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## **ONLINE LEARNING: ADAPTING TO CHANGES TEACHERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN IN THE PANDEMIC CONDITIONS**

### **Abstract**

The article discusses the results of a study of university teachers' adaptation to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the study showed the peculiarities of university teachers' perception of the crisis situation during the pandemic, as well as the real situation of transformation of educational activities in an online format. University teachers played an important role in ensuring the continuity of the educational process and a smooth transition from the traditional learning format to online learning. Online learning during the emergency contributed to the development and formation of culture between students and teachers. University teachers have faced psychological and physical stress during the pandemic. Teachers are aware of the importance of integrating online technologies into the educational process and prefer a blended approach to learning.

**Key words:** higher education, online learning, COVID-19 pandemic, teacher, student, educational process.

### **Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic has made dramatic changes to the learning process in higher education institutions in our country. To ensure the continuity of learning, teachers, and students, regardless of the degree of knowledge of digital technologies and online learning platforms, have been transferred to online learning.

The Covid-19 pandemic has become a real challenge to reforming the educational process of higher education institutions: the technical infrastructure of educational institutions, the level of digital technology proficiency of all participants in the educational process, the use of interactive methods and teaching technologies in the online learning format.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced all levels of education, including higher education, to adopt the online format as the main form of education. The dramatic changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic have pushed universities around the world to move to online learning, but without the strategic, coherent, and multilateral transition that has been voluntarily undertaken by individual universities in the past [1].

It should be noted that online learning has played a key role in the continuity of learning during the pandemic. The forced mass transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic caused certain difficulties in organizing the educational process and led to the adaptation of teachers and students to new conditions.

The complete transition of universities to online learning a long time made it possible to identify the positive and negative attitudes of teachers to changes in the educational process.

Teachers needed to change their courses in accordance with the characteristics of online learning. The content of the disciplines being read had to be adapted not only before the start of classes but also during classes to better understand the needs of students in a new type of education [2].

At the same time, the question of the degree of readiness for online learning of university teachers, the impact of the online format on the quality of students' knowledge, and psychological stress when teaching in the online format of teachers has not been sufficiently studied.

The relevance of the study lies in the fact that the unforeseen situation associated with the pandemic and the transition to online learning has made its own adjustments and significantly changed the organization of the educational process of higher educational institutions. Teachers were forced to quickly adapt to ongoing events for the continuity of the educational process.

The issues of online learning are relevant at the present time. This is due to the transformation of the entire educational process and the readiness of university teachers to carry out teaching activities in an online format. All university professors and students from all over the world have been forced to overcome difficulties in a relatively new direction for them, while simultaneously contributing to the fight against the spread of the virus [3].

In this article, we wanted to find out the attitude of university teachers to online learning during the pandemic, the problems teachers faced, and questions about how teachers perceive online learning. Thus, the purpose of this article is to study the point of view of university teachers on online learning and to identify the main problems of adaptation of university teachers to changes in the educational process in the context of online learning.

The role of teachers in times of crisis was not only to teach students online but also to make learning understandable and comfortable. Teachers, to a certain extent, had to form a culture of interaction among students in online learning.

Online learning acts as a barrier to engaging students in real classroom activities. In addition, students lack the influence of mutual learning. These problems also affect students' personalities and prevent them from doing their turn [4].

University teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic faced the problem of psychological and physical stress. This is a high level of fear of coronavirus infection, emotional burnout, and unwillingness to conduct all studies at home while maintaining the approved academic calendar of students for the academic year, as well as the schedule of studies.

An important stress factor was the significantly increased workload on teachers, which manifested itself as the need to look for new means of teaching and preparing materials, taking into account the distance format [5].

The online learning format has led to an increase in the teaching and methodological workload, additional work on the development of educational and methodological materials for online classes (lectures, practical, laboratory classes), technical problems, insufficient knowledge of platforms such as Zoom, Moodle, MS Teams, as well as an unstable Internet connection. Despite the fact that teachers already had electronic versions of prepared educational and methodological complexes for readable disciplines, the transfer of educational content to the educational platform of the university, which had its own specifics of filling, required the teacher to know this platform and also had to fill in educational content after hours.

Not all teachers have the same knowledge and ability in technology, while some teachers find it manageable to create, record, and upload video lessons, while others do not. It can cause stress and anxiety when trying to complete a difficult task without proper preparation and isolating work from home; without the support of peers or colleagues [6].

To achieve this goal of the study, it is necessary to solve the following tasks: to identify the perception of online learning by university professors; - to study the problems faced by university teachers in online learning; - to determine the prospects for the use of online education technologies by university professors.

In the post-pandemic period, there is a reassessment of the positive and negative aspects of the transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, in post-pandemic time, one can note the significant role of online education in overcoming unforeseen situations, and therefore it is important to understand how higher education teachers perceive the online learning format. Overcoming future crises will only be successful through joint efforts that create structures and policies that make the system work for and with its participants [7].

**Results and discussion.** This article was prepared as part of the "Scientific Winter School 2023" for the implementation of the scientific project "Online education: adapting to changes and rebooting university teachers in Kazakhstan in a pandemic."

The survey was conducted among the participants of the Winter School-2023. An online survey was created in Google Forms, and a link to the survey was sent to teachers. 93 teachers from 12 universities took part in the online survey, of which 81% were teachers of the humanities, and the rest were natural, technical, and medical.

During the pandemic, difficulties arose related to the knowledge of online educational platforms of universities. One of the conditions for adapting to the online learning format is the level of computer technology proficiency of teachers, and their experience in online learning.

As can be seen from Figure 1, most of the respondents were computer literate at a high and medium level. However, there were respondents who also spoke at an elementary level. As teachers noted, after the pandemic, the level of computer literacy has increased significantly. In a short time, the successful mastering of basic digital competencies indicates a high degree of adaptability of university teachers (Figure 1).

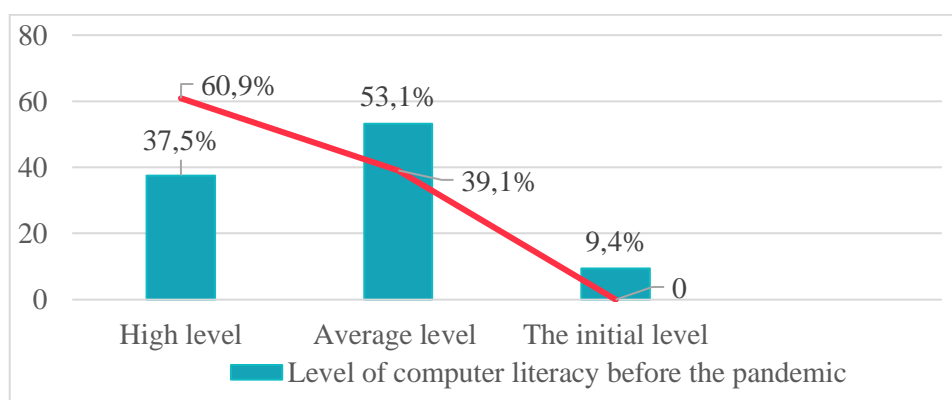


Figure 1. The level of computer literacy of teachers before the pandemic and after the pandemic teachers

According to the study, before the introduction of restrictive measures, 55% of respondents had the experience of conducting online classes in the form of consultations and webinars for distance learning students. The rest of the teachers (45%) did not have practical experience of working remotely but acquired the necessary skills to work on online platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Assessing their experience of working in an online format, 81.3% of respondents noted that there were difficulties in involving students in the educational process. Teachers need to provide regular feedback to effectively administer an online course, which requires students to be self-motivated [8].

When we asked about the consequences of the transition to online learning, teachers pointed to a decrease in the level of motivation for learning among students (75% of respondents), and the

level and quality of their knowledge (67.2% of respondents). Problems were also caused by the observance of academic honesty and discipline by students.

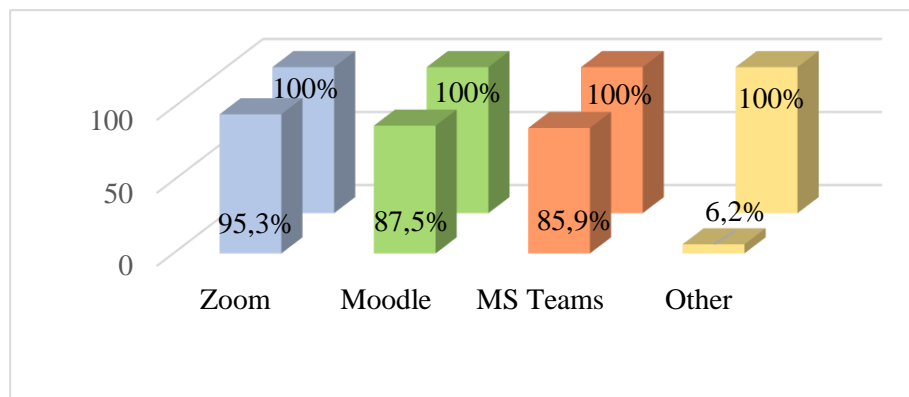


Figure 2. Online platforms used by teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic (in % ratio).

During the online learning format, the emotional burden on the teacher has increased, considering all types of teaching activities have remained the same. The majority of teachers (82.8% of respondents) indicated that the process of adapting to online learning had an impact on their emotional and physical condition. Respondents (62.5%) noted that the process of switching to online learning increased labor costs at the same level as wages. According to researchers, the coronavirus crisis has caused teachers to suffer from issues such as anxiety, depression, domestic violence, and divorce that limit their ability to teach properly [9].

The transition to distance education required the processing and preparation of all educational and methodological material, and the development of new programs and platforms for conducting classes.

Online platforms such as Zoom, Moodle, and MS Teams were used to implement the educational process. Respondents used the Zoom platform most actively, at 95.3%. Educational platforms such as Moodle (87.5%) and MS Teams (85.9%) were also widely used, while other platforms account for only 6.2% (Figure 2).

In our study, the attitude of teachers towards online learning was studied. The majority of respondents (62.5%) were in favor of blended learning, combining online and offline formats. Blended learning in higher education requires the collective effort of administrators, teaching staff, students, and parents [10].

As the analysis shows, only 7.8% of teachers are ready to transfer their teaching activities to an online format. 29.7% of the respondents indicated that the lesson should be held in the traditional format (Figure 3).

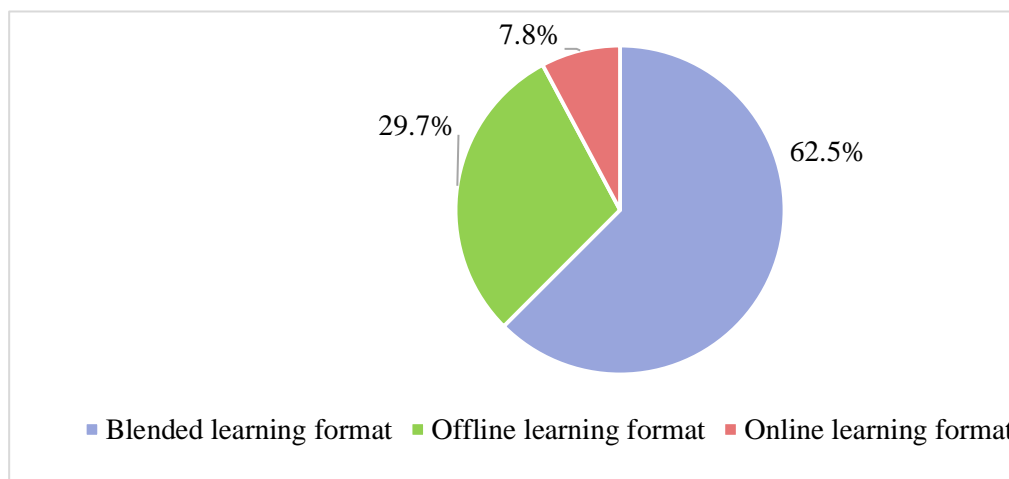


Figure 3. Preference of teachers to the format of training

To the survey question “How did online learning affect your professional development?” The answers in percentage terms were distributed as follows: 81.3% of respondents answered that the online format helped them master modern educational technologies, and 50% of respondents made changes to the content of the academic discipline. 75% of respondents answered that the online format contributed to changing the practice of teaching and learning.

Thus, the results of the survey showed the peculiarities of the perception of the crisis situation during the COVID-19 pandemic, the real situation of the transformation of educational activities, and the difficulties and problems faced by teachers in the transition to the online learning format.

### Conclusions

Thus, the blended learning format created as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to teachers, will lead to positive changes in the digital transformation of higher education.

The experience gained by teachers during the coronavirus crisis has made a certain contribution to the further development of digital competence in teaching, as well as to the development of new methods and technologies in online learning. I would like to note that the reloading of teachers took place simultaneously with certain difficulties and successes. An important role in the reorientation of the entire educational process was assigned to teachers, which successfully influenced the continuity of the educational process and the smooth transition from the traditional learning format to the online learning format.

Universities now more than ever need to invest in the professional development of their faculty to keep them up to date with effective teaching methods with or without the use of online technologies [11].

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**ОНЛАЙН ОҚЫТУ: ПАНДЕМИЯ ЖАҒДАЙЫНДА ҚАЗАҚСТАН  
РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫНЫҢ ЖОҒАРЫ ОҚУ ОРЫНДАРЫНЫҢ ОҚЫТУШЫЛАРЫ  
ӨЗГЕРІСТЕРГЕ БЕЙІМДЕЛУ**



## **Түйін**

Мақалада COVID-19 пандемиясы жағдайында университет оқытушыларының онлайн оқытуға бейімделуі бойынша зерттеу нәтижелері қарастырылады. COVID-19 пандемиясымен байланысты онлайн оқыту форматына шұғыл көшу жоғары оқу орындары қызметінің барлық аспектілеріне ғана емес, сонымен қоса оқытушылардың оқу-әдістемелік үрдісіне де елеулі өзгерістер енгізді. Зерттеу нәтижелері жоғары оқу орындары оқытушыларының пандемия кезіндегі дағдарыстық жағдайды қабылдау ерекшеліктерін, сондай-ақ онлайн-форматтағы білім беру қызметін трансформациялаудың нақты жағдайын көрсетті. Университет оқытушылары білім беру процесінің үздіксіздігін және дәстүрлі оқыту форматынан онлайн оқытуға бірқалыпты көшуді қамтамасыз етуде маңызды рөл атқарды. Жоғары оқу орындарының оқытушылары пандемия кезінде психологиялық және физикалық күйзеліске ұшырады. Оқытушылар онлайн технологияларды білім беру процесіне интеграция маңыздылығын ескере отырып, оқытудың аралас тәсілін тандайды.

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## **ОНЛАЙН-ОБУЧЕНИЕ: АДАПТАЦИЯ К ИЗМЕНЕНИЯМ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛИ ВЫСШИХ УЧЕБНЫХ ЗАВЕДЕНИЙ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН В УСЛОВИЯХ ПАНДЕМИИ**

### **Аннотация**

В статье рассматриваются результаты исследования адаптации преподавателей вузов к онлайн-обучению в условиях пандемии COVID-19. Результаты исследования показали особенности восприятия преподавателями вузов кризисной ситуации в период пандемии, а также реальную ситуацию трансформации образовательной деятельности в онлайн-формате. Преподаватели университета сыграли важную роль в обеспечении непрерывности образовательного процесса и плавного перехода от традиционного формата обучения к онлайн-обучению. Преподаватели не только преподавали в новом формате, но и стремились сделать процесс обучения понятным и удобным для учеников. Онлайн-обучение во время чрезвычайной ситуации способствовало развитию и формированию культуры между учениками и преподавателями. Преподаватели вузов столкнулись с психологическим и физическим стрессом во время пандемии. Преподаватели осознают важность интеграции онлайн-технологий в образовательный процесс и предпочитают смешанный подход к обучению.

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