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Motivation of the study via Internet

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This paper deals with the motivation of the study via Internet, as well as the advantages and the disadvantages of this kind of education compared to the traditional one. It presents the results from some studies that were held in Bulgaria from 1999 to 2006 concerning the motives for the choice of computer education and for the use of Internet as a means of improving and adding the traditional education.

IT-technologies have played a more and more considerable part in the human life. The using of PC in the education has increased tremendously for the last few years. We use Internet not only for entertainment, introduction, free time activities, but also for education, rise in qualification, teleconferences, to find a job, including an online job, even for online psychotherapy. The more and more profoundly penetration of the high technologies into the different spheres of the human activity requires a presence of qualified cadre. The specialists after their graduating perfect their skills or acquire some new qualification. The task for improving the quality of cadre's preparation imposes an important change in the structure and the organization of the education, and the study via Internet has advanced more and more. The using of PC and multimedia changes fundamentally the existing system of education. Some possibilities for enrichment of the education by means of the application of the high-technological products have come to light. The development of the infrastructure of the network enables the using of Internet in all matters. The revolutionary changes assume and impose some qualitative modifications and they increase the possibilities in every discipline. The new technologies and Internet particularly is a powerful instrument, which is able to fill some omissions in the system of the education, peculiarly in the area of the self-preparation and the self-control.

In the period of the globalization the countries are threatened by some informational lag. A possible issue is the study via Internet, which permits to enrich the educative contents, to improve the means of the education, to increase the students' self-dependent work, to stimulate the interest and the motivation for study [4]. The new high-technological means of the education do not allow any informational and educative detachment of the education. A research was held from December 06th 2002 to January 31st 2003 in the South-West University in Blagoevgrad. The result showed that 65.6 % of the foreign students used Internet, as well as 58.1 % of the Bulgarians students. The access to Internet is an additional condition, assisting the education: it gives knowledge and facilitates the realization of contacts between teachers and students [16]. The experience by the application of a multimedia course from 1999 to 2002 in the South-West University showed a suddenly increase of the students' interest in all matters; a fast speed of the transmission, treatment, analysis of the information and its qualified visualization; a possibility for reiteration of the exercises, depending on the students' individual desire [3].

A research on the students' academic motivation was held in December 2006 in the South-West University in Blagoevgrad by means of a questionnaire [15]. The respondents were 36 full-time students in Psychology. 5.6 % out of them were not looking for some additional matter in Internet. 16.7 % out of them rarely were looking for some additional matter in Internet. 22.2 % out of them very often were looking for

some additional matter in Internet. 55.5 % out of them often were looking for some additional matter in Internet. The respondents who often were looking for some additional literature in school subjects, too (Spearman's rho =0.562; p=0.015). There were some significant differences between the respondents looking or not for some additional matter on the level of their academic motivation ($\chi_{(6)}^2=16.741$; p=0.01). 66.7 % out of the respondents having weak academic motivation rarely were looking for some additional matter. 85.7 % out of the respondents having moderate academic motivation often were looking for some additional matter. 50 % out of the respondents having strong academic motivation very often were looking for some additional matter. The respondents who often were looking for some additional literature in school subjects, often were asking the teachers for some additional information, too (Spearman's rho =0.81; p=0.000).

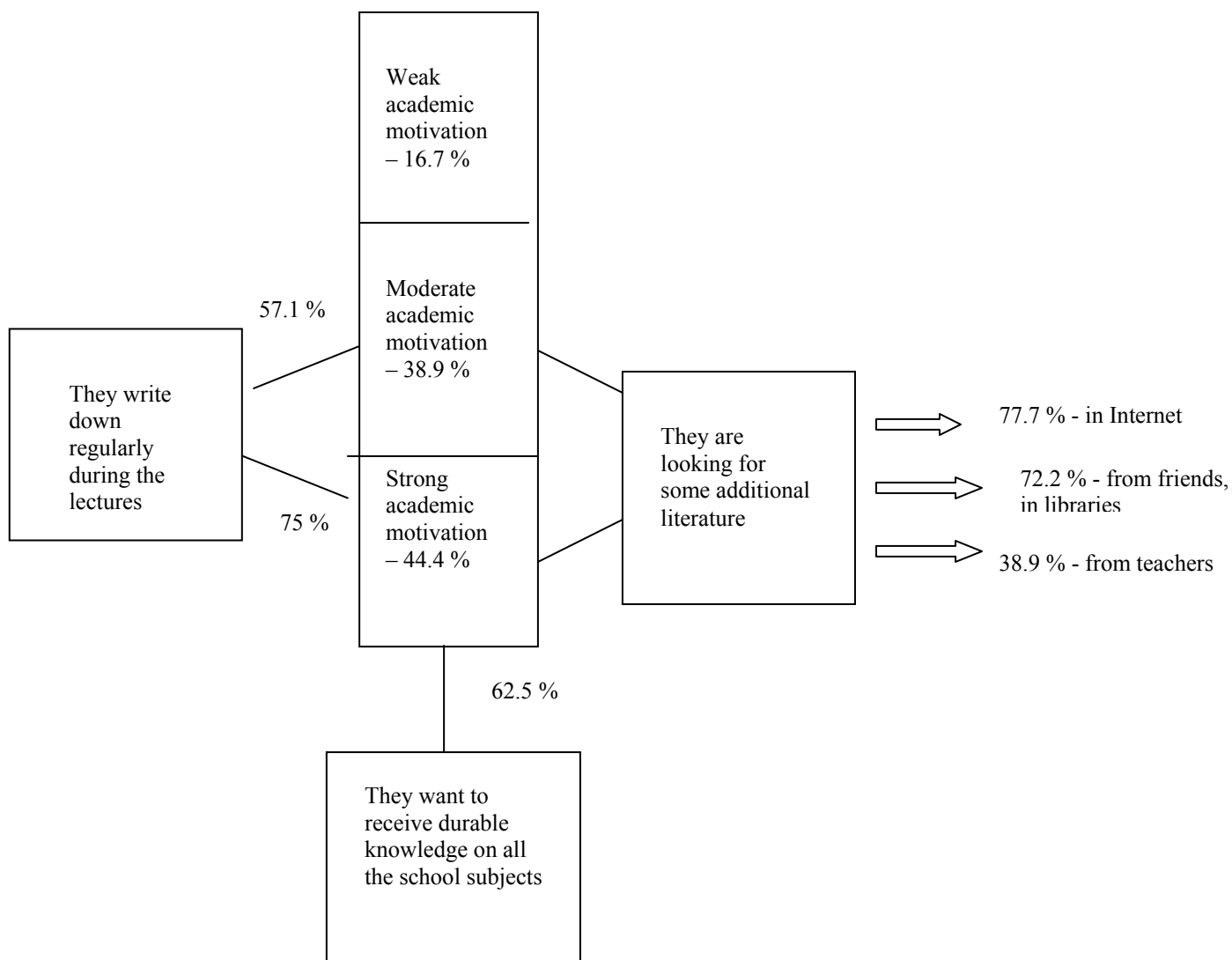


Fig. 1 Scheme of the respondents' levels of academic motivation and their means of acquiring the knowledge

The searching of some additional information in Internet and the presence at the lectures were not related ($\chi_{(9)}^2=8,257$; p=0,508). The writing down regularly at the

lectures and the searching of some additional information in Internet were not related ($\chi_{(9)}^2=8,367$; $p=0,498$). The education via Internet is not simply a supplement to the traditional education; the former has its own importance.

By means of the courses online and multimedia courses we try to solve the intensifying contradictions between the traditional restrictions in the process of the education and the students' increasing self-dependence. By means of the multimedia courses in the South-West University the students quickly obtain a picture about their standard of education and about the concrete direction, in which everyone of them must extend one's training; also everybody searches and chooses different possibilities for study and specialization to be competitive on the labour market. A possibility exists to make a detailed choice in the individual work with the topics, their volume and complexity, depending on the students' speciality, objectives and training [17].

The motivation for study via Internet is of major importance. The motivation is a subjective inherent determination of the human behavior, a process and specific way of organization of the psychic preparation about action [5]. The motivation is a hierarchic system with many levels, in which the different motives are united and they interact [12]. We distinguish cognitive or fundamental motives for study, related to the educative contents, to the aspiration for mastering of new knowledge and for extending of the view of life, to acquirement of methods of study, to self-realization, etc. We distinguish also social or communicative motives for study, related to the students' social relationships with the other members of the society; to the aspiration for mastering of knowledge, which will be useful for the society; to the aspiration for conquest of one's position in a group, for merit of one's authority and approbation; to the aspiration for collaboration, etc. [2; 12]. The motives of the conjuncture for study are related to the people's current interests; to the daily acquirement of knowledge and experience; to the immediate requirements of the situation; this kind of motives are supported most directly by stimulation and sanctions [2]¹.

The motives for the execution of the tasks in the process of study are external and internal. The external motives are related to some kind of award, expecting by the student in exchange for his/her efforts and results in the study. The internal motives presume some presence of cognitive interests and some orientation towards the process of cognition or towards its result [12].

According to A. Maslow basic cognitive necessities exist, like the wishes for erudition and for comprehension, the curiosity. They are organized in a hierarchy, where the wish for erudition dominates over the wish for comprehension. The cognitive necessities are also necessities of the personality and of the will, as well as the psychological necessities, the necessities from certitude, from belonging to a group, from love, from appreciation (the other peoples' respect and self-respect), from self-realization [9].

The students' self-dependence is an important condition for a better organization of the study [11]. One of the effective means of the formation of the motivation for study is the development of the self-control and self-estimation. The development of the ability for self-government gives rise to the sense of responsibility and it removes the passivity, as well as the external locus of control [12]. The self-dependence and the self-control are maximal at the study via Internet. The educative model, based on the use of Internet in the education, requires a students' bigger initiative. Besides, the

¹ M. A. Ahmed cites the structure of the motives for study according to A. A. Rean (1999).

courses online give some relatively equal access to the corresponding level of education or to some kind of qualification. Relatively, because even though the problems with the distance and the access to the information disappear, the problem concerning the cost price of the education remains. The last one has a different effect on the students depending on the incomes in the different countries, in spite of the possibility for receiving of grants. The study via Internet gives more possibilities for access to more sources of information, for access to information in any time, for sharing of the sources of information by a lot of students, for more creation. On the other hand it is long odds that some organizations and institutions can give certificates and diplomas, whose quality will be hard controlled [10].

One of the methods for increase of the effectiveness of the higher education is the organization of distant learning in the form of cooperation between some institutions, which elaborate a common programme of studies. In such a way the distant learning is more qualitative and cheaper than the traditional learning. The study via Internet gives the possibility to study without leaving the home [18].

The results from an investigation held in the university “St Kliment Ohridski” in Sofia, in 2002 among the students of computer sciences concerning the motivation for study of computer sciences manifested that the higher motivation was related to the possibilities for finding a job, for development of the intellect, for extending of the view of life and for rise of the self-confidence. The students specified the most unimportant role of the possibilities of the IT-technologies to get over the psychic barriers in the communication and the sense of social isolation [14]. Nevertheless the IT-technologies give the possibility for the realization of a bilateral connection in a real time. Technically the cooperation between tutors and students beyond the framework of a class or a country is possible [10].

The web-based education is desirable, because in this way the students have access from anywhere and they use an inexhaustible source of information. In this way students study more effectively and more qualitatively, with their tempo. The intensive communication and the exchange of opinions with the other students and tutors increase the quality of the education. The informational system contributes to remove the coincidence in the contents of the disciplines through hyper links. The coordination in the tutors’ work via Internet rises the quality of the researches and of the projects [1].

Under the study via Internet the possibilities for arising of interpersonal conflicts are minimized; the possibility for avoidance of difficulties, which are related to the communication is optimal, as well as the possibility for avoidance of the anxiety, which arises out of the insufficient adaptation to the new conditions of the environment.

A lot of students have a negative attitude towards the study, which is due to the absence of the habits for study, to the broken relationships with parents, teachers or fellow-students (classmates), to the unconscious meaning of the educative activity, to the presence of negative emotions and fatigue [12]. Under the study via Internet any broken relationships with fellow-students do not exist and they are not obstructive to the effectiveness of the study, as far as there usually are not any contacts with the classmates. Also the contacts with the tutors are strictly formalized. By reason of the absence of any direct interpersonal interaction the possibility for incomprehension with other people is lower than under the traditional education. Besides, everyone who studies via Internet has the possibility to choose when to study, that is to say there is not any obligatory presence in class. There are final terms, which have to be observed and the student can distribute his/her time in such a way that to not study

when he/she is tired or when he/she feels a negative emotion. All these peculiarities rise and support the cognitive interests stable. The repeated and monotonous exercises, which provoke tiredness and psychic saturation, are minimized.

The system of rating is an important element and a factor in the strategy of teaching, as far as it influences (positively or negatively) on the students' cognitive activity. The results from the investigation held in the university "St Kliment Ohridski" in Sofia, in 2002 among the students of computer sciences showed that the factors "unfamiliarity with the IT-technologies", "complexity of the contents" and "troubles from one's compromising in the presence of the colleagues" were the bigger sources of anxiety in the learning [14]. The stress springs up from some breach of the balance between the requirements of the environment and the realized possibility by the person to reply to them. The stress influences mainly negatively on the study and can disorganize the process of study. The psychic tension and the anxiety in the activity of study often are determined by a situation of examination. A lot of psychologists share the opinion that probably the public examination is more disagreeable than the negative rating. The humiliation, related to the public negative estimation, can provoke stress, aggressiveness or depression. Everyone can choose to overcome the stress, to increase one's resistance to the stress or to avoid the situations of stress [7; 13]. The study via Internet gives the possibility to avoid the stress resulting by a public examination.

A lot of courses in distant learning embrace some series of tasks – essays or other exercises, which have to be done regularly (i.e. once a fortnight). Thereby the tutors inform the students about their progress in the study. One of the most widespread means of examination is the test. The test in the distant learning put some special challenges towards the security. The students can take an examination in the presence of an invigilator in an educative center. Another procedure is the test with a computer program, when every student has to answer different questions, selected by the computer. In some courses for adults the students develop a project, a paper, based on a research in lieu of a final examination [18].

Internet and the PC give many possibilities for stimulation of the children's cognitive psychic process, for development of their imagination, of their mind. Internet facilitates the children to master other languages, i.e. the child can complete some stories. The teacher has to select some sites and programmes, adequate to the children's age and capabilities. The children can use also a computer dictionary [8].

The students' participation online can add the traditional learning "face-to-face" or in the absence of the direct contact, all kinds of students-tutors interactions, the contents, the activities, the estimation are only online. According to some authors the following advantages of the study via Internet exist: adaptable, attractive courses; changes in matters, instructions and criteria of estimation can be made during the course online; many educative materials, accessible for everybody online or printed, according to the individual desire; fast verification and evaluation of the acquired knowledge and skills; communication, cooperation and mutual aid between the students; exchange of the ideas and the opinions; fast and cheap communication by means of the e-mail; "cyber-space" for workshop; online conferences, accessible for everybody without any expences for transportation and accomodation. The disadvantages of the study via Internet are: requisite complementary skills for work with PC and IT-technologies; charges for access to Internet and difficult access to Internet sometimes; some difficulties to find out the necessary information in the abundance of information in the network; charges for creation and support of the IT-technologies; indispensable time for access to Internet [6].

The penetration of the IT-technologies in the education has changed into a technical defiance and into a giving new meaning to the didactic, its methods and purposes.

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