

# Peculiarities of Student Distance Learning in Emergency Situation Condition

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**Abstract:** The article outlines the contemporary issues of distance learning and the use of the Internet by students during the outbreak of pandemic. The conducted research demonstrates student attitude towards distance learning, its advantages and disadvantages, student perception and acquisition of lecture and seminar material, implementation of online trainings and practical classes. The purpose of this article is to investigate student behavioral, cognitive and emotional reactions to forced distance learning conditions. The authors assume that students, being members of Generation Z, can easily adapt to the new learning environment, quickly organize the learning process, as well as choose preferable online learning platforms. The research proves that 66% of students need from 2 to 4 hours for distance learning; 22% spend from 4 to 6 hours studying remotely and only 12% spend less than 2 hours a day studying in a new way. One third of students (36%) consider the distance learning system quite comfortable, 8% – very comfortable, while a quarter of the respondents (25%) have neutral attitude towards online learning technologies. Students choose the following distance learning platforms the most often: Google Meet (94%) and Moodle (70%). They also use Zoom, Skype, Viber and Telegram in order to keep in touch with teachers and fulfil studying purposes. 19% of students regard distance learning as of a high quality, whereas 75% are currently neutral about this way of learning and only 6% of the respondents consider these necessary innovations ineffective.

**Keywords:** *coronavirus pandemic; distance learning; students; Generation Z; innovative education at a high school.*

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## Introduction

The unexpected crisis caused by coronavirus pandemic has made millions of students resort to distance learning instead of attending classes at educational institutions. Students and teachers should quickly bring the Internet resources into use for the purpose of effective educational process establishment. It is essential to bear in mind that the Internet, as a platform of development and existing objective reality, has its own development patterns and forms of existence.

The Internet specificity, as of a new social space of interaction between individuals and social communities, is revealed in terms of network theories, whose methodology has been interpreted by sociologists, political scientists, psychologists, SMM-specialists, educators: Porat M. (1977); Chin-Hooi Soh P., Charlton J.P., Kok-Wai Chew (2014); Lytvyniuk O. (2016). Means of information and communication technologies in educational environment have been investigated (Bykov V., Lapinskyi V., Shyshkina M., Spirin O., Rudenko V., Demianenko V. et al., 2010), formation of multimedia competence of students (Myroshnychenko V., 2015); specific types of student research activities Kademia M. (Kademia, Kozyar, & Rak, 2011). The paradigm of vocational training in higher education has been deepened (Pichkur, Oliiar, Rozman, Petrenko, et al., 2020), trends of higher education have been considered (Bondar, Telychko, Tovkanets, Shcherban, & Kobal, 2020).

Teachers and students are in forced conditions that should be rapidly transformed into the usual mode of work at higher education institutions and the emergence of modern forms and approaches to innovative education at a high school.

While suggesting to use distance learning, teachers should bear in mind that modern students are representatives of a new generation.

Students belong to Generation Z, also called centennials (Howe & Strauss, 2009), or "Generation I" (Internet Generation) (Rosen, 2007).

It should be remarked that the main feature of this generation is the ability to perceive and analyze a large amount of information, separate its important pieces from the minor ones, synthesize and combine information into clusters.

The specificity of Generation Z is that such students know a large amount of information and are accustomed to its accessibility. Learning in such conditions becomes an algorithm of completing tasks at a specific time.

The peculiarities of processing information are speed, promptness and multitasking.

At the same time, scientists point out that the centennials are characterized by the following features: increased fatigue, attention deficit, inattention, visual symbols preference instead of logic or deeper analysis of a text (Bubich, et al., 2016).

Thus, given that Generation Z can extremely easy navigate the Internet, distance learning is, to a great extent, a familiar system for information perception and acquisition.

### **Material and methods**

Having faced today's challenges, in particular working in distance learning conditions, we have undertaken a survey among students of Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, whose field of study is Psychology. The survey touches on the issue of distance learning peculiarities in forced virtualization conditions. Full-time students in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>d</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year of study have taken part in the research. The average age of the respondents is 20 years, 80% of them are girls, 20% are boys.

Participants were given a questionnaire regarding the time spent on the Internet, the comforts and benefits of distance learning system, platforms chosen by students and faculty, as well as the disadvantages of this work format. The survey has been made by means of Google Forms during March 2020 in accordance with all ethical requirements of such a format and has involved 83 respondents.

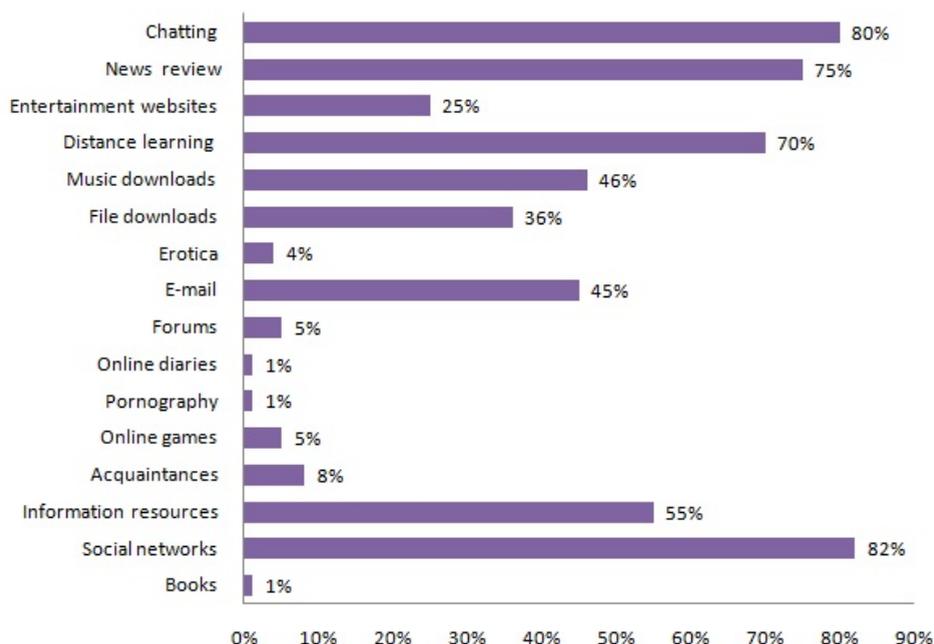
### **Results**

The research indicates that 46% of the interviewed students spend from 4 to 6 hours on the Internet, 29% spend from 6 to 8 hours online, 8% spend more than 8 hours online per day.

Accordingly, 66% of users need from 2 to 4 hours for distance learning; 22% of students spend from 4 to 6 hours studying in a distance learning format and only 12% spend less than 2 hours a day studying in such a way.

As a result, at present, the vast majority of students spend almost the whole day surfing the Internet and they spend a considerable amount of this time studying in a distance learning format.

Regarding the purpose of using the Internet, the division of responses has been done as follows (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1.** Percentage division of the interviewed by the criterion "Purpose of using the Internet"

As it can be seen in the figure, the vast majority of students use the Internet for social networks (82%), chatting (80%) and news review (75%). 70 % prefer distance learning and innovative educational forms; 55% of the interviewed students are ready to spend their time using information resources, about half of the respondents (45%) use the Internet to check their email. Other user' interests include leisure, entertainment and recreation.

The conducted research has stated a specific attitude of students towards the distance learning system.

**Table 1.** Student perception of the distance learning format

Student assessment of the distance learning system comfort					
Very discomfortable	A bit discomfortable	Neutral	Quite comfortable	Very comfortable	
6%	24%	25%	36%	8%	
Distance learning disadvantages					
Poor network connection	Imperfect distance learning platforms	Teacher unpreparedness for this work format	Student unpreparedness for the distance learning system	The need to study at home when there are other family members	
65%	27%	12%	27%	36%	
Distance learning platforms					
Moodle	Google Meet	Zoom	Skype	Viber	Telegram
70%	94%	24%	7%	63%	31%

One third of the students (36%) consider the distance learning system quite comfortable, 8% – very comfortable, while 25% of modern students are neutral about online learning technologies.

More than half of students remark poor network connection (65%) among the drawbacks of virtual class attendance, about a third (27%) indicate the online learning platforms imperfection.

Given that educational institutions must urgently resort to distance learning format, students were offered various technical platforms. Students choose the following distance learning platforms the most often: Google Meet (94%) and Moodle (70%).

## Discussion & Conclusions

Therefore, the current challenges that the society is facing and the higher education system in particular require rapid and immediate response from both the teaching staff and students.

Teachers, who teach remotely, should bear in mind that Generation Z students need systematization, logical coherence in teaching, communication, as well as support. The teacher, as the educational environment moderator and online conference organizer, is required for summarizing, systematic planning, setting tasks and testing the acquired knowledge. This is caused by some peculiarities of thinking of young people of Generation Z.

The Internet technologies are capable of improving the learning quality. Thus, students have a scope for creativity and cognition in their usual environment.

The novelty of the situation makes it possible to note the high efficiency of distance learning, 19% of students have indicated this; at present, 75% of respondents are neutral about this way of learning and only 6% of students consider the forced innovations ineffective.

Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, as one of the leading institutions of higher education in Ukraine, has faced a forced switchover to the distance learning system. Experience in organizing this type of training and forms of its implementation is only being developed, and as an option can be applied at educational institutions of other countries.

In particular, in conditions of crisis uncertainty, caused by the pandemic, the educational process remains a stable field of activity for both students and teachers. As the conducted research shows, teachers and students are free to choose a platform for online learning that will maximize convenience, confidentiality (for training sessions) and quality of the gained knowledge.

It is known that in conditions of crisis, security is most often violated, so the possibility to study according to the schedule creates a sense of continuity of the educational process, and therefore, contributes to the restoration of psychological security and reduces student anxiety and frustration to uncertainty.

At the same time, the conducted research can be useful as psychological, technological and professional monitoring of student preparedness for distance learning conditions. The disadvantages of such studies have been pointed out by the interviewed students and should be taken into account in order to allow teachers to respond promptly to the remarks and immediately correct them so as to improve educational services.

The conducted research does not examine all aspects of the stated problem. It remains to be investigated whether the higher education system will be able to cope with the transfer of all distance learning forms; how the teachers master the use of various online platforms; how the classical way of learning is transferred, as most of the interviewed students have indicated that it is convenient and profitable for them to stay at home and practise a chosen profession. This will lead to a new awareness and socio-economic challenges.

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