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DISTANCE LEARNING LESSONS DURING THE CORONAVIRUS
PANDEMIC: SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The article presents an analysis of the responses of survey participants to the questionnaire "Distance learning: feedback" in order to study the consequences of a post-traumatic situation caused by the sudden introduction of distance learning at a university, among higher education teachers. The situation was ambiguous and exacerbated the stress of teachers and students by the general unhealthy situation around the threat of the coronavirus pandemic, the systematic delay in returning to a normal form of interaction and the unpreparedness of the education sector in general for distance learning. In our study, we focused on the following main blocks of problematic issues: "How effective is it?", "Is distance learning ineffective?", "In what format can distance learning be implemented based on the experience of spring-summer 2020?" The results obtained showed that, in general, teachers are aware of the relevance of distance learning and the need to update the educational methodology. Almost all teachers recognize the value of traditional forms of teaching, in which the first place is the possibility of live dialogue between the teacher and the student, the student and the student. A person has a social being; in the process of adaptation and socialization to the social environment he is formed as a person. The culture of personal development requires a show, an example, live communication.

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1. Introduction

Over the past few months, the world has been experiencing a coronavirus pandemic COVID-19, as a result of which there are global changes in all spheres of human life. This pandemic has shown us how fragile the human world is and how unprotected humanity is from global social catastrophes. According to the UNESCO website, most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic (UNESCO, 2020). In particular, in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, a mode of remote interaction between a teacher and students was also introduced. Under these conditions, the format of distance learning has been actualized, which has been under discussion in recent decades intending to modernize both school and university education (Gozman & Shestopal, 1999). Distance learning technologies are used in many universities in Russia and abroad (Elizarov, 2016; Kuznetsova, 2015). The forced and urgent transition to distance learning put students and teachers in a stressful situation.

As the author notes (Grigorash, 2014), one of the tasks of the modern education system of the state is to provide every person with free and open access to education throughout his life, taking into account his interests, abilities and needs. In this context, of course, active and interactive methods of conducting classes are in demand, but, as the ancients said, it is crucial to know when to stop. Distance learning is one of the most productive forms of organizing the learning process. In general, the observed digitalization of the social sphere requires the participants of social interaction to possess modern communication technologies (Dronova, 2018).

Distance learning emerged at the beginning of the last century with the introduction of distance learning. Today the format of distance learning is changing (Gozman & Shestopal, 1999). Thanks to computer telecommunications, a productive connection is established between the teacher and the student, the student and knowledge (Zubov, 2016). Some researchers, based on experimental data, insist that "the quality and structure of training courses, as well as the quality of teaching in distance learning, are often much better than in traditional forms of education" (Vodolad et al., 2010, para. 7). Of course, the electronic education system can significantly increase the efficiency of training specialists with higher professional education. As the author writes (Grigorash, 2014), "there are some doubts about these statements" since not every specialist can be trained remotely. The thesis that "the higher education system does not only provide knowledge for mastering a specific speciality is of great value" (para. 3). However, the period of study at a university is the final stage of personality formation, which requires active interaction in a team, live communication, the ability to build connections in social reality.

2. Problem Statement

The problem, in the opinion of the authors, is the extreme positions on the issue of distance learning, which some researchers and officials take. Distance learning has its pros and cons, and they must be taken into account when organizing the educational process.

3. Research Questions

The subject of the research is distance learning at the Chechen State Pedagogical University as the first experience of teachers and students in the implementation of an innovative format of the educational process. This training format has its unique characteristics. Over the past decades, the university has actively operated a soft version of distance support for students, when all electronic material on disciplines read to students was displayed on a particular website. Despite this fact, the teachers and students of the university at the beginning of the announcement of self-isolation were not ready for the format of distance learning. The re-installation of education from the traditional form to distance learning happened suddenly. Moreover, mastering the new capabilities of Zoom applications, Cisco Webex took place in the process of active interaction of teachers and students, who together mastered new opportunities and unexpected forms of their implementation.

In our research, we focused on the following main blocks of problematic issues:

How effective or ineffective, is distance learning?

In what format can distance learning be implemented based on the experience of spring-summer 2020?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the work is to conduct an analytical review of the process of distance interaction between a teacher and a student during the period of self-isolation. For this goal, the following tasks are being solved:

- conducting a mass survey among teachers and students of the university;
- analysis of the results obtained.

5. Research Methods

With the help of Google Forms, a questionnaire "Distance learning: feedback" was created. A survey was conducted among teachers of the Chechen State Pedagogical University. The survey involved 100 representatives of the teaching staff of the university.

The survey involved:

- 3 % of the respondents are assistants.
- 49.5 % of the respondents are senior teachers.
- 32.7 % of the respondents are associate professors.
- 5.9 % of the respondents are professors.
- 7.9 % of the respondents are heads of departments.
- 1 % of the respondents are directors (deans) of the institute (faculty).

Of these, 6 % of the respondents are doctors of science; 42.6 % of the respondents are candidates of science; 51.5 % of the respondents are not graduated.

Age composition: up to 25 years old respondents are 3 %; 26–35 years old respondents are 20.8 %; 36–45 respondents are 24.8 %; 46–55 years old respondents are 24.8 %; 56–65 years old respondents are 23, 8 %; over 66 years old respondents are 3 %.

6. Findings

The survey gave the following results, the analysis of which provided us with the opportunity to put together an objective picture of the situation with distance learning in this university.

The following answers were received to the question "Do you consider distance learning an effective approach in the educational process?": 5.8 % of survey participants answered "yes"; 51.5 % of survey participants answered "no"; 6.9 % of survey participants answered "It is hard for me to answer"; 42.6 % of survey participants answered "I consider it necessary to combine remote and traditional technologies ". Other answers were offered 2 %. They are the follows: "A differentiated approach is needed – distance is not suitable for all students due to their weak basic knowledge and communication skills"; If we build the correct distance learning system, it can be actively implemented. However, unfortunately, Russia is far from effective methods of distance learning".

The following answers were received to the question "In the process of forced distance learning, you encountered the following difficulties", the survey participants noted the following obstacles to high-quality remote work: 71.2 % of the respondents noted "technical problems with the use of equipment"; 20.8 % of the respondents noted the "choice of control materials"; 5 % "selection of the lecture content"; 64.4 % of the respondents noted "no lively reaction to the material presented"; 2 % of the survey participants noted that there were no problems.

The following answers were received to the question "In what format do you see the productivity of distance learning": 3 % of survey participants chose "full distance learning"; 61.4 % of survey participants chose "partial distance learning"; 35.6 % of survey participants chose "full rejection of distance learning".

The following answers were received to the question "Name the most productive opportunities for distance learning": 4 % of survey participants chose "it is convenient to acquire knowledge through distance learning"; 10.9 % of survey participants chose "the opportunity to work in parallel with learning"; 17.8 % of respondents the survey chose "increasing the level of independence in mastering educational material"; 46.5 % of survey participants chose "experience of using new technologies"; 10.9 % of survey participants chose "stimulating personal growth"; 43.6 % of survey participants chose "did not see effectiveness distance learning". To the question "How do you assess your methodological readiness to switch to distance learning during the period of forced self-isolation in the spring of 2020", the following answers were received: 2 % of survey participants answered "I was ready to switch to distance learning in advance"; 63.4 % of survey participants answered "I was generally ready to switch to distance learning, but I had to learn some things "on the fly"; 15.8 % of survey participants answered "I was not ready to switch to distance learning"; 18.8 % of survey participants answered "I was not ready for the transition to distance learning".

The following answers were received to the question "What electronic resources and distance learning systems did you use?": 27.7 % of the survey participants answered: "the e-learning system of the

Chechen State Pedagogical University based on MOODLE"; 64.4 % of the survey participants answered "Viber messengers, WhatsApp, Skype"; 97.0 % of survey participants answered "Zoom platform, Cisco"; 79.2 % of survey participants answered "e-mail"; 4 % of survey participants answered differently (Google classroom, Yurayt educational program, Open education", several other electronic resources).

The following answers were received to the question "How did the transition to distance learning affect your working time?" 5 % of the survey participants answered "I have much free time"; 14, 9 % of the survey participants answered "I have a little more free time"; 10,9 % of survey participants answered "my working hours have practically not changed"; 37.7 % of survey participants answered "there is less free time, working hours have increased"; 34.7 % of survey participants answered "working hours increased significantly".

The following answers were received to the question "What kind of help did you need from the university (its structural divisions) to conduct distance learning?": 10.9 % of survey participants answered: "no help was required"; 26.7 % of survey participants answered "methodological or technical assistance was required in using the e-learning system on the MOODLE platform"; 13.9 % of survey participants answered "they needed methodological assistance when using video conferencing services"; 8.9 % of survey participants answered "they needed help to use social networking opportunities"; 4 % of survey participants answered "help was required to use the capabilities of instant messengers"; 16.8 % of survey participants answered " I needed to install additional software"; 19.8 % of survey participants answered " payment for a Zoom subscription in order to remove the inconvenient 40-minute limit"; 27.7 % survey respondents responded "the university was required to buy the rights to use the Zoom program, because this program is most suitable for video conferencing without special skills"; 23.8 % of survey participants answered " compensation for the use of the Internet, it would be possible to provide equipment for temporary use (laptop)"; 20.8 % of survey participants answered " targeted payment to upgrade (update) home computer equipment"; 36.6 % of survey participants answered " A technical consultant to whom students who have problems with software could be addressed"; 3.0 % of survey participants answered " Other answer options: "Consulting on working with the electronic library system (ELS)", "There are other programs that provide consulting support".

The following answers were received to the question "What problems and difficulties hindered you the most during distance learning": 13.9 % of survey participants answered "Lack of skills or experience in using distance learning technologies"; 28.7 % of survey participants answered "Weak technical capabilities of the personal equipment"; 56.4 % of survey participants answered "Weak Internet communication channel", 7.9 % of survey participants answered "Difficulty in organizing video lectures, video conferencing"; 12.9 % of survey participants answered "Excessive outside control"; 7 % of survey participants answered "Low student discipline"; 73.3 % of survey participants answered "Weak technical capabilities of the technique used by students or lack thereof", 1 % of survey participants answered "Other answer options: students' answers were more often read from the Internet".

The following answers were received to the question "Do you think that the employer should compensate employees for the intensive use of personal equipment, software and communication channels": 36.6 % of survey participants answered "No, it is not necessary to compensate"; 63.4 % of survey participants answered "Yes, it is necessary to compensate".

The following answers were received to the question "How successful was the educational process of distance learning, how easy it was to teach and learn in this format": 9.9 % of the survey participants answered "It was convenient to teach and learn"; 36.6 % of the survey participants answered "It was convenient to teach, but it was difficult for the students to study", 44.6 % of the survey participants answered "It was difficult to teach and learn"; 6.9 % of the survey participants answered "It was impossible to teach and learn"; 2 % suggested something else: "The lack of Internet among students hindered; I do not consider it successful, because with distant learning there is no way to control the real picture of mastering the educational material".

The following answers were received to the question "Did distance learning affect the results of the summer session?": 3.0 % of survey participants answered "Yes, it did, the quality of knowledge has improved"; 65.3 % of survey participants answered "Yes, it did, the quality of knowledge has deteriorated"; 28.7 % of the survey participants answered "No, it did not, the quality of knowledge does not depend on the form of education". 3 % of the survey participants answered and suggested something else: "The lack of live communication does not allow controlling real knowledge; I don't know, needs to be analyzed; The quality of knowledge has not deteriorated, but it has not improved either".

The following answers were received to the question "Are you satisfied with the level of control of the acquired knowledge and skills by the teacher in the process of distance learning": 15.8 % of the survey participants answered "The teacher gets an objective picture of the student's readiness"; 83.2 % of the survey participants answered "The teacher does not get an objective picture of the student's readiness"; 1 % of the survey participants answered "Difficult to answer".

The following answers were received to the question "Students received an objective assessment of their progress": 20.8 % of survey participants answered "Yes, students received an objective assessment of their knowledge"; 69.3 % of survey participants answered "No, thanks to distance learning, students had the opportunity to get an assessment that exceeded the quality of their knowledge"; 7.9 % of survey participants answered "No, due to distance learning, students received an assessment lower than the quality of their knowledge". 2 % of the survey participants answered differently: "There is no definite answer, each group has its own situation on this position; Not many nuances were missed, little time was allocated for the session".

The following answers were received to the question "How, in your opinion, should distance learning be developed at your university in the next academic year": 2 % of the survey participants answered "Full distance learning"; 54.5 % of survey participants answered "Partial distance learning"; 43.6 % of survey participants answered "Traditional education only".

The following answers were received to the question "What type of Internet connection do you have at home – wired (including WIFI), mobile or not?" 44.6 % of the survey respondents answered "Wired"; 54.5 % of survey participants answered "Mobile", 1 % of survey participants answered "There is none".

The following answers were received to the question "During the period of distance learning, the level of the teacher's exactingness to students": 10.9 % of the survey participants answered "Was higher than usual"; 44.6 % of the survey participants answered "Was the same as always"; 44.6 % of survey participants answered "Was lower than usual".

The following answers were received to the question "Please indicate what types of devices you used for entering the educational portal": 26.7 % of survey participants answered "Personal computer"; 69.3 % of survey participants answered "Notebook"; 8.9 % of survey participants answered "Tablet"; 62.4 % of the survey participants answered "Mobile phone".

The following answers were received to the question "Please mark the best ways for you to interact with a student": 17.8 % of survey participants answered "Webinar"; 3.0 % of survey participants answered "Forum"; 13.9 % of survey participants answered "Chat"; 62.4 % of survey participants answered "Video services (Zoom, Skype)"; 78.2 % of survey participants answered "Traditional meeting in the audience"; 26.7 % of survey participants answered "Individual consultations"; 47.5 % of survey participants answered "E-mail"; 26.7 % of survey participants answered "Telephone"; 15.8 % of survey participants answered "Social networks".

The following answers were received to the question "For conducting online lectures, communicating with students, the quality of the Internet connection at your home is excellent, good, satisfactory or unsatisfactory": 8.9 % of the survey participants answered "Excellent"; 20.8 % of survey participants answered "Good"; 56.4 % of the survey participants answered "Satisfactory"; 10.9 % of the survey participants answered "Unsatisfactory"; 3 % of survey participants answered differently: "The Internet is high-speed, but the congestion due to quarantine was high, so the quality of communication was much lower than before quarantine; unstable internet".

The following answers were received to the question "Do you think the situation caused by coronavirus infection will lead to an improvement or deterioration in the quality of higher education in Russia in a year, or will it not affect it in any way?": 2 % of survey participants answered "Improvement"; 57.4 % of survey participants answered "Deteriorating"; 5.9 % of the survey participants answered "Will not affect in any way"; 31.7 % of the survey participants answered "Difficult to answer". 3 % of survey participants answered differently: "Should lead to improvement due to competent integration of distance learning into the main format of education; Russia needs changes, namely, in the administrative apparatus! The virus does not affect the education system in any way! It is necessary to change the bureaucracy at the Federation level".

The following answers were received to the question "Do you think that as a result of the forced transition to distance learning, you have gained useful experience?": 73.3 % of the survey participants answered "Yes, I have gained new experience and skills, it is useful for me as a teacher"; 4.0 % of survey participants answered "No, I have not acquired new experience or skills"; 22.8 % of survey participants answered "I acquired new experience and skills, but these are properties that are useless for a teacher".

The following answers were received to the question "In what form did you send the theoretical material to students?": 50.5 % of the survey participants answered "Presentation of your lectures"; 21.8 % of survey participants answered "Presentations of lectures from other sources"; 72.3 % of survey participants answered "Own electronic lectures"; 13.9 % of survey participants answered "Lectures organized by special means of the MOODLE e-learning system"; 61.4 % of survey participants answered "Providing electronic textbooks or links to electronic textbooks"; 23.8 % of survey participants answered "Links to paper textbooks"; 8.9 % of the survey participants answered "I do not teach lectures", 1 % of

the survey participants answered differently: "Created flexible courses in disciplines on the URITE educational platform".

The following answers were received to the question "How did you conduct the practical (laboratory) classes": 81.2 % of the survey participants answered "The topics, assignments, tasks were given to students"; 37.6 % of the survey participants answered "The received and evaluated the solved tasks were carried out"; 6.9 % of survey participants answered "Students independently evaluated their own decisions"; 64.4 % of the survey participants answered "There were online classes in the form of a webinar in synchronous mode"; 1 % of the survey participants answered differently: "I practised mainly problem-based learning using various electronic resources, including the YouTube video hosting service".

The following answers were received to the question "How was the feedback with the students and the control of their mastery of the academic discipline carried out?" 73.3 % of the survey participants answered "Consultations in the dialogue format (e-mail, social networks, instant messengers)"; 44.6 % of survey participants answered "Group consultations (social networks, messengers)"; 19.8 % of survey participants answered "Testing students' knowledge using the MOODLE e-learning system"; 55.4 % of survey participants answered "Students send solutions to problems via social networks or e-mail"; 29.7 % of survey participants answered "Hosting webinars"; 2.0 % of the survey participants answered another "Testing on the URITE educational program".

The following answers were received to the question "In your opinion, should the transition to distance learning affect the teacher's salary and how?": 10.9 % of the survey participants answered "The transition to distance learning should not affect the teacher's salary, it should remain for everyone"; 41.6 % of the survey participants answered "The transition to distance learning should increase the salaries of all teachers"; 45.5 % of the survey participants answered "The transition to distance learning requires material incentives for teachers who carry out a high-quality educational process"; 2.0 % of survey participants answered differently: "In fact, work in the distance took at least 12 hours a day every day, and often more: preparing and conducting classes, advising students, reporting, performing the rest of the work on the load, preparing and carrying out planned activities almost seven days a week. I think that in some way these circumstances should affect wages, perhaps in a differentiated way, but they should".

7. Conclusion

As a result of the study, we received the following recommendations, which represent an overall picture of the assessment of the situation by university teachers.

Recommendations for organizing the educational process: "Set up in advance the content of the discipline on the Moodle platform. Create an electronic package of video materials for the discipline. Create conditions for monitoring students' knowledge of Moodle. Continue Zoom Conference. "It is recommended to prepare a course in the discipline taking into account distance learning and control in combination with the traditional form of communication". "Using the Moodle program". "A wish for the management not to transfer part-time students and students of additional education completely to distance learning for several reasons." "Provide proctoring in distance learning exams". "To stimulate and provide technical support to educators who will create their online courses". "I would recommend that students

and teachers communicate more and get acquainted with the experience of such training in the leading universities of the country and Europe". "To improve the material base for working remotely". "Since the majority of students use android smart phones, it would be relevant to use other programs, for example, Google duo, or a mail messenger where more people can be connected at the same time and for a longer time". "I would like the Internet communication channel to work efficiently everywhere in the republic, not only within the city and in the suburbs but also on the periphery (since students also live in remote areas). Moreover, an urgent need for students to have high-quality technical means for distance learning". "Active use of ICT tools". "Many students did not have the technical opportunity for distance learning – lack of proper communication, lack of necessary equipment, or rather, lack of it (there are schoolchildren and students or students in the family). If these problems are unsolvable, the schedule of classes for this category of students should be replaced with deferred work with a teacher". "I hope there will be no transition to distance learning. However, if this happens, then it is necessary to take care of the quality of communication for such a format of work for students, especially rural students". "It is necessary to develop network interaction with other universities, which will make it possible to actively use their resources and share experience in the field of distance education". "A new form of assessment of student skills needs to be created". "Take courses to improve skills and knowledge in the field of new technologies". "It is necessary to teach students how to prepare themselves for classes". "We will have to work on the quality of communication with the audience because you communicate like in space, there is no live connection".

Recommendations for the organization of control: "Less reporting. After the webinars, you need to rest. The training part must track the work through ZOOM".

Recommendations in the psychological sphere: "Always remain human, in any situation!" "Fortunately, or unfortunately, distance learning cannot replace traditional learning, live communication (contact)".

Distance Learning Opposition: "Distance Learning Only Harms Students." "I am against distance learning." "Against distance education".

Recommendations in the technical part: "First of all, it is necessary to provide teachers with electronic equipment, at least laptops." "Pay for Internet connection to each teacher monthly." "Provide high-quality communication for students". "Due to the lack of high-quality communication, productive work is not possible. Classes should be conducted in classrooms, with live questioning and dialogue". "To extend the duration of lectures and seminars at least up to an hour, because too much time is spent on connecting students to video conferences, roll call. Lack of high-quality communication entails a loss of time".

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