



Peculiarities of Psychologists' and Social Pedagogues' Work in Terms of Quarantine

Oleksandr Safin, Oksana Kravchenko, Maryna Mishchenko^(✉), and Yevhen Potapchuk

Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Uman, Ukraine

Abstract. The article is devoted to the study of peculiarities of work of psychologists and social teachers in quarantine conditions. The analysis of the mental state of specialists and the possibilities of conducting professional activities remotely is carried out. The ability of nature therapy to influence the restoration of the social and psychological state of children is considered. It is noted that the perspective direction of rehabilitation of children with special educational needs is inclusive tourism, namely, excursions, hikes, travels that contribute to the general process of socialization, integration and development of communication skills. Taking into account the increased demand for services, psychologists and social teachers can effectively work remotely in quarantine.

Keywords: Inclusive resource center psychologist · Social pedagogue · Specialist · Children with special educational needs · Quarantine · Isolation

1 Introduction

Mental state is a stable characteristic in a certain period of time, which affects human activity. A person may experience different states during the period of self-isolation due to the tension associated with changes in in people's living conditions, restrictions on their activity and freedom of movement.

In the psychological sense, self-isolation is a systemic, integral phenomenon that manifests itself at such levels of personality as individual, social and psychological. In the social sense, it is isolation in relation to broad social contacts. Individually and psychologically self-isolation may lead to such manifestations as fear, anxiety, stress, frustration and others.

Self-isolation is a compulsory measure, but it is not aimed at restricting personal freedom of a person or his/her family, but at organizing a socially responsible position of the individual, his/her safe life and allows you to protect yourself from the risks of contracting a viral infection.

Many people experience fear and peace of mind during a compulsory quarantine, which takes place due to the danger of COVID-19. Today it is important to monitor not only your health, but also your emotional state.

The most effective way to overcome this condition is to focus not on what is difficult, inaccessible or unpredictable at the moment, but on what can and should be done well. To do affordable activities (household duties, studying) in such an unusual situation as today

may seem unnecessary (“It is not clear what lies ahead of us, everything can change”), strange (“Watching the news is more important than reading literature”), impossible (“In such an intense situation I will not be able to concentrate anyway”). While watching the news seems to be important (“You have to be aware of it”). But in fact, the information flow increases the tension, and focusing on the usual things reduces it, and also allows not to postpone things until later.

Psychologists define the following indices of public health: self-assessment of health, attitude towards health, health perception, behavior and lifestyle [1]. The researchers V. Vasiutynskiy, V. Vinkov, I. Hubeladze, I. Husiev, L. Korobka, V. Mialenko note that modern social challenges have actualized the need to reflect and explain events, to identify and apply effective methods of psychological protection, to develop practices to counteract individual and collective trauma and effective behavioral strategies, to ensure positive changes at the level of the individual and society. Community adaptation to societal changes due to military conflict, pandemic, quarantine and their consequences is defined as a way from social trauma to collective recovery efforts and development [2]. **The article objective** is to study the peculiarities of work of psychologists and social teachers in quarantine.

2 Methodology

In order to study the opinion of psychologists and social teachers of secondary schools, inclusive resource centers in Uman on the peculiarities of work in distance learning, we conducted a study. We used the author’s questionnaire, which included 19 questions. More than 30 people took part in the survey. The survey was conducted in May 2020 (during the period of active quarantine) remotely using Google forms.

3 Results

Among the changes noticed by experts during quarantine, the most significant were “A” (53.3%) and “high anxiety” (30%). Anxiety during a pandemic is a normal reaction, a no

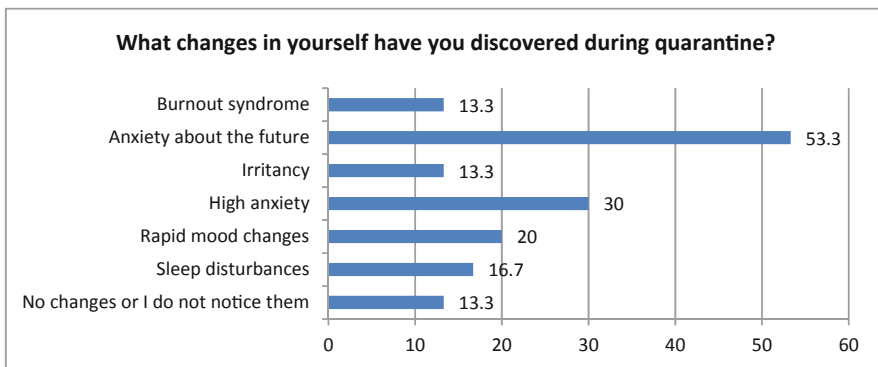


Fig. 1. Changes experienced by psychologists and social teachers

one knows when the pandemic and quarantine will end, and how it will affect the global economy, we can assume that psychological discomfort in people will only increase in the near future. Only 13.3% have no changes or do not notice them, which in turn may depend on the type of temperament of the specialist or his use of cognitive-behavioral and relaxation exercises to combat symptoms (Fig. 1).

To the question “What do you do during a compulsory isolation?” 63.3% of respondents answered that they improve themselves, 53.3% spend more time with family and 50% work with students remotely. Although quarantine has made significant changes in life, during this period most people were able to adapt to it, found some positivity in self-isolation: time with family, the opportunity to complete all planned activities, more time for reading, self-development, communicating with family and friends (Fig. 2).

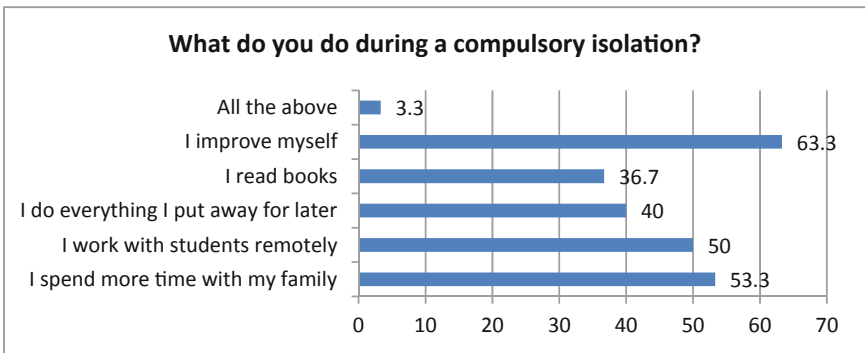


Fig. 2. Distribution of answers to the question “What do you do during a compulsory isolation?”

The psychological reaction to stressful events is natural, therefore to find out what exactly has a positive effect on the psychological state of specialists, the question “What could help you during isolation?” was asked. The respondents’ answers indicate that almost half of the specialists “struggle with monotony”, “plan the agenda” and “a stable daily routine”. Those who are megaactive in everyday life and are constantly on the move, suffer the most from quarantine. When suddenly everything changes, a person does not always perceive it as a “time to rest and relax”, but thinks that something is out of control, and the world collapses. People lose the usual rhythm of life, their plans change without their desire and consent to it. But most professionals (63.3%) effectively use the quarantine period for their own professional development, the study of modern psychological and methodological literature, improving professional competence (Fig. 3).

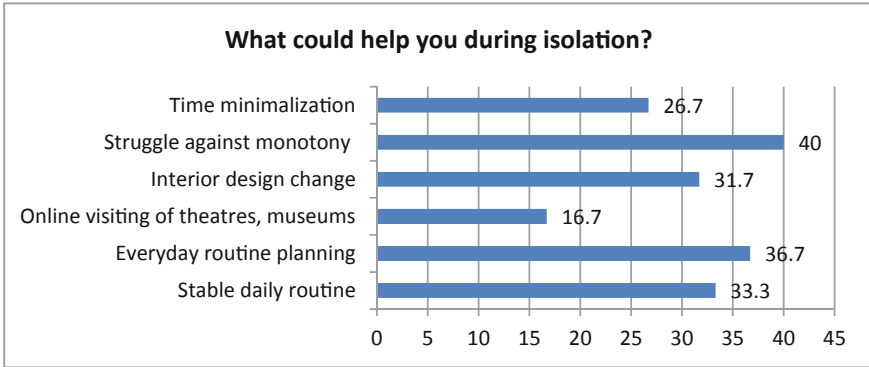


Fig. 3. Distribution of answers to the question “What helped you during isolation?”

As can be seen from the figure below, almost 100% of respondents during their distance work use the application “Viber”, because all students and their parents have access to such a popular resource and 36.7% use learning platforms. These several platforms help professionals to communicate with students (Fig. 4).

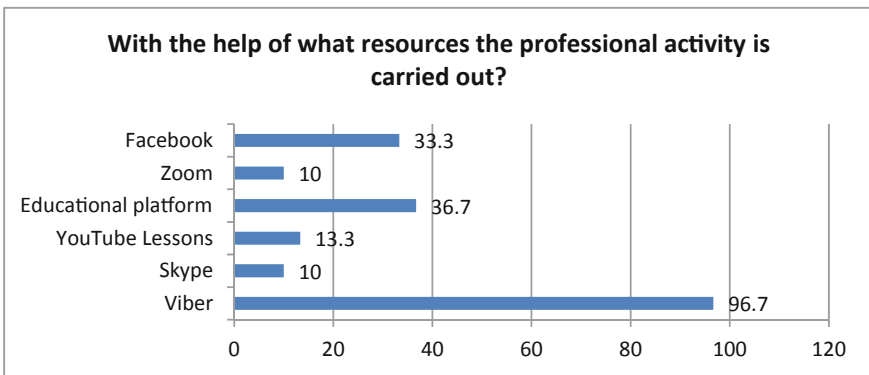


Fig.4. Resources for carrying out one’s professional activity

To the question "What teaching aids do you prefer during distance learning?" the vast majority use presentations (56.7%) and video lessons (66.7%). Because, the combination of small theoretical blocks with interesting tasks of the online lesson has not only game elements, but also communication and cooperation of students with each other. With the help of presentations you can provide basic learning material, and this will help to clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of the work.

In their work with children with special educational needs, social teachers and psychologists prefer motor games (53.3%), artistic and creative activities (50%) and walks in the fresh air (40%) (Fig. 5).

The sudden changes in our daily lives due to the quarantine restrictions have brought their adjustments. There have been changes in the educational process, including an

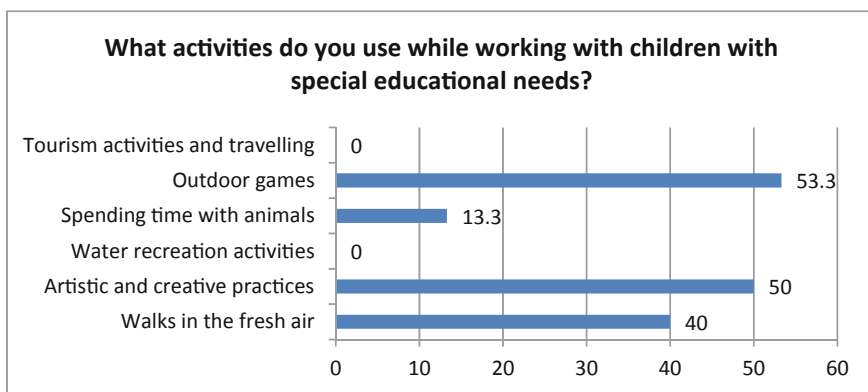


Fig. 5. Activities for work with children with special educational needs

inclusive environment. However, as it turned out, there are different ways to maintain efficiency, even during quarantine. This is an online job. Of course, conducting comprehensive psychological and pedagogical examinations for the period of quarantine had to be suspended, because the specifics of this process make it impossible to implement it online. But conducting counselling, educational work (for parents, teachers and educators) remains at a high level.

76.7% of specialists had to simplify or replace something in their work, because some tasks are impossible to perform at home in the absence of appropriate materials. During the long-term quarantine, the role of social educators is increasing, whose professional responsibilities include providing social and pedagogical support to people who find themselves in difficult life circumstances, are in crisis situations and the role of psychological service in modern conditions is growing. For example, such activities cannot be performed remotely, taking into account the special requirements for the implementation of diagnostic, corrective, developmental and certain forms of prevention work (including the development of social skills) that require direct contact with children, in particular, non-interference, privacy etc.

Now parents are at a loss because the schools had to switch to distance learning during the quarantine. Often parents are not authoritative enough in terms of education, not all teachers have the opportunity to conduct video lessons for children, and send only tasks, without explanation and specific requirements on how to implement it, and in some cases it is not possible to organize distance learning for the child. Therefore, the vast majority of parents are dissatisfied with the distance learning, but are sure that the child should learn, so they cooperate if necessary.

When asked "How do you think the students have adapted to distance learning?" the majority of respondents said that "Students who studied well, continue to do so, those who did not study are not studying now either" (56,7%). Teachers believe that students, who studied well in the normal educational process and worked a lot on their own, continue in same way on distance learning (Fig. 6).

Distance learning is an individualized process of acquiring knowledge, but it also requires a well-established "teacher-student-parent" system, according to which it will

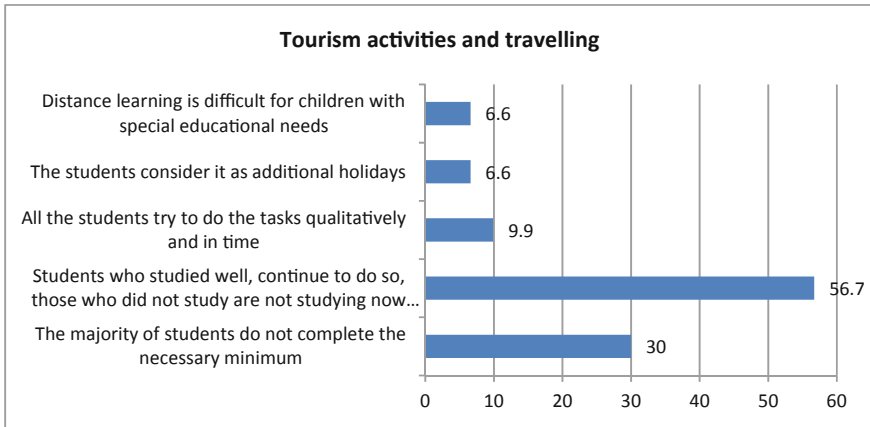


Fig. 6. Distribution of answers to the question “How do you think students have adapted to the conditions of distance learning?”

have a positive impact on students. It needs more organization of children and teachers. The teacher should encourage rather than just give the topic, because it takes much more time to master the material independently. In the normal school learning process, the teacher has the opportunity to interact directly with the class and each student in particular. It is the direct presence that allows to enter the learning process more emotionally. It is a well-known fact that if there is a good relationship between the teacher and the student, it will have a positive effect on the student’s learning efforts. Therefore, to the question “What negative working moments are manifested during the quarantine period?” 60% of experts answered “There is not always enough feedback’, 46.7% - “the complexity of the material, which cannot be thoroughly studied remotely”, 40% - “low motivation of students” (Fig. 7).

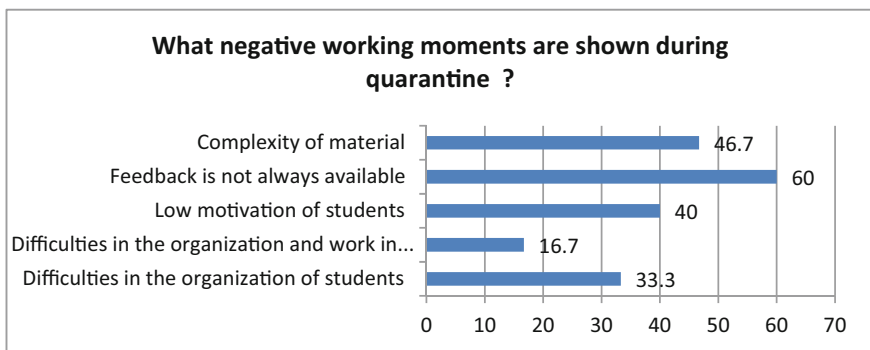


Fig. 7. Negative working moments during quarantine

According to psychologists and social educators, the complex unity of medical, psychological and social components of rehabilitation will affect the restoration of the social and psychological state of students (70%) (Fig. 8).

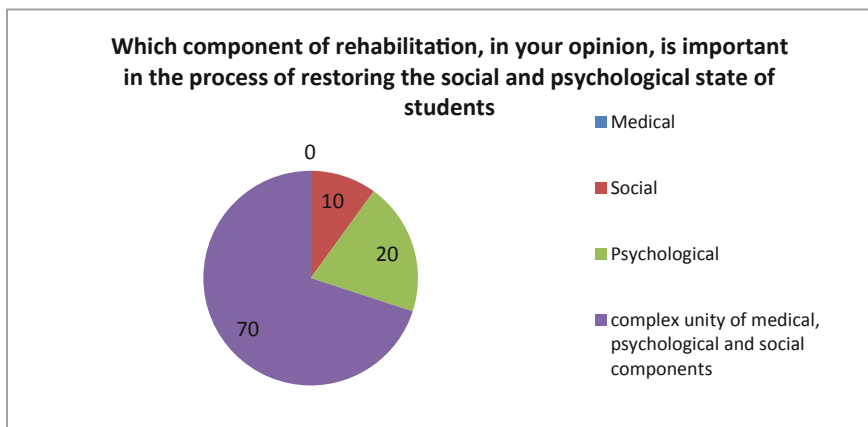


Fig. 8. Restoration of social and psychological state of students

The most popular method of nature therapy in the work of specialists is art therapy (60%). This direction has a lot of forms, each of which corresponds to a certain kind of art. Psychologists and social teachers single out fairy tale therapy, music therapy and others. And this means that everyone can find something close and interesting for themselves. Art therapy classes contribute to the development of self-analysis, a better understanding of one's own motives, values, behavioral strategies; harmonization of the emotional state; solution of internal conflicts; development of the emotional-volitional sphere, emotional intelligence, understanding of one's own emotional states and feelings; disclosure of personal potential, which in turn is relevant under quarantine conditions. Another advantage of art therapy is that it can be used by both children and adults.

The powerful effect of nature therapy, health recovery through communication with nature, lies not only in a significant improvement of physical and mental condition, but also in the intellectual abilities of the child. 100% of respondents believe that nature therapy will stabilize the emotional state of the child. Nature therapy involves the influence of natural factors on the sensual and emotional spheres of a child's psyche. Vasyl Sukhomlynskyi has also practically introduced its main methods and forms. He widely used nature therapy in educating and raising children: taste therapy, color therapy, aromatherapy and flower therapy. He combined all this with music therapy and other forms of psycholinguistic therapy. Children admired the beauty of nature, listened to birds singing, the rustle of leaves, the noise of wind etc.

Therefore, according to experts, it is better to play games outdoors than indoors (90%). Outdoor games fortify the body and increase resistance to disease. A well-trained child's body reacts better to adverse effects. Active games satisfy the child's body's need for movement, contribute to the enrichment of his movement experience.

Tourism is an innovative form of rehabilitation of children with special educational needs and includes both the cognitive process and the possibility of full socialization. It is an alternative to social isolation that has a destructive effect on health and the psyche. Social isolation significantly reduces life opportunities, is the cause of depression and stress. Therapy and prevention of psychosomatic diseases are provided through tourism. Such trips not only diversify the lives of children with disabilities, but also improve its quality. Therefore, to the question “What is your attitude towards participation in tours, travels, hikes together with children with special educational needs?” 80% answered “Positive”, which in turn will contribute to the overall process of socialization and integration (73.3%) and the development of communicative skills (70%).

Tourism for people with special educational needs is a relatively new social and cultural phenomenon. The organization of barrier-free tourism in Ukraine is at an early stage of development. The majority of the Ukrainian population does not consider the cities convenient for people with special educational needs, but actively supports the idea of making the environment accessible for all. Specialists of inclusive resource centers expressed positive attitude to this issue, stating that children with special educational needs should participate in tours, trips, hiking.

Inclusive tourism as a means of socialization has the following peculiarities: firstly, tourism provides movable activity, the restriction of which reduces life opportunities, causes sadness, stress, despair, insecurity. Through the organization of movable activity tourism provides therapy and prevention of psychosomatic diseases and supports physical health. Secondly, tourism creates a complete environment for communication, establishes independent and diverse social contacts, forming various social roles. Tourism destroys the feeling of inferiority, integrating people with disabilities into society, helps to form a confident and effective life position. Tourism is also aimed at restoring the strength to perform production processes and household duties, as well as human mental resources. It has an active nature, including various amusements that allow distracting from the monotony of everyday life. Tourism helps to get to know the surrounding world with its various manifestations and customs, to learn about previously unknown natural phenomena, to meet new people. Environmental aspects of tourism as an activity contribute to a positive psycho-emotional mood, and are a socializing factor: a favorable climate, nature, water resources proximity, natural attractions, monuments of material culture [3].

The obtained indices of the respondents once again confirm the expediency and necessity of organizing travels, tours, and hikes with children (96.7%). Also, psychologists and social teachers believe that corrective and developmental exercises as well as social and psychological rehabilitation in inclusive tourism are appropriate, as evidenced by the survey results (96.7%).

4 Conclusion

The results of the research show that psychologists and social teachers in quarantine are experiencing changes in their psycho-emotional state, namely, anxiety about the future and high general anxiety. During a compulsory quarantine, specialists continue their professional activity aimed at ensuring the implementation of the main goal and

objectives of the psychological service – preservation and strengthening of mental and physical health; assistance in ensuring psychological safety, provision of psychological and socio-educational assistance to all participants of the educational process, implementing it taking into account the specifics of the educational institution, peculiarities and opportunities of students.

References

1. Frolova, Ju.G.: Psihologijazdorov'ja: posobie [Psychology of health: a manual]. Minsk: Higher school (2014). (in Russian).
2. Korobka, L.M., Gusyev, I.M., Myalenko, V.V.: Spil'nota v umovaxvoyennogokonfliktu: psixologichnistrategiyiadaptaciyi: monografiya [Community under conditions of a military conflict: psychological strategies of adaptation: monograph]. Kropyvnytskyi: Imex-LTD (2019). (in Ukrainian)
3. Naumenko, L.Yu., Lepskyj, V.V., Makarenko, S.V. Inklyuzy vny jтуры zmyakvy dreabilitaciyi: suchasnipotreby invalidiv [Inclusive tourism as a form of rehabilitation: modern needs of people with disabilities]. Visny k VDNZU Ukrayins kamedy chnastomatologichnaakademiya – Bulletin of “Ukrainian Medical Dental Academy”. **2**, 23–26 (2015). (in Ukrainian)
4. Safin, O.D., Kravchenko, O.O., Mishhenko, M.S.: Zberezhenyapsy xichnogozdorovya u fax-ivcivinklyuzy vno-resursny xcentriv: monografiya [Preservation of mental health of specialists of inclusive resource centers: a monograph]. Uman: Vizavi (2020). (in Ukrainian)
5. Kravchenko, O., Shelenkova, N., Mishchenko, M.: Development of psychological readiness of the high school students to enter higher educational institutions. In: Kantola, J.I., Nazir, S., Salminen, V. (eds.) AHFE 2020. AISC, vol. 1209, pp. 407–413. Springer, Cham (2020). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-50791-6_52