Insights into the impact of the pandemic on early career researchers: the case of remote teaching

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Abstract

The study presents comparative qualitative findings from a longitudinal exploration of the impact of the pandemic on early career researchers (ECRs) from the sciences and social sciences. Using qualitative methodologies, it focuses on the increasing demands of remote teaching made on ECRs and the potentially negative effects these had on their research. The study also sheds light on ECRs’ country-specific teaching commitments and the extent to which these play a role in their assessment. Data comes from the first of three rounds of in-depth interviews, conducted with 177 ECRs from China, France, Malaysia, Poland, Russia, Spain, UK and US. The main findings, which are set against the published literature, were: a) over half ECRs teach and most of them are assessed on their teaching; b) there are significant differences between countries, with, for instance, French researchers hardly teaching and nearly all Polish researchers doing so; c) around a quarter of ECRs felt research was hindered during the pandemic because online teaching was increasingly demanding of their time; d) a preliminary analysis of ECRs’ gender-specific attitude to teaching in the pandemic-incurred new realities indicates that women experience more difficulties.

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