4.

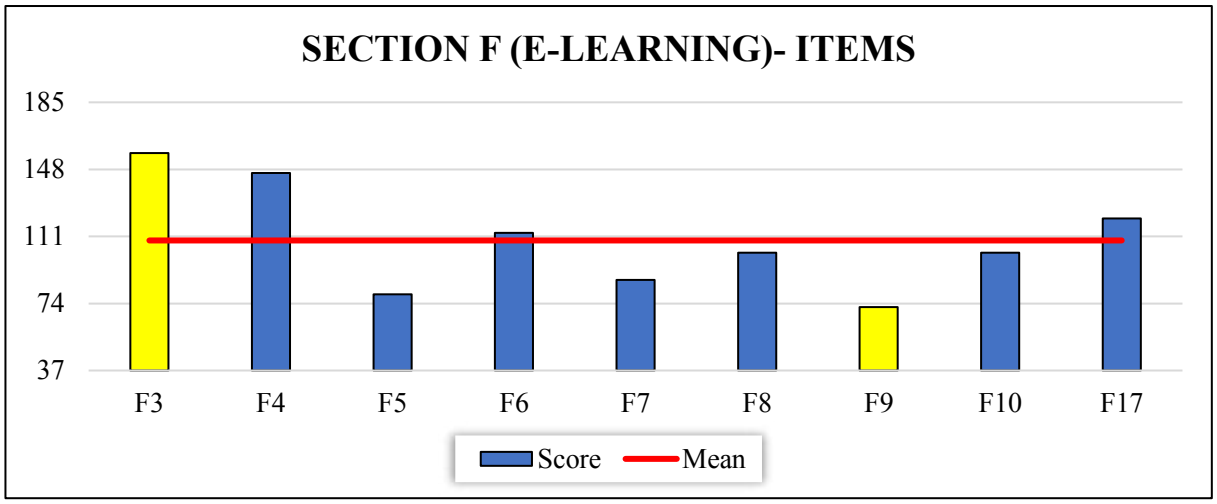

Figure 39: column chart reporting the scores of each Likert-scaled item and the mean (108.8). In yellow, the highest (157/185; 81.1 %) and the lowest score (72/185; 23.6 %) of section F (e-learning)

As it was done in the previous sections of the questionnaire, answers were divided into three categories, namely positive, negative, and neutral. As the table and pie chart below show, the majority of answers (131/333; 39.3 %) are negative.

Positive	123	36.9 %
Negative	131	39.3 %
Neutral	79	23.7 %

Table 43: types of answers to section F's items (e-learning) and percentage of the total (333)

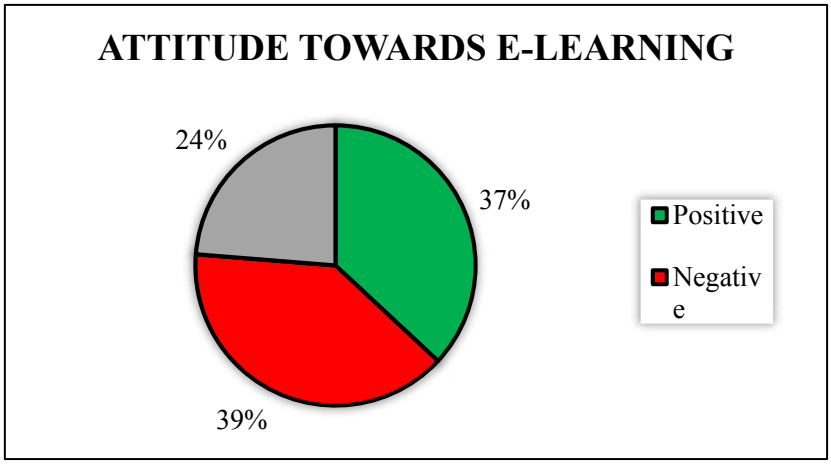

Figure 40: pie chart reporting the percentage of answers per category with reference to section F (e-learning)

However, the percentage difference between positive and negative responses is rather low (i.e., 2.4). It may be true that most answers are negative, but their slim majority alone does not seem sufficient to prove the validity of hypothesis 4, which establishes a negative relation between emergency remote teaching and attitude towards e-learning. After all, great part of respondents (20/37; 54.1 %) either kept a positive approach towards online education or improved their opinion on this topic during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data on lecturers' attitude change may be less dissonant than they look, though. Indeed, if you calculate the percentage increase of participants with a positive and a negative attitude, you will discover that the latter show a higher increase than the former (66.7 % and 53.8 % respectively). In light of this, one can state that hypothesis 4 is valid.

To conclude the present sub-chapter on the effects of emergency remote teaching, a cross-analysis between attitude towards e-learning and demographic variables will be presented in order to discover whether participants' belonging to demographic categories can affect their opinion on online education or not. The table below reports the means of each group into which the sample was divided. As it was done in the previous sections of the questionnaire, only categories with at least two participants were taken into account for the analysis.

	Category	N participants	F
AGE	30-40	4	3.1
	41-50	11	3.1
	51-60	11	3.0
	> 60	10	2.7

SUBJECT	Language	10	3.0
	Linguistics	7	3.3
	Literature	13	2.7
	History	3	2.8
	Translation	2	3.2
EXPERIENCE	1-5	7	3.2
	6-10	3	3.0
	11-15	4	3.0
	16-20	2	3.3
	> 20	20	2.8
POSITION	CEL	5	2.8
	Researcher	9	3.3
	Full	9	3.0
	Adjunct	7	2.8
	Associate	7	2.7
N CLASSES	1	8	3.2
	2	13	2.9
	3	9	2.8
	> 3	7	3.0

Table 44: cross-analysis of section A and F (e-learning) of the questionnaire

As for age, data show a pattern that is more or less linear: the first two categories have the same average score (i.e., 3.1), and then the mean gradually decreases until it plummets with the last group. The general trend is negative. As a consequence, a negative relationship can be established between attitude towards e-learning and age, as the line chart below clearly shows.

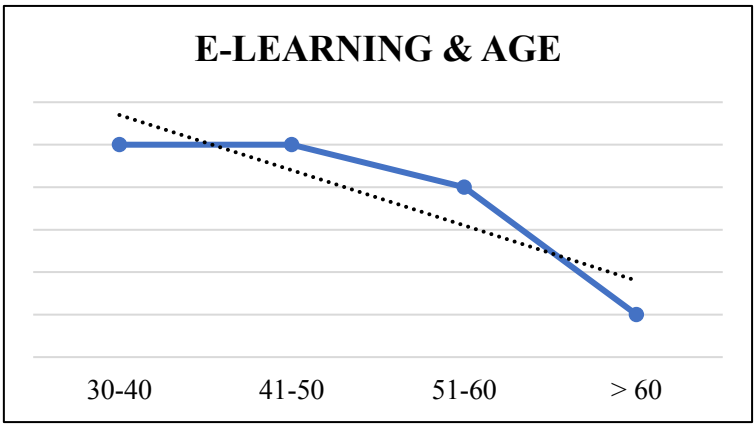

Figure 41: line chart showing the trend of data on age and attitude towards e-learning

As for subject areas, linguistics lecturers seem to have a very positive opinion on e-learning, given that their average score is the highest (i.e., 3.3). On the other hand, the group with the lowest mean (i.e., 2.7) teaches literature. The opportunity to discuss literary texts and themes was probably frustrated by emergency remote teaching. Similarly, history lecturers appear to have a rather low opinion on remote education. One might thus infer that reduced social contacts and forced e-learning had a negative impact on their approach. Indeed, history lecturers were the least motivated as well, and the social dimension plays an important role in ensuring one's motivation at work according to the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). One may expect language lecturers to have a negative attitude towards e-learning due to the pandemic, since interpersonal exchanges are a salient part of both the teaching and the learning process as well, and yet the language category has a medium-high mean, namely 3.0.

As for years of experience, the mean slightly decreases between the first (i.e., 1-5) and the third group (i.e., 11-15), then it unexpectedly soars and eventually plummets. The mean increase that characterizes the fourth category (i.e., 16-20) may be explained by crossing experience-related data and information deriving from the other demographic variables in relation to the third and fourth group. Subject areas are relevant in this case: those participants whose experience ranges from 16 to 20 years teach either foreign languages or linguistics, and these groups have a high mean (3.0 and 3.3 respectively); on the other hand, half of the lecturers in the third group deals with literature, and this category has the lowest score within the categorization by subject, namely 2.7. In addition, academic positions provide useful information. The majority of respondents in both categories are either full professors or researchers, but the third group comprises one associate professor as well, and associate professors seem to have a rather low opinion on e-learning, given that their average score is the lowest (i.e., 2.7). To sum up, qualitative categories- namely, subject areas and academic positions- may justify the above-mentioned mean increase. The overall trend of experience-related is nonetheless negative, which implies that years of experience and attitude towards e-learning are on the whole negatively related.

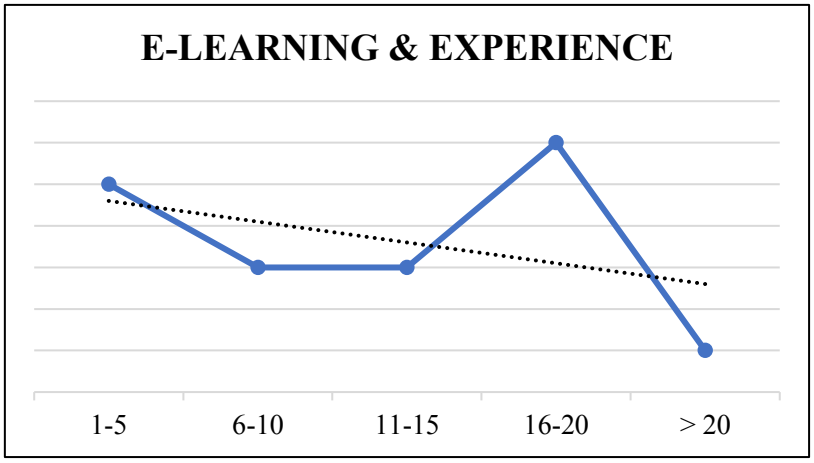

Figure 42: line chart showing the trend of data on years of experience and attitude towards e-learning

As already said, associate professors have the lowest mean within the categorization by academic positions, namely 2.7. On the other hand, researchers appear to have a very positive attitude towards online education, since their average score is the highest, namely 3.3. Interestingly enough, CELs have a rather low mean, namely 2.8. Even though foreign languages are not the most penalized subjects in terms of attitude towards e-learning, the other demographic variables could provide useful information to explain this datum. First of all, the sampled CELs are all at least 51 years old, so they are not among the youngest participants, and, as already said, a negative relation can be established between age and approach towards remote education. Secondly, they have all gathered more than 20 years of experience, and this group has the lowest mean within the related categorization, namely 2.8. Last but not least, the sampled CELs taught at least 3 classes per semester during the coronavirus outbreak, and both those lecturers with 3 and more than 3 classes have a rather low average score (2.8 and 3.0 respectively). To sum up, quantitative categories- namely, age, years of experience, and number of classes per semester- are relevant to explain the rather low mean of CELs.

As for number of classes per semester, the first three categories- i.e., those lecturers with 1, 2, or 3 classes- show a predictable decreasing pattern. Then, the mean unexpectedly increases with the last group. In other words, those lecturers with more than 3 classes per semester appear to be more well-disposed towards e-learning than their colleagues who taught only 3 classes. In order to explain this unexpected result, the last two categories were compared in relation to the other demographic variables. Subject areas and academic positions might provide useful information in this respect. While the majority of participants belonging to the

fourth category teach foreign languages, great part of the third group deals with literature, and, as already said, literature lecturers have the lowest mean (i.e., 2.7) within the categorization by subject. Besides, the third group comprises many associate professors while none of them is included in the last category, and associate professors have a rather low average score, namely 2.7. The lower mean of lecturers with 3 classes per semester could in sum be influenced by their subject area and academic position. Anyway, the overall trend of data is negative, as the line chart below clearly shows.

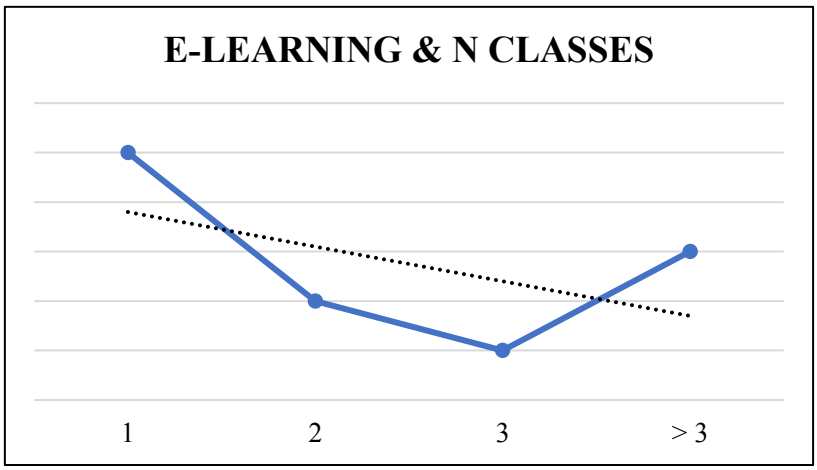

Figure 43: line chart showing the trend of data on number of classes per semester and attitude towards e-learning

To sum up, the cross-analysis on quantitative categories seems to emphasize the existence of a negative relationship between attitude towards e-learning and demographic variables. Even though the trend of data is sometimes irregular, unexpected results could be influenced by participants' belonging to other demographic categories. Similarly, the analysis of qualitative categories led to interesting outcomes, which could be explained by crossing the related data and other pieces of information. Demographic variables seem to affect research results, but their influence is often determined by multiple factors rather than by single constructs.

4.2 What There Should Always Be: Motivation and Exhaustion as Independent Variables

The introduction of emergency remote teaching was definitely the major change caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in those higher education institutions where classes are normally face-to-face. Some relations between the variables considered in the present study should,

however, exist in any situation, and such relationships are precisely the focus of the current sub-chapter. More specifically, a high motivating job potential is expected to foster employees' engagement and satisfaction at work. This assumption is grounded in the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976), which defines work engagement and job satisfaction as possible work outcomes deriving from a stimulating environment. In addition, the present paper follows the suggestion by Schaufeli and colleagues (2002) of seeing professional exhaustion as an antonym for work engagement. The validity of this definition will be tested in the current sub-chapter in order to determine whether the negative relation between burnout and engagement is supported by concrete data or is just theoretical.

The above-mentioned relationships between variables are presented in hypothesis 5 and 6, which will be verified in separate parts of the present sub-chapter. Therefore, the means of single participants will be confronted and a cross-analysis on demographic information will be conducted in relation to the constructs under inspection, namely motivating job potential, work engagement, job satisfaction, and professional exhaustion. As already said, the base level statistical skills of the author do not allow to resort to more sophisticated analysis methods such as inferential statistics, which would produce more reliable data on the actual influence of independent variables.

4.2.1 Conditions and Consequences: An Analysis on the Relation between Motivating Job Potential and Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction

Hypothesis 5 establishes a positive relation between motivating job potential and work engagement and job satisfaction. We will first of all focus on engagement and then on satisfaction at work. Eventually, the patterns that data of section B, C, and D showed in the cross-analysis on demographic information will be confronted.

In order to investigate the relationship between motivating job potential as an independent variable and work engagement and job satisfaction as dependent variables, the average score of each respondent was calculated over the points they earned in section B, C, and D. Then, both means were compared to each other through a scatter chart with the purpose of discovering whether the trend of data is positive or negative.

	B	C	D
N1	4.0	4.4	3.8
N2	2.7	2.0	1.5
N3	3.2	2.8	2.8
N4	3.6	3.8	2.5
N5	4.0	4.3	3.4
N6	3.9	3.6	3.7
N7	3.2	3.8	2.1
N8	3.9	3.9	3.6
N9	3.6	3.4	2.5
N10	4.3	4.5	4.4
N11	3.6	3.7	2.8
N12	3.7	3.3	3.6
N13	3.5	2.9	2.1
N14	3.7	3.3	3.5
N15	4.0	3.9	2.7
N16	3.7	3.6	3.2
N17	3.7	3.1	3.3
N18	3.6	3.7	3.1
N19	4.1	4.4	4.1
N20	3.9	3.1	2.6
N21	3.7	2.5	2.8
N22	4.1	3.9	3.8
N23	3.7	3.2	3.2
N24	3.9	3.4	2.8
N25	3.4	3.2	2.9
N26	2.8	2.8	1.7
N27	3.0	2.7	3.0
N28	2.5	3.5	2.0
N29	3.7	3.7	3.9
N30	3.8	4.7	4.4
N31	3.0	2.3	2.2
N32	3.6	3.8	4.2
N33	3.4	2.8	2.6
N34	3.7	3.3	2.7
N35	3.0	2.8	2.3
N36	3.9	3.7	3.8
N37	3.9	3.5	3.3

Table 45: means of participants in section B, C, and D

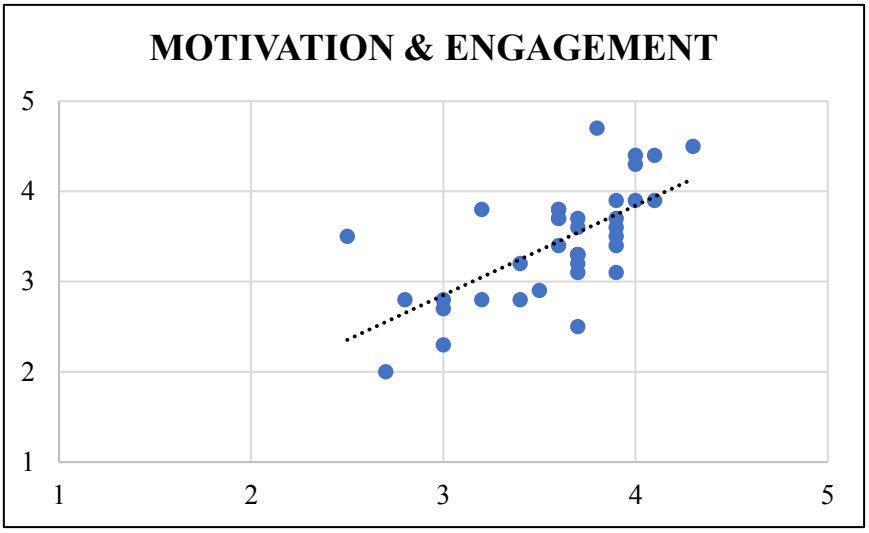

Figure 44: scatter chart showing the trend of motivation- and engagement-related data

As one can infer from the chart above, the overall trend of data is positive, which means that hypothesis 5 is confirmed, at least as far as work engagement is concerned. After all, the sample showed high levels of both motivation and engagement at work despite the emergency restrictions, thus disproving the existence of a negative relationship between emergency remote teaching and motivating job potential and work engagement, which is established by hypothesis 1 and 2 respectively.

Similarly, you can draw a comparison between lecturers' average scores in section B and D of the questionnaire in order to investigate the relationship between motivating job potential and job satisfaction.

Figure 45: scatter chart showing the trend of motivation- and satisfaction-related data

Clearly, the general trend is positive, so one may conclude that hypothesis 5 is valid as far as both work engagement and job satisfaction are concerned: the constructs under inspection seem to be positively related to motivation, indeed. It may be true that forced e-learning had a negative impact on lecturers' job satisfaction as established by hypothesis 2, but apparently the relationship with motivation is nonetheless positive.

One may deepen the analysis of section B, C, and D by comparing the related pattern of data with reference to demographic variables. The table below reports again the average score of each category into which the sample was divided, as long as such categories comprise at least two participants. Groups with only one respondent were not taken into account for the analysis indeed, since you cannot make general considerations about a given category based on only one result.

	Category	N participants	B	C	D
AGE	30-40	4	3.7	3.9	3.8
	41-50	11	3.6	3.4	2.9
	51-60	11	3.6	3.5	3.0
	> 60	10	3.5	3.2	2.9
SUBJECT	Language	10	3.6	3.4	2.8
	Linguistics	7	3.5	3.2	2.8
	Literature	13	3.6	3.4	3.2
	History	3	3.4	3.9	3.1
	Translation	2	3.9	4.1	3.8
EXPERIENCE	1-5	7	3.7	3.8	3.6
	6-10	3	3.9	3.8	3.3
	11-15	4	3.3	2.8	2.3
	16-20	2	3.6	3.7	3.2
	> 20	20	3.5	3.3	2.9
POSITION	CEL	5	3.7	3.4	2.5
	Researcher	9	3.6	3.4	3.3
	Full	9	3.3	3.3	2.6
	Adjunct	7	4.0	4.0	3.7
	Associate	7	3.5	3.1	3.0
N CLASSES	1	8	3.8	3.8	3.7
	2	13	3.6	3.6	3.3
	3	9	3.3	3.1	2.6

	> 3	7	3.6	3.2	2.5

Table 46: cross-analysis of section B, C, and D of the questionnaire

As for age, data on work engagement and job satisfaction are characterized by the same pattern, namely decrease-increase-decrease. Section B shows a slight variation in the pattern instead, as the second (i.e., 41-50) and third age range (i.e., 51-60) have the same average score (i.e., 3.6), but again irregular patterns may be influenced by multiple variables at a time. Apart from the first category (i.e., 30-40) that is on the whole more engaged and satisfied than motivated, all the other groups show a higher degree of motivating job potential, as presented by the line chart below.

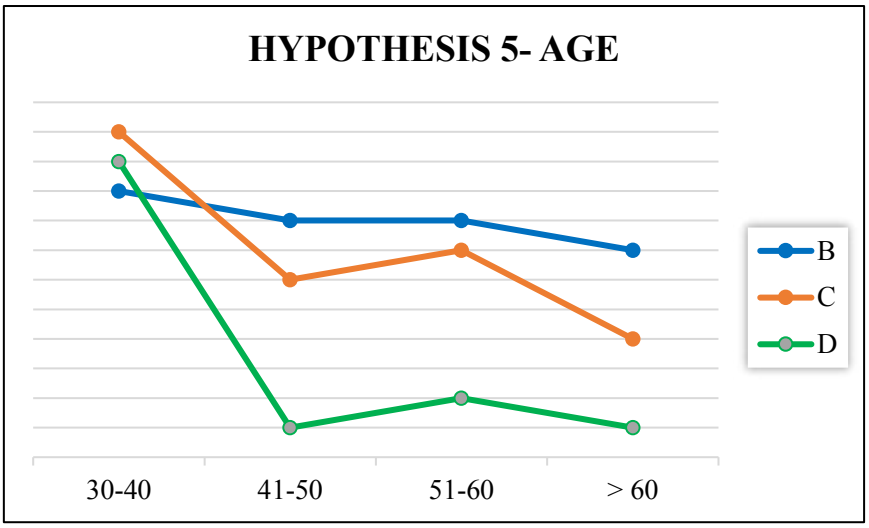

Figure 46: line chart showing the pattern of age-related data of section B, C, and D

As for subject areas, lecturers who deal with translation studies have the highest mean in all three sections (3.9, 4.1, and 3.8 respectively). Interestingly enough, translation studies are a minor subject area within Ca' Foscari university's language department, and yet their group appear to be pretty motivated, engaged, and satisfied with their job, especially if compared to other categories. As for the major subjects, linguistics lecturers were on the whole the most penalized by forced e-learning, given that their mean is rather low in all three sections (3.5, 3.2, and 2.8 respectively), and they were even the least engaged and satisfied within the categorization by subject.

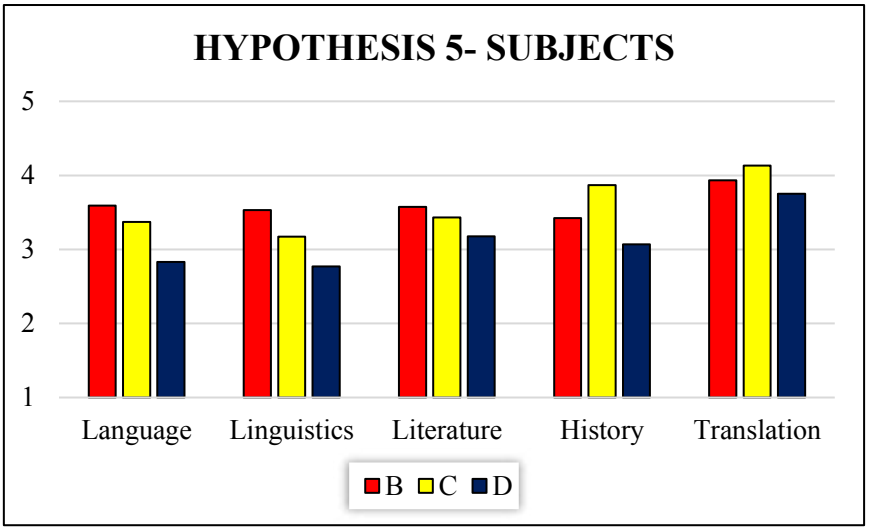

Figure 47: column chart reporting the mean of each subject area in section B, C, and D

The categorization by years of experience produced unexpected results in all three sections, as the group whose teaching experience ranges from 11 to 15 years has always the lowest mean (3.3, 2.8, and 2.3 respectively). This irregular pattern of data was ascribed to the influence of the other demographic variables considered in the present study, but one might wonder whether it can be explained differently, given the drastic mean decrease noticed in all three sections. Are there other variables that cause it? Is this unexpected result really influenced by the variables under inspection? Or is it just the coincidental product of the categories that the author chose to classify the sample? Future research could shed some light on these issues. As already said, data analysis seems to provide evidence of a negative relation between years of experience and motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction. Considering that the last two categories (i.e., 16-20 and >20) have always a lower average score than the second one (i.e., 6-10), the pattern of data would probably be more linear, if it were not for the very low mean of the third group (i.e., 11-15). Anyway, the first (i.e., 1-5) and the fourth category (i.e., 16-20) appear to be more engaged than motivated, while lecturers belonging to the other groups are characterized by higher levels of motivation at work. Job satisfaction is the construct with the lowest means, as the line chart below clearly shows. After all, data analysis did not provide support to the negative relationship between emergency remote teaching and motivation and engagement established by hypothesis 1 and 2 respectively,

whereas lecturers' job satisfaction was significantly undermined by the conversion to online classes.

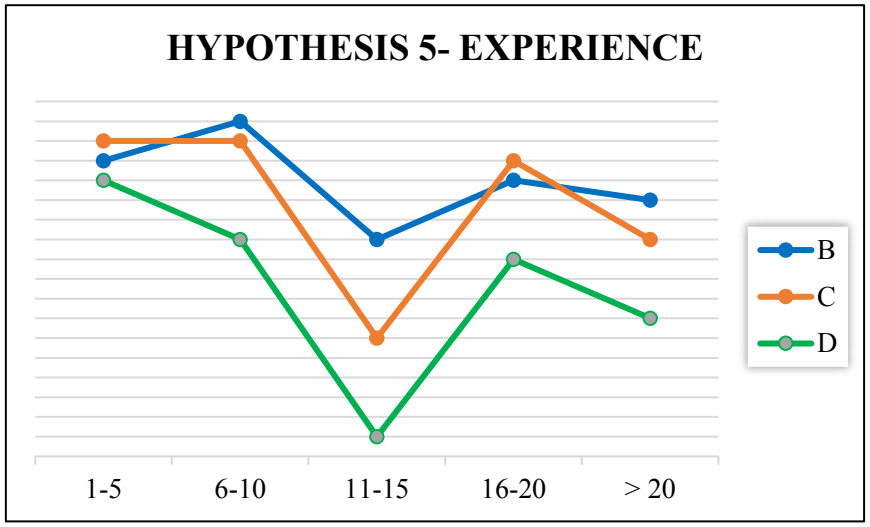

Figure 48: line chart showing the pattern of experience-related data of section B, C, and D

As for academic positions, adjunct professors have the highest mean in all three sections (4.0, 4.0, and 3.7 respectively) despite having a less solid position than other groups such as full professors, who appear to be particularly penalized by forced e-learning, instead. As for the other groups, their motivation at work is higher than their engagement and satisfaction. The lowest mean of all three sections is 2.5, which was calculated over CELs' points in section D. This datum mirrors the low average score that defines the satisfaction of language lecturers.

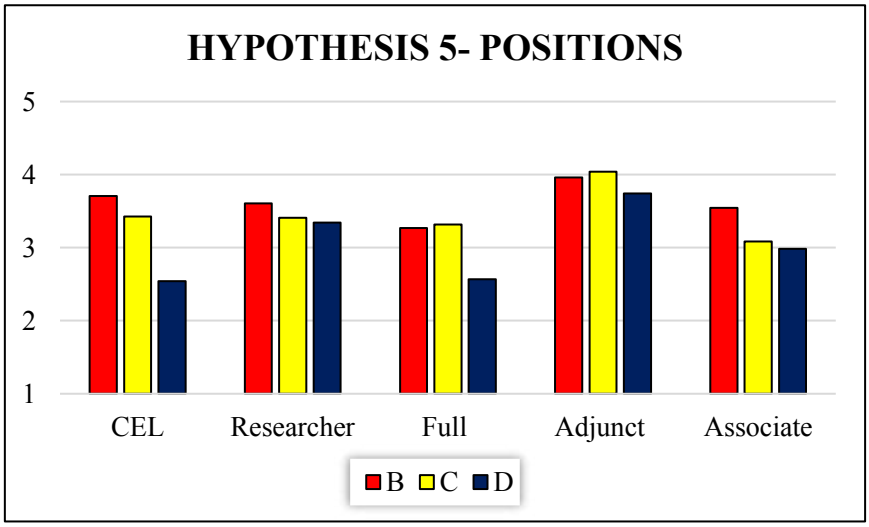

Figure 49: column chart reporting the mean of each academic position in section B, C, and D

Last but not least, the cross-analysis on the number of classes per semester that respondents taught during the pandemic led to unexpected outcomes, as participants with more than 3

classes appear to be more motivated and engaged than their colleagues with only three classes. Instead, data on job satisfaction show a predictable, decreasing pattern that is more linear than that of section B and C. Again, irregular patterns of data were explained by considering the possible influence of the other demographic categories to which participants belong. Generally speaking, lecturers who had 1 or 2 classes per semester show the same degree of motivating job potential and work engagement, while the other groups seem to be more motivated than engaged. Again, job satisfaction is the construct with the lowest means as represented by the line chart below.

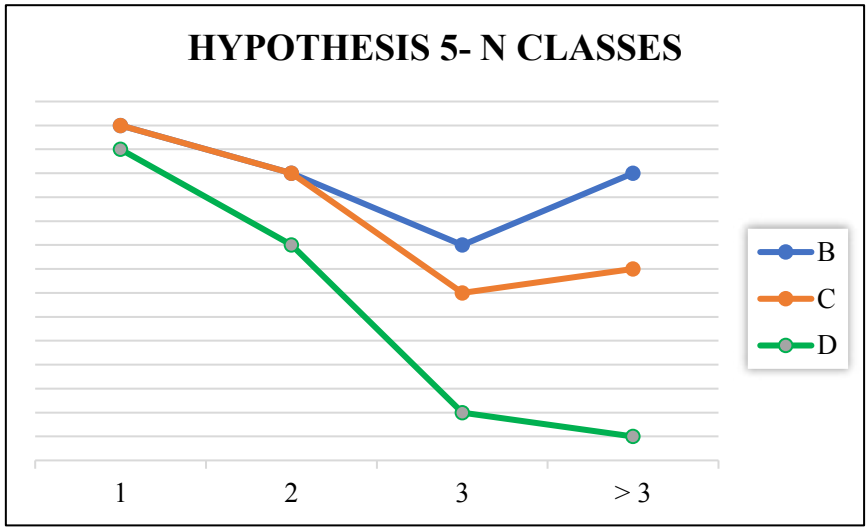

Figure 50: line chart showing the pattern of data on the number of classes per semester lecturers had and with reference to section B, C, and D

4.2.2 Professional Exhaustion and Work Engagement: Test of a Definition

Hypothesis 6 asserts that professional exhaustion and work engagement are negatively related. In order to prove the validity of this relation, the mean of each participant was calculated over the points they got in section E and C of the questionnaire and then compared to each other through a scatter chart. Since the constructs under inspection are expected to be inversely proportional to each other, the related data should consequently show a negative trend. The table and scatter chart below report the results of such calculations.

	E	C
N1	2.7	4.4
N2	5.0	2.0

N3	3.6	2.8
N4	4.0	3.8
N5	3.3	4.3
N6	2.6	3.6
N7	3.9	3.8
N8	3.0	3.9
N9	4.0	3.4
N10	2.0	4.5
N11	3.0	3.7
N12	2.3	3.3
N13	3.0	2.9
N14	3.3	3.3
N15	4.4	3.9
N16	3.1	3.6
N17	2.6	3.1
N18	3.7	3.7
N19	3.4	4.4
N20	3.9	3.1
N21	4.0	2.5
N22	2.4	3.9
N23	2.3	3.2
N24	3.6	3.4
N25	2.9	3.2
N26	4.7	2.8
N27	3.3	2.7
N28	2.6	3.5
N29	2.7	3.7
N30	2.1	4.7
N31	3.1	2.3
N32	1.1	3.8
N33	3.4	2.8
N34	4.1	3.3
N35	3.7	2.8
N36	1.7	3.7
N37	3.9	3.5

Table 47: means of participants in section E and C

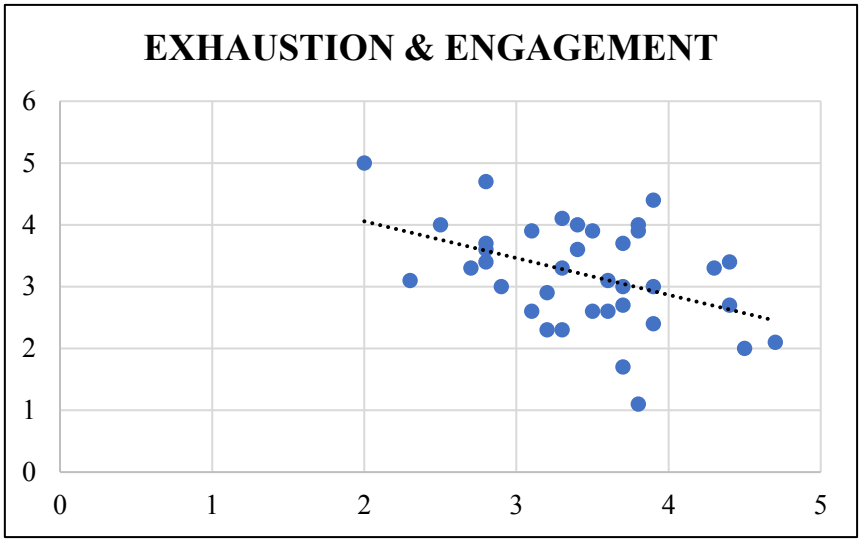

Figure 51: scatter chart showing the trend of exhaustion- and engagement-related data

As you can infer from the chart above, the overall trend of data is negative, which provides support to hypothesis 6. Apparently, the definition by Schaufeli and colleagues (2002) has a practical validation on data analysis. The more respondents felt exhausted during the pandemic, the less they were engaged with their work. It may be true that emergency remote teaching did not undermine lecturers' engagement while it fuelled their exhaustion, but apparently the effects of forced e-learning were not strong enough to change the negative relationship that you would normally expect to exist between these variables.

The relation between professional exhaustion and work engagement can be further investigated by confronting the patterns of data with reference to the cross-analysis on demographic information. Given that the constructs under inspection proved to be inversely proportional to each other, the related data should consequently show specular patterns. The table below reports again the average score of each demographic category in section E and C.

	Category	N participants	E	C
AGE	30-40	4	2.8	3.9
	41-50	11	3.6	3.4
	51-60	11	3.1	3.5
	> 60	10	3.1	3.2

SUBJECT	Language	10	3.5	3.4
	Linguistics	7	3.7	3.2
	Literature	13	2.9	3.4
	History	3	2.8	3.9
	Translation	2	2.9	4.1

EXPERIENCE	1-5	7	3.0	3.8
	6-10	3	3.3	3.8
	11-15	4	4.1	2.8
	16-20	2	3.4	3.7
	> 20	20	3.1	3.3
POSITION	CEL	5	3.7	3.4
	Researcher	9	3.1	3.4
	Full	9	3.5	3.3
	Adjunct	7	2.8	4.0
	Associate	7	3.0	3.1
N CLASSES	1	8	2.7	3.8
	2	13	3.1	3.6
	3	9	3.4	3.1
	> 3	7	3.7	3.2

Table 48: cross-analysis of section E and C of the questionnaire

As for age ranges, the first three groups are indeed characterized by specular patterns of data in relation to section E and C. Where the degree of engagement is the highest (3.9), that of exhaustion is the lowest (2.8). Then, the mean of section C decreases and increases with the second (i.e., 41-50) and the third category (i.e., 51-60) respectively, while section E shows the opposite pattern: the average score of the third group (3.1) is lower than that of the second one (3.6). However, the last group (i.e., > 60) has the same level of exhaustion than the third one, while the mean of section C decreases. This slight difference in the pattern may, however, be ascribed to the influence of the other demographic variables. As already said, a positive relationship could be established between age and burnout, so one may expect the oldest lecturers in the sample to be the most exhausted. However, great part of the respondents belonging to the last category (i.e., > 60) teach literature, and literature lecturers have a rather low mean in section E, namely 2.9. Crossing age- and subject-related information might thus provide an explanation for the unexpected pattern that characterizes section E.

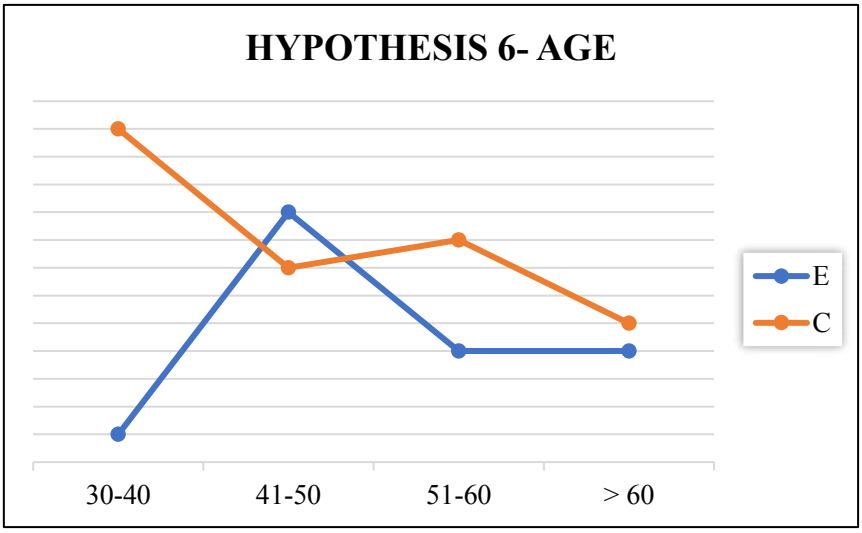

Figure 52: line chart showing the pattern of age-related data of section E and C

The cross-analysis on subject areas provides further support to hypothesis 6, since groups with high means in one section have low average scores in the other one and vice versa. Only language teaching shows a very slight difference (i.e., 0.1) in the means of section E and C. Again, linguistics lecturers appear to be the most penalized by forced e-learning, given that they were both the most exhausted and the least engaged with their work during the coronavirus outbreak. Those participants who deal with minor subjects such as history and translation studies were scarcely burned out and pretty engaged, instead. As for the main subject areas of the language department, literature was probably the least penalized by the introduction of emergency remote teaching.

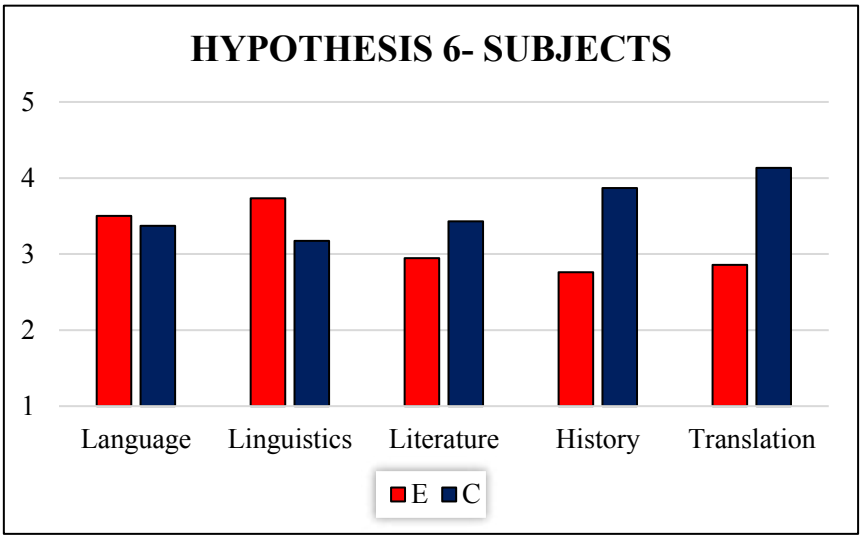

Figure 53: column chart reporting the mean of each subject area in section E and C

As for years of experience, the negative relation between professional exhaustion and work engagement is made particularly evident by the mean of those respondents whose experience ranges from 11 to 15 years, since they appear to be both the most exhausted and the least engaged. Again, the patterns of data are not perfectly specular. While the mean of section E increases with the second category (i.e., 6-10), that of section C remains stable. Besides, the average score decreases with the last group (i.e., > 20) in both sections, but the most experienced lecturers are expected to show higher levels of exhaustion. After all, the general trend of burnout- and experience-related data is positive, as already said. As for section C, the second category comprises many participants in the age range from 51 to 60 years and lecturers with two classes per semester, and these groups have rather high means within the related categorizations, namely 3.5 and 3.6 respectively. This datum might explain why the mean of the second group does not decrease as expected. Secondly, lecturers who gathered more than 20 years of experience show lower levels of exhaustion than expected probably because many of them teach literature, which appears to be one of the least penalized subject areas.

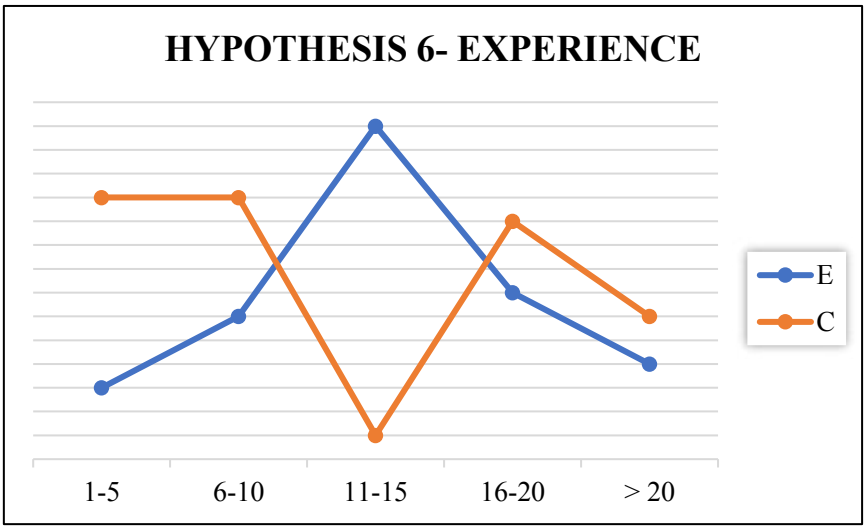

Figure 54: line chart showing the pattern of experience-related data of section E and C

The cross-analysis conducted on academic positions produced predictable results, since it provided further support to hypothesis 6. Only associate professors show a very slight difference in their mean, namely 0.1. Adjunct professors seem to be both the least exhausted and the most engaged despite having a less solid position if compared to other categories such as full professors, whose work engagement was significantly undermined by emergency remote teaching. Furthermore, one may expect a more solid position to imply more

responsibilities as well, and, as a consequence, lecturers in that position are more likely to feel exhausted.

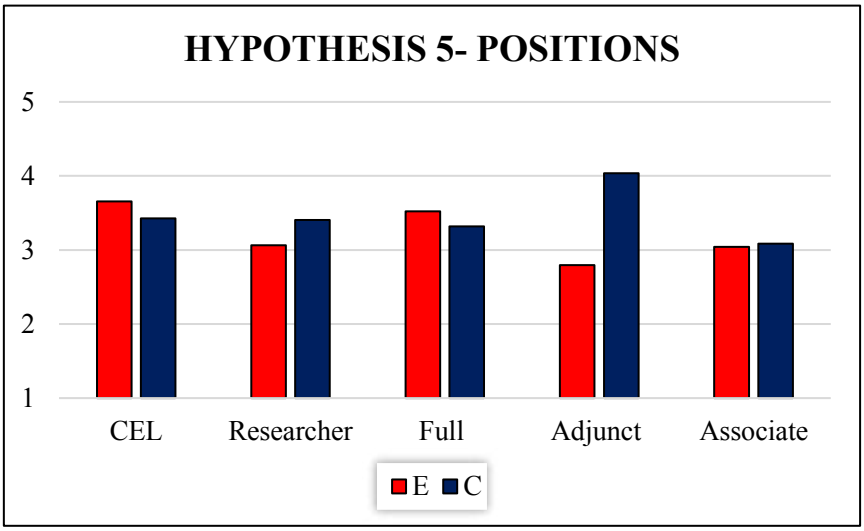

Figure 55: column chart reporting the mean of each academic position in section E and C

Last but not least, the cross-analysis on the number of classes per semester that respondents had during the pandemic highlights the negative relation between professional exhaustion and work engagement. The only dissonant datum can be found in section C, where the mean of those participants with more than three classes per semester is slightly higher than that of their colleagues who taught just three classes. As already said, this unexpected outcome may be influenced by the other demographic variables considered in the present study, though. More specifically, age and academic position provide relevant information, given that the third group (i.e., lecturers with three classes per semester) includes many respondents who are older than 60 and many full professors, and these categories have low average scores within the related categorizations (3.2 and 3.3 respectively). Generally speaking, data on quantitative categories and on professional exhaustion appear to be positively related, but this positive relationship is particularly evident when you classify the sample on the basis of how many classes per semester they taught during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the related data are clearly characterized by the most linear and increasing trend of all, as shown by the line chart below.

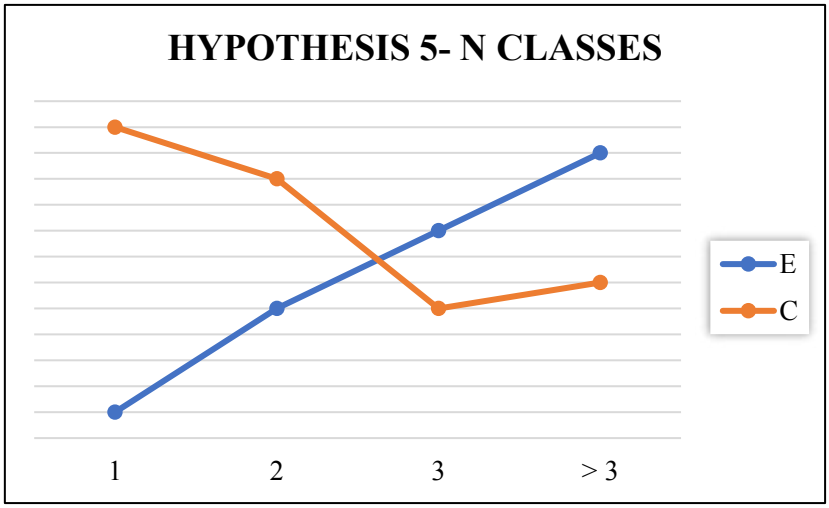

Figure 56: line chart showing the pattern of data on the number of classes per semester lecturers had and with reference to section E and C

4.3 Other Factors: Attitudes and Management Decisions

Hypothesis 4 focuses on attitude towards e-learning in general terms, and data analysis showed that emergency remote teaching affected lecturers' opinion on online education negatively. The influence of attitude towards e-learning on dependent variables as presented by hypothesis 7 will be discussed in the present sub-chapter, instead. As already said, hypothesis 7 is quite complex, given that it focuses on an independent variable that may have opposite connotations, one positive and one negative. It is consequently expected to affect dependent variables differently, on the basis of its connotation. On the other hand, hypothesis 8 focuses on a construct that has a positive meaning, namely satisfaction from management, and it considers the same dependent variables as hypothesis 7. In order to prove the validity of both hypotheses, data gathered in section F will be analysed and commented. The last section of the questionnaire includes also some general questions on lecturers' experiences during the pandemic, which will be discussed in a separate part of the present sub-chapter.

4.3.1 Attitude towards E-Learning: When Scenarios Do Not Unfold

Hypothesis 7asserts that a positive attitude towards e-learning has a positive impact on motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction, whereas a negative

relationship can be established between the construct under inspection and professional exhaustion. It is the other way round in case of a negative attitude towards e-learning. One might, however, wonder what you mean by positive and negative attitude in concrete, numeric terms. In other words, how can you define respondents' approach on the basis of figures? Actually, the general assessment that respondents were asked to make of their attitude towards remote education was deemed insufficient to properly classify the sample in this respect; one needs a more objective criterion. For the purposes of the present study, the percentage of the total was calculated over participants' individual scores, and 50 % was taken as the watershed between lecturers with a positive attitude towards e-learning (i.e., those who exceed 50 %) and lecturers with a negative opinion on remote education (i.e., those who do not exceed 50 %). The majority of participants (19/37; 51.4 %) got a score that is lower than 50 % of the maximum score. 15 respondents out of 37 (40.5 %) exceeded 50 %, instead. 3 lecturers (8.1 %) earned 27 points, which correspond to half of the maximum score and, therefore, could imply a neutral attitude towards e-learning. Participants who got 50 % of the maximum score were consequently excluded from the analysis, since their approach appear to be balanced. The table below summarizes the results of this categorization.

Positive attitude	15	40.5 %
Negative attitude	19	51.4 %
Neutral attitude	3	8.1 %

Table 49: number of participants per attitude and percentage of the total (37) with reference to individual scores

Apparently, the categorization based on individual scores is different from the general evaluation of lecturers' attitude towards e-learning during the pandemic. As it was done to test hypothesis 5 and 6, scatter charts were used to compare the mean that every respondent got in all sections. Of course, this comparison was drawn with reference to the above-mentioned categorization of the sample. The table below reports the average scores of participants with a positive attitude towards e-learning. It comprises all sections, but the analysis was conducted on single dependent variables.

		F	B	C	D	E
POSITIVE ATTITUDE	N2	3.7	2.7	2.0	1.5	5.0
	N6	3.3	3.9	3.6	3.7	2.6
	N8	3.6	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.0
	N10	3.2	4.3	4.5	4.4	2.0

	N12	3.1	3.7	3.3	3.6	2.3
	N13	3.1	3.5	2.9	2.1	3.0
	N15	3.4	4.0	3.9	2.7	4.4
	N18	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.1	3.7
	N21	3.4	3.7	2.5	2.8	4.0
	N22	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.8	2.4
	N29	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.9	2.7
	N32	3.2	3.6	3.8	4.2	1.1
	N34	3.1	3.7	3.3	2.7	4.1
	N36	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.8	1.7
	N37	4.1	3.9	3.5	3.3	3.9

Table 50: mean of participants with a positive attitude towards e-learning

As for motivating job potential, hypothesis 7 establishes a positive relation with positive attitude towards e-learning. In other words, a high opinion of online education is assumed to foster lecturers' motivation in an emergency remote teaching situation. However, the scatter chart below has a trendline that is almost flat, which might mean that the relationship between the variables under inspection is either weak or inexistent.

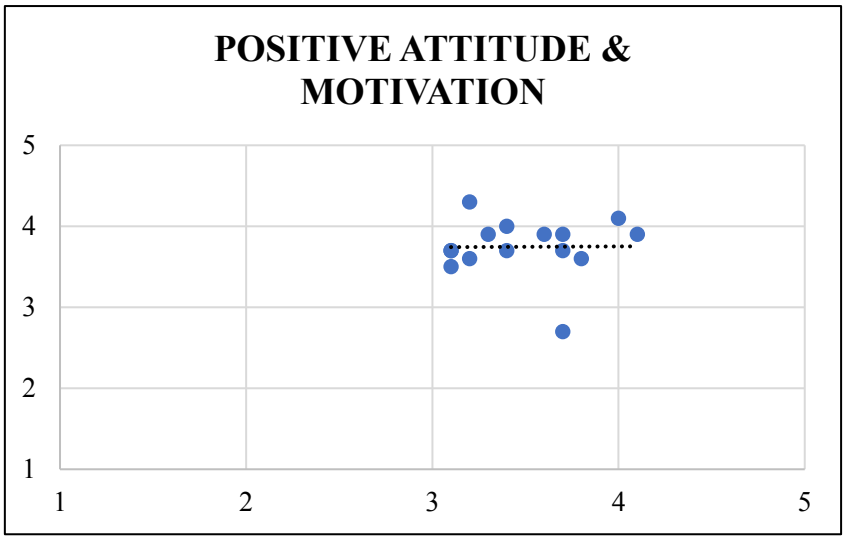

Figure 57: scatter chart showing the trend of data on positive attitude towards e-learning and motivating job potential

Similar results were found as far as work engagement and job satisfaction are concerned: the trendline is slightly ascendant in both cases, which does not seem enough to support hypothesis 7, though.

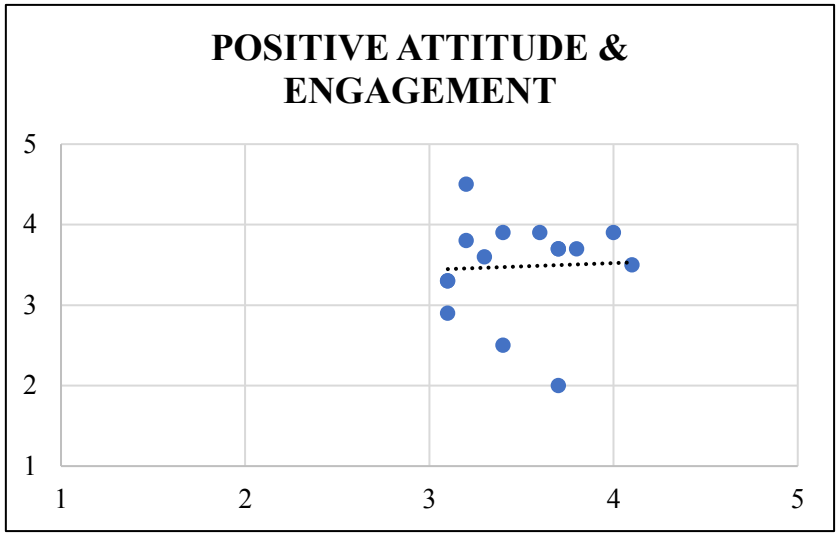

Figure 58: scatter chart showing the trend of data on positive attitude towards e-learning and work engagement

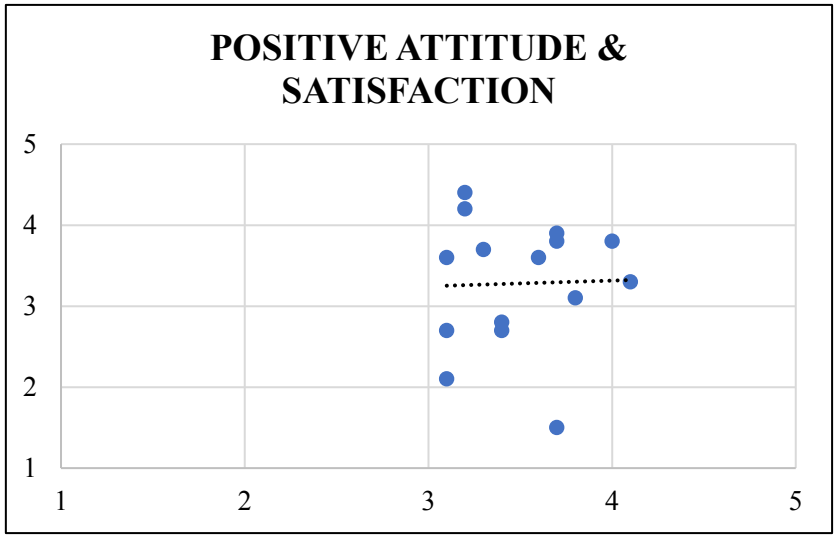

Figure 59: scatter chart showing the trend of data on positive attitude towards e-learning and job satisfaction

On the other hand, data on professional exhaustion seem to provide evidence of the fact that positive attitude towards e-learning and burnout are directly proportional to each other. However, hypothesis 7 says otherwise, which means that research results do question its validity.

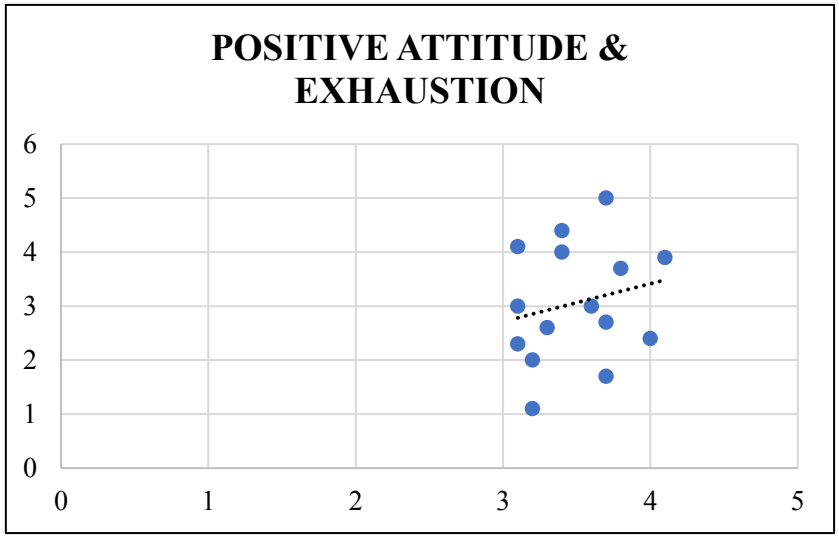

Figure 60: scatter chart showing the trend of data on positive attitude towards e-learning and professional exhaustion

Similarly, the analysis on negative attitude towards e-learning produced unexpected outcomes. The table below reports the mean of participants in section F, B, C, D, and E of the questionnaire.

		F	B	C	D	E
NEGATIVE ATTITUDE	N1	2.9	4.0	4.4	3.8	2.7
	N3	2.0	3.2	2.8	2.8	3.6
	N4	2.9	3.6	3.8	2.5	4.0
	N5	2.8	4.0	4.3	3.4	3.3
	N7	2.3	3.2	3.8	2.1	3.9
	N9	2.0	3.6	3.4	2.5	4.0
	N11	2.9	3.6	3.7	2.8	3.0
	N14	2.1	3.7	3.3	3.5	3.3
	N16	2.9	3.7	3.6	3.2	3.1
	N17	2.4	3.7	3.1	3.3	2.6
	N19	2.3	4.1	4.4	4.1	3.4
	N20	2.6	3.9	3.1	2.6	3.9
	N24	2.6	3.9	3.4	2.8	3.6
	N25	2.4	3.4	3.2	2.9	2.9
	N26	2.3	2.8	2.8	1.7	4.7
	N28	2.8	2.5	3.5	2.0	2.6
	N31	2.1	3.0	2.3	2.2	3.1
	N33	2.6	3.4	2.8	2.6	3.4
	N35	2.4	3.0	2.8	2.3	3.7

Table 51: mean of participants with a negative attitude towards e-learning

Having a negative opionion on online education was assumed to undermine lecturers' motivation, engagement, and satisfaction at work, yet the related data show opposite patterns. Unlike what hypothesis 7 asserts, negative attitude towards e-learning appears to be positively related to the dependent variables under inspection, as the scatter charts below clearly show.

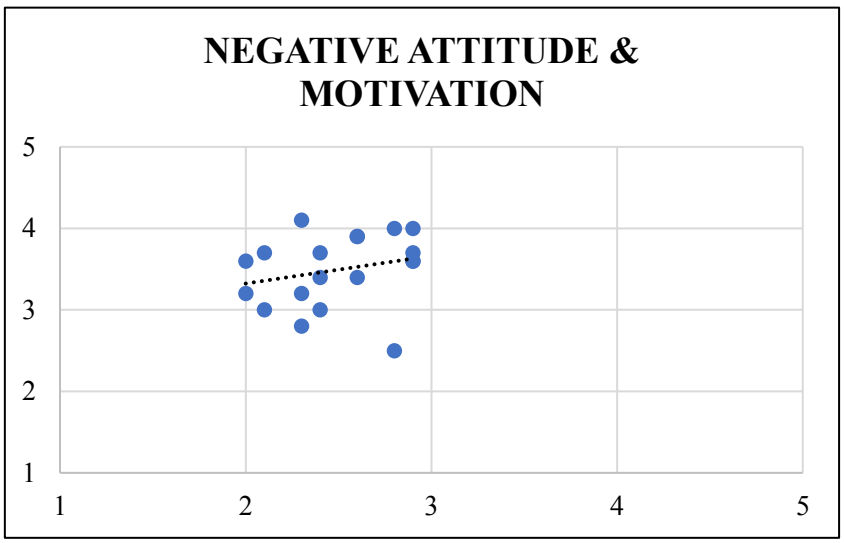

Figure 61: scatter chart showing the trend of data on negative attitude towards e-learning and motivating job potential

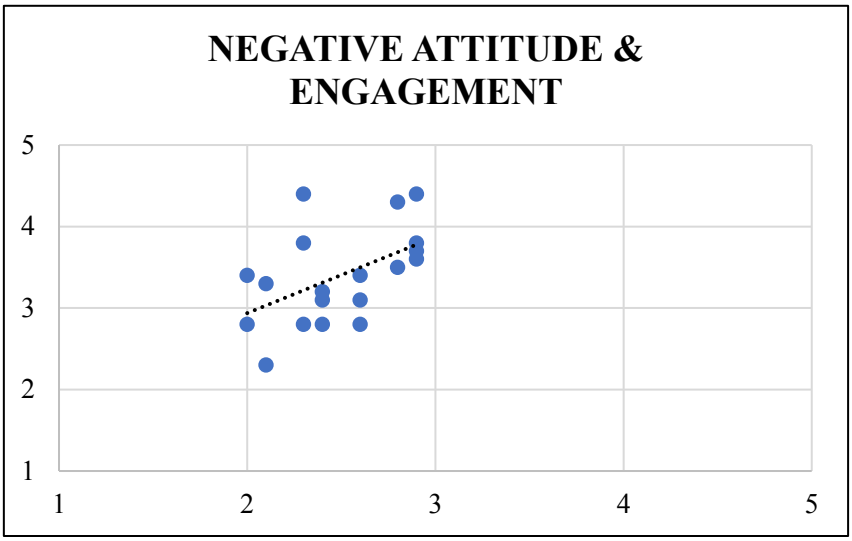

Figure 62: scatter chart showing the trend of data on negative attitude towards e-learning and work engagement

Figure 63: scatter chart showing the trend of data on negative attitude towards e-learning and job satisfaction

Conversely, negative attitude towards e-learning and exhaustion seem to be inversely proportional to each other: the more negative lecturers' approach was, the less they felt burned out during the coronavirus outbreak. Again, research results do not provide support to hypothesis 7.

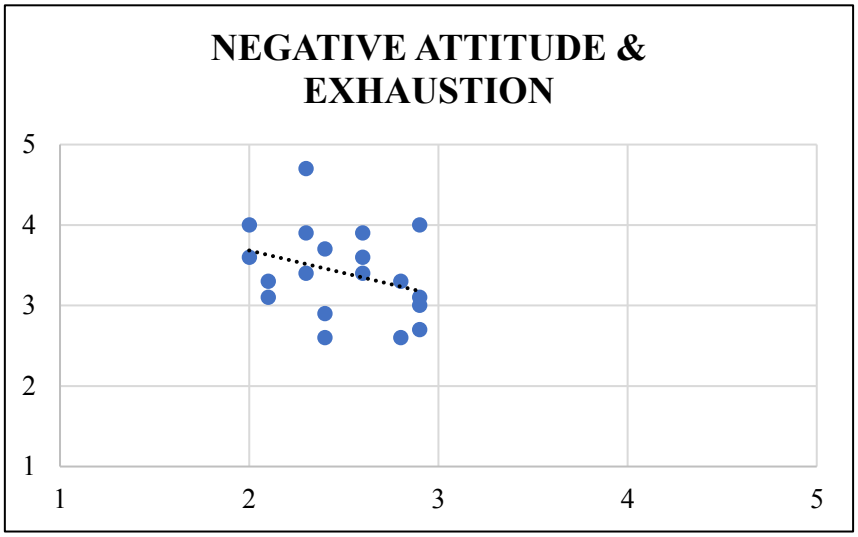

Figure 64: scatter chart showing the trend of data on negative attitude towards e-learning and professional exhaustion

The fact that the trend of data on motivation, engagement, and satisfaction is more or less positive no matter the approach of participants might imply that the latter has no real impact on the former, at least as far as the sample of the present study is concerned. Alternatively, the distinction between positive and negative attitude may be useless in this case. Actually, also

Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) could not prove the influence of attitude towards e-learning on other constructs, even though they aimed to find evidence of its moderating role, and so they did not consider it as an independent variable. Quite unexpectedly instead, the scenarios described by hypothesis 7 did not occur as predicted, but the reverse may be true: apparently, a positive approach is accompanied by higher levels of burnout, and a negative approach ensures lower levels of exhaustion in an emergency remote teaching situation. In short, data analysis did not support hypothesis 7.

4.3.2 Lecturers and University Management: A Satisfied Sample

The last assumption to test is hypothesis 8, which establishes a positive relationship between satisfaction from management and motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction. Besides, it asserts that the independent variable under inspection is negatively related to professional exhaustion. First of all, data on the questions of section F devoted to satisfaction from management will be reported and commented. The possible influence of demographic information will be discussed as well. Then, such data will be compared to those gathered in the other sections through a cross-analysis, as it was done to test hypothesis 5, 6, and 7.

Unlike the other constructs, satisfaction from management refers only to the period of time under inspection, so participants were not asked to compare their satisfaction after the introduction of emergency remote teaching to that of the pre-covid situation. The table below reports data on the Likert-scaled items that focus on this construct.

Item	Topic	Mean	Mode
F11	Continuity of education	3.6	4
F12	Information	3.2	4
F13	Commitment	3.3	4
F14	Support	3.3	4
F15	Updated information	3.4	4
F16	Overall assessment of lecturers' satisfaction	3.4	4

Table 52: mean and mode of the Likert-scaled items of section F (management)

Clearly, the most frequent score is 4, while the overall mean of section F (management) is 3.4. One may, therefore, infer that the sampled lecturers were on the whole satisfied with university management during the pandemic.

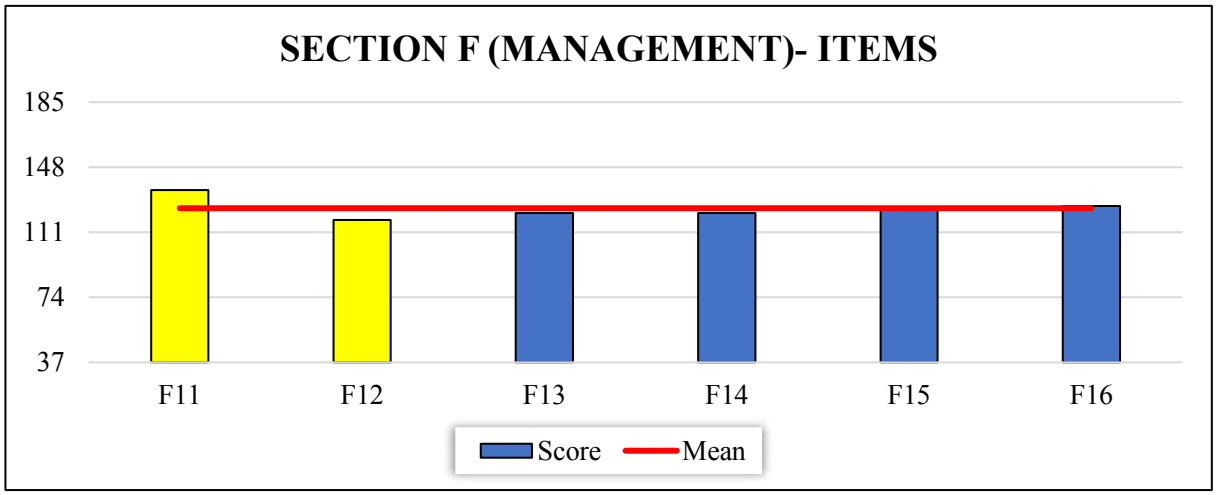

Figure 65: column chart reporting the scores of each Likert-scaled item and the mean (124.7). In yellow, the highest (135/185; 66.2 %) and the lowest score (118/185; 54.7 %) of section F (management)

As it was done in the previous sections of the questionnaire, responses were divided into three categories, namely positive, negative, and neutral. The table and pie chart below report the results of this categorization.

Positive	127	57.2 %
Negative	48	21.6 %
Neutral	47	21.2 %

Table 53: types of answer to section F's items (management) and percentage of the total (222)

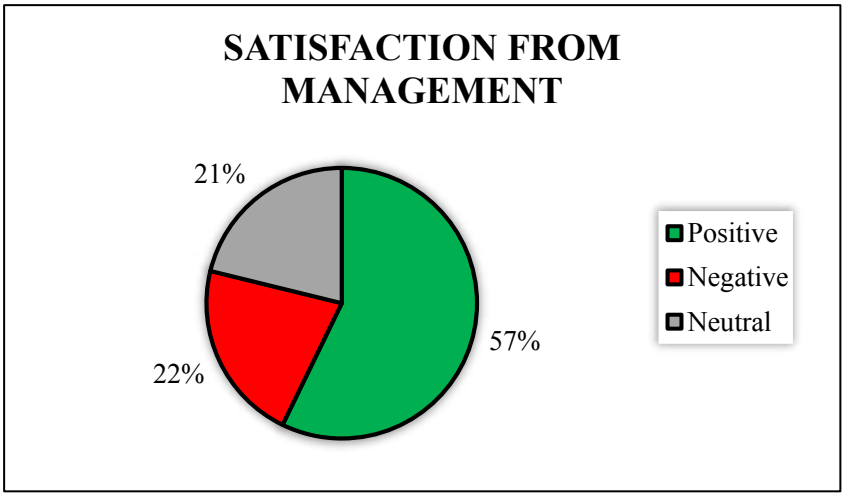

Figure 66: pie chart reporting the percentage of answers per category with reference to section F (management)

Clearly, the majority of answers (127/222; 57.2 %) are positive. This datum is in line with the high mode and mean of the items that focus on satisfaction from management.
Similarly to all the other constructs examined so far, research results on the variable under inspection may be influenced by demographic information. The mean was calculated over the points that each demographic group earned in the part of section F devoted to satisfaction from management. The table below reports the results of these calculations. Again, only categories that comprise at least two participants were taken into account for the analysis.

	Category	N participants	F
AGE	30-40	4	3.3
	41-50	11	3.3
	51-60	11	3.3
	> 60	10	3.5
SUBJECT	Language	10	3.1
	Linguistics	7	3.0
	Literature	13	3.6
	History	3	2.8
	Translation	2	3.9
EXPERIENCE	1-5	7	3.6
	6-10	3	3.7
	11-15	4	2.5
	16-20	2	3.3
	> 20	20	3.4
POSITION	CEL	5	2.7
	Researcher	9	3.3
	Full	9	2.9
	Adjunct	7	4.1
	Associate	7	3.8
N CLASSES	1	8	3.9
	2	13	3.8
	3	9	2.9
	> 3	7	2.6

Table 54: cross-analysis of section A and F (management) of the questionnaire

Age-related data appear to be quite homogeneous, in the sense that the first three categories have the same average score (i.e., 3.3), while the oldest lecturers within the sample seem to be

the most satisfied with university management, with a mean of 3.5. As a consequence, the overall trend of age-related data is positive, as the line chart below clearly shows.

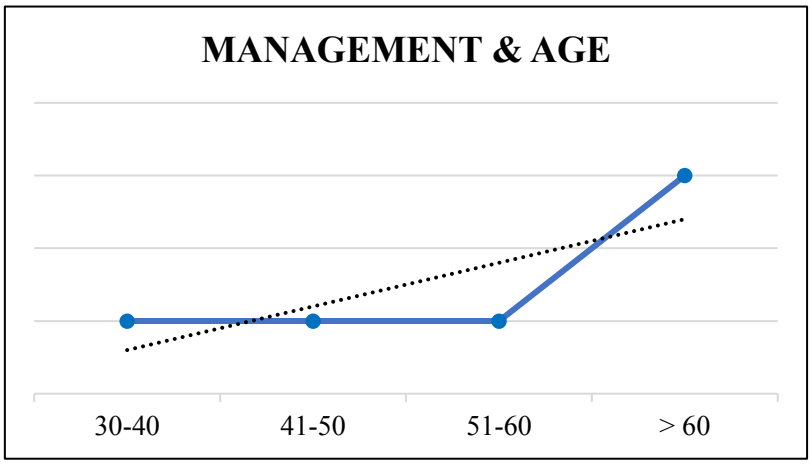

Figure 67: line chart showing the trend of data on age and satisfaction from management

As for subject areas, the group with the highest mean (i.e., 3.9) deals with translation studies, whereas history lecturers were the least satisfied during the pandemic, with an average score of 2.8. As for the main subjects of the language department, language teaching and linguistics have rather low means (3.1 and 3.0 respectively), while literature lecturers appear to be pretty happy with management decisions, with a mean of 3.6.

Experience-related data show again a rather irregular pattern: the mean reaches the peak (i.e., 3.7) with those participants whose experience ranges from 6 to 10 years, then it plummets with the following group (i.e., 11-15), and eventually increases again with the last two categories. The third group is clearly characterized by a drastic mean decrease that may be explained by comparing the related category to the previous one (i.e., 6-10) in relation to the other demographic variables. The mean decrease could be influenced by lecturers' subject area. Half of the third group teaches linguistics, which appears to be a rather penalized category, while the majority of respondents in the second group deal with subjects that have high means such as literature and translation studies. Resorting to position-related data and number of classes per semester provided relevant information as well, since the majority of participants in the third category are full professors and had at least three classes per semester during the pandemic, and these groups appear to be scarcely satisfied. On the other hand, the second group comprises mainly associate professors and lecturers with two classes per semester, which have lower means than the above-mentioned categories. The overall trend of data is negative.

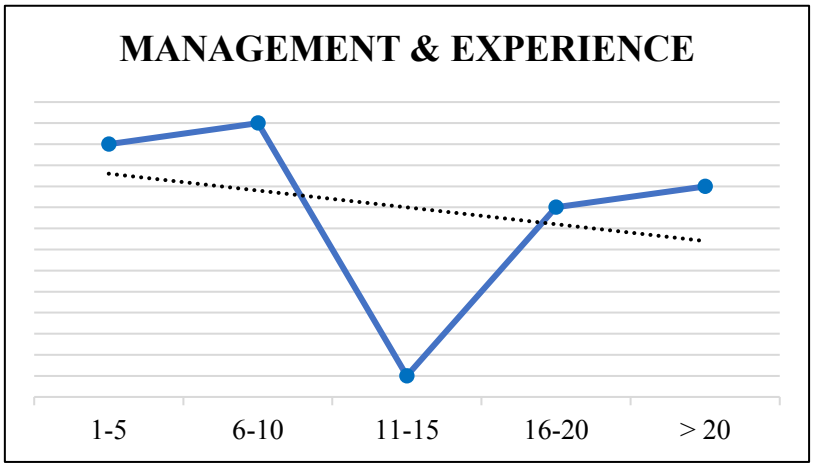

Figure 68: line chart showing the trend of data on years of experience and satisfaction from management

As for academic positions, the cross-analysis produced results that are on the whole in line with what was found in the other sections of the questionnaire: full professors- who have a solid position- were scarcely satisfied, with an average score of 2.9, while adjunct professors- who have a less solid position than full professors- were the most satisfied, with a mean of 4.1. As for CELs, they were the least satisfied with Ca' Foscari's management, with a mean of 2.7. This datum is not surprising though, considering that language teaching has a rather low average score as well, namely 3.1.

Last but not least, the number of classes that lecturers taught during the pandemic seems to be a highly influential variable, since it is characterized by a very linear pattern of data. Apparently, number of classes and degree of satisfaction are inversely proportional to each other: the higher the number of classes that respondents had, the less they were satisfied with how university managers tackled the emergency. The negative trend of data is visually represented by the line chart below.

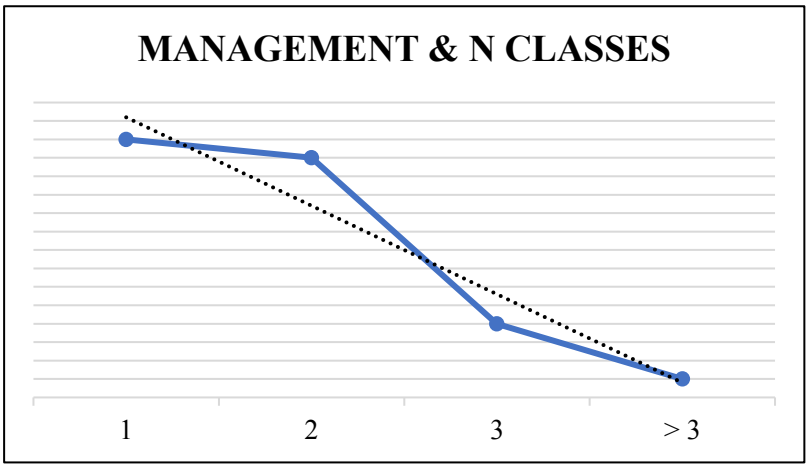

Figure 69: line chart showing the trend of data on number of classes per semester and satisfaction from management

So far, a negative trend of data surfaced from the analysis of quantitative variables (i.e., age, years of experience, number of classes per semester) with reference to positively connoted constructs, but satisfaction from management seems to represent an exception as far as age ranges are concerned, given that the most satisfied group comprises the oldest lecturers within the sample. As for qualitative variables (i.e., subject area, academic position), the cross-analysis produced results that are more or less predictable. Among the major subjects of the language department, linguistics appears to be the most penalized by the emergency situation, while literature lecturers were pretty satisfied during the pandemic. On the other hand, the impact of emergency remote teaching on translation studies does not seem that negative. The analysis on academic positions highlighted a huge difference in the covid-related experiences of full and adjunct professors as in the previous sections of the questionnaire. Generally speaking, emergency remote teaching may have had a particularly negative impact on those participants with a higher position, namely full professors.

That said, the test of hypothesis 8 was based on the comparison of means and on scatter charts just like that of hypothesis 5, 6, and 7. The table below reports the average score of each respondent in each section of the questionnaire. The analysis was conducted construct by construct, though.

	F	B	C	D	E
N1	4.3	4.0	4.4	3.8	2.7
N2	1.0	2.7	2.0	1.5	5.0
N3	4.2	3.2	2.8	2.8	3.6
N4	3.3	3.6	3.8	2.5	4.0
N5	3.8	4.0	4.3	3.4	3.3
N6	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.7	2.6
N7	4.0	3.2	3.8	2.1	3.9
N8	3.5	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.0
N9	2.8	3.6	3.4	2.5	4.0
N10	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.4	2.0
N11	3.7	3.6	3.7	2.8	3.0
N12	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.6	2.3
N13	2.2	3.5	2.9	2.1	3.0
N14	4.3	3.7	3.3	3.5	3.3
N15	2.0	4.0	3.9	2.7	4.4
N16	3.5	3.7	3.6	3.2	3.1
N17	3.5	3.7	3.1	3.3	2.6
N18	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.1	3.7
N19	3.5	4.1	4.4	4.1	3.4

N20	2.8	3.9	3.1	2.6	3.9
N21	1.7	3.7	2.5	2.8	4.0
N22	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.8	2.4
N23	4.0	3.7	3.2	3.2	2.3
N24	3.8	3.9	3.4	2.8	3.6
N25	4.0	3.4	3.2	2.9	2.9
N26	2.0	2.8	2.8	1.7	4.7
N27	3.7	3.0	2.7	3.0	3.3
N28	2.3	2.5	3.5	2.0	2.6
N29	3.3	3.7	3.7	3.9	2.7
N30	2.2	3.8	4.7	4.4	2.1
N31	3.7	3.0	2.3	2.2	3.1
N32	3.2	3.6	3.8	4.2	1.1
N33	3.2	3.4	2.8	2.6	3.4
N34	3.0	3.7	3.3	2.7	4.1
N35	3.7	3.0	2.8	2.3	3.7
N36	4.8	3.9	3.7	3.8	1.7
N37	3.8	3.9	3.5	3.3	3.9

Table 55: means of participants in section F (management), B, C, D, and E

As already said, hypothesis 8 establishes a positive relation between satisfaction from management and motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction. The validity of this assumption was indeed proved by data analysis, as the scatter charts below clearly show.

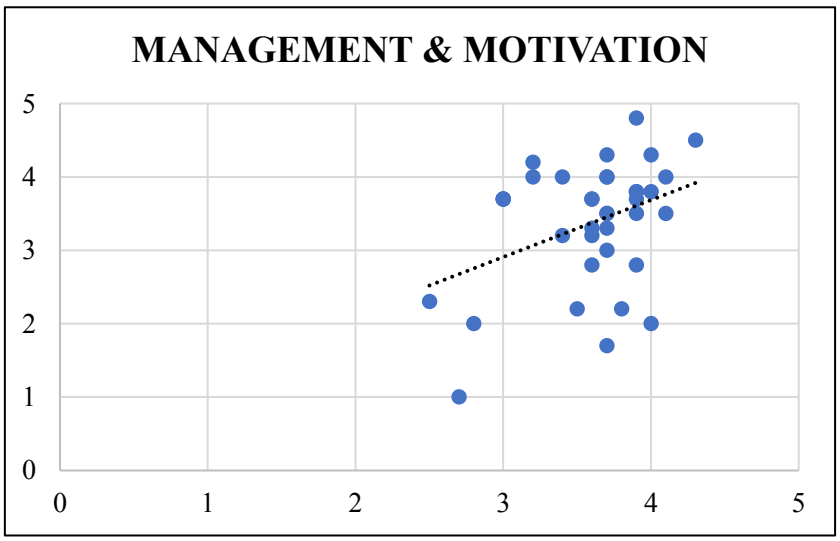

Figure 70: scatter chart showing the trend of data on satisfaction from management and motivating job potential

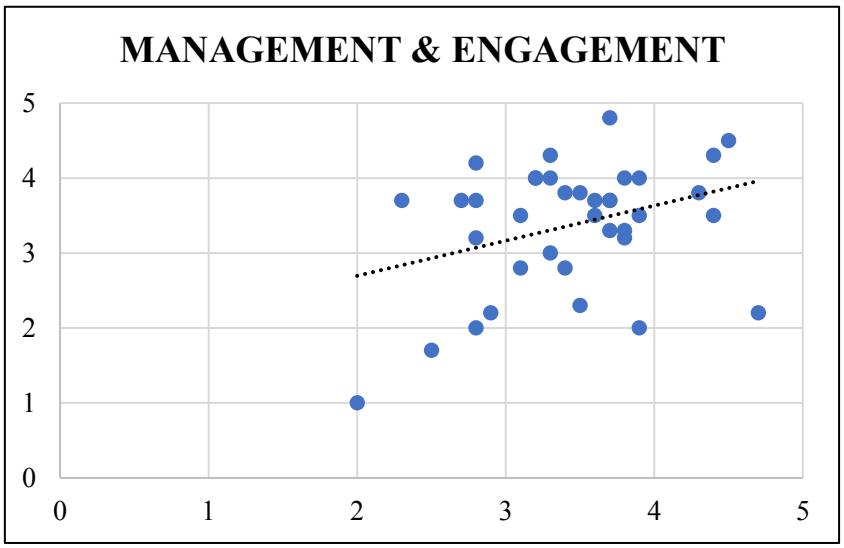

Figure 71: scatter chart showing the trend of data on satisfaction from management and work engagement

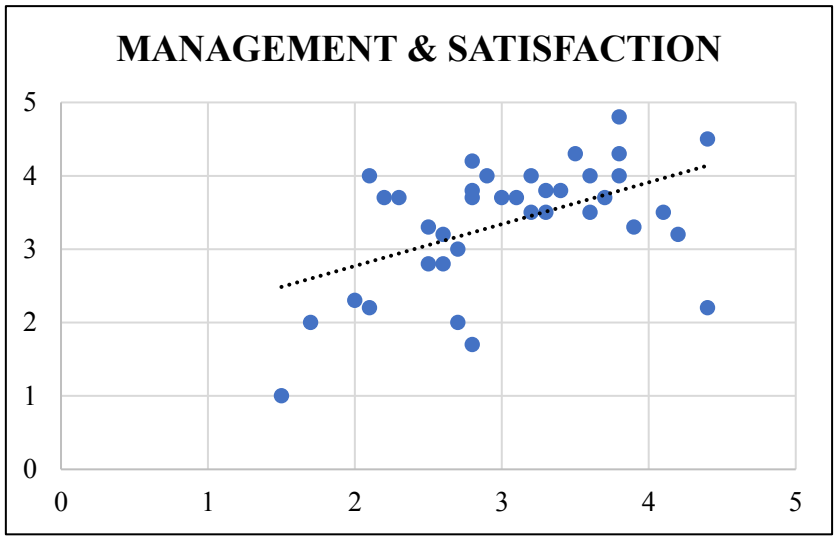

Figure 72: scatter chart showing the trend of data on satisfaction from management and job satisfaction

Moreover, satisfaction from management and professional exhaustion are assumed to be inversely proportional to each other: the more lecturers were satisfied with management decisions, the less they felt exhausted during the pandemic. Indeed, the scatter chart below clearly highlights the negative relation between the variables under inspection. On the whole, data analysis proved the validity of hypothesis 8.

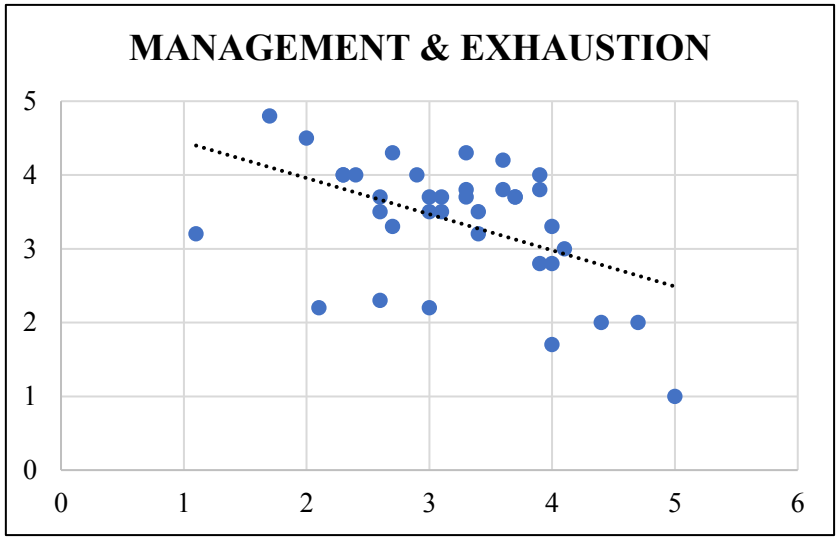

Figure 73: scatter chart showing the trend of data on satisfaction from management and professional exhaustion

Comparing the patterns of data with reference to demographic information could produce interesting results on the influence that other variables may have on research outcomes. The table below reports again the mean of each demographic category in section F (management), B, C, D, and E. Only groups with at least two participants were considered for the analysis.

	Category	N participants	F	B	C	D	E
AGE	30-40	4	3.3	3.7	3.9	3.8	2.8
	41-50	11	3.3	3.6	3.4	2.9	3.6
	51-60	11	3.3	3.6	3.5	3.0	3.1
	> 60	10	3.5	3.5	3.2	2.9	3.1
SUBJECT	Language	10	3.1	3.6	3.4	2.8	3.5
	Linguistics	7	3.0	3.5	3.2	2.8	3.7
	Literature	13	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.2	2.9
	History	3	2.8	3.4	3.9	3.1	2.8
	Translation	2	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.8	2.9
EXPERIENCE	1-5	7	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.0
	6-10	3	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.3	3.3
	11-15	4	2.5	3.3	2.8	2.3	4.1
	16-20	2	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.2	3.4
	> 20	20	3.4	3.5	3.3	2.9	3.1
POSITION	CEL	5	2.7	3.7	3.4	2.5	3.7
	Researcher	9	3.3	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.1

	Full	9	2.9	3.3	3.3	2.6	3.5
	Adjunct	7	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.7	2.8
	Associate	7	3.8	3.5	3.1	3.0	3.0

N CLASSES	1	8	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.7	2.7
	2	13	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.3	3.1
	3	9	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.6	3.4
	> 3	7	2.6	3.6	3.2	2.5	3.7

Table 56: cross-analysis of section F (management), B, C, D, and E of the questionnaire

As for age, making considerations is difficult, because the majority of participants have the same average score in section F, namely 3.3. One may, however, focus on the general trend of data. As already said, the analysis of quantitative variables highlighted an overall negative relationship between constructs and demographic information, but satisfaction from management and professional exhaustion are exceptions. The latter shows quite predictably an opposite pattern of data if compared to motivation, engagement, and satisfaction at work, given that it has a negative meaning, while the other constructs are positively connoted. Research results on the former are surprising instead, but again respondents' belonging to other demographic categories could influence such unexpected outcomes.

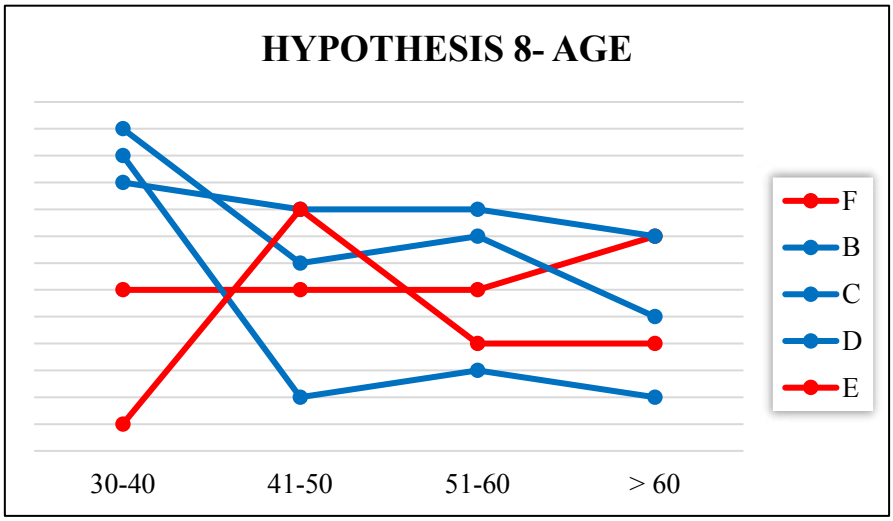

Figure 74: line chart showing the pattern of data of section F (management), B, C, D, and E. In red, the constructs with a positive trend; in blue, the variables with a negative trend

As for subject areas, the confrontation of means revealed that the least penalized subject was quite interestingly a minor one, namely translation studies. Actually, those lecturers who teach this subject appear to be the most motivated, engaged, and satisfied with their work and

with management decisions. On the other hand, the have a rather low mean in section E (i.e., 2.9), which means that they felt scarcely exhausted during the pandemic, especially if compared to their colleagues who teach foreign languages and linguistics. This fact provides further support to hypothesis 8. As for the major subject areas of Ca' Foscari's language department, working in an emergency situation had a particularly negative impact on linguistics lecturers, who appear to be scarcely motivated and satisfied with management in the period of time under inspection. In addition, they were the least engaged and happy with their work during the pandemic, and they even showed the highest degree of exhaustion. These data are evidence of the opposite patterns that should characterize positively and negatively connoted constructs, as assumed by hypothesis 8. On the other hand, the literature group seems to be the least penalized among the main subject areas of the language department.

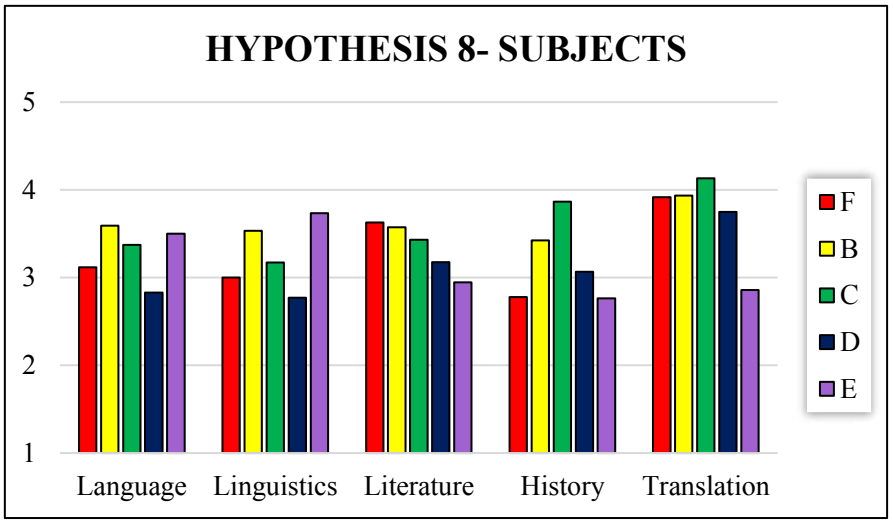

Figure 75: column chart reporting the mean of each subject area in section F (management), B, C, D, and E

As for years of experience, all constructs show a negative trend of data but professional exhaustion. This datum is not surprising, because that is precisely the scenario predicted by hypothesis 8. After all, burnout has clearly a negative meaning unlike the other variables, and data analysis proved that it can be considered as the antonym for work engagement both at the theoretical and operational levels. If you compare the patterns of data of the questionnaire sections, you will immediately notice the drastic mean decrease that characterizes the third group (i.e., 11-15) in section F (management), B, C, and D and the mean increase in section

E. In any case, the participants who belong to the third category have either the lowest or the highest average score.

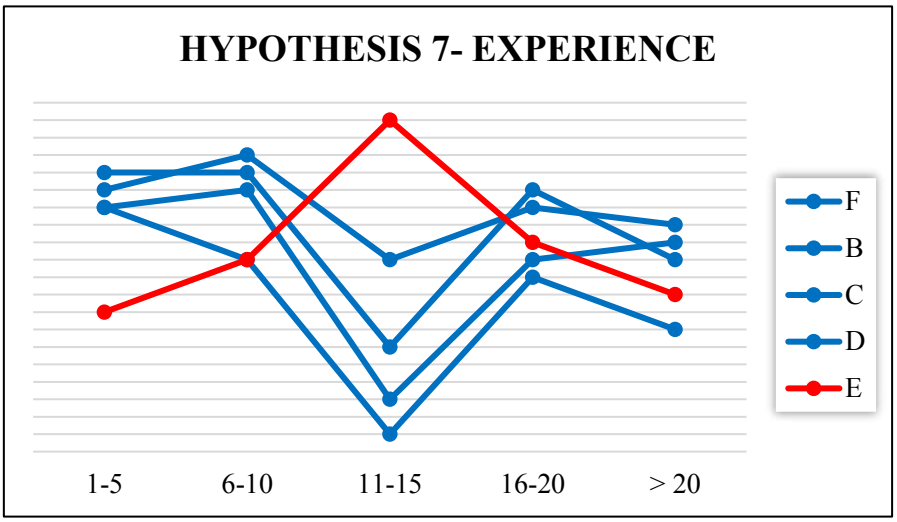

Figure 76: line chart showing the pattern of data of section F (management), B, C, D, and E. In red, the constructs with a positive trend; in blue, the variables with a negative trend

As for academic positions, data analysis revealed a gap between full and adjunct professors. Even though the former have a more solid position than the latter, they seem to be more penalized by the emergency. The related patterns of data could be defined as specular: when the former have a low mean, the latter have a high average score, and vice versa. The column chart below represents respondents' means visually and makes the gap between full and adjunct professors more evident.

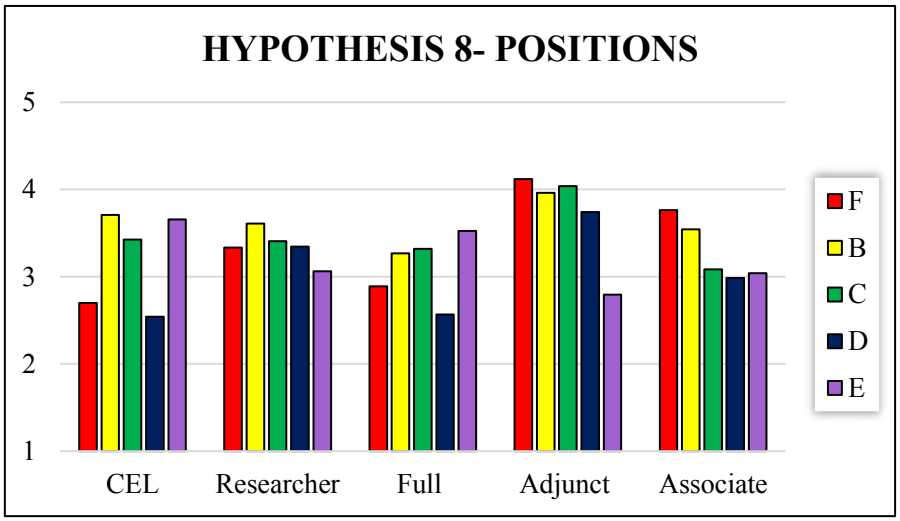

Figure 77: column chart reporting the mean of each academic position in section F (management), B, C, D, and E

Last but not least, the cross-analysis on number of classes per semester provided further support to hypothesis 8, given that all sections show a negative trend of data but section E, which focuses on professional exhaustion. Generally speaking, the number of classes per semester that lecturers taught during the pandemic seems to have a certain influence on research results. Actually, the related data show more linear patterns if compared to those of the other demographic variables considered in the present study. Being a quantitative category, number of classes should be characterized by a negative trend of data in section F just like in the other sections of the questionnaire, and so it is. Professional exhaustion represents an exception, but, as already said, this scenario was predicted by hypothesis 8. Actually, the only unexpected outcome was the positive trend of data on age and satisfaction from management.

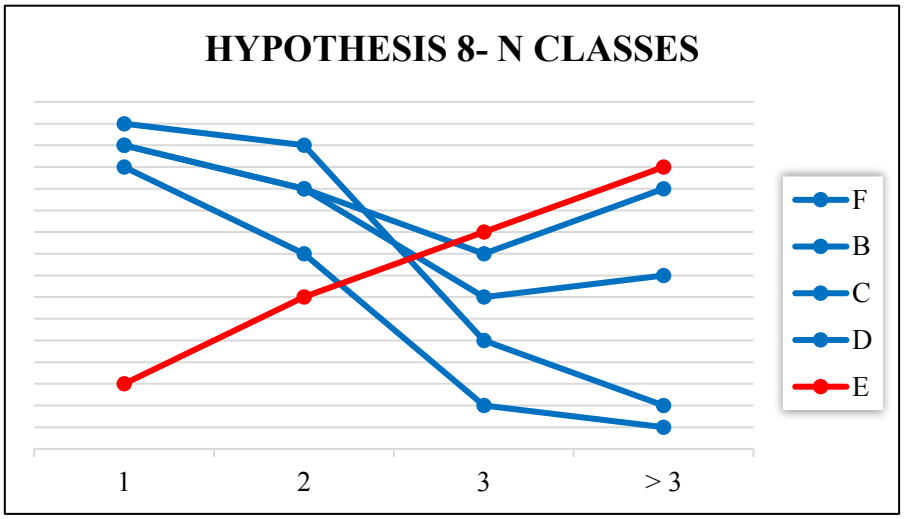

Figure 78: line chart showing the pattern of data of section F (management), B, C, D, and E. In red, the constructs with a positive trend; in blue, the variables with a negative trend

4.3.3 Lecturers' Experiences in a Nutshell

As already said, section F comprises also some general questions about lecturers' emergency remote teaching experiences. The related answers will be analysed in the last part of the present chapter. First of all, respondents were asked to tick which negative factors could affect their performance in an emergency remote teaching situation.

F18. In your opinion, what may have a negative impact on your performance in an emergency remote teaching situation?

- ☐ Bad internet connection
- ☐ Difficulties in managing dual-mode classes
- ☐ High number of classes to teach
- ☐ Limited time to design curricula
- ☐ Little familiarity with online platforms (e.g., Google Meet, Zoom)
- ☐ Little support/feedback from your organization, students, and colleagues
- ☐ Students' counterproductive behaviour (e.g., disrespect, distraction, non-attendance)
- ☐ Other

The table and column chart below report the number of responses per option.

Connection	23
Dual mode	20
N classes	10
Time	13
Familiarity	10
Support	10
Behaviour	19
Other	6

Table 57: answers to item F18

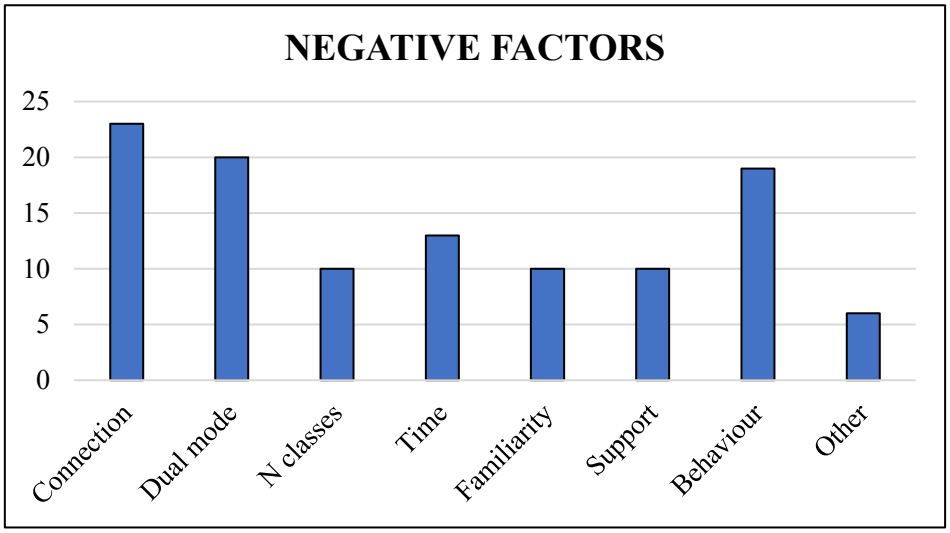

Figure 79: column chart reporting the number of answers per option with reference to item F18

Clearly, bad internet connection and difficulties in managing dual-mode classes are seen as obstacles by many lecturers. Interestingly enough, few respondents ticked the option “little support/feedback from your organization, students, and colleagues”, even though the analysis of item E9- which focuses on job resources- emphasized that feedback and support are given importance by great part of the sample. Probably, they are considered as important job resources, whose absence does not affect lecturers’ performance too negatively, though. Similarly, the majority of participants did not choose the option “high number of classes to teach”, but data analysis proved the influence of this variable on research results. As already said, all constructs but professional exhaustion are characterized by a negative trend of data in relation to the number of classes that respondents taught during the coronavirus outbreak. Furthermore, participants were given the possibility to indicate other factors that could have a negative impact on their performance in an emergency remote teaching situation. Some of them lamented a lack of feedback from the audience due to the fact that many students did not want to turn their webcam on, thus being invisible to lecturers. For instance, participant number 11 stated that negative factors were

> students' unwillingness/difficulty in speaking in class, their unwillingness to turn on the webcam. Some students left the lesson when I divided them into breakout rooms.

Generally speaking, such considerations may be included in the category of students’ counterproductive behaviour, which is one of the major negative factors indicated by respondents. Participant number 26 highlighted the necessity of training for remote teaching and the fact that online classes are not simply the replacement of face-to-face courses during an emergency.

> Learning at distance and even blended teaching are entirely different categories of teaching, for which one should receive adequate education, which should be targeted at very specific aims and for a very specific audience. It's not a simple replacement or a cogredient of teaching in class. This simple fact hasn't been acknowledged by the university management.

Last but not least, respondents could leave a general comment on their emergency remote teaching experience as their last answer. Item F20 was optional, and it received 13 responses. Both positive and negative comments could be gathered as evidence of the wide range of

experiences linked to forced e-learning. Some statements were particularly positive like, for instance, that of participant number 5:

> I felt proud of my work and felt like I was part of a team with the whole university management.

Some respondents left more balanced comments, instead. They depicted emergency remote teaching as an overall positive experience, but they emphasized its drawbacks as well. For instance, participant number 34 asserted that remote teaching can help shy students to be more active in class, but face-to-face classes are preferrable with small groups. Some respondents were particularly critical of dual-mode classes.

> The university management made a huge effort to save our classes and it was a success on the whole, but e-learning is, in my opinion, a useful tool only in case of emergencies. In my experience, it reduces interaction and traditional reading skills (participant number 3).

> I believe DAD[19] to be an acceptable solution during an emergency pandemic situation, but the dual mode is the worst of both worlds and should be abandoned immediately, in my honest opinion (participant number 9).

> I've teaching in a blended way for more than 10 years. That was not a problem for me. What was difficult, instead, was having students on site (very few) and students connected from home and having to plan activities to be done by both groups at the same time. Interaction was very difficult too. Another weakness was about the many meetings organised by colleagues, departments, groups, and me as well! The fact of working from home makes people think that you can stay connected from 8am to 10pm (participant number 37).

Among the negative comments, one may quote what participant number 4 stated:

> I felt that the psychological well-being, health and familiar situation of the teaching staff were completely disregarded.

[19] The acronym DAD stands for *didattica a distanza*, in other words remote education

Probably, the majority of lecturers would have gone on with face-to-face classes, if they had been given the chance.

> It has been a challenge, which, in my opinion, I (the CELs) mastered quite good. I worked three times more, at the beginning the whole day at home in front of my PC. I have learned a lot as an autodidact and by asking my colleagues (we helped each other). The correction of written works on PC was very tedious, I got problems with my eyes. The daily question to my students "can you hear me?", "can you see me?" got on my nerves. I was anxious about the fact that I couldn't see their reactions. Now, I am very glad to be again in my face-to-face class, to be able to correct written works on paper sheets, to speak to my students and to have their feedback at once (participant number 20).

To conclude this overview on lecturers' general experiences during the pandemic, one may quote the comment by participant number 26, who emphasized the extraordinary nature of the situation under inspection. Once again, the adjective "extraordinary" is used in its etymological sense (i.e., out of the ordinary). In other words, no comparison can be drawn between emergency remote teaching and what is usually seen as the norm, namely face-to-face education in this case. Forced e-learning was a solution to be adopted in order to ensure continuity of education during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the sudden conversion to online classes left little time for careful planning, unlike normal e-learning experiences. However, this fact seems to be ignored by many.

> The final comment is that an emergency is an emergency, its practices can be those which can be implemented at the time of the emergency. But they shouldn't be confused with normal time practices, and they are far from being the best practices, even when there's something to learn from them.

V. Discussion: Results and Implications

In this chapter, research results will be summarized. The possible pedagogical implications of the study will be discussed as well.

First of all, hypothesis 1 asserts that emergency remote teaching had a negative impact on lecturers' motivating job potential, as Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) assumed as well. In other words, forced e-learning is believed to make the work environment less stimulating by affecting job characteristics, individual features, and social interactions negatively. However, research results proved otherwise. Despite the emergency restrictions, the sample appears to be on the whole motivated, in particular the youngest respondents, lecturers dealing with translation studies, participants with 6-10 years of teaching experience, adjunct professors, and respondents who taught one class per semester.

Hypothesis 2 focuses on the negative effects that forced e-learning is expected to have on lecturers' work engagement and job satisfaction. It was partially supported by data, though. Actually, participants did show low levels of job satisfaction, but they were pretty engaged in their work, nonetheless. Even though both constructs are possible products of a motivating work environment, they seem to be independent of each other. Anyway, the most engaged and satisfied groups were the youngest participants within the sample, respondents dealing with translation studies, lecturers with fewer experience (i.e., 1-5, 6-10), adjunct professors, and lecturers who had one class per semester.

As for hypothesis 3, the present study investigated the relationship between emergency remote teaching and professional exhaustion, which were expected to be positively related. The sample showed indeed high levels of exhaustion during the pandemic, especially participants whose age ranges from 41 to 50 years, linguistics lecturers, respondents with 11-15 years of experience, CELs, and participants who taught more than three classes per semester in the period of time under inspection.

Attitude towards e-learning may be taken as a dependent variable as well, if you consider the possible influence of emergency remote teaching on it. Hypothesis 4 assumes that forced e-learning had a negative impact on lecturers' general opinion on remote education, and data analysis provided evidence of it. In particular, the approach of the oldest participants within the sample, literature lecturers, respondents with more than 20 years of experience, associate professors, and of lecturers who taught three classes per semester appears to be the most negatively affected by the emergency.

The Job Characteristics Model (JCM; Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976) identifies not only motivation as a possible product of a stimulating environment but also work engagement and job satisfaction. Therefore, the relationship between these constructs was investigated with motivating job potential as the independent variable. Hypothesis 5 assumes the existence of a positive relation between the variables under inspection, which was indeed confirmed by data analysis: the more participants felt motivated, the more they were engaged and satisfied during the pandemic, and this despite the negative impact that emergency remote teaching had on their job satisfaction.

Professional exhaustion is the independent variable of hypothesis 6, which asserts that the more lecturers feel burned out, the less they are engaged in their work. Research results provided support to hypothesis 6, and this despite the fact that the sample showed high levels of both work engagement and exhaustion during the pandemic. Actually, hypothesis 5 and 6 aimed to investigate relations that should exist in any situation, so they did not refer exclusively to the COVID-19 outbreak.

As already said, the study by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) is an important work of reference within the theoretical framework of the current research project. The authors included some moderating variables in their study- namely, attitude towards e-learning and satisfaction from management, which were taken as independent variables in the present project, instead. Unlike all the other constructs considered here, attitude towards e-learning has not a clear connotation. In other words, it has neither a positive nor a negative meaning per se, and, as a consequence, hypothesis 7 predicts two scenarios in order to investigate both possibilities, while hypothesis 4 focuses on attitude towards e-learning in general terms. However, data analysis provided little or no support to it. No clear evidence could be found of the relation between positive and negative attitude towards e-learning and lecturers' motivation, engagement, satisfaction, and exhaustion at work, which is the same conclusion to which Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) came. In light of this, future researchers might consider focusing on participants' general approach rather than classifying respondents on the basis of specific attitudes.

As for satisfaction from management, the sample appears to be on the whole happy with university managers, both at the decision-making and communication levels. In particular, the oldest lecturers within the sample, participants dealing with translation studies, respondents who have gathered 6-10 years of teaching experience, adjunct professors, and lecturers with

one class per semester were the most satisfied during the pandemic. Moreover, hypothesis 8 asserts that satisfaction from management is positively related to motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction, whereas a negative relation could be established between it and professional exhaustion. Research outcomes proved the validity of this assumption.

The table below summarizes research outcomes hypothesis by hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: negative relation between emergency remote teaching and motivating job potential	Not confirmed
Hypothesis 2: negative relation between emergency remote teaching and work engagement and job satisfaction	Partially confirmed (not confirmed with work engagement, confirmed with job satisfaction)
Hypothesis 3: positive relation between emergency remote teaching and professional exhaustion	Confirmed
Hypothesis 4: negative relation between emergency remote teaching and attitude towards e-learning	Confirmed
Hypothesis 5: positive relation between motivating job potential and work engagement and job satisfaction	Confirmed
Hypothesis 6: negative relation between professional exhaustion and work engagement	Confirmed
Hypothesis 7: positive relation between positive attitude towards e-learning and motivating job potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction, and negative relation with professional exhaustion. Vice versa in case of negative attitude towards e-learning	Not confirmed
Hypothesis 8: positive relation between satisfaction from management and motivating job	Confirmed

potential, work engagement, and job satisfaction, and negative relation with professional exhaustion	

Table 58: summary of research results

As already said, contextual factors seem to have a certain influence on the success or failure of emergency remote teaching, given that it produced different effects across countries and educational institutions. The latter could draw inspiration from the analysis of contexts with specific characteristics, necessities, and dynamics, especially if they find themselves in situations with similar issues to face. The analysis of the experiences of lecturers as part of Ca' Foscari university's language department revealed some criticalities of emergency remote teaching and, by extension, of online education that could be used to provide better quality e-learning experiences in the future, hopefully in a non-pandemic situation. For instance, dual-mode classes were difficult to manage without tutors. Besides, the lack of feedback from students who were not willing to turn on their cameras along with bad internet connection and unclear instructions are certainly issues to address. Above all, many participants lamented that the emergency situation was not acknowledged as such by university management, thus demanding the same level of performance from them, who were evaluated accordingly. As for helpful resources, many respondents indicated participation in decision making and support from management. Hopefully, planning and implementing e-learning courses will be done in a more careful and rigorous way in the future, since there will be no health crisis to face and, as a consequence, there will be plenty of time to do it properly. However, the emergency remote teaching experiences of lecturers highlighted that perhaps e-learning will never replace face-to-face classes completely, even though it is seen as a valuable support by many.

VI. Conclusions: Limits and Suggestions

Among the possible limits of the current study, two seem to be worth mentioning. As already said, the author possesses basic level statistical skills. If things had been different, it would have been possible to employ more sophisticated and rigorous methods to analyse data, thus making more confident statements about research results. For instance, inferential statistics would have provided more solid evidence of the actual relationship between variables. Instead, the author relied mainly on descriptive statistics. The analysis of the questionnaire sections along with the confrontation of means gave an answer to research questions though, thus enabling the author to make considerations about the way in which emergency remote teaching affected the sampled lecturers.

Secondly, another weakness may be identified in the sample size of the present study. Marshall and colleagues (2013) lamented a lack of standards and guidelines to determine an adequate number of participants, especially for qualitative research projects. Many researchers do not justify the sample size of their works, indeed. Sample size does matter to some extent, though. If the number of participants is too small, researchers risk gathering only scant data, which are not sufficient to describe a certain phenomenon properly. On the other hand, the reverse is possible as well. Researchers could gather too much information, and this situation is commonly known as data saturation.

> Data saturation entails bringing new participants continually into the study until the data set is complete, as indicated by data replication and redundancy. In other words, saturation is reached when the researcher gathers data to the point of diminishing returns, when nothing new is being added (Bowen, 2008).

In other words, there is no point in sampling many participants, if the related data do not enable you to deepen your research but add just redundant information. However, the current study is based on a convenience sample. Only those lecturers who accepted to complete the online survey designed for the present project could be taken into account, and so determining an adequate number of respondents beforehand was pointless. It might be true that 37 is a small number, though. Gathering data from more participants would have probably been helpful to avoid dissonant outcomes such as the mode and number of positive answers of section D.

Given the importance of gathering data on emergency remote teaching experiences for future

improvement, conducting new exploratory studies on specific contexts could enrich the framework so far built with relevant elements and considerations. Future researchers may certainly use inferential statistics to analyse data, so that they can provide more solid evidence of the relations between variables if compared to descriptive statistics alone. Furthermore, they might consider including more than one department in their project for comparison purposes, thus gathering data from a larger sample. As for research variables, neither the study by Kulikowsky and colleagues (2021-2) nor the present project were able to get clear information on the role played by attitude towards e-learning, at least as long as it is not taken as a dependent variable. Therefore, future researchers might either investigate participants' general approach as an independent variable or even exclude this construct from their analysis.

VII. Appendix

Below, you can find all the questionnaire items used to gather data from the sampled lecturers. Questions marked by asterisk are compulsory.

SECTION A- GENERAL INFORMATION

A1. How old are you? *

- Less than 30
- 30-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- More than 60

A2. Which is your subject area? *

- Language teaching
- Linguistics
- Literature
- Other

A3. If your answer to item A2 was “other”, could you please specify?

A4. How long have you been teaching? *

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- More than 20 years

A5. Which is your position within Ca’ Foscari university? *

- CEL
- Researcher
- Full professor
- Other

A6. If your answer to item A5 was “other”, could you please specify?

A7. How many classes per semester did you teach during the COVID-19 outbreak? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

SECTION B- MOTIVATING JOB POTENTIAL

Motivating job potential can be defined as a state of mind that depends on some specific features of a given job. Does your job require “doing a whole and identifiable piece of work from beginning to end”? Has it “a substantial impact on the lives of other people”? May you use your skills and talents while working? Do you get feedback from your job? Are you autonomous in your work? In addition, individual characteristics and the social dimension of the job should be considered as well (Oldham & Hackman, 2010).

B1. On the whole, would you say that your motivating job potential was higher before or after the introduction of emergency remote teaching? *

- Before
- After
- I perceived no difference

B2. You managed to design and implement class curricula despite the shortage of time *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

B3. In your classes, curricula were completed without cuts, just like you planned *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- Agree
- Strongly agree

B4. As usual, your didactic work significantly affected students' outcomes *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

B5. In your classes, students learnt useful things both for their academic careers and their lives outside university even at distance *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

B6. In your opinion, who may benefit from the results of your work apart from your students? And why?

B7. You managed to exploit the potential of online platforms (e.g., Google Meet, Zoom) and provide quality teaching *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

B8. During the COVID-19 outbreak, your work required a wider range of skills than before *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree

- Strongly agree

B9. Despite the emergency restrictions, you felt that your work enabled you to use your skills and talents *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

B10. You could observe the direct and unequivocal effects of your didactic work even at distance *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

B11. Observing students' performances in class (both face-to-face and virtual) was on the whole rewarding *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

B12. During the COVID-19 outbreak, your work gave you freedom and independence in determining the methods of its implementation *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

B13. You felt empowered, because you managed to schedule your work in an efficient way despite the emergency restrictions *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

B14. Emergency restrictions were stimulating challenges rather than obstacles *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

B15. The world of education has learnt a lot from the COVID-19 experience *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

B16. Your job allowed you to have friendly contacts and interactions with your students and colleagues even at distance *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

B17. The importance of face-to-face interactions in education is unquestionable *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

SECTION C- WORK ENGAGEMENT

"Engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. [...] Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Dedication is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. [...] The final dimension of engagement, absorption, is characterized by being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work" (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

C1. On the whole, were you more engaged in your work before or after the introduction of emergency remote teaching? *

- Before
- After
- I perceived no difference

C2. On the whole, you felt like going to class despite the emergency situation *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

C3. Your work made you feel bursting with energy *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

C4. As far as your work is concerned, you would always persevere even in the face of difficulties *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

C5. During the COVID-19 outbreak, you were able to work for long periods at a time like before *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

C6. Despite the emergency restrictions, you were always willing to invest effort in your work *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

C7. During the COVID-19 outbreak, your work was more challenging than before, but in a positive sense *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

C8. Your work made you feel proud, enthusiastic, and inspired despite the emergency situation *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

C9. You found your work full of meaning and purpose even when you had to work at distance *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

C10. Despite the emergency situation, time would fly while you were working like in the past *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

C11. Despite the emergency restrictions, detaching yourself from your work was always difficult *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

C12. You felt happy when working intensely even at distance *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

C13. During the COVID-19 outbreak, you would think less and do your work almost mechanically *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

C14. You became increasingly disconnected from your work during the COVID-19 outbreak *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

C15. Sometimes, you felt sickened by your work tasks due to the emergency restrictions *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

C16. Despite the emergency situation, your job is the only one that you can imagine yourself doing *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

SECTION D- JOB SATISFACTION

The term "job satisfaction" refers to a positive evaluation of the work experience both at the cognitive and affective levels. From a cognitive point of view, workers are satisfied with their jobs when the kind of work they do, the working conditions, and the opportunities for personal growth and development are in line with their needs. On the other hand, affection-based job satisfaction means that a given work arouses positive emotions in the worker who carries it out (Moorman, 1993).

D1. On the whole, were you more satisfied with your work before or after the introduction of emergency remote teaching? *

- Before
- After
- I perceived no difference

D2. Despite the emergency restrictions, you felt that your didactic work was effective *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

D3. Working conditions were on the whole adequate even at distance *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

D4. Despite the emergency situation, there was still room for personal and professional growth *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

D5. During the COVID-19 outbreak, you felt that your work environment fostered quality teaching like before *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

D6. Despite the emergency restrictions, you felt at ease while working *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

D7. Working in an emergency situation was tougher than you expected *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

D8. As far as your work is concerned, what did you expect right before the introduction of emergency remote teaching? Did the actual working situation live up to your expectations?

D9. You felt that your role as a lecturer was more important than in the past precisely because of the pandemic *

- Strongly disagree

- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

D10. During the COVID-19 outbreak, you felt less appreciated as a lecturer *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

D11. The transition from traditional teaching to emergency remote teaching messed up your schedule *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

D12. Due to the pandemic situation, you would talk about your job in negative terms more often than in the past [20] *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

SECTION E- PROFESSIONAL EXHAUSTION

Generally speaking, exhaustion means energy depletion. According to the job demands-resources model of burnout, there is a close relationship between work environment and

[20] Item D12 was adapted from Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005. Even though it originally referred to burnout, the author found it better suited to the definition of job satisfaction

professional exhaustion. In short, there should be balance between job demands- what a given job requires doing- and job resources- what can help you to achieve work goals. Indeed, any work environment with high job demands but few job resources is likely to cause stress and exhaustion (Demerouti et al., 2001).

E1. As far as your work is concerned, would you say that you felt more exhausted before or after the introduction of emergency remote teaching? *

- o Before
- o After
- o I perceived no difference

E2. During the COVID-19 outbreak, there were days when you felt tired before starting to work *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

E3. After work, you needed more time than in the past in order to relax *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

E4. Your work was on the whole tougher than before, both in terms of physical workload and psychological costs *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

E5. After work, you had enough energy for your leisure activities despite the emergency situation *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

E6. On the whole, you were able to manage your workload well despite the pandemic *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

E7. You could tolerate time pressure even when working at distance *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

E8. You often felt emotionally drained while working *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

E9. In your opinion, which job resources may be helpful in an emergency remote teaching situation? *

- ☐ Feedback from students and/or colleagues
- ☐ Job control

- ☐ Job security
- ☐ Participation in decision making
- ☐ Personal traits (e.g., mental resilience, organizational skills)
- ☐ Rewards
- ☐ Support from your organization
- ☐ Task variety
- ☐ Other

E10. If your answer to item E9 was "other", could you please specify?

E11. In your opinion, were there enough job resources during the COVID-19 outbreak? And why?

SECTION F- OTHER ASPECTS

In the last section of this questionnaire, additional variables will be considered, namely attitudes towards e-learning and satisfaction from management during the COVID-19 outbreak. You will also be provided with more general items at the end.

F1. How was your attitude towards e-learning before the pandemic? *

- o Positive
- o Negative
- o Neutral

F2. Has your attitude towards e-learning changed due to the pandemic? *

- o Yes and for the better
- o Yes but for the worse
- o No

F3. In higher education, e-learning can be a valuable support for the education process, but it will never replace face-to-face classes [21] *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree

[21] Item F3 was interpreted as a positive question, but this labelling might be contested. Future researchers could consider writing two separate items: "in higher education, e-learning can be a valuable support for the education process" and "e-learning will never replace face-to-face classes"

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

F4. You can see the benefits of using blended learning (e.g., expanding class curricula with elements of distance learning) *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

F5. Classes conducted entirely in the form of e-learning convey knowledge in a more attractive way than traditional teaching *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

F6. Blended learning leads to better learning outcomes than using only one form of education (i.e., either traditional or distance learning) *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

F7. E-learning is the future of higher education, since it allows to keep up with the times and provides high-quality learning *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- Agree
- Strongly agree

F8. Before the pandemic, the opportunities for using e-learning at Ca' Foscari were limited, which posed a problem when emergency remote teaching was introduced *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

F9. Remote teaching is on the whole better than traditional teaching *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

F10. Overall, you are enthusiastic about the implementation of distance learning in higher education *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

F11. University managers were good at ensuring continuity of education despite the emergency situation *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

F12. During the COVID-19 outbreak, the announcements issued by university management about the planning of distance or dual-mode classes provided you with all the information you needed *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

F13. University managers were committed to addressing issues raised by lecturers *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

F14. During the COVID-19 outbreak, you received an appropriate amount of support from university managers, so you could properly implement programs *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

F15. Information on Ca' Foscari website was always useful and updated *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

F16. You are on the whole satisfied with how university management tackled the emergency situation *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

F17. The way you perceive e-learning had a great influence on your performance when you had to teach at distance *

- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

F18. In your opinion, what may have a negative impact on your performance in an emergency remote teaching situation? *

- ☐ Bad internet connection
- ☐ Difficulties in managing dual-mode classes
- ☐ High number of classes to teach
- ☐ Limited time to design curricula
- ☐ Little familiarity with online platforms (e.g., Google Meet, Zoom)
- ☐ Little support/feedback from your organization, students, and colleagues
- ☐ Students' counterproductive behaviour (e.g., disrespect, distraction, non-attendance)
- ☐ Other

F19. If your answer to item F18 was "other", could you please specify?

F20. If you want, you can write a comment on your emergency remote teaching experience here

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