

The Level of Socio-psychological Adaptation and Emotional Status of Graduate Students and Teachers in Conditions of Covid-isolation

Abaskalova Nadezhda Pavlovna¹, Aizman Nina Igorevna² and Aizman Roman Idelevich^{3*}

¹Professor of the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Life Safety, Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University, Russia

²Candidate of Psychology Science, Docent, Department of Psychology and Pedagogics, Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University, Russia

³Professor, Head of the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Life Safety, Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University, Russia

***Corresponding Author:** Aizman Roman Idelevich, Professor, Head of the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Life Safety, Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University, Russia.

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Abstract

The relevance of our research is due to the problems of distance education in modern conditions during COVID-19 isolation. The online survey was chosen as the research method for collecting data. It was noted that the level of anxiety and conflict among school teachers increased, health disorders manifested themselves, professional burnout was revealed. The insufficient level of competence of school teachers in the field of information technologies requires psychological and pedagogical support of their work to reduce the level of maladjustment in the mode of distance education. Parents and teachers noted an increase in aggressiveness, anxiety, sleep disorders, exacerbation of chronic diseases in schoolchildren. The school psychologist in this situation did not have the opportunity to personally communicate with the child, and remote communication did not give the desired result. Deterioration of psychological health affected the ability to assimilate educational material and academic performance. It is necessary to select specific technologies and teaching methods in the distance education system in the current situation and develop a system for the prevention of psychological health disorders.

Keywords: Socio-psychological Adaptation; Anxiety; Professional Burnout; Epidemic; Distance Education; Psychological Health; Aggressiveness; Prevention

Introduction

One of the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standard of General Education (FSSES GE) is compliance with the conditions for the implementation of the basic educational program of general education, which provide variability in the directions of psychological, pedagogical and social support for participants of the educational process. It includes diagnostics, counseling, correctional and developmental work, psychological and pedagogical rehabilitation.

In recent years, aspects of studying the environment have changed in pedagogy. The emphasis is shifted from the adaptive function of education (preparing a person to perform certain roles in society) to the developmental one (education is designed to develop the ability to accept oneself and one's being). There are new concepts - adaptive and developing educational environment. Of particular interest today is the consideration of the educational environment as a space for the development and social adaptation of the individual [4,8].

The setting of increasingly complex cognitive tasks for students in the mode of distance education causes maladjustment manifestations concerning various aspects of adaptation: educational (academic failure, chronic difficulties in mastering the curriculum); social (conflicts with teachers and peers, deviant behavior); psycho-emotional (emotional discomfort, anxiety, stress); somato-physiological (somatic health disorders, exacerbation of chronic diseases).

Epidemics have always been associated with adverse consequences for society, including for human mental health. The COVID-19 pandemic was the most unexpected and complex due to the lack of information about the nature of its development and the course of the disease. In addition, it was a blow to the health care and the economy of all countries without exception. On March 11, 2020, the WHO announced the introduction of a pandemic regime, strict socially restrictive measures such as self-isolation and quarantine were introduced in many countries.

The available publications show that, based on modern ideas about the work of the psyche, these are common psychological responses to the COVID-19 pandemic: the frequency of symptoms of anxiety and depression is on average from 16 to 28%, sleep disorders that in 8% of cases are accompanied by severe stress [6].

In the situation of COVID-19, there was a change in the natural way of life, there were reactions of loss, a decrease in the previous standard of living, restriction of movement, a sense of danger and as a result emotional problems such as: helplessness, denial, anger, depression, expressed fear, a state of constant anxiety and depression.

Both adults and children were under stress, which was accompanied by feelings such as loneliness, fear, anxiety for their own health and the health of loved ones, uncertainty about the future. At the same time, people did not have the opportunity to cope with stress in previously familiar ways (visiting the gym, friends, entertainment public institutions, spending a vacation at the sea, etc.). In the publication of Lima, *et al.* it was emphasized that anxiety acted as the dominant symptom of a mental disorder in the general population [5].

Another powerful stressful factor was isolation. In paper of Xiao, *et al.* it was shown that in persons who were isolated for

more than 14 days, the average score of the anxiety scale was 55.4 ± 14.3 points, that corresponded to a confident level of anxiety, which correlated with severe stress and negatively affected the quality of sleep and social relationships [7].

Therefore, the issue of maintaining the psychological and mental health of vulnerable groups of the population, including children, is an important problem and requires the development of psychological assistance in the pandemic conditions [1-3].

The relevance of our research is due to the presence of the following contradictions:

- Between the increased relevance of distance education during the coronavirus epidemic and the search for ways to organize the quality of education under this training system;
- Between the high level of education informatization and the insufficient readiness of school teachers (their competence) to work in the mode of distance education;
- Between the increasing load on students and teachers (mainly, psychological) and the lack of psychological and pedagogical support for their activities in the new conditions.

Methods

- 30 school teachers and 20 university teachers as well 60 students of grades 9 who will take the General State Exam this year, and 60 students of grades 11 who will take the Unified State Exam were surveyed and tested online using questionnaires and testing.
- The following diagnostic tools were used: the method of coping strategy (Lazarus test that determines coping mechanisms, ways to overcome difficulties in various spheres of mental activity); the Kettell test, that evaluates psychological characteristics of the individual; the method of socio-psychological adaptation according to K. Rogers and R. Diamond; questionnaires "Scale of personal anxiety", "Possession of information technologies", and "State of health". All tests and questionnaires are validated and widely used in our country [4], as well the program of the study have been approved by local Ethical Committee of Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University.
- The diagnostics made possible to analyze the level of readiness of students and teachers for the distance education system, the level of their socio-psychological adaptation, and the emotional state.

Results

We compared the coping strategy of behavior among school teachers and university teachers who were engaged in the distance education process. Among school teachers was 46% who used the coping strategy to solving problems and 54% of representatives from this group used the strategy of seeking social support. At the same time, university teachers used a coping strategy to solving problems more often by 5% (51%), and the strategy of social support more rarely by 5% (49%). As for the students of the final 11 grades, the coping strategy for solving problems used only 29% of respondents, and the strategy of social support - 76% of students (Figure 1).

We analyzed the parameters of socio-psychological adaptation to the new conditions of distance education in a pandemic situation: acceptance of others, conflicts, a sense of emotional comfort or discomfort.

The comparative analysis showed that the number of conflicts between teachers and students has increased three times compared before isolation, and only 17% of respondents - teachers in general education schools and 21% of university teachers experienced a state of emotional comfort.

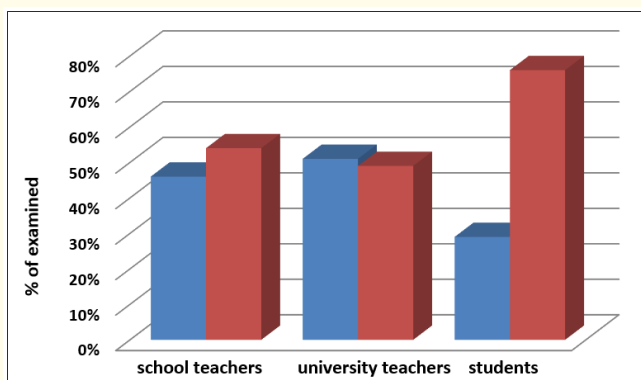


Figure 1: Coping strategies of teachers and the 11-th grade students.

Strategy for solving problems; ■ Strategy of social support.

It was shown that the psychological state of teachers reduced the level of socio-psychological adaptation. They experienced some emotional instability, anxiety, tension, dissatisfaction with the surrounding reality, pessimism. Among school teachers these indica-

tors were in 69%, among university teachers these symptoms were detected in 48% of the examined respondents (Figure 2).

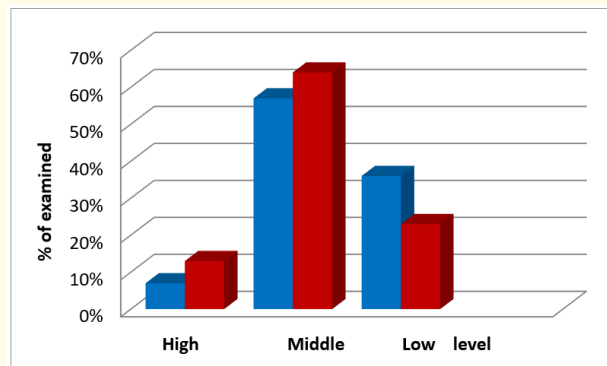


Figure 2: The level of socio-psychological adaptation of teachers.

School teachers; ■ University teachers.

Among the surveyed contingent 36% of school teachers and 23% of university teachers with a low level of socio-psychological adaptation were identified. The majority of respondents (57% school teachers and 64% university teachers) were characterized by an average level of socio-psychological adaptation. A high level of socio-psychological adaptation was registered in 7% of school teachers and 13% of university teachers.

A higher level of anxiety among school teachers was associated with the fact that they had to prepare students for the Unified State Exam, so the level of responsibility was very high, which caused psychological stress and often disruption of adaptation process. This was evidenced by the presence of a low level of socio-psychological adaptation in 36% of examined school teachers.

The system of distant education requires computer skills, knowledge of different programs, including for the testing of the students, skills to make presentations to classes and lectures, the development of e-textbooks (Figure 3).

Unfortunately, there has been found insufficient level of school teacher's competence to use information and communication technologies, that makes it difficult professional work in the mode of distance learning.

Figure 3: Computer competence of school teachers.

Legend:

- A - Do not know enough about the programs (28%);
- B - Are able to independently compose tests on a subject (34%);
- C - Cannot make presentations (47%);
- D - Can independently develop e-manuals (5%).

In 70% schoolchildren prevailed negative emotions such as anger (38%), boredom (67%), mistrust (57%), irritability (59%), fear (38%), aggression (63%), etc. Therefore, the interests of students moved into destructive forms of behavior (smoking, alcohol consumption, gambling, bullying, etc.), which became more attractive than the educational process.

An increased level of workload and the volume of homework (preparing presentations, essays, projects, etc.) with unpreparedness for independent work led to a high level of anxiety. We used the Phillips questionnaire (computer version), which allowed us to assess not only the general level of school anxiety, but also the qualitative originality of an anxiety feeling associated with distance education (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Emotional state of different grades students.

9-th grade students; ■ 11-th grade students.

Legend:

- A - Anxiety; B - Social Stress; C - Factors Hindering Success;
- D - Low Psychophysiological Resistance.

After analyzing the data, we found out the following: 42% of 9th grade students and 54% of 11th grade students had an anxiety above the normal level; 48% and 68% of 9th and 11th grades students, respectively, experienced social stress; 62% of 9th grade students and 53% of 11th grade students believed that there were unfavorable factors hindering success in the educational process during distance education; 45% of 9th grade respondents and 33% of 11th grade students had low physiological resistance to stress and problems, fears in communicating with teachers and parents.

We also conducted an analysis of the level of socio-psychological adaptation of students and found that there were almost twice as many children with a low level of adaptation in grades 9, most of the students were to the middle level of adaptation (Figure 5).

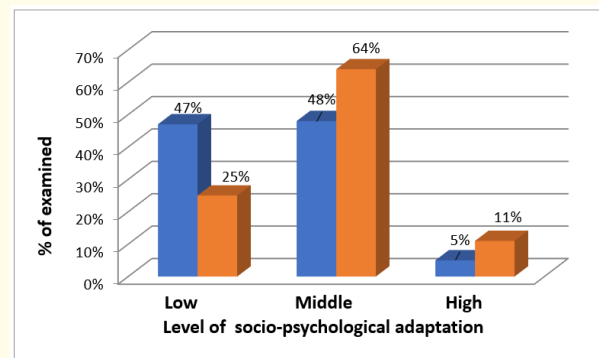


Figure 5: The level of socio-psychological adaptation of students 9-th grade students; ■ 11-th grade students.

Conclusion

Thus, the regime of distance education during the epidemiological situation requires the development a support system for the work of teachers and students, consisting of the next modules:

- Informational - support of socio-psychological and socio-professional adaptation;
- Organizational - development of programs for socio-psychological and professional adaptation; development of programs for the prevention of professional burnout;
- Scientific and methodological - providing scientific and methodological assistance to school teaching staff on the problems of distance education, consulting assistance to students and their parents.

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