Parents’ Perspectives on Remote Learning in the Pandemic Context

Engl. transl.: Parents’ Perspectives on Remote Learning in the Pandemic Context

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# Abstract

In the spring of 2020, when the entire education system worldwide switched to distance learning, parents became key learning agents, helping students to understand how to continue learning, how to use digital solutions and how to support students in this process. This article summarizes parents’ views on the distance learning process and the challenges they faced. This is part of a larger study carried out within the project “Life with COVID-19: Evaluation of the overcoming coronavirus crisis in Latvia and recommendations for social resilience in the future” (CoLife), which was launched in Latvia in the summer of 2020 and analyzed what digital learning tools schools can use to support students in their learning. Parents’ views on 738 school-age children (313 responses about 1st–4th graders; 362 responses for 5th–9th graders and 63 responses for 10th–12th graders) were obtained, and the main conclusions were that after parents became learning agents, they would have liked more support from educators to understand how to support their children in the learning process. Parents would also have liked schools to be interested in how their children are doing and whether everything necessary is available. Overall, it can be concluded that in this crisis, parents tried to support their children, and in most cases, it was the mothers of the students who provided this support, but it was primarily based on the need to use digital technologies, which means that children whose parents do not use digital technologies may be more exposed to the danger of falling into a risk group with larger educational gaps.

# Outcome

According to the study schools, in trying to ensure the success of remote learning processes, tried to organize these using learning platforms available in Latvia, and parents served as learning agents [13] to provide homeschooling for their children during this period. Overall, this is a good way to organize remote learning, but there are a number of issues that should be taken into account:

(1)
 Teachers also tried to organize lessons on online communication platforms (Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams). In general, this trend is to be welcomed, but the availability of technologies should be taken into account as data show that in many families, devices are shared, and this means that there could be occasions when students are not able to join synchronous learning because their siblings have online lessons at that time.
(2)
 The learning platforms used in Latvia are more usable in STEM subjects because there are various tasks and tests that require analytical–algorithmic thinking and providing specific answers that are well developed