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## STUDY ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF STUDENTS FROM “CONSTANTIN BRÂNCUȘI” UNIVERSITY OF TÂRGU JIU DURING THE FOURTH WAVE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**Abstract:**

*AIM: THE STUDY REFLECTS THE WAY IN WHICH THE STUDENTS OF THE “CONSTANTIN BRÂNCUȘI” UNIVERSITY OF TÂRGU JIU PERCEIVE THE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, BOTH REGARDING THE DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE INSTITUTION'S MANAGEMENT REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING ACTIVITIES IN THE ONLINE VERSION AND REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THEIR LIVES.*

*METHODS: THE STUDY TARGETED A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF STUDENTS FROM THE “CONSTANTIN BRÂNCUȘI” UNIVERSITY OF TÂRGU JIU, BUILT ON THE BASIS OF A RANDOM STATISTICAL STEP OF 3, THE NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BEING 674. THE QUESTIONNAIRE ADDRESSED TO THE RESPONDENTS INCLUDED A NUMBER OF 39 QUESTIONS, 26 OF WHICH ALLOWED US TO ASSESS THE QUALITY OF LIFE, THROUGH THE WHOQOL-BREF INSTRUMENT OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION.*

*RESULTS: THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY REVEAL THE HIGH DEGREE OF TRUST GIVEN BY THE RESPONDENTS TO THE TEACHING STAFF OF THE “CONSTANTIN BRÂNCUȘI” UNIVERSITY OF TÂRGU JIU. ALTHOUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAD SERIOUS INFLUENCES ON STUDENTS' LIVES AND THEIR INCOME LEVELS, THE PARAMETERS THAT CHARACTERIZE STUDENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE, ASSESSED IN THE FOUR MAJOR AREAS: PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL, ARE HIGHER. ALTHOUGH THE DEGREE OF ACCEPTANCE OF COVID-19 VACCINES IS HIGH, WHICH CONFERS AN INCREASED DEGREE OF IMMUNITY AND A MINIMAL RISK OF CONTAMINATION WITH THE SARS-COV-2 VIRUS, STUDENTS PREFER THAT THE TEACHING ACTIVITIES CONTINUE IN THE ONLINE VERSION.*

*CONCLUSIONS: THERE ARE FAVORABLE PREMISES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN THE “CONSTANTIN BRÂNCUȘI” UNIVERSITY OF TÂRGU JIU AT HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS, GIVEN THE HIGH DEGREE OF TRUST OF STUDENTS IN THE TEACHING STAFF, THEIR APPRECIATION OF THE TECHNICAL PLATFORM OF THE INSTITUTION PROVIDED STUDENTS AND THE HIGH LEVEL OF PARAMETERS THAT CHARACTERIZE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE.*



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*WE RECOMMEND DEEPENING THE CAUSES FOR WHICH ALMOST TWO THIRDS OF THE RESPONDENTS THINK ABOUT THE CONTINUATION OF ONLINE TEACHING ACTIVITIES, ALTHOUGH THE OPINIONS OF SPECIALISTS REVEAL MULTIPLE SHORTCOMINGS THAT LED TO THE WIDENING OF THE EDUCATION DEFICIT OF YOUNG PEOPLE DURING THE PANDEMIC.*

**Keywords:** *QUALITY OF LIFE, PANDEMIC, COVID-19, STUDENTS, "CONSTANTIN BRÂNCUȘI" UNIVERSITY OF TÂRGU JIU.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic was declared on March 11, 2020, by the World Health Organization, as a result of the emergence and global spread of the SARS-Cov-2 virus. Although almost 2 years have passed since the onset, the pandemic is manifested worldwide, with varying degrees of aggression, with state decision-makers resorting to measures to limit the spread of the virus, such as: social distancing measures, limiting the mobility of unvaccinated citizens, mandatory vaccination, etc. All this contributes seriously to the decline in the quality of life of citizens, including as a result of the spread of feelings of fear and apprehension among them. In this context, there is an increase in the number of people diagnosed with various forms of anxiety, depression, adjustment disorders, etc. (Harper, Satchell et al., 2020), caused by job loss, social distancing measures, non-existence or limitation of social events, transfer of teaching activities in the online, etc.

The quality of life index (QoL) is an important measure in scientific research in the fields of psychiatry and psychology, being considered a particularly eloquent indicator in the case of evaluation before and after treatment (Leong Bin Abdullah et al., 2021). The World Health Organization has developed various tools for measuring quality of life, including WHOQoL-BREF, used in this study (who.int).

## RESEARCH METHODS

### *Participants*

Between 5 and 10 December 2021, during the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, we applied a questionnaire to a representative sample of students from the "Constantin Brâncuși" University of Târgu Jiu, built at random, with a step of 3, the number of respondents being 674.

### *Procedure*

The questionnaire, consisting of 39 questions, was built on the Google Forms platform and did not include identifiers of the respondents.

### *Measurements*

First of all, we aimed to extract data on the degree of perception by the respondents of the way of carrying out the teaching activities in the online version. Secondly, we aimed to extract data that would highlight the quality of life of respondents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

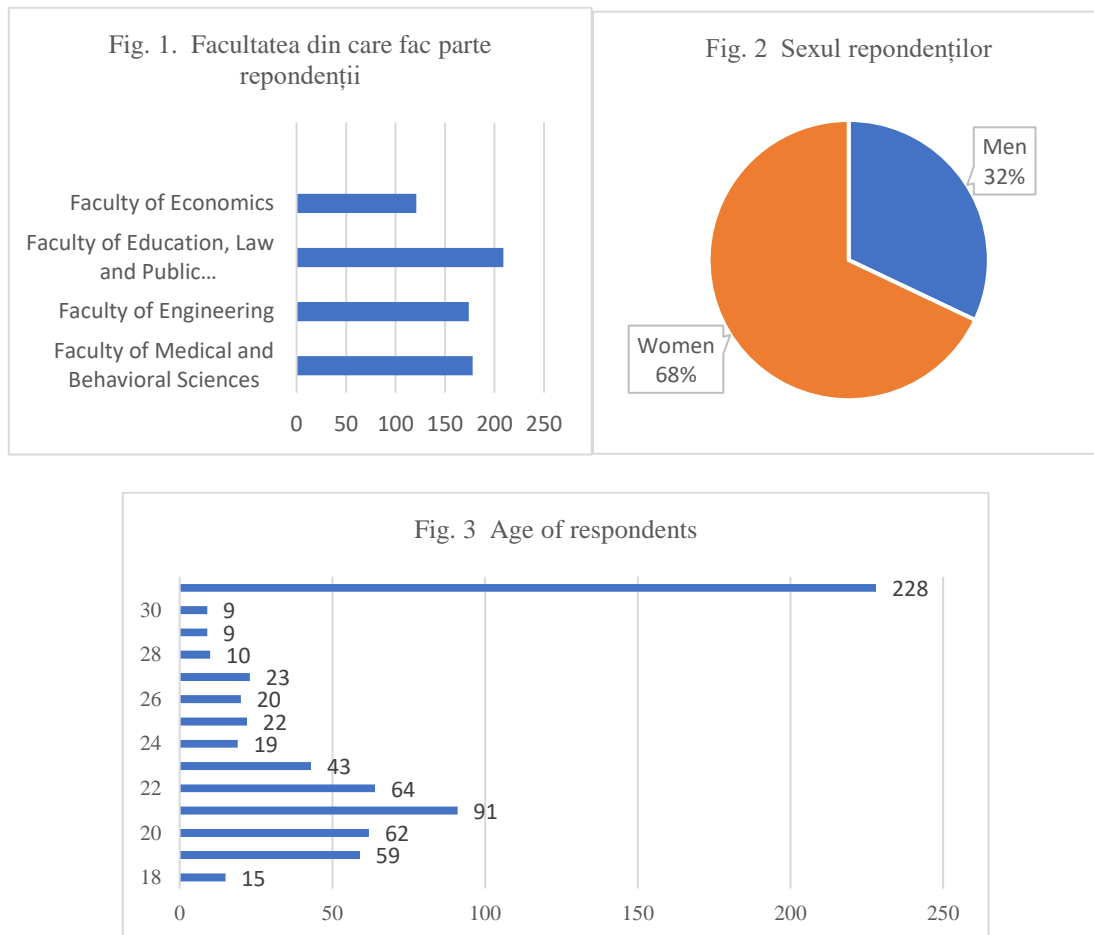
### Statistical analysis

Statistical data analysis was performed in the Excel program, part of the Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2019 package, and in the IBM SPSS Statistics statistical analysis program (trial version).

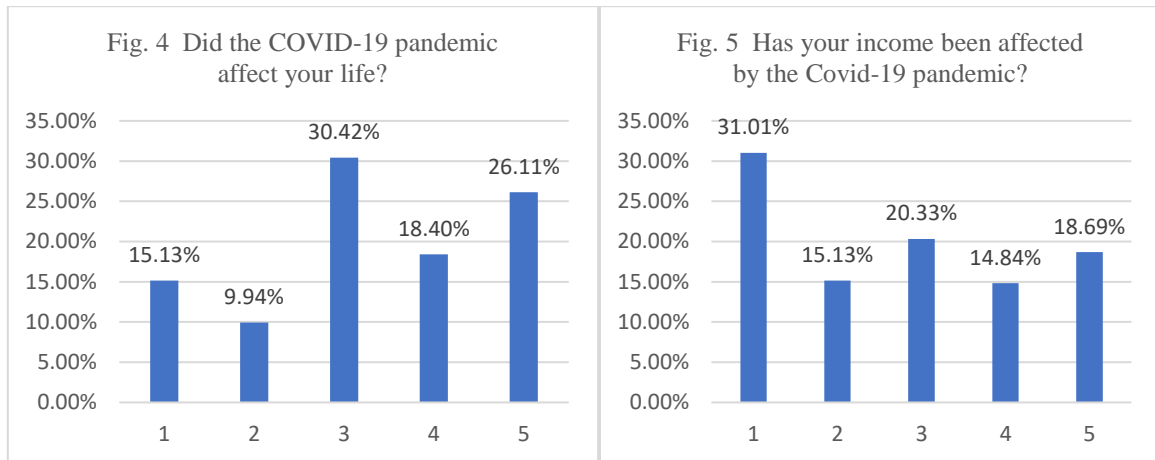
The tool used in this study is WHOQoL-BREF, which contains 26 key questions for four major areas: physical (seven questions), psychological (six questions), social (three questions), and environmental (eight questions). In order to determine the quality of life measurements, we proceeded to implement the instructions provided by the application methodology provided on the World Health Organization website (who.int).

### RESULT

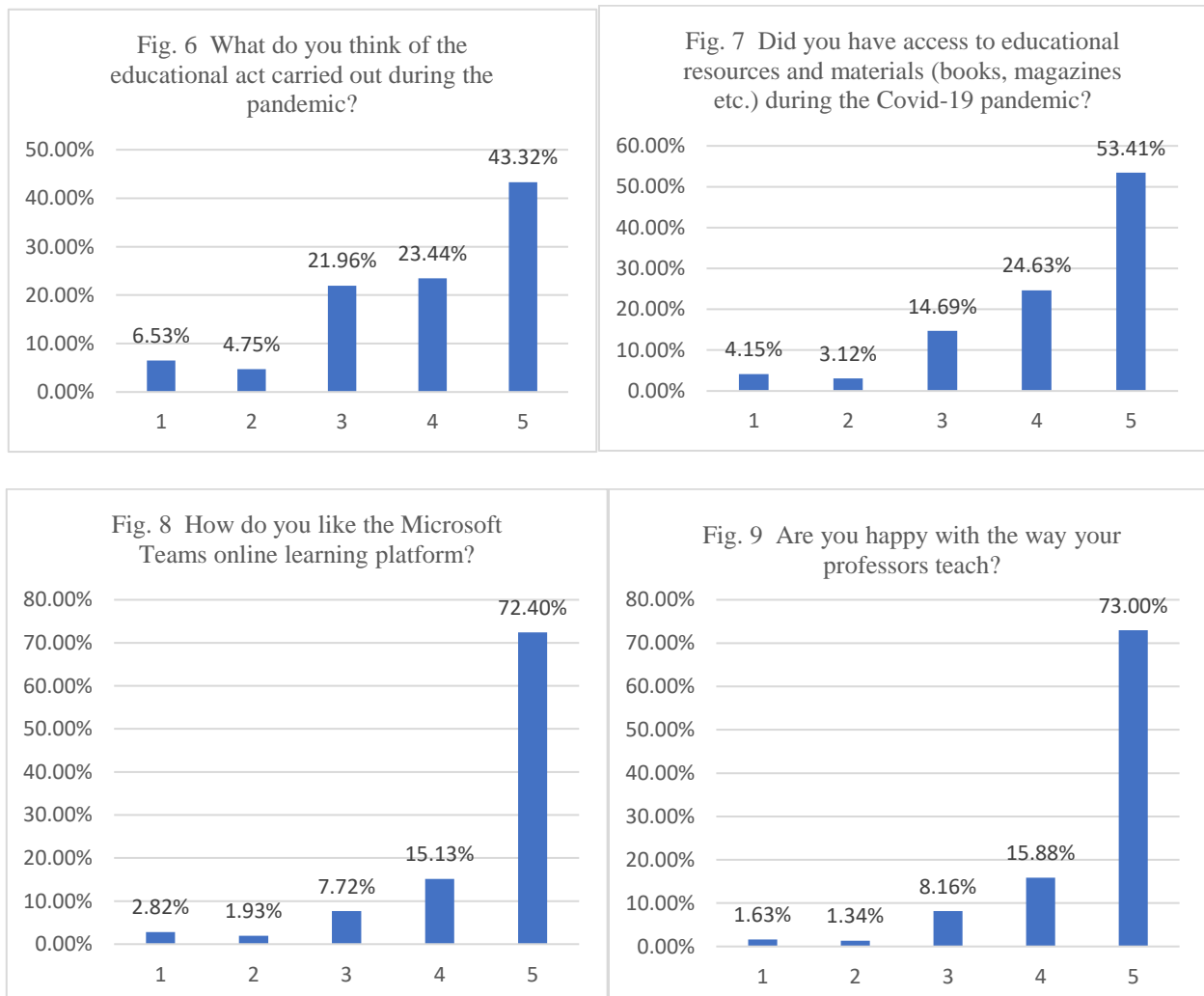
The socio-demographic data of the respondents (faculty, sex and age) are shown in Fig. 1-3.

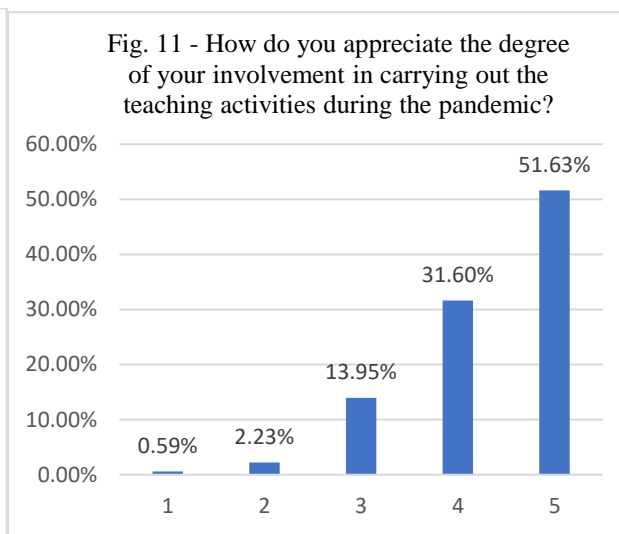
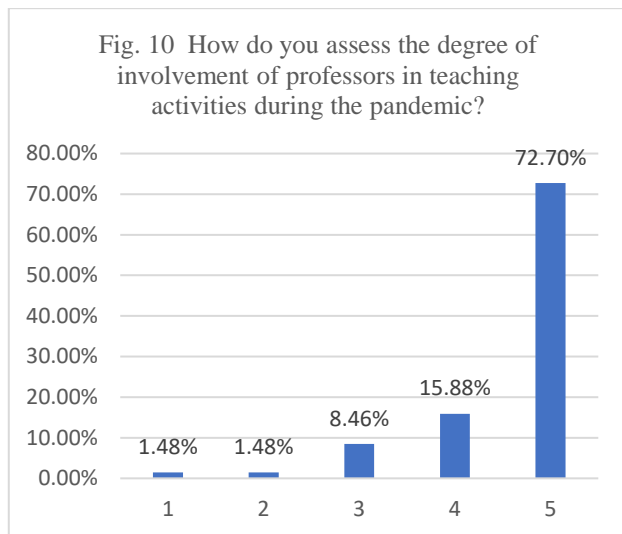


The influences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the life and income of the participants, expressed as a percentage, on each level of a Likert scale from 1 to 5, are highlighted in Fig. 4-5.

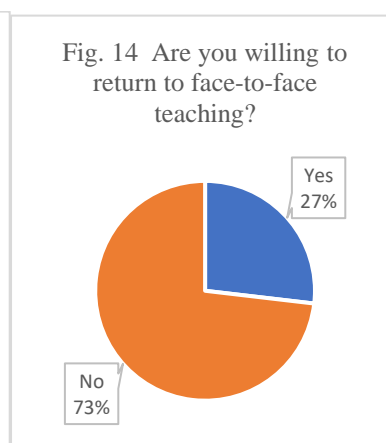
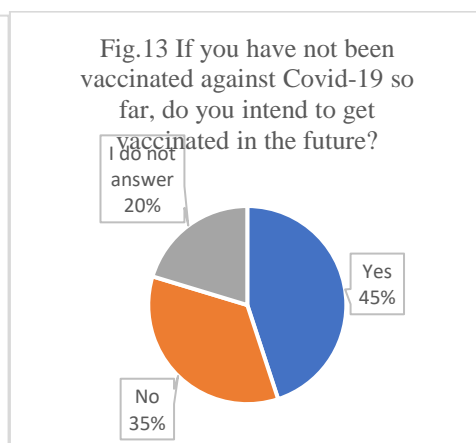
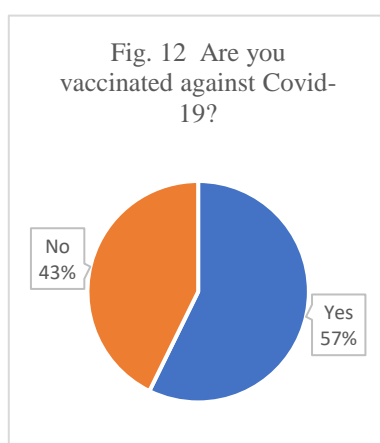


The respondents' assessments regarding the quality of the teaching activities carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, in the online system, are highlighted in Fig. 6-11.





The situation of the degree of acceptance of the COVID-19 vaccines by the respondents and their readiness to return to the development of teaching activities in the face-to-face version, are presented in Fig. 12-14.



### Quality of life of students

The frequency of responses for the four major areas (physical, mental, social and environmental), as described in the WHOQoL-BREF application methodology, are presented in Tables 1-4.

#### PHYSICAL

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	14.29	.1	.1	.1
	21.43	.1	.1	.3
	25.00	.1	.1	.4
	28.57	.4	.6	1.0
	32.14	4	.6	1.6
	35.71	5	.7	2.4
	39.29	9	1.3	3.7
	42.86	6	.9	4.6
	46.43	18	2.7	7.3

#### PSYCHIC

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20.83	1	.1	.1
	25.00	2	.3	.4
	33.33	2	.3	.7
	37.50	7	1.0	1.8
	41.67	4	.6	2.4
	45.83	9	1.3	3.7
	50.00	11	1.6	5.3
	54.17	16	2.4	7.7
	58.33	28	4.2	11.9



50.00	40	5.9	5.9	13.2
53.57	52	7.7	7.7	20.9
57.14	47	7.0	7.0	27.9
60.71	56	8.3	8.3	36.2
64.29	61	9.1	9.1	45.3
67.86	79	11.7	11.7	57.0
71.43	89	13.2	13.2	70.2
75.00	66	9.8	9.8	80.0
78.57	54	8.0	8.0	88.0
82.14	31	4.6	4.6	92.6
85.71	40	5.9	5.9	98.5
89.29	5	.7	.7	99.3
92.86	3	.4	.4	99.7
100.00	2	.3	.3	100.0
Total	674	100.0	100.0	

Table 1

62.50	39	5.8	5.8	17.7
66.67	48	7.1	7.1	24.8
70.83	46	6.8	6.8	31.6
75.00	67	9.9	9.9	41.5
79.17	81	12.0	12.0	53.6
83.33	189	28.0	28.0	81.6
87.50	61	9.1	9.1	90.7
91.67	21	3.1	3.1	93.8
95.83	15	2.2	2.2	96.0
100.00	27	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	674	100.0	100.0	

Table 2

**SOCIAL**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid .00	2	.3	.3	.3
8.33	4	.6	.6	.9
16.67	4	.6	.6	1.5
25.00	8	1.2	1.2	2.7
33.33	11	1.6	1.6	4.3
41.67	25	3.7	3.7	8.0
50.00	31	4.6	4.6	12.6
58.33	53	7.9	7.9	20.5
66.67	71	10.5	10.5	31.0
75.00	83	12.3	12.3	43.3
83.33	84	12.5	12.5	55.8
91.67	100	14.8	14.8	70.6
100.00	198	29.4	29.4	100.0
Total	674	100.0	100.0	

Table 3

**ENVIRONMENT**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 15.63	1	.1	.1	.1
18.75	2	.3	.3	.4
21.88	1	.1	.1	.6
25.00	2	.3	.3	.9
28.13	1	.1	.1	1.0
31.25	4	.6	.6	1.6
34.38	3	.4	.4	2.1
37.50	6	.9	.9	3.0
40.63	8	1.2	1.2	4.2
43.75	9	1.3	1.3	5.5
46.88	8	1.2	1.2	6.7
50.00	14	2.1	2.1	8.8
53.13	19	2.8	2.8	11.6
56.25	22	3.3	3.3	14.8
59.38	21	3.1	3.1	18.0
62.50	29	4.3	4.3	22.3
65.63	33	4.9	4.9	27.2
68.75	34	5.0	5.0	32.2
71.88	37	5.5	5.5	37.7
75.00	46	6.8	6.8	44.5
78.13	54	8.0	8.0	52.5
81.25	44	6.5	6.5	59.1
84.38	54	8.0	8.0	67.1
87.50	52	7.7	7.7	74.8
90.63	41	6.1	6.1	80.9
93.75	43	6.4	6.4	87.2
96.88	39	5.8	5.8	93.0
100.00	47	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	674	100.0	100.0	

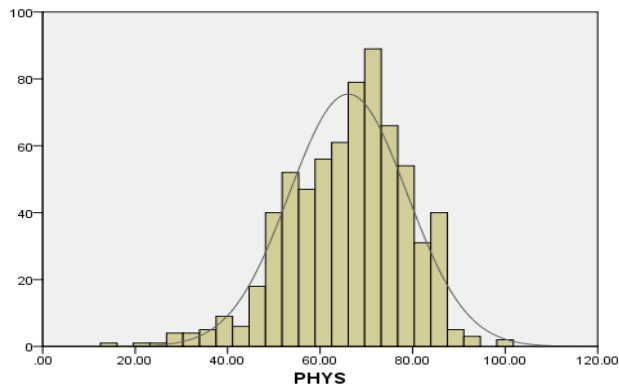
Table 4

The statistical analysis of the four main areas (physical, mental, social and environmental) can be seen in Table 5.

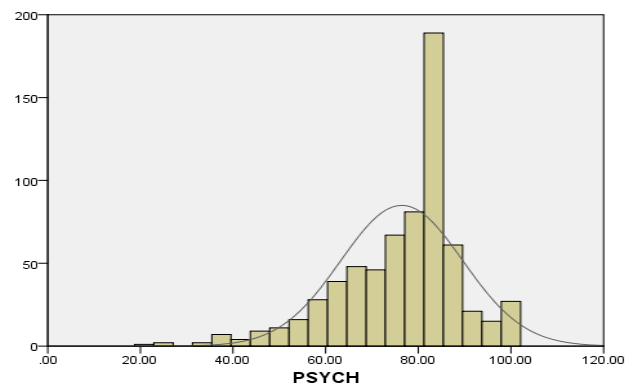
		Statistics			
		PHYS	PSYCH	SOCIAL	ENVIR
N	Valid	674	674	674	674
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		66.0714	76.4280	79.0430	76.3260
Std. Error of Mean		.49006	.50805	.80629	.65129
Median		67.8571	79.1667	83.3333	78.1250
Mode		71.43	83.33	100.00	78.13 <sup>a</sup>
Std. Deviation		12.72261	13.18969	20.93241	16.90849
Variance		161.865	173.968	438.166	285.897
Range		85.71	79.17	100.00	84.38
Minimum		14.29	20.83	.00	15.63
Maximum		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Sum		44532.14	51512.50	53275.00	51443.75
Percentiles	25	57.1429	70.8333	66.6667	65.6250
	50	67.8571	79.1667	83.3333	78.1250
	75	75.0000	83.3333	100.0000	90.6250

**Table 5**

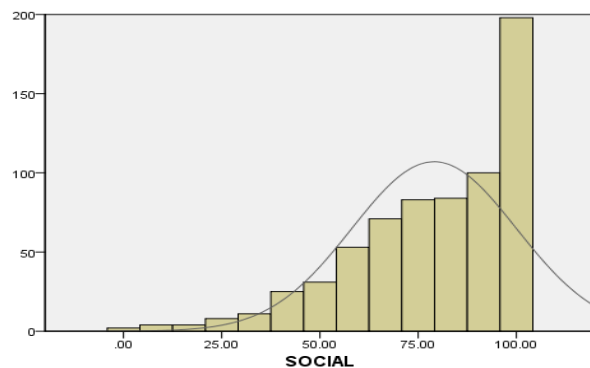
The histograms with normal distribution of the four domains, on a satisfaction scale between 0-100, are presented in Fig. 15-18.



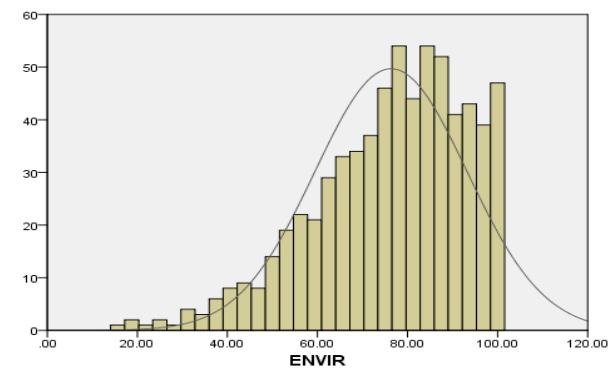
**Fig. 15 Histogram with normal distribution, physical domain**



**Fig. 16 Histogram with normal distribution, psychic domain**



**Fig. 17 Histogram with normal distribution, social domain**



**Fig. 18 Histogram with normal distribution, environmental domain**

We considered it was necessary to detail the results of the answers to some of the questions related to the health / safety of respondents during the pandemic, these being in close correlation with the option to continue the teaching activities in the online.

For the question "How satisfied are you with your health?", the frequency of answers starts at 5 (0.7%) for the answer "very dissatisfied", with a peak of 351 (52.1%) for the "very satisfied" and 100 (14.8%) for "moderate". (Table 6)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	5	.7	.7	.7
	2	17	2.5	2.5	3.3
	3	100	14.8	14.8	18.1
	4	201	29.8	29.8	47.9
	5	351	52.1	52.1	100.0
	Total	674	100.0	100.0	

**Table 6**

For the question "How satisfied are you with your access to health services?", the frequency of answers starts at 60 (8.9%) for the answer satisfied "to a very small extent", with a peak of 245 (36.4%) for the answer satisfied "to a great extent". (Table 7)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	60	8.9	8.9	8.9
	2	52	7.7	7.7	16.6
	3	156	23.1	23.1	39.8
	4	161	23.9	23.9	63.6
	5	245	36.4	36.4	100.0
	Total	674	100.0	100.0	

**Table 7**

For the question "How healthy is your physical environment?", the frequency of answers starts at 2 (0.3%) for the answer "very unhealthy", with a peak of 335 (49.7%) for the answer "very healthy". (Table 8)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	.3	.3	.3
	2	12	1.8	1.8	2.1
	3	96	14.2	14.2	16.3
	4	229	34.0	34.0	50.3
	5	335	49.7	49.7	100.0
	Total	674	100.0	100.0	

**Table 8**

For the question "Is the information that you need in your daily life available to you?", the frequency of answers starts at 4 (0.6%) for the answer "to a very small extent", with a peak of 357 (53%) for the answer "to a great extent". (Table 9)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	4	.6	.6	.6
	2	8	1.2	1.2	1.8
	3	88	13.1	13.1	14.8
	4	217	32.2	32.2	47.0





	5	357	53.0	53.0	100.0
	Total	674	100.0	100.0	

Table 9

For the question "How safe do you feel in your everyday life?", the frequency of answers starts at 12 (1.8%) for the answer safe "to a very small extent", with a peak of 283 (42%) for the answer safe "to a great extent". (Table 10)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	12	1.8	1.8	1.8
	2	25	3.7	3.7	5.5
	3	124	18.4	18.4	23.9
	4	230	34.1	34.1	58.0
	5	283	42.0	42.0	100.0
	Total	674	100.0	100.0	

Table 10

To the question "How would you rate your quality of life during the pandemic?", the frequency of answers is between 20 (3%) for the answer "very poor" and 123 (18.2%) for the answer "very good", reaching a peak of 258 (38.3%) in the case of the "moderate" answer. (Table 11)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	20	3.0	3.0	3.0
	2	47	7.0	7.0	9.9
	3	258	38.3	38.3	48.2
	4	226	33.5	33.5	81.8
	5	123	18.2	18.2	100.0
	Total	674	100.0	100.0	

Table 11

## DISCUSSIONS

After analyzing the data obtained as a result of completing the questionnaire by 674 students from "Constantin Brâncuși" University of Târgu Jiu, we found that 30.42% of them were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of their own lives, in a moderate way, and 44.51% were affected to a large and very large extent.

Regarding the income of the respondents, a percentage of 35.53% of the respondents were affected to a large and very large extent, 20.33% were affected in a reasonable manner, and 31.01% stated that their income was affected to a very small extent.

The educational act carried out during the pandemic, in an online system, was to the liking of the respondents, so that 66.76% think that it was good and very good, 21.96% are neutral and 11.28% think that it was very lacking. During the courses, 78.04% of the respondents consider that they had access to educational resources and materials (books, magazines, etc.) while 7.27% have the opposite opinion.

The Microsoft Teams platform, used to conduct the courses, is appreciated by 87.53% of the respondents, and the way of teaching and the involvement of teachers in the teaching activities during the pandemic was appreciated as good and very good by 88.88% of them. With a similar percentage, the involvement of teachers in carrying out specific activities during the pandemic is appreciated as

good and very good. We can conclude that these high percentages are due to the efforts of teachers to have adapted the way of teaching for the online system, the information easily reaching students.

Of the total respondents, 57% said they were vaccinated against Covid-19 and 45% of those who were not vaccinated were willing to be vaccinated in the near future. However, only 27% of respondents want to return to face-to-face courses, with 73% preferring to continue online teaching. This aspect can generate two conclusions: 1) either the students prefer the way of teaching in online system due to the convenience and ease of participating in the courses; 2) either the pandemic has created anxiety among students, who prefer the online version to prevent a potential infection with the SARS-Cov-2 virus.

Regarding the quality of life of students at the "Constantin Brâncuși" University of Târgu Jiu, using the WHOQoL-BREF tool, we noticed, when extracting the necessary data for the four main areas (physical, psychological, social and environmental), that opinions are divided, it turns out that some of the respondents are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thus, after analyzing the physical field (Table 1), 89 students (13.2%) fall into the first half of the degree of satisfaction (maximum 50 points). Most students, a number of 450 (66.8%) are between 50 and 75 points and 135 students (20%) are between 75 and 100 points. The median value of the degree of satisfaction is 67.85 (see Fig. 15).

Analyzing the psychic field (Table 2), 36 students (5.3%) fall in the first half of the degree of satisfaction (maximum 50 points), 244 (36.2%) fall between 50 and 75 points and 394 of students (58.5%) are between 75 and 100 points. The median value of the degree of satisfaction is 79.16 (see Fig. 16).

Analyzing the social field (Table 3), 85 students (12.6%) fall into the first half of the degree of satisfaction (maximum 50 points), 207 (30.7%) fall between 50 and 75 points and 382 of students (56.7%) are between 75 and 100 points. The median value of the degree of satisfaction is 83.33 (see Fig.17).

Analyzing the field of environment (Table 4), 59 students (8.8%) fall in the first half of the degree of satisfaction (maximum 50 points), 241 (35.7%) fall between 50 and 75 points and 374 of students (55.5%) are between 75 and 100 points. The median value of the degree of satisfaction is 78.12 (see Fig. 18).

Although the study shows that: 81.9% of respondents are satisfied and very satisfied with their health; 60.3% of respondents are satisfied, to a large and very large extent, with access to health services; 83.7% of respondents are satisfied, to a large and very large extent, with the health of the physical environment in which they work; 71.6% of respondents feel safe to a large and very large extent, however only 27% of them agree with the resumption of teaching activities in the face-to-face version. The fact that 73% of the respondents want to continue their teaching activities in the online version is also justified by the percentage of 85.2% of those who consider that they have access to the necessary information, to a large and very large extent.

## CONCLUSIONS

Although, on the whole, the measures adopted by the decision-makers during the COVID-19 pandemic were likely to decrease the population's trust in the state authorities, the results of this study reveal the high degree of trust given by respondents to the teaching staff of "Constantin Brâncuși" University of Târgu. Jiu.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative influence on students' lives and income levels, the parameters that characterize students' quality of life, assessed in the four major areas:



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physical, psychological, social and environmental, are higher, which shows optimistic premises for the development of university activities at the highest quality parameters.

In the context in which the respondents' health is mostly good and very good, they are relatively satisfied and very satisfied with the access to health services and are relatively satisfied and very satisfied with the health of the physical environment in which they carry out their activity, approximately two thirds of them still prefer the didactic activities to be carried out in the online version. In this context, we recommend deepening the causes for which the very high percentage of respondents think about the continuation of teaching activities in the online version, being well known that this was a backup option that could not successfully replace the traditional education carried out in the face-to-face version, amplifying the education deficit in the Romanian society.



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