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Zoran Krupka, PhD

Goran Vlašić, PhD

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Mental Health Among Adolescents During Covid-19 and Distance Learning: Sleep Quality as an Expression of Distress

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Abstract

COVID-19 posed many challenges to education systems worldwide. In Israel, as elsewhere, schools were closed and distance learning was implemented. Major emphasis was placed on maintaining academic continuity, and hundreds of thousands of students used digital content on various platforms. Nevertheless, the education system has additional functions aside from its academic role that relate to students' psychological well-being. Schools serve as a source of this well-being while also enabling educators to identify distress and provide assistance. School closures and the shift to distant learning may make it difficult to identify distress and provide assistance and may itself induce distress. In order to encourage adolescents' psychological well-being, educators must identify this distress during distance learning. The literature shows that adolescents' distress can have behavioral manifestations, such as affecting their sleep quality. This study examines the associations between adolescents' sleep quality, distress, and COVID-19-related stress by focusing on the differences between Arab adolescents and Jewish adolescents in Israel. The results indicate that although there were no differences between Arab and Jewish adolescents in their sleep patterns (bedtime, wake time, sleep duration) during COVID-19 and distance learning, there were differences in their mental health aspects. Sleepiness was also found to be a significant mediator of COVID-19-related stress on distress. The findings can expand theoretical knowledge about the mechanism behind psychological distress among adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic and, more practically, help identify distress in adolescents during distance learning. They highlight the need for cultural sensitivity in such circumstances.

Keywords

COVID-19 pandemic, online learning, education system roles, adolescents' distress, sleep

Portfolio - Learning Tool That Enables Transfer

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Abstract

In the elementary school, a cross-curricular connection is more and more emphasized as a teaching method which enables easier knowledge transfer from one subject to the other, and gives sense to pupils' abstract learning. Many teachers claim that this kind of school learning sounds good, but is not feasible in practice, as the school system in the current form does not enable teachers to realize it. Thus, the key question is if it is possible, using the current curricula in the elementary school, to organize the cross-curricular connection that will be, actually, the reflection of what the cross-curricular connection in reality is. Through the paper, which presents the cross-curricular connection between Art and other subjects in the 4th class of the 9-year elementary school, we will find out that it is possible. Such class format organization does demand a lot of the teacher's time, energy, effort, etc., but it proves that, nonetheless, the current school system is the way it is, it is possible to plan class format that motivates pupils to learn and keeps a high level of their motivation through the whole learning process by applying different learning methods, such creating a portfolio, for example, and in such a way, it enables the knowledge transfer from one subject to the other, from the "supernatural" environment to the real life.

Keywords

Cross-curricular connection, curriculum, learning, knowledge transfer, portfolio

Job Satisfaction and Motivation of Tutors from Open Distance Learning Institutions: A Theoretical Perspective

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Abstract

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) plays a vital role in the African context and serves as a vehicle that drives access to educational opportunities through tutorial facilities of a high standard. The tutors concerned offer additional support through online platforms and are almost the only 'academic' staff in direct contact with students. This implies that their job satisfaction and motivation strongly influence the throughput rates of modules offered by ODL Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This is in line with the fact that work-centred individuals have a high need for achievement, are satisfied with their jobs, and are more committed to their organisations.

Distance learners often experience a feeling of isolation and lack of confidence, and tutors' job satisfaction and motivation, might affect their learning experience. The aim of this article is to assess the factors affecting job satisfaction and motivation of tutors in ODL HEIs. The scoping literature review focuses on job characteristics as a predictor variable, with job satisfaction and motivation as criterion variables. The main research question of the review is: To what degree do job satisfaction and motivation contribute towards quality service delivery by tutors from ODL HEIs? For the purposes of this article, the stand-alone literature review method will be followed to make sense of a body of existing literature through the aggregation, interpretation, explanation, or integration of existing research.

The review on which the present study is based will be the first step towards identifying gaps in the body of knowledge and will serve as a foundation for the development of a measuring tool to conduct an empirical study that will attempt to open a line of dialogue between the tutors and the universities.

Keywords

Open and Distance Learning (ODL), tutors, job satisfaction, motivation



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