STUDY ON THE GLOBALIZATION OF INFORMATION IN THE ONLINE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

Purpose *– The paper aims to study the globalization of information in the online educational environment during the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Methodology/approach *- The online teaching activity during the emergency period focused on the realization of projects by students and their online presentation. The project was presented online and after that the authors proposed to colleagues a game through which to fix their knowledge or to develop their skills / competencies.*

Findings *– The results of the study focus on the following directions: Globalization of information; Flexibility of information; Ability to use information; Motivating students through information.*

Research limitations/implications *– The research results refer strictly to the statistical population mentioned in the article. A larger statistical group is needed to generalize the results.*

Practical implications *– The research results can be used to establish educational strategies for the online environment at the university level.*

Originality/value *– The research is innovative and can support new educational policies for the pandemic period.*

Key words: *Globalization of information, e-learning, blended learning platforms*

Introduction

Globalization is a phenomenon of transforming the world into a unit, which manifests itself on a global scale through the creation of supranational political institutions and bodies, through a common economic and security policy, etc. (DEX, 2016).

Information is power at the moment in the context of the technical-scientific revolution. The channels of information propagation are represented by net networks, specific programs and applications on a global scale (Diaconu, 2014). The globalization of information is manifested by the promotion of information strategies, beyond what we define classical borders of the national state, aiming at prioritizing information and developing information culture on a global scale (Diaconu, 2014).

In the field of sustainable management and quality (Bratu, 2019a; Enescu, 2018), the principle of open source solutions is already widely used (Bratu, 2016; Bratu, 2019b). In education we find such examples, but face-to-face learning predominates.

The online educational environment includes blended learning platforms for educational institutions and is an alternative to simplify the teaching-learning process (UMFCD, 2020). Adapting teaching-learning strategies in the online environment involves adapting the managerial style of teachers, to model learning behaviors and increase the quality of teaching through creativity and ability to use online resources (Bratu, 2019; Bratu, 2018a; Bratu, 2018b; Cioca, 2020).

Given the local, national and global context, being declared a COVID-19 pandemic by the OMS (Javelot, 2020), the educational process took place online in the next period. The Google Classroom platform has been designed so that teachers and students can communicate and collaborate effectively in the online environment. Thus, along with the face-to-face meetings, the students carry out their individual study, accessing the course materials available in eLearning format.

Methodology

The study on the globalization of information in the online educational environment during the Covid-19 pandemic aims at analyzing students' activities in the online environment and offers teachers some benchmarks on classroom management strategies to optimize learning.

The research problem presented by the paper is the analysis of students' activity in the online environment.

The target population of the research was a number of 69 students - bachelor and master, in the field of Economic Engineering and European Project Management, who studied the disciplines Human Resource Management and Project Team Management. The students were organized into three classes on Google Classroom.

The tasks of the students during the classes on the Google Classroom platform are the following:

- Perform tasks at each seminar;
- Post comments on each topic;
- Present projects online;
- Explain to colleagues the tasks to be performed;
- Develops interactive games with colleagues that aim to apply theoretical information.

Playing games with students is a trend in e-learning, for consolidating information, acquiring skills and developing personality (Stevenson, 2018; Alsharif, 2018).

Each team carried out a project on a topic in the field of human resources management and the project team.

Were analyzed the resources used by students to organize games / applications for colleagues during the presentation of projects. The following items were followed:

- Variability of applications used by students.
- Content of applications:
  - o Assess knowledge;
  - o Apply concepts;
  - o Evaluate the personality.
- Student involvement:
  - o Emotional;
  - o Cognitive;
  - o Physics (online presence at the right time).
- Results obtained in applications / games.
- Feedback provided by students regarding games / applications.
- The impact of Covid-19 and social isolation on learning activity.

Results

Out of a total of 69 students, 68% are female and 22% are male; 81% are students in the first cycle of studies - bachelor, and 19% are students in the second cycle - master.

The notes from the project reflect the quality of the scientific content, the use of technology, innovation, organization of applications. The marks were between 7 and 10, 72% obtaining marks of 9 and 10. The average mark obtained was 9.04.

The grading of the seminar activity was done according to the involvement and solving of the tasks given by colleagues, communication with the group, compliance of the deadlines for applying the games. The grading range was between 1 and 10, 12% had grades between 1 - 4, 12% between 5 - 7, and 76% greater than or equal to 8. The average grade at the seminar activity was 8.28, and standard deviation of 2,468.

The final score obtained by the students, after summing up all the items tracked, was between 13 and 31, with an average of 25.94 and a standard deviation of 3,650. It should be noted that the maximum expected grade was 27, for the maximum standard of 100% of tasks, but the expected level of average was 26.

The use of online platforms by students was assessed in order to monitor the extent to which they have access to information and how they take it. Excluding the use of the Microsoft Office - Power Point package, students use between 1 and 4 platforms, according to the figure below.
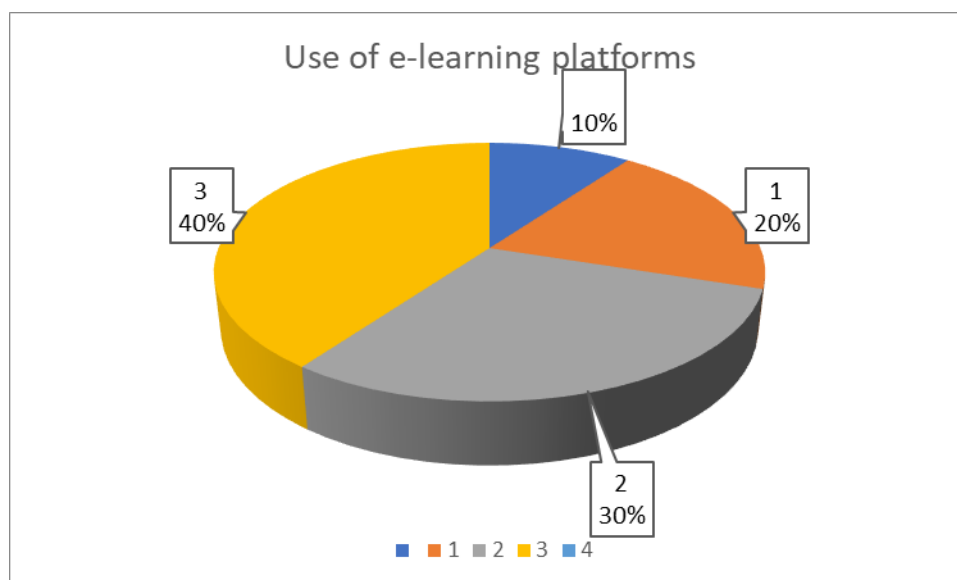

Figure 1. Use of e-learning platforms

The applications made by the students evaluate the knowledge transmitted in proportion of 46%, evaluate the personality 67% and apply concepts 61%. The applications implied students at the cognitive level in proportion of 99%, emotionally 77% and physically 99%.

96% of students communicated easily with colleagues, passed on clear tasks and responded to colleagues. The feedback provided by colleagues was 100% positive.

Following the statistical analysis it is observed that the following data are correlated at a moderately positive level:

- Field of study with the application of concepts and personality assessment. The higher the level of study of students and implicitly their age, the more complex the applications made by them and target the personality as a whole.
- Use of e-learning platforms with the application of concepts and personality assessment. Students who use multiple learning platforms tend to view learning as a whole, as a process not only of reproduction but of personality formation and development.

– Personality assessment and emotional involvement of students. Applications that require the development of students' personality require an emotional response from them, so the degree of emotional involvement also increases.

There was a strong correlation between the final score of the students and the evaluation of the seminar, according to the chart below.
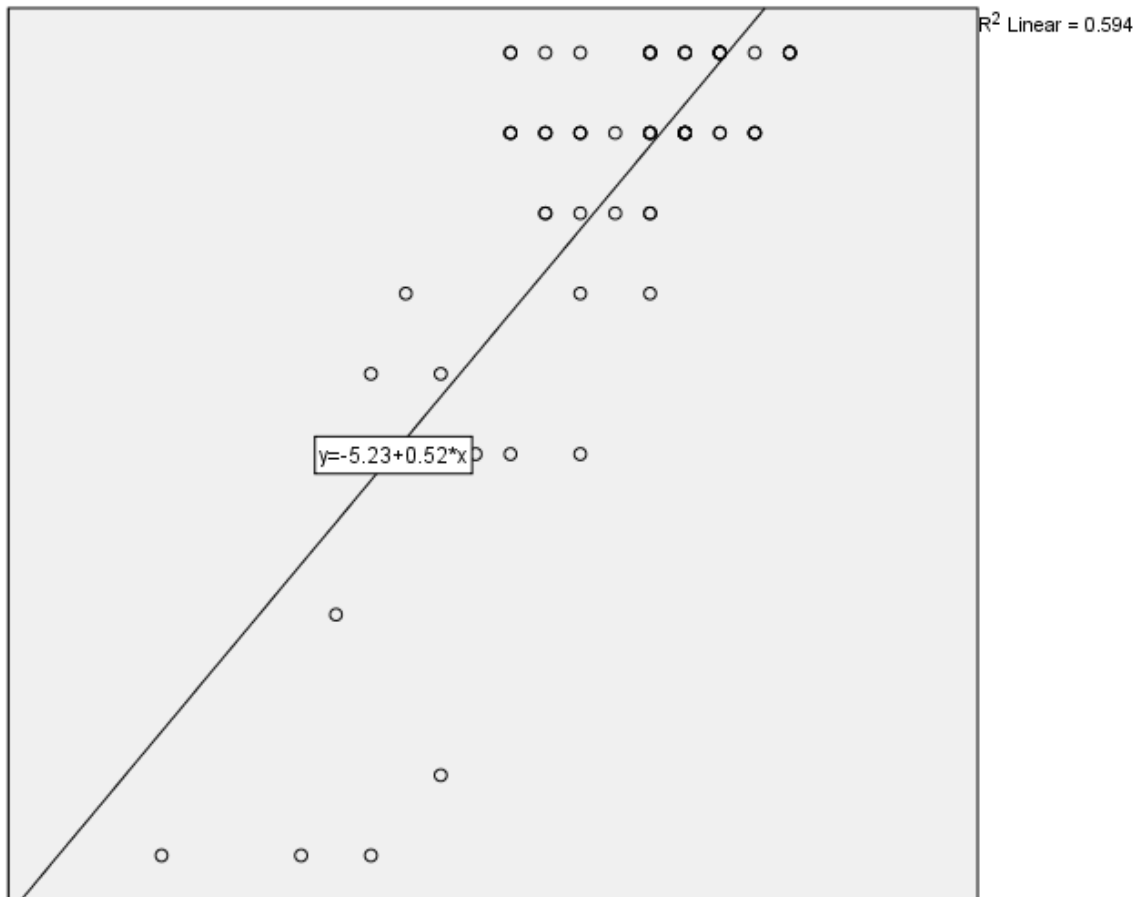

Figure 2. Correlation between the final score of the students and the evaluation of the seminar.

Students who were involved throughout the online learning phase by solving tasks, communication and feedback provided, used most e-learning platforms and developed the most complex applications, which led to superior final results.

In conclusion, online learning is more successful if it is staggered over time, is supported by constant interest and desire for knowledge.

Discussion and conclusions

The globalization of information in the online environment has the following effects at the level of students:

– Browse and download more information from the online environment;
– Use several online applications;
– Uses technology at higher level than in the first semester;
– The open access system motivates them in the study.

Another interesting element to note is that the projects bibliography included only online links, even the cited books were in electronic format.

Following the analysis of the activities carried out in the online educational environment, the following management strategies from the perspective of information globalization are recommended to the teachers:

- − Punctuality to scheduled activities.
- − Composing an informal environment in the situation of teleconferences, characterized by simplicity, non-protocol, including clothing.
- − Indulgence of disturbing factors that may occur in communication (problems with technology, meeting primary needs - food, food).
- − Clear conceptualization of the problem, clear setting of learning goals and objectives.
- − Use of negotiation strategies, moral support, as well as ritual and routine.
- − Qualities of the didactic act promoted in the online environment: professionalism, cultural sensitivity, information, fidelity, educational impact.

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