

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia ad Didacticam Biologiae Pertinentia 11 (2021)

ISSN 2083-7276

DOI 10.24917/20837276.11.16

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The models of students' adaptation to online learning in terms of Merton's theory of anomie

Introduction

The state of the pandemic has led to changes within many systems in the world, including axio-normative subsystems. The introduced restrictions have affected customs, morals, and laws. The existing rules have been redefined, which in turn has led to changes in the definition of behaviors considered conformist and deviant. It was necessary to verify the previous norms and complement them with new ones, regulating social life in the face of restrictions introduced in our country. It is hard to deny the statement that the emergence of the pandemic threat has led to social anomie in societies around the globe. The state of anomie is often caused by a crisis in broad terms. According to Emil Durkheim (Bielicki, 1993), this state of deregulation is the result of the breakdown of rules and norms in force at a given moment in society. The breakdown should be understood as their obsolescence or disappearance.

In this article, the state of anomie will be considered in terms of the individual, so the theoretical assumptions refer to the theory of anomie suggested by Robert K. Merton. He developed E. Durkheim's concept and specified different varieties of deviant behavior. The centre of his considerations was constituted by two basic elements of the cultural structure: culturally defined goals and sanctioned patterns of group life as well as the efforts of achieving these goals (Merton, 2002).

The choice of means is controlled by institutionalized norms. There is a wide spectrum of such control: from behaviors that are unequivocally condoned in society, through the realm of individual choice, to behaviors unequivocally prohibited (Merton 1982:196).

Anomie occurs when the relations between the elements of the cultural structure are disturbed, i.e. the norms guarding the selection of means leading to the realization of the goal cease to perform their previous function. Individuals may go beyond the normative system in their choice of means. They can, as P. Sztompka (2002:280) notes, follow current norms but reject values or, on the contrary, accept values while ignoring norms.

The theory of R. K. Merton originally explained the relationship between social pressure for financial success and the lack of clear, institutionalized means to achieve it. Its utilitarianism allows to analyze many social phenomena. The mentioned discrepancy between the obligation to achieve certain goals and the clarity of how to achieve them often leads to deviant attitudes and behaviors.

Theoretical framework

R. K. Merton developed a typology of how individuals in society adapt in situations of anomie. It included conformist, innovative, rebellious, ritualistic, and withdrawal actions. The adaptation styles described were intended to explain why people take certain actions. Each adaptation style was analyzed in terms of cultural goals and institutionalized means.

The conformist style implies acceptance of the whole procedure. The individual agrees to respect socially approved goals and means. It is the most expected attitude because it guarantees the collective stability of the whole structure and predictability. This style ensures social order.

Other types represent deviation from the rules and are classified as deviant behavior. The innovative type of adaptation involves accepting goals determined by pervasive values while finding and using new ways to achieve them. Often these are socially and institutionally prohibited means. For the individual, the overriding consideration in choosing them is their effectiveness. Interestingly, these behaviors may receive social approval. This style partially respects the procedure - values contained in it. The pandemic situation has forced societies to be more open to this type of behavior. Implementing new therapies among Covid patients, developing new vaccines, and bypassing the sequence in the vaccination schedule are just a few examples of behaviors within this style. It should be remembered that this category of deviance also includes neutral and positive behaviors (Sztompka, 2002: 280).

The opposite type is ritualism. It is based on clinging to traditional, fixed ways of doing things while at the same time losing or abandoning the goal. In other words, the individual is characterized by a strong conformism to the means. The selective focus on this part of the procedure may be due to a variety of factors related among other things to a decline in ambition and aspiration, a state of burnout, a sense of lack of agency, disbelief in one's abilities, or an attempt to reassure oneself. This style is associated with bureaucracy, which has reached skyrocketing proportions in the age of pandemonium. Sometimes the unquestioning adherence to certain rituals can be a value in itself.

The next, and least frequent, variety of passive deviancy is resignation/withdrawal. It is characterized by the rejection of the entire procedure (values and norms). The individual gives up on socially approved goals and means. This type of adaptive style condemns the individual to marginalization and even social exclusion. This style may be lifelong or a consequence of the crisis experienced. Fear of the pandemic has caused many people, especially in the oldest age group, to withdraw on their own or under pressure from the media, local environment, and family life. Adopting this adaptive style certainly reflects on one's mental condition, as a natural human need is to act.

The last, rebellious type involves the rejection of socially accepted goals and measures and the introduction of new, alternative ones in their place. In the literature, such behavior is classified as active deviance (Sztompka, 2002: 282). Such behaviors lead to changes in the rules of the social structure. They can have positive as well as negative consequences.

As a result of the outbreak of the pandemic, the Polish government took a number of decisions aimed at limiting the transmission of the virus and the safety of citizens. These affected the nature of the work of many sectors, including the educational (Długosz, Foryś, 2020). Universities and colleges have been required to move to a remote mode of education. Overnight, on March 12, 2020, the only socially recognized means of achieving educational goals became the remote learning format. While the lecturers had various levels of experience with new information and communication technologies, the students in most cases were representatives of the generation of digital natives (Prensky, 2001).

Research Methodology

Poland started implementing the Bologna Process assumptions from 1999. From 2005, most fields of study began to be implemented under two-cycle studies. (Włoch, 2016, s. 160). A uniform five-year training cycle has been retained by several study courses: medicine, law, psychology, pre-school and early preschool and early school education. The didactic process is implemented in the form of lectures, exercises, workshops, seminars and / or internships, depending on the content of the study programme.

In Poland from March 12th 2020, due to the SARS-COV-2 coronavirus pandemic, the universities switched to remote learning. Under these conditions, learning continued until May 25th 2021. Further, the activities of the universities were limited. Only those classes that are impossible to conduct online could be conducted in a stationary form. This regulation was valid until September 30th 2021. Since the new academic year 2021/2022 most of Polish universities decided to organize lectures and classes in a stationary or in a hybrid form.

There have been many recent publications on various aspects of remote learning. The purpose of the research presented here is to *describe the adaptive styles taken by students in remote classes*. The lack of direct contact with instructors may induce different adaptation styles among students. Especially since the previous social control has been weakened.

The researchers tried to find the answer to the question: *What kind of adaptation styles do students manifest?*. Considering the conditions where academic education takes place, they expected that students would most often exhibit the innovative type of adaptation.

The researchers focused on two basic elements of cultural structure:

- culturally defined intentions and purposes sanctioned for all participants in collective life: **obtaining an academic education**,
- the means to achieve these goals: **distance learning**.

The research was quantitative in nature. The online survey technique was used. The survey questionnaire included 40 statements. The researchers selected 8 indicators for each adaptation style by R. K Merton, e.g. conformism - adherence to all findings of the tutor. The respondents were asked to read these statements and mark their answer on a 5-point Likert scale.

The selection of the research sample was random sampling. A category of students was selected, but further sampling was not controlled.

The proper research was preceded by a pilot study with a sample of 50 students conducted in March 2021. The proper research was implemented in April 2021. During the implementation of the research, the principles of ethical conduct arising from the Code of Social Research were observed: voluntary participation in research, giving informed consent of the respondents to participate in research, ensuring anonymity of the respondents, ensuring confidentiality of data.

302 participants from different majors and degrees took part in this study.

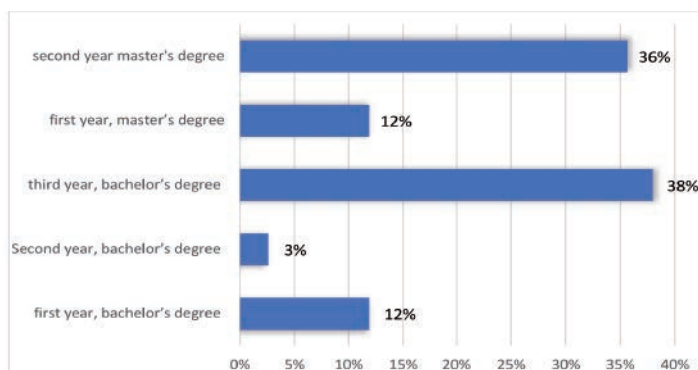


Fig. 1. Characteristics of the respondents by type of degree (%)

The survey was most often completed by second-year students. These are individuals who have been introduced to the academic learning process and certainly have already developed ways of acquiring cultural goals, in this case knowledge. A smaller percentage of responses came from those completing their first degree. The smallest group was represented by second-year bachelor's degree students.

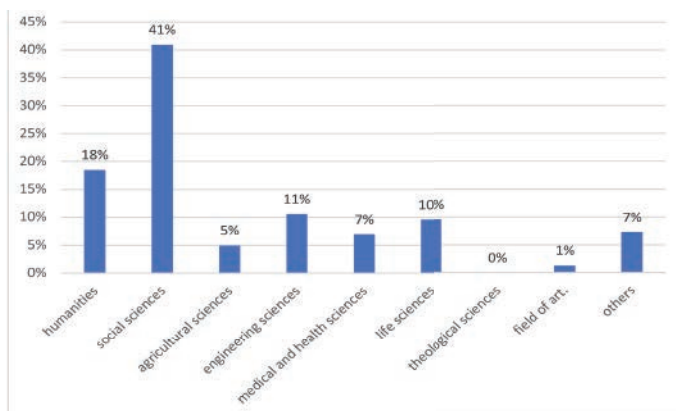


Fig. 2. Field of study (%)

The graph illustrates how many students representing a particular academic discipline completed the survey. The distribution of this statistic shows that the respondents represent all fields except the theological sciences. The largest representation studied social sciences and the smallest representation studied arts majors.

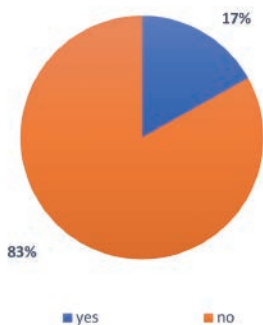


Fig. 3. Employment in the field of study (%)

The distribution of this variable indicates that most of the students surveyed are not yet working in an occupation related to their chosen educational path.

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this survey was to determine students' adaptive styles during distance learning. Students were asked to respond using a 5-point Likert scale to 40 statements. In order to increase the transparency of the results obtained, the answers obtained from the cafeteria of statements „strongly agree” and „rather agree” and the cafeteria of statements „rather disagree” and „disagree” were combined. The researchers expected that at the time of the study, almost a year after the introduction of distance learning, students would mostly exhibit deviant, in the Mertonian sense, styles: innovative or rebellious. The research material obtained as a result of the questionnaire survey was grouped according to particular styles. The researchers are aware that the results obtained are declarative in nature.

The statements presented to the respondents addressed several areas of student didactic and organizational activity. The responses obtained were distributed in percentages as follows (Table 1).

Table1. Distribution of students' statements within the conformist style (%)

Area	Acceptance	No opinion	Rejection
Faculty requirements	95,0	3,0	2,0
Performing student responsibilities	88,8	5,0	6,2

Area	Acceptance	No opinion	Rejection
Attendance at remote classes	93,4	1,3	5,3
Excusing absences from classes	72,8	10,6	16,6
Collaborating with class instructors	73,5	16,2	10,3
Enabling cameras in class	24,8	16,6	58,6
Adaptation to the learning environment	49,3	14,2	36,5

The students surveyed most often exhibited a conformist style when it came to: the demands placed on them by their online instructors (95.0%), the requirement to attend these classes (93.4%), and their responsibilities as a student (88.8%). These areas make up the formal requirements of the student role.

The rejection of the conformist style most often involved the issue of turning on cameras during class (58.6%). While this practice certainly provided students with a sense of intimacy in these rather challenging learning environments, it hindered the instructors' ability to implement the principle of individualizing the learning process and imparted an impersonal nature to the interaction. The fact of speaking to a black screen may have caused both instructors and speaking students to lose engagement. It is known that students during remote classes often stayed in uncomfortable conditions or performed activities unrelated to the teaching process (Table 2).

Table 2. Distribution of students' statements within the innovative style (%)

Area	Acceptance	No opinion	Rejection
Using false absent notes	7,3	1,7	91,0
Cheating on a small scale	30,4	12,3	57,3
Simulation of critical events	5,6	2,3	92,1
Using various forms of crib sheets for credits, exams	26,8	12, 6	60,6
Performing other non-educational activities during class time	53,9	9,3	36,8
Simulating technical problems	6,3	6,3	87,4
Permission to cheat on credits	47,7	12,9	39,4
Late logging out after class	26,1	7,6	66,3

In the case of the innovative style, high percentages can be observed on the rejection side of the attitudes described in the questionnaire. Definitely non-innovative adaptation was declared by students for three areas. The first is to simulate, for one's own needs, critical events e.g. illness, mental crisis, employment problems (92.1%). This distribution of responses may be surprising. The form of conducting classes fostered various disruptions, technical failures, as well as unexpected random events. Moreover, under the conditions of e-counseling implemented by the health service, it was very easy to obtain confirmation of the described disease entity and sick discharge. There may be several hypotheses to explain this distribution. The state

of the pandemic and its attendant restrictions were in themselves a critical event in many biographies. Students may also have feared “tempting fate” with imaginary events. The uncertainty and unpredictability of pandemic behavior meant that no one could feel safe.

Another area that was difficult for students to accept was the use of fake exemptions in order to miss classes or to gain “time” (91.0%). It was certainly easy to get e-consultation for depressive or drug-related conditions. It is known that a psychiatrist has the ability to provide a backdated discharge. Again, it is likely that students have declined this innovative option because of real concerns that any of the disorders might happen to themselves.

Another area was simulating faults of a technical nature (87.4%). The students surveyed did not resort to innovative ways of obtaining excuses for absences from class due to technical glitches or interruptions in Internet connectivity. From the observation of students’ behavior during researcher’s own teaching activities, it appears that students often reasoned not turning on the webcams by the loss of connection quality. The students surveyed felt responsible enough for their educational process to not exploit absenteeism due to pretended communication failures with their instructors.

Innovation was declared by students with regard to performing other non-educational activities during remote classes (54%). This type of behavior is often practiced.

The last active style of adaptation is the rebellious attitude. It assumes the rejection of goals (values) approved by the majority and the means that may lead to these goals. This style is often chosen due to dissatisfaction with the current state or growing frustration. The last mentioned during the pandemic is common. The inability to achieve certain goals through the means developed over the years created a sense of tension and a desire to oppose the order imposed by the SARS Covid 19 virus. Rebel adaptation also applied to the education sector (Table 3).

Table 3. Distribution of students’ statements within the rebellious style (%)

Area	Acceptance	No opinion	Rejection
Reporting violations to university authorities	9,6	14,6	75,8
Open communication about concerns	32,8	19,2	48,0
Temporality of education	14,2	13,6	72,2
Refusal to turn on the webcam	12,9	6,3	80,8
Non-acceptance of feedback from instructors	24,9	35,4	39,7
Non-acceptance of the terms of online education	43,0	12,3	44,7
Establishing one’s own rules in learning	39,1	22,2	38,7

Intriguingly, there were the fewest rebellious individuals among the students surveyed. This type of adaptation manifested itself by a mere plus or minus 40%, in such areas of remote education as not accepting the conditions of remote learning (4.3%) and setting their own rules for mastering the learned course material (39.1%).

In the case of the first indicator, there is no surprising result. Students found it difficult to come to terms with the new way of education, especially in the case of majors that are mainly based on practical training. The implementation of laboratory classes, methodical or practical training was much less effective than in the case of stationary form. It is necessary to remember that not every student had comfortable conditions for participating in remote education. This attitude affected 40%, while the remaining 60% more or less adapted to e-education and discovered its various advantages quite quickly. Occasionally researchers have found students running errands away from home during class. The development of modern technology makes it possible to connect from practically anywhere, as long as there is signal coverage.

The second area of rebellion concerned setting new rules in learning. The respondents (39.1%) declared that they learn on their own terms and what they want. These are individuals who select the knowledge they are given in terms of fulfilling perceived needs. It is to be hoped that this attitude is the result of critical thinking skills and not ignorance or laziness.

The respondents certainly do not feel the need to rebel against a request from the instructor to turn on the camera (80.8%). It is important to mention that universities have regulated in different ways the obligation to remain on camera during the implementation of classes. In comparison, elementary and high school students, despite their obligation to be visible in class as time went on, were less likely to comply with these regulations and less likely to activate the cameras at the request of teachers.

The introduction of remote education became a challenge for teachers, especially those who remained digitally ignorant or immigrant for various reasons. The education offered remained at varying levels, especially during the first months of the pandemic.

The researchers were interested in the question of whether the students were critical of the organizational and teaching skills of the instructors and had a need to report these deficiencies to the university authorities, ranging from unit directors to the rector's student affairs authority. Almost 76% did not declare such a need.

The time of the pandemic and restrictions were beneficial for reviewing past priorities and goals. Many people had time to look at their needs and undertake to make, sometimes radical, changes in their lives. There was a statement in the survey about such a tendency. The students surveyed, it appeared, did not view their current majors as temporary (72.2%). Despite the difficulties and challenges associated with passing the course, they wanted to continue their studies, even if it was the first, crucial year of studying.

In every community there is a group for whom tradition, legal norms and rules are more important than the goals that the group or community is striving to achieve. This can be attributed to a variety of factors, such as the fearful attitudes of some individuals. There were 8 statements in the questionnaire representing this style of adaptation (Table 4).

Table 4. Distribution of students' statements within ritualism (%)

Area	Acceptance	No opinion	Rejection
Requirements and regulations are most important	70,9	14,2	14,9
Class attendance, despite disruptions	81,5	6,6	11,9
Class attendance with no plans for employment in the profession	14,2	13,5	72,3
Knowledge of all regulations regarding remote learning	42,3	9,9	47,8
Demanding attendance to be checked every time	43,2	22,4	34,4
Preference for a traditional course of education, without innovations	30,1	22,8	47,1
Reporting incidents of violations of arrangements by fellow students to faculty	3,4	3,6	93,0

The largest percentage of students surveyed adopted a style based on ritualism when it came to observing class attendance (81.5%). Students repeatedly showed concern when attendance was not verified. They asked if they were sure the system had recorded their attendance in class. If there was a connection breakdown on their part, they reported it to the instructor. With the introduction of distance learning, the students had to face a new situation. The requirements of the instructors and the ways of passing the material changed. Attendance verification was one of the elements of the "old order". In addition, students hoped that high attendance would give them the prospect of passing the course.

Another area with a high rate of ritualism was compliance with faculty requirements in class and regulations (71%). Students reported knowing them and needing to fulfill them.

The least amount of ritualism was declared for watching over fellow students to follow arrangements with the instructor (93.0). The pandemic necessarily affected the weakening of social control by weakening direct social contacts. The respondents also disagreed with the statement that they attend classes but do not link their future to this field of study, treating it temporarily (72%). The pandemic has helped to validate the needs and aspirations of many people. Changes were also taking place in the educational field. Many times people decided to retrain or supplement their education. The decision-making process was carried out at different pace, hence the question about treating the current studies as a "kind of waiting room" before finding the right educational path.

The surveyed group of students also declared an adaptation style of simultaneous rejection of the goals associated with academic education and the means leading to those goals (Table 5).

Table 5. Distribution of students' statements within the withdrawn style (%)

Area	Acceptance	No opinion	Rejection
Willing to pause one's studies and wait out the restrictions	25,8	10,9	63,3
Attendance only at the beginning of class	5,9	3,0	91,1
Not volunteering to speak in classes when not asked	77,9	5,9	16,2

Area	Acceptance	No opinion	Rejection
Losing contact with students in one's year through online classes	66,3	5,9	27,8
No desire to return to regular classes	31,6	15,2	53,2
Reducing activities on Teams and college to a minimum	26,1	18,5	55,4
Fear of returning to regular studies	31,8	9,9	58,3

The pandemic has certainly contributed to an increase in anxiety and depression in every age group. Such disorders are accompanied by an attitude of apathy and withdrawal. The shift to a remote mode of education created conditions that did not appeal to everyone. Part of them withdrew because of the lack of conditions for continuing education, others because of frustration caused by the way the educational content was implemented. The respondents declared withdrawal attitudes in the area of activity during classes (78%). They did not speak unless asked to do so. Perhaps the withdrawal was due to fear that their statements might be secretly recorded. A lot of footage of various remote learning activities has appeared online in the last year. Some of them ridiculed or discredited their participants.

Withdrawal was also caused by the loss of face to face contact with other people from the year (66.3%). Academic teachers stayed in contact with students thanks to cameras being turned on, students largely "hid" behind avatars or initials. For many, eye contact and all non-verbal communication is a key element of interpersonal relationships. It is worth exploring this aspect in order to determine whether the withdrawal from contact with people of the year was due to fears of misuse of modern technologies or an attitude of indifference caused by prolonged strictures.

Conclusion and Implications

The new reality, caused by the introduction of distance learning, triggered the need for readjustment in all participants of the academic education process: university authorities, lecturers and students. The results indicated that the students represented different modes of adaptation. The authors of the present research expected a prevalence of innovative and rebellious strategies. The study showed that students most often declared a conformist style. The analysis focused on only two elements with the highest percentage of declarations, over 90%: meeting the requirements set by the instructors and adhering to attendance.

Conformist behaviour mainly involved tasks arising from the formal definition of the student role: a person attending classes and fulfilling the expectations of the instructor. These tendencies were also confirmed by the respondents' declarations made within the style based on ritualism (obeying requirements and regulations, attending classes). Students, submitting to generally accepted rules of functioning as students, do not feel the need to be the guardians of these rules, do not show the willingness to report deviations or shortcomings to the supervisor.

This type of adaptation also included such elements as: fulfilling the duties of a student, excusing absences, cooperation during classes with the instructor. The respondents declared that they fulfilled the formal requirements related to the role of a student using approved means. Conformism may have resulted from the fact that students were afraid of not meeting the new demands associated with the transition to distance learning. This situation was mentioned by one respondent to a Polish nationwide survey: "Instructors, most likely out of a well-founded fear of possible cheating, impose such requirements that passing by an honest and conscientious student sometimes is almost impossible - let alone a very good grade" (Leżański, Marek, Sobolewska, 2020, p:42).

The distribution of declarations in terms of students' innovative behaviour did not confirm the hypotheses. Students participating in remote learning did not have to use some of the usual ways to justify absences (fictitious dismissals, critical situations). The conditions of the online classes, the unspecified regulations regarding the necessity of switching on cameras, widened the possibilities of apparent participation.

In the situation of the transition to distance learning, students of the first years were observed to resign from the educational process. Some declared their willingness to wait out the pandemic and return to full-time study. The students surveyed did not rebel against the conditions. Perhaps they adopted a strategy of "waiting for normality". They showed understanding towards the shortcomings of the remote learning process. They did not argue with the lecturer's clear order to turn on the cameras, but they did not come up with such an initiative on their own. More than half of the respondents declared non-conformist behaviour in this case.

In the case of statements characteristic of the withdrawn adaptive style, the tendency to adhere to class attendance was confirmed. The respondents rejected the possibility of appearing only at the beginning of the class in order for the system to register their attendance. They declared their willingness to attend class until the end, even if this involved logging back into the course after being cleared due to technical glitches. The strongest trends were discussed.

What should be of concern are declarations of withdrawal in the area of interpersonal relations. The conditions during distance learning influenced the formation of a basis of a passive recipient and limitation of contacts with people from the year. Maintaining passivity significantly reduces the learning effectiveness of the individual as well as the whole group. This in turn has a direct impact on the final results obtained in credits and examinations. Limiting contacts with peers, as confirmed by numerous studies carried out by psychologists, affects the lowering of individual well-being and the appearance of various types of disorders.

This type of adaptation also included such elements as: fulfilling the duties of a student, excusing absences, cooperation during classes with the instructor. The respondents declared that they fulfilled the formal requirements related to the role of a student using approved means.

An adaptive style based on ritualism was exhibited by students primarily in relation to adherence to class attendance.

The restrictions on social contact and isolation that persisted through the pandemic caused a number of people to withdraw from previous interpersonal

relationships. Especially those studying in the first years. Psychological discomfort was deepened by various crises, e.g. loss of employment, deterioration of material and health situation and fear for the loved ones and the future. As researchers emphasize, such situations should not be underestimated (Białaś, 2020). The earlier a student receives support, the greater the chance of reintroducing him or her to academic society. The issue of limiting relationships with peers and lecturers is addressed in many reports related to the diagnosis of distance learning and is one of the key drawbacks of e-learning (Modrzyński i in., 2020; Raport 2021; Romaniuk, Łukasiewicz-Wieleba, 2021). Over 50% of students and teachers surveyed indicated that e-learning causes the feeling of isolation (Doroszewka, Hys, Jakubiak, 2020). The phenomenon of passivity and lack of involvement of students was perceived by 40.26% of teachers at The Maria Grzegorzewska University (Romaniuk, Łukasiewicz-Wieleba, 2021). As much as 44% of the students surveyed experienced periods of depression and moodiness more strongly and 41% experienced loneliness (Report 2021).

The withdrawal attitude also applies to what happens in remote classes. This problem was also noted by Dominik Leżański, Julia Sobolewska: *"For some participants, this makes it easier to "switch off" and despite being in a virtual classroom, the content is not effectively delivered"* (Leżański & Sobolewska, 2020, p.60).

Recommendations

The conducted research, despite its limitations, has a cognitive value in the context of supporting participants in the distance learning process. Academic teachers should pay particular attention to maintaining interpersonal relations in isolation conditions. This can be achieved by introducing teaching methods based on cooperation and exchange of ideas between students, e.g. requests, gamification, using the social media in education.

The declaration of teachers' availability, through the virtual plane, creates new, previously unseen opportunities to create interpersonal ties with the student, establish cooperation, provide assistance. Teachers can establish a direct relationship through individual contact with their charges in virtual space. Every student wants to be treated in a subjective manner, as a unique human individual. At the time of the pandemic, such contacts were possible and, what is more, did not require the time-consuming journey to the meeting place.

In some way the contact was much easier. When both parties were using a camera (which the students considered a necessary practice in a one-to-one conversation), such communication was of greater importance providing comfort of safety, also psychological comfort. Through such meetings with the students a close interpersonal bond could be established. Also, problems faced by students were more easily communicated through remote contact than during face-to-face contact in the teaching room. The teacher gained fuller knowledge of the student and was able to adapt the form of communication to the cognitive predispositions of the individual student. Virtual consultations created a sphere of psychological and emotional safety. Students in the environment of their own home were inclined to be more open towards the teacher.

It is worthwhile for teachers to address the importance of face-to-face relationships in building individual well-being. The researchers would like to draw attention to the importance of being in front of a webcam during teaching. Although the view of the addressee of the messages sent is a substitute for a direct relationship, it always gives a sense of the subject's presence. The lecturer who remains on camera should raise the issue of the determinants of attentiveness in online learning. These elements (the ability to build and maintain relationships with the teacher and other participants) should be components of training in remote teaching methodology.

The results obtained are worth using as a reference point for broader analyses concerning the maintenance of natural relationships between e-learning users.

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The models of students' adaptation to remote learning in terms of R. Merton's theory of anomie

Abstract

The outbreak of the Covid - 19 pandemic resulted in the introduction of restrictions that forced academia to move to a remote mode of education and modify the existing methods of achieving their goals. This situation caused different adaptation reactions in the society. The article presents the problem of students' adaptation to new conditions of education. The theoretical background is provided by R.K. Merton's *typology* of modes of adaptation.

The aim of the article is to analyze the adaptation styles of students of different majors. A quantitative strategy was used in the research. A questionnaire survey was conducted among 303 students.

The surveyed students showed different ways of adapting to particular elements of remote education, but the most common style was a conformist one.

Keywords: social anomie, adaptation styles, remote education, student

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