



Media Literacy and Higher Education in Epidemical Aspect: a Short Overview

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Abstract

Introduction: *The modern world has entered a new phase of development, where it has had to form a new type of society in a difficult time - previously referred to as a future challenge. More than 300 million students worldwide are having their education disrupted by Covid-19. Universities haven't faced such level of disruption in generations. However, unlike any point in the past, now we have the ability to continue education even when universities physically close. New questions about how remote-learning can be delivered and improved are raised. An urgent one is the quality of the educational process in isolation and how to preserve the basic teaching principle. **Presentation:** The essence of this approach was not clear in terms of parameters, but it was known that it would be the result of the construction of a new social phenomenon – education in isolation during a pandemic. Real-time information sharing and cultural communication is already a fact. The challenge higher education systems face is improving the organization of the learning process and integrating traditional bases into new platforms. They need to be more operational and dynamic, allowing the capacity of huge volumes of data, but also be open to complement and correction. This can be achieved through the collaboration of all teachers from different fields so as to create a dynamic software product that will allow the creation of a system of different aspects of higher education. **The paper aims** to make a short overview of the diversity of forms of learning as a positive in work and how the creative atmosphere at the university motivates students for a meaningful learning process. Another aspect that has been addressed is the fact that, in social isolation, people should not be divided **Conclusion:** The huge role of media is to educate and bring up individuals. It is the bridge between ruling and vigilant people who complain but also ask questions, verify facts and worry, but also offer solutions. This is why **media literacy** for learners is crucial, especially in times of crisis.*

Keywords: *media, Covid-19, higher education, online training, distance learning, social isolation*

1. Introduction

The world shut down at home and opened up to a new kind of culture based on socialization through Internet. University education has entered the electronic environment with a flying start and is already a fact. Just as the spirit cannot be quarantined, nor can the thirst for knowledge. Life has moved in a new direction and raises new questions about the way of learning in the future and the opportunities for its improvement.

An urgent question is the quality of the learning process. Another one is related to workload - staring at the screen for hours on is exhausting. Lack of direct contact with colleagues and teachers raises the level of anxiety, creates a feeling of insecurity, and leads to disorders.

2. Education during a crisis

The basic principle of remote-teaching is to preserve the interest in the discipline and to develop knowledge in an online environment, which does not contradict the strategic goals of higher education. As Bill Gates said back in 1999: "...the era of personal computers has caused a real revolution that has affected millions of people. It took us where we could not have imagined. ... Today we are embarking on a new great journey. No one can predict where we will end up on this path, but I am confident that this revolution will touch even more people and move society far forward. Radical changes will occur primarily in communication between people" [1], that change has taken place. Now the challenge is to improve the system for online-learning. This can be achieved through the joint work of teachers from different fields to create a dynamic software product aimed at research work in universities and education itself.

3. Positives and negatives in online education. Advantages and problems

The variety of educational forms turned out to be a positive. Something more: The right decisions are made based on experience and not just knowledge. [2] Through analysis and case studies, students



draw conclusions and make concrete decisions. This is done purposefully so they can reveal their strengths, be active, diverse, and apply what is learned. This example is another new application of the theory of the American philosopher John Dewey [3], where the interaction of students with practical matter makes them more adaptable and more professionally literate. In other words, students placed in a situation with real life problems, guided by the teacher, solve the case, and gain new knowledge.

4. Sustainable survival

Media today are more than ever rushing to create an information environment – dynamic and often noisier than useful. One of the most pressing issues is saving economies, but at a time when we are learning to live with the crisis caused by Covid-19, it is extremely important to have a rational conversation about social distance in terms of education, culture, intellectual capacity. At a distance, we cannot afford to stand divided. And here comes the huge role of the media, whose function is to educate and discipline. It is the bridge between rulers and complainers. But it is also there to ask questions, check facts, offer solutions. This way wandering between the themes of freedom, elections, the pandemic, Covid-19, students are involved in the adventure of information literacy, in particular copyright literacy in the media in the modern world.

The project “Model for research and increase copyright literacy at the media in the university environment”, funded by the National Science Fund of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria, considers intellectual property as a law, discipline and science, provokes discussions on the issue with the emphasis on copyright literacy and media literacy of students learning in specialties such as journalism, media, public relations, communications, or more generally in the professional field 3.5 “Social Communications and Information Sciences”. Observations show that this competence is not at the required level, there is a real need for additional knowledge and training.

Within the project, the research examines the educational content and programs offered by higher education on the topic, as well as the formation of copyright literacy in the media of students learning in similar specialties in different universities. The accumulated factual information outlines the trend of awareness, level of knowledge and practical orientation of skills in future professionals.

The results such as creative thinking and copyright competence in the field of media in a university environment will contribute to higher competitiveness of students in the labour market and to the establishment of an active civil society, and this is a prerequisite for advanced problem-oriented education of students, which in turn is a step towards changes in the legal infrastructure of culture in our country.

The significance of the project is due to the growing influence of the media in the international aspect, especially social and online media. In the 21st century there is an organized unification of various media industries – newspapers, radio, television, communication networks, in whole media complexes of a new model, that today carry out all the media activities, and soon are about to become a major market of the future. We are witnessing a new type of mass culture, a new type of organization and management of society through information knowledge and products. The scientific interest in the problems and the current trends in the media industry in terms of copyright literacy in the media in the university environment is provoked by the need to fill some gaps in research in the media industry, as well as the fragmentary nature of research related to copyright aspects of media in a university environment.

We can summarize that the current project is interdisciplinary in its nature because it includes different areas of knowledge and helps to increase the media literacy and to solve digital divide problems. It also has a direct application in education at various levels and especially in the university environment. The current state of the studied issues shows that the problem of the media industry from the point of the legal framework in the field of copyright and related rights has not been studied. In recent years, the need to address it has been recognized, but there have been no concrete results.

5. Results

Human behaviour is different and research among our students shows that the lack of a system for copyright protection of journalists and their authors' materials raises the need to develop an information campaign and training courses to ensure information comfort for authors and trust for authenticity among users of such information. There is a need for the media to pay more attention to the new conditions faced by intellectual property in the media, to start preparation and consultations for the creation of a sustainable and effective strategy for improving the intellectual property protection



/ competence of their employees. Intellectual legal aspects in the media will become a part of new discipline that would train current and future journalists on intellectual property and copyright issues.

6. Conclusion

The media work around the clock to meet society's expectations. It is the history that will tell how successful they are. A report by the EBU [4], released a few days ago, found that the escalation of the Covid-19 situation around the world is increasingly directing the majority of the audience to the public media in order to receive reliable news and information based on verified facts. According to Liz Corbin, Deputy Director Media and Head of News at the European Broadcasting Union: "In times of national or international crisis, millions of people turn to public service television, radio... In the current crisis situation, public media journalists give their best they are able, in order to provide true, accurate and complete information as quickly as possible". Therefore, the work of these people must be respected, and the knowledge of this must be part of the learning process of students.

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