A leap to the digital era—what are lower and upper secondary school students’ experiences of distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic in Serbia?

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# Details

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Learning

## Sample

45 students, aged 12–18, diverse in terms of age, gender, educational level, and school type, from both urban and rural settlements in Northern, Central, and Southern Serbia.
The sample was biased in favour of students who had the technology to access the online survey and the skills to independently respond.
The students produced 106 narratives: 36 stories, 31 letters, and 39 requests.

## Implications For Parents About

Parenting guidance / support

## Implications For Educators About

## Implications For Policy Makers About

## Other PolicyMaker Implication

Importance of reaching students without access to the online world, rethinking what education should be

# Abstract

The aim of this paper is to thoroughly examine how students in Serbia experienced their education through distance learning during the 2020 Spring school closures due to the pandemic. Schoolchildren’s multigenre narratives about learning during school closure were elicited by online surveys; qualitative thematic and values analyses were conducted; and data was further analysed by cluster analysis, ANOVA, and t-tests. A total of 45 lower and upper secondary school students produced 106 narratives providing 429 thought units for analysis.
Altogether, 6 themes and 26 value codes were identified. They demonstrate the wide range, complexity, and nuanced positioning of students’ experiences towards the new situation, their role in it, and the role of others i.e. teachers and the technology itself. The paper draws implications on the policy and educational-psychological and methodological level.

# Outcome

"Students shared their affective and cognitive reflections, describing anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, positive evaluations, selfregulatory behaviours, self-evaluations, and coping strategies, witnessing the strong effect of the new situation on children’s self-reflection. Students’ perceptions of their teachers were in
regard to the quality of communication, understanding, and their competence. Besides dominating instruction, technologies were not only seen as a potential for learning but also as a source of various problems in teaching, with the lack of equipment being one of them." (Kovács Cerović, Mićić, Vračar, 2021, p. )
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