

**ISCKMC 2020****International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****DISTANCE LEARNING INFLUENCE ON PERSONAL AND  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF CADETS**

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**Abstract**

The article presents the general characteristics of distance learning, its origin and features of its implementation in modern conditions. The authors' own position in disclosing the essence of distance learning is expressed. The contradictions generated by distance learning adoption and defining the problem field of research are formulated. Theoretical and empirical research is aimed at studying the impact of distance learning on cadets' personal and professional development. The features of the educational process in the Voronezh Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, inherent to educational institutions sponsored by government agencies in general, are reflected. The article defines the dynamics of developing such personal parameters as motivation, safety of personal resources, stress resistance, communicative and characterological qualities of cadets. Attention is paid to the peculiarities of adaptation, educational and service activities of cadets of an educational institution sponsored by government agencies. A comparative analysis of data from 2 diagnostic sections carried out before the distance learning adoption and three months after it started due to the pandemic was made. Comparison of the empirical research findings indicated a decrease in the level of motivation of educational and professional activities of cadets, their desire for self-education and, in general, a decrease in the level of the distance learning effectiveness. The importance of direct interaction between teachers and cadets was emphasized, where the role of the teacher's personal example in the process of professional education of future law enforcement officers was named especially high.

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*Keywords:* Distance education, cadets, personal qualities



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## 1. Introduction

In the context of the forced adoption of educational programs with the use of distance technologies by higher educational institutions of the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, the problems of determining these technologies effectiveness, their advantages and limitations, the impact of distance learning on the professional and personal development of future law enforcement officers have become relevant.

Distance education dates back to the first half of the 18th century, when Boston educator Caleb Phillips organized the process of education by sending assignments to students and receiving answers from them through the post office. An active information system development, which began in the second half of the twentieth century, was a catalyst for the development of distance learning and contributed to its competitiveness with classical education, although only to a certain extent.

The scientific definitions of distance learning are quite diverse. This concept is viewed as a stage of distance education (Domrachev, 1994), as an independent form of work (Demkin, 2000), as a model that erases temporal and spatial barriers (Seregina, 2018), etc.

In our study, we rely on the definition proposed by Starichenko (2014), specifically, distance learning is one of the methods of education, in which a teacher and students are physically located in different places and use modern means of communication for educational purposes.

The works of domestic researchers are devoted to various aspects of distance education, specifically, to the issues of philosophy of the 21st century education (B.S. Gershunsky), fundamental problems of the theory and methods of technology in education (I.V. Robert, M.S. Chvanova), modeling and forming a virtual educational environment (A.A. Akhayan, Zh.N. Zaitseva, V.I. Soldatkin), problems of technology in education (I.A. Aleksashenkov), the effectiveness of teleeducation and video lectures (M.P. Karpenko, V.G. Kinelev), innovative technologies of education (A.V. Khutorskoy, G.A. Krasnov, E.S. Polat and others), psychological and pedagogical aspects of diagnosis and the effectiveness of distance learning (I.A. Zimnyaya, I.F. Isaev, A.K. Markova, M.I. Shilova, A.I. Yakovlev, etc.).

Distance education has been widely developed in the works of the following foreign researchers: Jedlicka et al. (2002), Xu et al. (2014), aimed at finding modern and effective teaching methods. Thus, a conceptual framework has been developed for the model of autonomy and independence of learning, Kett (1996), Thomas (2011) focused on a social aspect of distance education.

Along with a multifaceted analysis of the issues of distance learning, the aspects of its influence on the personal and professional development of students are insufficiently studied.

In our research, we turned to the problem of the impact of distance education on the personal and professional development of cadets being the future law enforcement officers.

## 2. Problem Statement

As the analysis of practice has shown, the forced adoption of educational programs using distance technologies led to a number of contradictions between:

1) the global trend of the widespread introduction of distance learning and the insufficient technical and methodological elaboration of distance technologies, unpreparedness of teachers for their implementation;

2) the focus of Russian education on ensuring the unity of teaching and upbringing and reducing the educational potential of the pedagogical process in distance learning;

3) the use of various remote tools (online lectures, webinars, etc.) and insufficient study of their impact on the personal and professional development of students, the development of the necessary professional competencies;

4) the implementation of distance learning technology as innovative in the education system and the need to refer to the traditional technology of offline learning with a possible degree of adaptation to achieve the educational process effectiveness.

The research problem is to resolve these contradictions.

### **3. Research Questions**

The subject of the research was the features of the personal and professional development of cadets of an educational institution sponsored by government agencies in the context of distance education, which involves the study of the following aspects:

1. The essence and specifics, methods and means of distance learning, especially its application in educational institution sponsored by government agencies.
2. Personal and professional characteristics of cadets of an educational institution sponsored by government agencies.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the research is to study the impact of distance education on the personal and professional development of cadets of the educational organization of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia.

### **5. Research Methods**

The research used: 1) theoretical methods (analysis, synthesis, generalization of scientific data on a research problem); 2) empirical methods (survey, test); 3) methods of processing and analyzing empirical data, including qualitative analysis, quantitative methods (descriptive statistics, Fisher's F-test, Student's t-test).

Empirical methods were represented by the following techniques: 1) N.E. Vodopyanova and M.V. Stein "Questionnaire of losses and acquisitions" (as cited in Vodopyanova & Nasledov, 2013); 2) T. Leary's test "Study of communicative and characterological trends" (as cited in Fetiskin et al., 2005).

## 6. Findings

The objective of professional education in the institutions of the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia is to train professional personnel for all areas of the law enforcement sphere. Professionalism of a law enforcement officer implies a system of professional knowledge, methods and means of professional activity, confident application of theoretical knowledge in practice, striving for their constant replenishment and improvement, developed intellectual sphere, the employee's awareness of the mission for society.

These competencies contribute not only to solving professional tasks at a high level but also to create a positive image of a police officer in the minds of citizens (Zinnurov & Khrustaleva, 2015).

The educational process of the institutions sponsored by government agencies differs significantly from civil ones. In addition to training, cadets carry out official activities, specifically, they join the outfits, perform various types of economic activities, participate in public order enforcement, etc.

Essential features of educational institutions sponsored by government agencies are strict regulation of any types of activities carried out by cadets. This necessitates the use of psychologically sound forms and methods of work designed to ensure the high-quality performance of the tasks assigned to the educational organizations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia. As Ulyanina (2019) points out, methodological support should include a significant psychological component focused on optimizing the educational and service activities of cadets with regards to their individual psychological characteristics.

Features of the educational process of the institutions sponsored by government agencies significantly affect the process of students' adaptation to educational and professional activities. The more significant changes occur in the life of students, the more difficult the adaptation process is. For example, students from other cities or states find it much more difficult to adapt to a new format of education, the need to perform official tasks under strict regulation of educational and professional activities and life in general (Kuptsov, 2016).

In the course of specially organized educational work, the future law enforcement officer develops legal literacy and the ability to perform professional actions in the field of law enforcement practice in strict accordance with the law as well as other competencies affecting the success and effectiveness of a future police officer (Bryzgalova, 2016).

Despite the uniqueness of the educational process in the institutions sponsored by government agencies, the general tendencies of domestic higher education are naturally realized there as well. Thus, in the 2019/2020 academic year the forced adoption of distance education due to COVID-19 was common for all educational organizations.

To study the features of distance learning from the viewpoint of the subjects of the educational process, an online survey was carried out. The participants were 132 cadets of the 2<sup>nd</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> years of studying and 21 teachers of the Voronezh Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia.

As noted by 63.6 % of cadets, preparation for classes and online classes themselves took from 4 to 6 hours a day. A fifth of students (21.4 %) spent less than 4 hours on educational activities and only 15.0 % exercised more than 6 hours a day. Accordingly, the weekly study load was significantly lower than the one determined by the Federal State Educational Standard 3 ++ (54 academic hours per week).

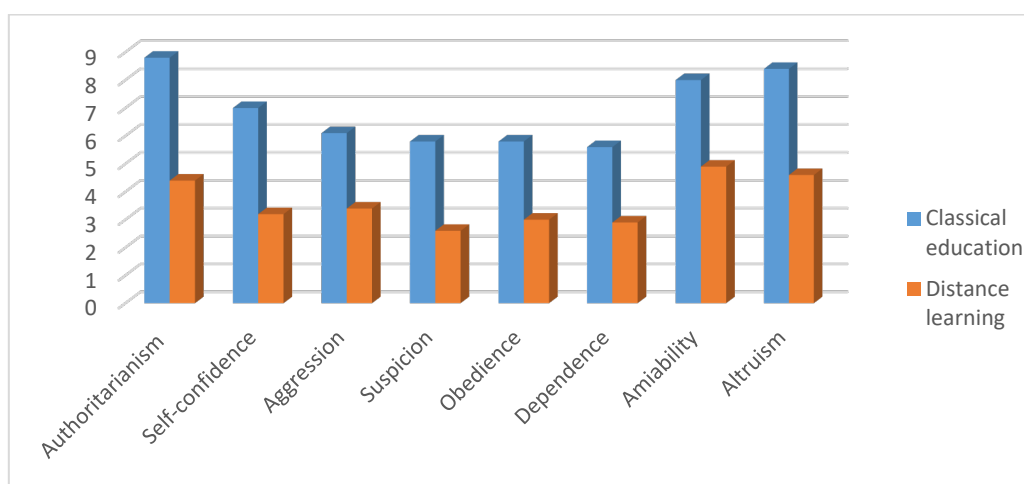
The results of teachers' survey (81.0 %) indicate a significant decrease in the academic discipline of cadets, the untimely performance of assignments. There are frequent cases of copying material from classmates and borrowing complete answers from the Internet.

Thus, distance education reduces the motivation of educational and professional activities, the need for critical understanding of educational material. This disadvantage was noted by some researchers of distance education (Krasnova, 2002). To level it, the learning personalization function needs to be integrated into a virtual learning environment, which has the potential to meet the diverse requirements of students (Xu et al., 2014).

51.5 % of cadets noted the absence of emotional contact with a teacher as a significant disadvantage of distance learning. Subject-subject interaction plays a dominant role in the educational process. Modern means of distance learning as well as audio and video communication do not contribute to ample interaction of a teacher and students, to providing feedback.

On the basis of a theoretical analysis of the problem, a pilot study and personal pedagogical practice, an empirical study aimed to study the influence of distance education on professionally significant personality traits of cadets was carried out. The study involved 192 cadets enrolled in the third and fourth years of the Faculty of Law of the Voronezh Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia.

One of the important personal characteristics of law enforcement officers is communicative competence, attitude towards citizens and colleagues. To determine the prevailing type of attitude of cadets to the people around them, T. Leary's test "Study of communicative and characterological trends" was used. The study was conducted in December 2019 before the adoption of distance education (Classical education) and three months after the start of distance learning (Distance learning). The results are shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Average values of different types of cadets' attitude to others

In general, it should be noted that the intensity of all types of attitude towards others decreased among cadets. For some items, statistically significant differences were found, which is confirmed by the use of Student's t-test. The most noticeable changes occurred in the manifestations of aggressiveness, rigour and perseverance ( $t_{emp} = 7.053$ ;  $t_{emp} > t_{0.01}$ ); dependence on others ( $t_{emp} = 5.562$ ;  $t_{emp} > t_{0.01}$ );

agreeableness ( $t_{emp} = 3.956$ ;  $t_{emp} > t_{0.01}$ ); compassion ( $t_{emp} = 6.139$ ;  $t_{emp} > t_{0.01}$ ); tendencies towards authoritarianism and leadership ( $t_{emp} = 2.184$ ;  $t_{emp} > t_{0.05}$ ); self-confidence ( $t_{emp} = 2.292$ ;  $t_{emp} > t_{0.05}$ ). Skepticism and compliance declined slightly ( $t_{emp} < t_{0.05}$ ).

At the first stage of the survey, 51.6 % of the respondents demonstrated pronounced leadership and organizational qualities; 48.4 % of the cadets, along with striving for leadership, showed authoritativeness, dogmatism, and intolerance to criticism. At the end of the study, only 9.4 % of cadets showed a tendency to take responsibility for others.

Excessively high values on the self-confidence scale indicating a sense of superiority over others, were revealed at the first stage of the study only in 17.2 % of cadets, the majority showed a moderate level of independence, confidence, striving for healthy competition (87.5 %). At the second stage of the study, 77.8 % of cadets showed a low level of confidence and independence of judgment. In the absence of students' competitiveness, the opportunity to compare their achievements in educational activities with classmates, the desire of students to make additional efforts to increase academic success was largely lost.

The first stage made it possible to reveal an average level of criticality, reflecting straightforwardness, frankness and exactingness in assessing others in the majority of cadets (64.1 %); 12.5 % of cadets had a high level of criticality, which manifested itself as aggression and hostility; a low level (sincerity, immediacy, persistence in achieving goals) was characteristic of 23.4 % of cadets. As a result of three months of distance learning, the level of aggressiveness and activity, persistence in achieving the goal significantly decreased (low indicators were found in 71.1 % of the respondents).

At the first stage of the study, a significant number of cadets (42.2 %) showed gullibility and dependence on the opinions of others, expecting help and advice. As a result of distance learning implementation, the proportion of subjects with the specified characteristics doubled (84.4 %). At the same time, the number of cadets showing fearfulness, inability to resist the influence of others, significantly decreased (from 39.1 % to 13.3 %). These qualities are of particular importance for the cadets of educational institutions sponsored by government agencies, since official activity involves compliance with one-man command and subordination. However, it is important for this subordination to be conscious.

Distance education contributed to a decrease of amiability (a low level was found in 62.2 % of cadets, while at the first stage it was inherent in 7.8 % of respondents). Excessively high scores on this scale are characteristic of emotionally labile, hysterical individuals seeking social approval without regard to the situation. The number of persons with similar manifestations decreased from 39.1 % to 7.8 %. This is a positive dynamics. However, the general trend indicates a total decrease in the orientation of cadets towards collaboration and cooperation.

The severity of altruistic behavior patterns also decreased significantly. If at the first stage of the study, the number of cadets with high and medium levels on this scale was 93.8 %, then after the distance learning implementation, the group of cadets inclined to more or less degree of altruism included only 42.2 %.

In our opinion, the reason for these tendencies is a decrease in the social orientation of cadets, a decrease in the focus on interaction with fellow students, teachers and officers. According to Rukshin (2020) being a people's teacher of Russia, distance education is killing socialization. And we, as a biological species, survived not only because we passed knowledge, experience, skills to each other but

also because we transmitted the emotions like sympathy, compassion, empathy, consciousness, condolences.

The research also covered the safety of cadets' personal resources that contribute to resisting stressful life circumstances. Such resources can be living conditions, study, work, material and non-material sources of physical and psychological well-being. An increase in resistance to stress is carried out through the accumulation or conservation of resources (Vodopyanova & Nasledov, 2013).

To identify the subjective assessment of the gains and losses of vital resources by cadets when adopting distance learning, a study was carried out using N.E. Vodopyanova and M.V. Stein's Loss and Gains Questionnaire, modified for research purposes.

As a result, it was revealed that a high level of resourcefulness is inherent in 33.3 % of cadets, which indicates significant adaptive capabilities and stress resistance of this part of the surveyed. The average level of resourcefulness is shown by a small number of respondents being 8.3 %. More than half of the cadets (58.3 %) found a low level of resourcefulness, which indicates a decrease in stress resistance in general. The results are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Indicators of losses and gains of cadets in educational and professional activities

| Resources                                      | Average indicators |       | Resource indicators (%) |
|--|--------------------|-------|-------------------------|
|  | Losses             | Gains |                         |
| Confidence in achieving goals                  | 1.625              | 2.125 | 21.6 (low)              |
| Stable educational and service activities      | 1.875              | 2.542 | 25.4 (low)              |
| Recognition of achievements                    | 1.667              | 3.000 | 44.6 (average)          |
| Motivation to studying                         | 1.958              | 2.750 | 30.4 (low)              |
| Motivation to do something                     | 1.708              | 2.917 | 42.5 (average)          |
| Support from fellow students                   | 1.667              | 2.750 | 38.2 (average)          |
| Opportunities for education and self-education | 2.042              | 2.458 | 18.0 (low)              |

As can be seen from Table 1, the average indicators of the resource capacity of cadets were revealed in relation to the recognition of their achievements by others, support of fellow students and the motivation of general activity.

It is important to note that losses negatively correlate with an assessment of the quality of life in general and are directly related to frustration, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization (Vodopyanova, 2009).

## 7. Conclusion

The results obtained indicate that the educational process in an exclusively distance form reduces the motivation of educational and professional activities of cadets, their desire for education and self-education. As the experience of implementing distance learning has shown, the need for reflection and analysis of educational material also decreases.

Education, along with training, involves mentoring of law enforcement officers. The distance learning regardless of its form serves to destroy the social in a person, and without the social, there is no

personality. No distance formats even ultramodern ones can replace live communication, a personal example of a teacher due to which a specialist in any field develops personally and professionally.

The three-month period of distance learning implementation led to a significant decrease in the social orientation of cadets, the loss of personal resources and a change in their communicative and characterological characteristics.

Thus, under normal circumstances, the use of distance education is impractical. Even under the condition of competent methodological and technical support, its application will lead to a significant decrease in the quality of law enforcement specialists training; will prevent them from forming their general, communicative and professional culture at the proper level.

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