
TEACHER READINESS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION OF DISABLED STUDENTS

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Abstract: The article describes the teacher's readiness for distance learning of students with disabilities in higher education institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The article defines the leading principles of distance education and formulates the problems of managing this process. The authors have conducted a research including questionnaires and interviews with teachers of universities that provide educational activities to disabled students. Resulting data are analyzed, factors affecting the formation of teachers personal attitude to distance education students with disabilities are elicited. The authors revealed a positive attitude of teachers towards the education of disabled students, it is noted that they have a positive motivation in providing all necessary conditions for effective education of this category of students. Teachers are interested in obtaining the necessary knowledge on the organization of distance education for students with disabilities and increasing their own professional qualifications. However, the results of this survey have identified the lack of teacher's understanding of the characteristics of the psychophysical development of disabled persons, ignorance of the perception specifics of students with hearing and visual disabilities, insufficient understanding of psychological features (fatigue, attention and perception, the visual thinking prevalence, etc.). Teachers of higher educational institutions had difficulty in determining the form of presentation of lecture material, the selection of pedagogical techniques and means of organizing and monitoring the performance of independent practical work. The teachers had some difficulties with the adaptation of educational materials in accessible forms for students with impaired vision and hearing, the materials should be specific and accessible for their understanding. There were particular difficulties in explaining by teachers of abstract concepts and theoretical positions. Based on the identified difficulties in the implementation of distance learning for disabled students describes the possible risks inherent in inclusive higher education. The necessary conditions for organizing the process of distance education for disabled students are highlighted, it should increase readiness of teachers to work with students with disabilities.

Keywords: higher education, teacher readiness, disabled students, distance education, inclusive education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education as a social institution is one of the most important factors in the personal sociocultural mobility. However, it is not available for all social categories. Many researchers⁹⁰ argue the importance of implementing inclusive education in higher education, emphasizing the need for special training of faculty that work with disabled students⁹¹. The specificity and problems of obtaining higher and vocational education are revealed in the writings by E. F. Zeer⁹², B.Z. Cantor⁹³, E.A. Martynov⁹⁴, Movkebayeva Z.A.⁹⁵ and etc.

⁹⁰ Liudmila M. Volosnikova, Galina Z. Efimova. *Faculty Attitudes Towards Students with Disabilities in Russian Universities: A Glance at Western Siberia*//The European Proceedings of Social & Behavioural Sciences. 2016. P.432-438.

⁹¹ Williamson, P. T. (2000). *Attitudes of the Troy State University Dothan faculty toward students with disabilities* (Doctoral dissertation, Auburn University. 2000). World Cat, OCLC: 44857670.

⁹² Zeer E. F., *Methodology the professional development of the personality*. Ekaterinburg: Russian State Vocational Pedagogical University Publ., 2014. p. 194.

⁹³ Kantor V. Z. *Rehabilitation potential of persons with disabilities: the problem of system of pedagogical analysis*. Special'noe obrazovanie [Special education], 1, 2012. pp. 44-53.

⁹⁴ Martynova E. A. *Information educational environment for students with disabilities in Chelyabinsk state University*. Chelyabinsk, 2012. pp. 253-257.

Foreign and domestic scholars of Kazakhstan noted the fact that for the inclusive education expansion in the world, it is necessary to be ready for a change in this sphere of education⁹⁶.

One of the forms of organization of teaching for disabled students with their own learning needs has been introduced as distant learning. Today this form of organization is carried out by means of significant methodological and authentic difficulties, as well as the use of materials for the purpose of distant work as the students are very few in number and the creation of materials is very productive. While using this technology it is important that the material is coordinated with specifically developed curricula, enriched with new templates and frameworks. The problem is understood that it should be solved by using already existing videos and presentations, adapting themselves to the need of students to get rid of the damage, the slack and the mobile-engine device.

The next problem of distance training is the technical and methodological environment of a disabled student and computer training and the teacher training on computer technology. The problems are caused by the psychological traumatism which is a requirement of new technologies used by educators in their work. According to the data of Roger, all people can go one to five groups who are classified according to their own ideas and teaching technologies⁹⁷.

The first group consists of people who are looking for newer innovators, with the newest ideas, the enthusiasm of the adventurism and the freshness of their new ideas in their own work. The crew comprises 2.5% of the staff. The real performers of the second group is 13.5%. They are ready for the sake of innovators, but moreover, they can integrate their own field of view, representing the virtue, often referred to the group of leaders. Their number comprises 13.5%. The Group of Predictors who are previews comprise about 34%. They are just beginners who introduced with new ideas of the technology. They consider this technology for a long time before implementing it in practice. In general they have positive attitudes towards this novelty. The forth group has the highest percentage - 34%. This group of people who have doubt and they treat this technology very carefully.

The fifth group is fluctuating, usually consists of 16% of the staff members. They usually inhibit any innovation, do not want to part with their traditional activities.

According to A.V.Khutorosky there are far more innovators among teachers (6.6%) and foremost leaders (44.7%), 17.7% belong to “moderates”, and the third group consists of the people who relate to new ideas. Apparently, the same ratio will be in relation to distance learning among university professors. The matter is aggravated by the fact that during distance learning the structure of the educational process changes dramatically.

Overcrowded lectures may take no more than 25% of the training time which is considered under the research of this topic. They perform approximate and navigational functions, forming the student’s systematic basic concepts about the course and helping them independently navigate new information for them. Most of the time the teacher takes informational and methodical preparation for the classes, as well as working with the website and information about students. Unfortunately, today there are no standards that define the directions and working hours for the teachers in the process of distance learning. At present, there is no such specialist in universities as a tutor who can set up equipment at a place of residence for a disabled student, take test measurements, and explain the principles and technologies of working with the program. Without such a specialist, distance learning is hardly possible. Apparently such parents could be tutors or disabled student’s close relatives. Having undergone advanced training on the program of tutors, they can master the virtual learning environment, provide advice and, possibly, technical support for the educational process.

⁹⁵ Movkebayeva Z.A. *The organization of the educational process at the university for persons with special educational needs*. Bulletin KazNPU them. Abaya. Ser. "Pedagogical sciences". - №2 (54). - 2017. - p. 69-73.

⁹⁶ Movkebayeva Z.A., Kabdyrova A.A. *On the readiness of teachers of higher education to implement inclusive education in the Republic of Kazakhstan // Inclusive education: theory, practice, experience*. Astana: NAO to them. I. Altynsarin, 2018. p. 360-367.

⁹⁷ Simanovsky A.E. *The use of distance technologies for teaching students with disabilities*. Yaroslavl Pedagogical Bulletin - 2012 - No. 4 - Volume II (Psychological and Pedagogical Sciences).

2. PRINCIPLES AND VERIFICATION OF SUCCESSFUL CHANGES

The authors of the research conducted surveys and conversations with university professors who carried out educational process and teaching activities with disabled students. Analysis of the data obtained in the course of the questionnaire surveys of teachers, allowed to identify the factors influencing the formation of teachers' personal attitudes about distance learning for disabled students. In order to identify the degree of faculty satisfaction about the quality of higher education of disabled students and students with limited mobility, we conducted a research on the purpose of determining the teachers' points of views about distance learning for disabled and students of limited mobility.

185 teachers took part in this experiment who conducted lectures and practical classes on compulsory, basic and major courses. Among 185 teachers who participated in the survey, 98 teachers taught courses in the Kazakh language, 87 teachers taught in Russian. Among them, 75 teachers were male teachers and 110 teachers were female teachers. The interviewed teachers were from 23 to 56 years old and (23-30 - 15%, 31-40 - 20%, 41-50 - 30%, 51-55 - 25%, over 56 year olds - 10%). The work experience of teachers who participated in the survey varied from 1 year to 31 or more (1-10 years - 18%; 11-20 years - 26%; 21-30 years - 45%; 31 years and more - 11%).

The next set of questions in this survey allowed us to identify the factors that influenced on the formation of the teachers' personal points of views about distance learning of disabled students. According to 58% of teachers, the most suitable form of higher education for disabled students was a distance learning system. 25% of teachers considered it was appropriate disabled students could get knowledge well in full-time education. 14% of teachers chose teaching students with low mobility. And only 3% of the interviewed teachers chose the evening classes as the optimal form of education for disabled students.

In general most of the interviewed teachers were familiar with the distance learning system and had a positive attitude towards teaching disabled students in this system. 70% of teachers knew the technical aspects by which distance learning was carried out, and only 30% of teachers were familiar with the methods and forms used in the distance learning system. Among teachers in the distance learning system, 85% of teachers noted the presence of disabled students in their experience. 9% of students noted that there were no disabled students among students. 6% of teachers did not know whether disabled students existed among students. At the same time, teachers noted that they had experience working with students in various disorders of psychophysical development: with hearing disabilities - 30%, with bad eyesight - 28%, with physical disabilities - 19%, with intellectual disabilities - 4%, with speech disabilities - 11%, others - 9%.

More than half (54%) of teachers conducted classes on major courses, 18% of teachers teach compulsory courses, 28% of teachers taught basic courses.

3. SUCCESSFUL CHANGES

In the course of our research, we paid attention to those aspects that teachers needed to organize distance education of disabled students and students with limited mobility effectively, as well as the skills and abilities available to teachers of higher educational institutions in working with this category of students. In general, the positive attitude of teachers towards the education of disabled students has been revealed. Positive motivation was observed in providing all the necessary conditions for effective training of this category of students.

Teachers were also interested in obtaining the necessary knowledge on the organization of distance learning for disabled students and they had desire to improve their own professional qualifications. As additional resources necessary for the organization of distance learning for disabled students, 15% of teachers point out the need for additional remuneration as far as, in their opinion, they spend their personal time for the preparation for the classes. For 29% of teachers, no additional conditions were required as they thought it was pleasure to teach with disabled students. 10% of respondents needed to provide them with a sign language interpreter and typhoon translator. Among the 100% of teachers interviewed as additional resources in organizing distance education, 37% of teachers pointed out the need to reduce the annual workload for teachers who work with disabled students.

As a result, we determined the principles of formation of distant educational environment at a higher education institution for teaching students with limited mobility (stationary): visibility, individualization, communication, the use of information technologies, the development of an educational and teaching complex (including a package of special educational and methodical presentations) adapted for perception by students with impaired psychophysical development, the use of electronic control software on the courses for students with disabilities and others.

The leading conditions for the formation and structure of the organization of distance learning environment have been established, which include: reduction of the duration of classes (no more than 1.5 hours, in general, the

workload per day should be no more than 3 hours) with 10–15-minute break time, a rational combination of written and oral work, taking in to account the volume and forms of oral and written work, the tempo to complete activities for each student, changing the form of classes, duplication of auditory information with visual materials and vice versa, the use of visual materials, training videos, the use of methods that enhance the students cognitive activities, developing oral and written speech and forming the necessary learning skills, and etc.

4. CONCLUSION

In general, we identified of teachers' positive attitude about training the disabled students. It is noted that they have a positive motivation in providing all the necessary conditions for effective training of this type of students. Teachers are interested in obtaining the necessary knowledge on the organization of distance learning for disabled students and they have positive desire to improve their own professional qualifications. At the same time, according to the results of this research, teachers' low methodological readiness was revealed distance learning in higher education: incomplete understanding of the features of disabled students' psychophysical development, lack of awareness on the perception of learning materials by students with hearing and visual disabilities, lack of understanding of psychological features of this students group (fatigue, the level of their attention and perception, the predominance of visual thinking, and etc.). Teachers of higher educational institutions have experienced difficulties in determining the form of presentation of lecture materials, selection of pedagogical methods and means of organizing and monitoring the implementation of independent practical work for the students with various developmental problems. The teachers have also experienced certain difficulties with the adaptation of educational materials for students in accessible forms on vision and hearing disabilities, which must be concise, specific and accessible to be understood by them.

The teachers had particular difficulties in explaining abstract concepts and theoretical concepts. On the basis of the difficulties identified by teachers of higher educational institutions in the implementation of distance learning for disabled students, the authors could describe the possible risks inherent in inclusive higher education. The necessary conditions for organizing the process of distance learning for disabled students have been highlighted, which form and enhance teachers' readiness to work with disabled students.

According to the results of our research, we can draw the following conclusions about the need for a comprehensive solution of existing problems in organizing and conducting training sessions with disabled students and with limited mobility students on a distance learning system, as well as taking into account the need for teachers to select teaching methods and techniques individually depending on the types and forms of developmental disabilities of students.

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