



## Emotional Well-Being During Distance Learning

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## EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Emotional well-being during distance learning is essential if we are to build a better security society. Many students experience high levels of stress because schools are closed due to a pandemic coronavirus. They are separated from friends and stuck at home. They may be worried that they will get sick. Students whose families face financial worries or illness are particularly vulnerable. But there are ways we can support students socially and emotionally during distance learning. The aim was to ensure the socio-emotional well-being of primary school students during distance learning. Teachers need easily accessible materials - materials that can be found in one place, resources in their mother tongue that are practical, easy to use and easy to implement. The most convenient solution is to have a web platform with a list of activities, materials, links and other resources for teachers. The site is intended to act as a social network that will allow teachers, social workers, educators and psychologists to connect with each other. Parents will have the opportunity to contribute, they will be able to download these materials so that they can help at home. While most students study at home, teachers are asked to create work units that all students can complete regardless of location. Good planning will ensure consistency in learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** *resources, social-emotional wellbeing, Remote Learning*

## Introduction

Many students experience high levels of stress because schools are close because of the coronavirus pandemic. They are separated from friends and stuck at home. They may be worried that they will get sick. Students whose families face financial worries or illness are particularly vulnerable. Teachers play a major role in shaping students' emotional well-being and that is why greater access to teaching resources is needed. In order for people to work in a field that requires so much commitment, teachers must be individuals who love the learning process and who are happy to do their job. For this they need help with strategies and resources to activate learning modes in home learning. The Distance Learning Emotional Well-Being Project explores the problems associated with implementing a socio-emotional component in primary schools with a focus on distance learning emotional well-being in order to provide information to support the development of certain solutions that will help teachers teach socio-emotional education during regular classes. We conducted a survey that included more than 200 teachers working in public schools in Macedonia, and about 150 students who are also from public schools. In order to better understand the problems, we spent a month doing the

research using different methods - arousal, semi-structured face-to-face interview and online form. We came to the following conclusions.

Public primary school teachers:

- research - find, manipulate and evaluate data and information.
- create - produce a new product or plan.
- communicate - submit or receive information while doing so taking into account the emotional well-being of students
- know the pros and cons of different approaches, methods and techniques of effective learning and teaching
- provides a selection of great tools, the school can also have additional accessories above that
  - encourage students to communicate with each other and to be involved in the learning process and to involve them in the decision-making process with age-appropriate solutions and to benefit from the group
- recognize the necessary resources and methods that will motivate students to be empathetic, grateful and courageous and that will encourage their learning habits
- to recognize the physical, emotional and mental abilities of their students and to properly manage the teaching activities
- not only are they aware of the qualities of formal education, but they also know the fact that character education is crucial

Although this study was limited in time and scope, the results obtained provided a good basis for developing a solution. Teachers, students, parents and the entire education system have encountered this type of learning for the first time. The study showed that teachers have a positive attitude to the introduction of new ways of communication, although they all agree that direct contact in the classroom most affects the socio-emotional development and has the greatest achievement. The biggest problem at the beginning was what kind of communication to implement, and how to involve students who are socially disadvantaged. Those who do not understand English need too much time to search for resources online, which reduces their motivation for continuous work. In terms of how resources are presented, research shows that teachers are more comfortable using a website that is similar in design to those they already use, such as Facebook, Messenger, Viber, Google Doc. In addition, the option for teachers to submit their own materials and the gamification-based solution are expected to prove motivating for teachers who are further down the road. To be a great teacher, you must always strive to nurture a learning environment for maximum effect. Taking into account the above challenges of teachers, we decided to propose and organize independent webinars in which through the zoom platform we will share ideas for planning, opportunities and use of technologies, curriculum, ideas for recording video lessons, and feedback ideas.

**The meaning and goal of our study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of stress because schools were closed due to the coronavirus pandemic. They were separated from friends and stuck at home.

Starting school or starting a new school year can be stressful at the best of times, let alone during a global pandemic. Children may feel nervous or unwilling to go back to school, especially if they have been studying at home for months. It is also difficult for children to be physically separated from friends and teachers while at school. The easiest way to reassure children is to take precautions to keep students and teachers healthy and to remind children that they can prevent the spread of bacteria by washing their hands with soap and coughing or sneezing in the elbow. How to show children positive things - that they will be able to see their friends and teachers (if they physically return to class) and continue to learn new things.

## **Method**

When it comes to the methods used, the first activity that was conducted was research in terms of comparative statistical analysis between two methods or ways of teaching (eg, distance versus face-to-face).

This method unequivocally did not show a statistically significant differentiation between the two experimental treatments examined regardless of which two phenomena were examined. The fact is that no statistically significant differences were observed in almost all comparative studies, indicating the inadequacy of the comparative examination method in, at least, in issues related to distance education.

### **Example of population and studies**

The population surveyed consisted of teachers working in public primary schools during the March 2020 pandemic, public school students and parents who were affected by this way of extending the school year and learning from home.

(1) The teachers in the first pilot study were randomly selected. The group consisted of 50 teachers directly involved in the educational process. 88% of them, 44 teachers, were women and 12%, which is 6 teachers, were men. The average age of teachers was 50 years.

Parents were voluntarily involved in an online survey of 138 , 90,5% are woman and 9,5% are man , students involved 168 and 55,4% girls and 44,6% boys .

## **Results and Discussion (Findings)**

Emotional well-being during distance learning is essential if we are to build a better security society. Based on the findings of the study, we confirmed our hypothesis that attention should be paid to Emotional well-being, but that it also needs the help of teachers, who provide resources and material in a language that is understandable to them. The study also found that the use of design thinking can have a huge positive impact on the development of solutions as it

puts the user at the center of the problem and as such should be explored further in future educational projects.

The study resulted in a network platform at the level of Balkan teachers, which helped the teachers to conduct distance learning, but in the end it was concluded that this part lacked Emotional well-being, as well as all the accompanying problems faced by students. The solution was designed during the pandemic with a platform that was support and assistance.

The next step is suggested activities, games, ideas by psychologists and pedagogues that are a key factor in the education system that will identify which elements of the website can be improved and what types of promotional activities.

## **FINDINGS**

The results of arousal, interviews, research and mass research have shown that

- profile of respondents 21% from 1st to 5th grade, 73% of respondents from 6th to 9th grade are in primary education, 4% secondary education and 2% faculty
- during distance learning, than in normal conditions 53% more obligations, 14% less obligations, 33% there was no significant difference,
- sent assignments and tests 66.1%, and tried to hold online lectures 33.9%
- teachers talked about emotional state given the unusual situation 27% talked, 24% slightly committed, 42% uninitiated, 7% other
- online classes dedicated to building character values 7% else, 49% did not have, 20% slightly dedicated, 24% dedicated,
- contacts or conversations for emotional support of students during distance learning 1-3 times a week 23%, 1 to 3 times a month 11%, once or twice for the whole period 15%, not once 51%
- in the future, distance learning should be partially introduced and in regular classes 70% no, 30% yes
- Parents play a big role in the whole process, the parent-teacher relationship is very important and parents should be present on the platform and should be able to access it.
- Teachers have more confidence to use pages and tools they are already familiar with or seem familiar to those who use them, such as Facebook, Viber, Whats app, Google Slide,
- Providing options for teachers to develop their own materials and gain recognition for being part of the playground solution will be a great source of motivation for them

## **Conclusion (Summary)**

Teaching Social Emotional Learning is extremely important right now, everyone is under tremendous pressure and the future feels more unpredictable than ever. This is the time when we need to cultivate healthy relationships and coping strategies, more than ever, now is the time to help our youngest learners develop and demonstrate empathy, compassion, and resilience.

Many families struggle to work from home and their children learn online, while others simply do not have access. To help manage this challenge, teachers also need help with ready-made solutions.

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Social Emotional Learning (SEL): Remote Learning  
<https://empatico.org/at-home>

Balkan teacher, parent and expert community, individuals and organizations that directly or indirectly participate in various levels of formal and non-formal education in the Western Balkans  
<https://edubalkan.com/mod/page/view.php?id=37>

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