SATISFACTION WITH DISTANT LEARNING
AND END-OF-COURSE PRODUCTIVITY

The research studies the inquiries of students and educators in Institute of Journalism of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University due to the change of an activity format during COVID-19 quarantine measures. 302 bachelors and masters Institute of Journalism have been inquired, as well as the participants’ activity of internal distance learning system of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University and the level of technical possibilities of access to it, utilization rate of platforms and services has been under analysis to receive the data.

The research described the peculiarities of distance learning organization in an individual subdivision of a higher education institution during the period of quarantine measures implemented due to lockdown. The purpose of the research is to study students' inquiries regarding the distance learning organization, to establish criteria influencing on the level of students’ satisfaction with the learning process and to analyze how the distance learning influences on students’ academic results and quality of their knowledge. The researchers offer a hypothesis that permanent monitoring of the learning process participants’ inquiries and taking their results into account while organizing delivery of distance learning allow increasing the degree of satisfaction with learning without decreasing students’ academic results.

Based on practical experience of an individual educational institution, a group of researchers have analyzed the statistics of students’ and academic staff’s activity in the internal distance learning system, carried out a statistical analysis regarding the rate of miscellaneous online-platforms use to implement continuous distance learning during the quarantine, as well as statistical analysis of educands’ technical possibilities of access to distance learning. The needs and inquiries of 302 institution students were found through a questionnaire method, as well as there was performed further statistical and content analysis of the responses. The research findings were made using a triangular method.

The majority of the students inquired state that the offered forms and distance learning methods are productive; they also indicate particular increase in productivity during such work, however, the minority of the students point at the productivity decrease and difficulty when distance work.

Key words: distance learning; higher education; electronic academic course; online services term.

Introduction. The world has currently accrued much experience of distance learning implementation and development of virtual academic courses to be used by higher education institutions and to increase professional competence. The development of modern information technologies sets new tasks before all educational process participants regarding skills formation, knowledge acquiring, work with all currently available possibilities of information provision. The distance learning system, which was powerfully implemented all over the world due to COVID-19 pandemic, first of all, has quite a long history of development and use in miscellaneous forms.

So far, the national higher education institutions have been using distance learning forms quite slowly taking into account the cost of modern technologies, low motivation, preparation of the participants and a range of other factors: as a rule, it was required for individual academic disciplines or academic courses. Moreover, they lacked the experience of successful complex distance learning implementation in the higher education institutions as well as theoretic and methodic support of this process, as well as practical recommendations for its participants.

Thus, the research of the distance learning organization for all attendance modes and for all academic courses is important and promising for further interpretation and use for the Ukraine’s system of education.
Topical experience of using online instruments along with the traditional educational forms is described by Carlos J. Asarta, and James R. Schmidt, researchers from the University of Delaware, who set a purpose to study the influence of blended educational environment on students’ academic results. The scientists did not see any effect while analyzing the complete sample, but while studying the range of grade point average the positive dynamic was seen. That provided an opportunity to suppose that the students of low and medium academic preparation level in the groups that study mostly with the use of online materials achieve later the same level of competence as the students of the high one [1].

The issue of blended learning was also researched by B. Demyda, S. Sahaydak, I. Kopyl [7]. The experience elucidated in the speech at the conference of The Asian Conference on Education & International Development 2017 by Q. Ogbomo, R. Chitiyo [12] is important for our work; the researchers specify that the distance learning in higher education institutions requires elaborating a new paradigm of interaction between academic staff and students on the Internet, since the learning process participants of the XXI century have to learn how to develop new strategies of creating balanced educational environment.

Distance learning platforms allow supporting the traditional learning process because it is easy to spread learning materials and contact with students, ensure learning process organization for the students who cannot attend offline classes, engage new target audiences. For the research it was helpful to study the experience of other countries, particularly, of the USA (I.E. Allen & J. Seaman, 2013) [9], Tanzania (Joel S. Mtebe, 2020) [10], Thailand (J. Wongwuttinwat et al. (2020) [11], Sri Lanka (Sabraz Nawaz Samsudeen, Mohamed Rusith, 2019) [12].

While assessing reasonability and efficiency of the distance learning use to increase the degree of satisfaction with learning on the academic results taking into account different kinds of interaction between the educational process participants.

The purpose of the article is to study students’ inquiries regarding the distance learning organization, to establish criteria influencing on the level of students’ satisfaction with the learning process and to analyze how the distance learning influences on students’ academic results and quality of their knowledge. The researchers offer a hypothesis that permanent monitoring of the learning process participants’ inquiries and taking their results into account while organizing delivery of distance learning allow increasing the degree of satisfaction with learning without decreasing students' academic results.

The practical experience of using distance learning in Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University proves productivity of combining offline and distance learning forms on the Moodle platform. That allows permanent updating of learning materials, using different performance forms of practical tasks, engaging additional resources for intensive cooperation with a group, avoiding, in this ways, a problem of permanent data deterioration, especially in the fast-developing areas, particularly, journalism and social communications.

It is undeniable for practicing educators that the distance learning system requires different pedagogical instruments in comparison with offline full-time and part–time learning forms. However, the academic staff in their activity are oriented to classical requirements of learning process, determining clearly the content of learning, competences formed during the study of disciplines, specifying methods and forms of learning, instruments of learning, etc.

While organizing distance learning, the learning process participants in Borys Grinchenko Kyiv
University use electronic academic course (EAC) developed in compliance with modern methodological requirements.

Thus, the educands have experience of distance work studying the professional preparation disciplines almost from the enrollment to the educational institution; that provided them with significant advantages in a situation of forced remote learning and allowed using acquired skills in work during March-May 2020. However, until the quarantine was enforced in Ukraine, the University’s academic staff and students had majority of classes offline using the EAC system as an auxiliary one, i.e. the one that provided wider technical possibilities to form professional competences. That is why the situation of 2019–2020 academic year became a kind of challenge for academic staff and students.

The hypothesis of our research is dependence of the satisfaction level with distance learning and productivity level as assessed by the students on their experience of work on different online-platforms and flexibility regarding combination of their possibilities as well as particular digital competence of the students.

Method. This research is a quantitative study based on open online-questionnaire fulfilled in stages (in the beginning and in the end of the period analyzed regarding the students’ inquiries concerning the use of online–platforms for distance learning, their experience in the distance learning). Based on the analysis of the questionnaires, a statistical method was applied, as well as the qualitative method was used while analyzing learning quality for two years to see dynamics. The research had to confirm or cancel a hypothesis concerning the perceptiveness of distance learning with a particular set of instruments for increasing optimality of work performance. This research was developed under six parameters: experience in distance learning, use of online-platforms, satisfaction with learning, assessment of learning productivity, indicator of the learning process quality.

This section describes the method of preparation and conducting research as well as experimental base of research, participants or investigating facilities. Also the characteristics, criteria, indicators and parameters of assessing are provided. The names and registration numbers of scientific programs and research projects can be provided.

The research covered the students from the Institute of Journalism of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University. Totally 302 students participated in the questionnaire. In general, the degree of involvement into the distance learning was analysed in the statistical calculations: 778 students out of 865 who studied at the Institute (a part of students were on practice during the research and were not engaged into the distance learning system during the quarantine measures related to Covid-19 pandemic).

Descriptive statistics was received to see the respondents’ demographic data. Out of 302 respondents, 274 are women (90,7%), 28 – men (9,3%). The respondents included those who studied under a bachelor program – 293 (97%) and under Master’s program – 9 persons (3%). 302 respondents (100%) were the full-time students. 116 people (38,4%) were the students majoring in Advertising and Public Relations, 88% (29,1%) major in Journalism, 61 (20,2%) are the students majoring in Publishing and Editing, (9,9%) – Information, Library and Archive sciences, 7 (2,3%) – International Journalism. 146 (49%) of respondents were the 1st year students, 48 (15,9%) – 2’nd year, 43 (14,2%) – 3’rd year, 6 (17,8%) – 4’th year, 9 (3%) – 5’th year (1’st year under Master’s program). The respondents’ age varies from 18–23. This section contains an analysis and justification of scientific results. The division into units are recommended.

Results. The questionnaire was a google-form available for all the learning process participants through the corporate mail system. Requests for participation in questionnaire were spread via the Institute’s Telegram-channel and counsellors of academic groups.

Participation in questionnaire was voluntary, no financial or other motifs were proposed, that is why all the students who expressed willingness participated in the questionnaire.

Table 1 demonstrates the increased level of satisfaction with distance learning from the beginning to the end of compulsory quarantine measures since the experience of using online platforms is growing up gradually and the academic staff and administration modify and improve system through the study of students’ inquiries. Thus, in the beginning of the period under research 62,9% of respondents stated satisfaction with distance learning process; moreover, 37,04% had experience of permanent work on online-platforms, 26,5% – had such experience during the academic year, which is 63,54% in total. In the end of the period, due to the grown experience of the system use, the level of satisfaction reached 83,1%.

| Indicators                              | N  | %   |
|----------------------------------------|----|-----|
| Distance learning experience:          |    |     |
| – enjoyed constantly;                  | 113| 37,04|
| – enjoyed since the beginning of the   | 89 | 26,5 |
| school year;                           | 106| 35,1 |
| – used during the quarantine period     |    |     |
| Satisfication with distance learning   |    |     |
| (beginning of quarantine)              | 190| 62,9 |
| Satisfication with distance learning   |    |     |
| (completion of quarantine)             | 251| 83,1 |

The data provided correlate completely with those received by the researchers as accompanying ones and determined the level
of positive assessment of distance learning system as such by the respondents.

Table 2 demonstrates that 64.5% of respondents expressed loyalty to the distance learning as a learning form, and 62.9% answered that they were satisfied with learning in the beginning of the compulsory distance learning, so, these results correlate as it was specified in the beginning of the research.

Table 2

| Indicators                                      | N   | %    |
|------------------------------------------------|-----|------|
| – time requirement;                            | 113 | 37.04|
| – one of the forms of education;               | 80  | 26.5 |
| – unpromising form.                            | 106 | 35.1 |
| Satisfaction with distance learning (beginning | 190 | 62.9 |
| of quarantine)                                 |     |      |
| Satisfaction with distance learning (completion| 251 | 83.1 |
| of quarantine)                                 |     |      |

Additionally, it was found that 50% of the respondents acquired their experience of learning online courses extramurally from time to time, and 17.2% indicated that they did that permanently; thus, in total 67.2% of the respondents demonstrate their interest in online-learning and assess it positively.

Constant cooperation between academic staff and administration and the students through the services of corporate mail <…>@kubg.edu.ua, telegram, viber, Institute page on Facebook, Instagram, through the groups created by the counsellors and representatives of administration, during compulsory quarantine measures also facilitated the increased level of satisfaction with the learning process.

The Figure 1 represents the level of using different online platforms for additional communication between the academic staff and the students to solve the issues related to the access to distance learning.

Based on the specific nature of the institution contingent and a student-centric system of interaction, the administration and academic staff had to provide the students who were on practice in different regions of the country and faced technical problems with an opportunity to solve these issues flexibly.

According to the questionnaire results, 50% of the students specified that for them an urgent connection with a lecturer was important.

In Table 3 “B” means the beginning of the period under research and “E” – its end. The data show that during the period of quarantine measures and relevant distance learning, the percentage of students who had technical problems in access to distance learning systems decreased because the majority of problems were solved (repair of gadgets, flexible use of platforms with an opportunity of access through mobile Internet, change of the Internet operator, etc.).

Table 3

| Indicators                                      | B   | %    | E   | $    |
|------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-----|------|
| Participate in distance learning               | 718 | 100  | 718 | 100  |
| Do not have computers                         | 12  | 1.6  | 5   | 0.6  |
| Stay in residential areas where the Internet   | 30  | 4.1  | 12  | 1.6  |
| connection is poor or absent                   |     |      |     |      |
| Other technical problems                       | 6   | 0.8  | 0   | 0    |
| Under medical treatment/chronic diseases      | 3   | 0.4  | 2   | 0.4  |
| Stay abroad                                    | 2   | 0.2  | 2   | 0.4  |

The next important indicator, which, according to the hypothesis, had to influence on the increase of the educands’ satisfaction with the distance learning system is a possibility of flexible use of different platforms for process organization.

Table 4

| Indicators                                      | B   | E    |
|------------------------------------------------|-----|------|
| Participate in distance learning               | 84  | 75   |
| Do not have computers                         | 5   | 14   |
| Stay in residential areas where the Internet   | 9   | 9    |
| connection is poor or absent                   |     |      |
| Other technical problems                       | 2   | 2    |
| Under medical treatment/chronic diseases      |     |      |
| Stay abroad                                    |     |      |
| Combining the capabilities of online platforms | 28.4| 62.5 |
| by teachers                                    |     |      |

The indicator “B” in Table 4 means the beginning of the period under research and the indicator “E” – its end. The Table shows that the Moodle system prevailed during the period, since the internal resources of the distance learning in the institution, EAC (Electronic academic courses), were placed on this platform. This indicator is dynamic because during the period, the indicator of Hangout Meets use is increasing and correspondingly, the indicator of the Moodle platform use is decreasing. The Hangouts Meet appeared to be productive for the institution as it is connected to the corporate google mail, that is why the academic staff and the students had an opportunity to form meetings in the system joining users due to the possibilities provided by the internal system. During this period, the academic staff mastered their skill of using it, thus, the rate of its use grew up. The opportunities of Google Class actually doubled the majority of the functions in the internal
online learning system, that is why the share of its use during the period did not change, the percentage of Zoom use also remained permanent. Additional data demonstrate that the share of learning materials on Moodle platform combined by lecturers with a format of video-conferences increased.

A significant strengthening of a video-conference component in the learning process is specified by the analysis of the students’ inquiries in the first weeks of distance learning to increase productivity and to provide a dynamic response to the educands’ expectations.

According to the questionnaire results, 55.3% of the respondents think that the distance learning can be productive if the lecturer combines work on different platforms, 38.7% specify that the work on one platform is more productive. Some students’ answers provide an opportunity to assess the peculiarities of their work and perception of work convenience on different platforms, particularly: a lecturer can give lectures in Zoom and Hangouts Meet, but Moodle is more suitable for tests and assignments; a lecturer works flexibly on different platforms providing clear instructions where to place the assignments performed; a lecturer is present at the classes simultaneously with the students and uses video conference, chat, live broadcast; every lecturer uses one platform, but different lecturers can use different platforms; the university has to choose two platforms – for video conference and for assignments performance, etc. These responses encourage further trends of researching the parameters of distance learning implementation.

Table 5 demonstrates the analysis results of the learning process participants’ inquiries in order to remove difficulties while implementing distance learning, provided there is no opportunity for immediate communication between the students and the lecturers.

The need of students in the format of video conferencing in the study of academic disciplines (March – June 2020)

| Indicators | B | E |
|------------|---|---|
| – desired; | 154 | 51 |
| – important; | 119 | 39,4 |
| – unimportant. | 23 | 7,6 |

The productivity of learning is an important indicator demonstrating suitability of the implemented forms to study vocational disciplines and to form competences required. Table 7 demonstrates that the Institute students questioned assess the work productiveness as follows: productivity increased – 48,7% of the respondents (147); productivity did not change – 26,5% (980); productivity decreased – 24,8% (75). These data prove that with optimum use of possibilities provided by different platforms, services and methodic materials, the distance learning gives an opportunity to increase productivity of learning having kept time for that.

Table 7

The summarized data of dynamics of distance learning qualitative indicators provided in Table 8 prove productivity of the hypothesis offered by the authors on a necessity to take into account the inquiries of learning process participants under the following directions: removal of technical problems, optimum combination of online-platforms for teaching, intensive communication with students using mobile services: these have to guarantee the increase of learning productivity and the level of satisfaction of the students with the learning process.

The data demonstrate that the more than a half of students leans toward the combination of online-platforms, almost a half of the academic staff also believes that this form of work is productive. Moreover, the academic staff in the beginning of the quarantine period relied on the opportunities provided by Zoom platform. Its use did not become productive for the educational institution because it did not correlate with the corporate cooperation system and did not allow proper monitoring of the learning process participants’ activity in compliance with the timetable.

Thus, it is seen that a great part of lecturers tried to work in different systems, involving both EAC resources and the video conference format; that completely meets the inquiries of the educands.

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An important indicator for any educational model efficiency is the students’ academic results and the quality of the received knowledge subject to measurement under the results of the examination sessions.

In Table 9 the indicators mean the following: S1 – students’ academic results during summer session of 2019; S2 – students’ academic results during summer session 2019; S3 – students’ academic results during winter session of 2020, S4 – students’ academic results during summer session 2020. The data are given in per cents.

Table 9

| Indicators \ Course | S1  | S2  | S3  | S4  |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 (bachelor’s degree) | 75.2 | 76.7 | 95.5 | 80.7 |
| 2 (bachelor’s degree) | 74.4 | 74.9 | 68.4 | 81.7 |
| 3 (bachelor’s degree) | 67.9 | 71.7 | 74.8 | 73.8 |
| 4 (bachelor’s degree) | 72.3 | 74.5 | 64.7 | 78.4 |
| 1 (1 master’s course) | 82.5 | 75.9 | 85.3 | 74.2 |
| Average            | 74.46 | 74.74 | 77.38 | 77.76 |

The “academic results” mean such an indicator of the students’ academic achievements, which includes only A, B, C grades.

It is seen from the average indicators under the terms in Table 9 that in general the academic results dynamics is growing up slightly, moreover, the results of the session under the term when the students studied distantly due to Covid-19 pandemic are higher than in previous terms. The graphic results are provided in the diagram in figure 2.

In summary, the team of the educational institution within the period of quarantine measures due to COVID-19 pandemics in Ukraine within March – May 2020 received a valuable experience on implementation of distance learning and practical use of its different means in higher education institutions. This experience proves the efficiency and viability of distance learning as a new form specifying the application of technical means and online services to organize the learning process provided strict coordination of academic staff actions, transparent system of assessment, formation of clear conditions and use of reasonable methods of work.

Conclusions and prospects. The research results bespeak a necessity of flexible use of the distance learning system in specific conditions, which, particularly, educational institutions of Ukraine faced during the quarantine restrictions in March – May 2020, the importance of permanent monitoring of the learning process participants’ inquiries, solution of the situations impeding the implementation of full-fledged learning.

The results of students’ questionnaires show that they expected from distance learning within the quarantine period of a possibility to keep permanent contact with the academic staff and administration, availability of video conference in a sufficient amount, which provided an opportunity of face-to-face discussion of the knowledge acquired, analysis of the tasks performed. After taking this inquiry into account, as the comparison of two monitoring of learning process satisfaction indicator showed (in the beginning and in the end of the period analyzed), satisfaction with learning increased.
The data analysis also demonstrated the correlation of the percentage rate of the students having sufficient experience of distance learning and the percentage rate of the students who were significantly satisfied with the distance learning in the beginning of the period analyzed, since they could rely on the skills they had already developed. Thus, the growth indicator of satisfaction with learning in the end of the period analyzed can also be connected to the grown experience of the students in using opportunities of online-platforms.

The research also demonstrated that flexible use of distance learning means, combination of the online-platforms and services possibilities, permanent monitoring of the students’ inquiries, permanent connection between the administration and academic staff with the educands allow maintaining the quality of the learning process even if in the beginning of the quarantine period the country’s educators expressed some concerns in respect with the decrease in knowledge and skills quality, and in general some representatives of Ukraine’s education are prepossessed regarding distance learning.

The use by the educational institution of Moodle, a permanent platform of online-learning accessible for the academic staff and the students of the Institute, gradual implementation of blended learning forms, development of methodically circumspect and comprehensive academic courses, as well as combination of work on this platform with the use of Hangouts Meet, a service for video-conferences, created favourable conditions for joint work of educators and students. Additional use of Telegram, Viber, Instagram services for contact in academic groups allowed optimum removal of all the situations that could decrease the learning quality.

This practical experience of the educational institution is extremely valuable in the context of the challenges the world and the country faced; on the other hand, it allows making a good case for perceptivity of distance learning in education and self-education and decreasing the level of prepossession in the country regarding online-learning.

Since the situation with Covid-19 pandemic has not been solved globally yet, and a chance for quarantine measures prolongation remains, the development of optimum forms of distance learning organization is topical.

The perspective of the research is study of the academic staff’s experience within the distance learning period due to the implementation of the quarantine measures in Ukraine, analysis of educational and practical inquiries from the academic staff and active participants and organizers of distance learning, generalization of administrative experience in implementing different distance learning forms, further monitoring of the learning process results when distance and blended forms of learning.

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Росінська О., Горбенко Г., Журавська О. Дослідження рівня задоволення процесом навчання та його продуктивністю у процесі дистанційного навчання

Дослідження присвячено вивченню студентів та викладачів Інституту журналістики Київського університету імені Бориса Грінченка у процесі зміни формату діяльності під час карантинних заходів у зв’язку з пандемією COVID-19. У процесі експерименту брали участь 302 бакалаври та магісти Інституту журналістики, освітня діяльність яких була організована у внутрішній системі дистанційного навчання Київського університету імені Бориса Грінченка. Окремо вимірювалися такі параметри: рівень технічних можливостей учасників освітнього процесу, можливість доступу до дистанційного навчання, ефективність використання платформ та послуг.

Дослідження описує особливості організації дистанційного навчання в закладі. Метою дослідження стало вивчення запитів студентів та викладачів щодо дистанційного навчання, встановлення критеріїв, що впливають на рівень задоволеності студентів навчальним процесом, аналіз того, як дистанційне навчання впливає на академічні результати студентів та якість їхніх знань. Дослідники пропонують гіпотезу, що постійний моніторинг запитів учасників освітнього процесу та їх урахування дозволяють збільшити ступінь задоволеності навчанням, не знижують академічних результатів студентів. Грунтуючись на практичному досвіді окремого навчального закладу, група дослідників проаналізувала статистику діяльності студентів та викладачів у системі внутрішнього дистанційного навчання, провела статистичний аналіз рівня використання різних онлайн-платформ для впровадження безперервного навчання під час карантинних заходів, а також статистичний аналіз технічних можливостей учасників освітнього процесу. Потреби та запити 302 студентів закладу було виявлено за допомогою методу опитування, а також проведено подальший статистичний та змістовий аналіз відповідей. Результати дослідження були узагальнені методом тріангуляції. Більшість студентів визначили, що запропоновані методи та форми навчання є продуктивними, вони вказують на особливе підвищення продуктивності праці під час упровадження таких систем, однак частина студентів указують на зменшення продуктивності, що створює перспективи для більш глибокого дослідження.

Ключові слова: дистанційне навчання, електронний навчальний курс, учасники освітнього процесу, карантинні заходи.