



PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL PROFILE OF THE STUDENT – FUTURE TEACHER, BEFORE AND DURING COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this publication is to present the results of a study conducted in the period April – June 2020. The survey is aimed at identifying ways of organizing and spending leisure time and learning activities before and during a pandemic. The results obtained by student-future pedagogue show that during the pandemic the time spent on learning activities has increased; the activities have changed; time for sports have increased, skills related to their personal and professional development have changed. The conclusions are aimed at a comparative analysis of the concepts of leisure time and their personal and professional development before and during isolation.

Key words: leisure time, learning activities, students, pandemic

INTRODUCTION

Coming into University the young person enters into another world – in this of science. University – a place for improvement, acquisition of new knowledge, skills and competences is also the place to build future professionals. Regardless of the professional field in which the student is accepted, he gradually enters the profession. He begins using its conceptual apparatus, to sense whether it is for him and to imagine how he practices it. After graduating and entering the profession, the young person begins to build his professional image. It is formed gradually. This professional image, combined with the personal qualities that each of us has, shape him as a specialist, as an expert in the profession.

But how do you prepare for a profession during a pandemic? What flooded the world was unexpected and unknown. Covid-19 came into our lives and changed them. Changed us as

individuals and as professionals. The transformations are yet to be noticed and explored. From the beginning we are looking for an answer of questions like: How does Covid-19 affect different generations?, How has the preparation of cadres in various types of jobs changed?, What new qualities are formed in the future specialists? On these and many other questions are still to be answered. What we seek to answer in this article is related to the changes in the organization and leisure and learning activities before and during a pandemic.

Students are young people who, in addition to commitments at the university, and possibly at work, they seek and implement activities in their spare time. Their personal profile is shaped by what they do in their free time. The way of its organization and „compaction” is a personal choice, but it turns out that this is one of the little-studied scientific problems in Bulgaria. The reason for this is that the time a person uses outside of working hours, that of housework, shopping, sleeping, meeting physiological needs, caring for children and the elderly, transporting to and from work, is a time when everyone from us

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decides how to organize. Our behavior at this time is not a priority for research, because on the one hand everyone has the freedom to choose the activities to carry out, and on the other hand the variety of activities is extremely large. However, its research is extremely important. As Milena Velikova points out, „In recent decades, the activities they carry out in their free time have aroused the interest of researchers, because the research gives idea of the standard of living, the social culture of a society, its way of life. It can be an indicator of the development of a civilization, a measure for any society” (1). N. Boyadzhieva points out that „Traditionally, free time is defined as that part of social time that remains outside work, social obligations and the satisfaction of biological needs. During this time, recreation, entertainment, cultural consumption takes place. Free time allows you to restore balance by enabling a person to satisfy and develop that part of his personality for which professional life and responsibilities are an obstacle” (2). Free time has a great impact on people's lives. It provides an opportunity to acquire new knowledge. Improves emotional life. Stimulates the development of psycho-physical abilities, skills and habits, improves independence and socialization. All this affects the physical, intellectual, emotional, work and moral development of man (3). In the free time, each person chooses the content and activities he wants to engage in according to his interests, inclinations, desires and needs (4). Only when free time fills the space in which young people feel satisfied and happy, where they recognize themselves, can we be sure that free time has fulfilled its functions and contributed to the development of the young person (5).

In 2009-2010, among 5,503 people, the National Statistical Institute conducted a survey of the time budget, which showed that the highest percentage (33%) is spent on personal care, followed by 19% employment, 15% training and 12% time of day is spent on leisure, 10% for housework, 6% for volunteering, 3% for travel and 2% for unskilled activities. The fourth place of this activity „free time” shows its importance for each person. According to analysts „Almost everyone (98% of respondents) spends time on activities such as watching TV, reading books, walking, hiking, sports, games, computer activities and more. The average free time per respondent is 4 hours and 25 minutes. People aged 10-19 (nearly 6 hours)

and 65 and older (5 hours and 15 minutes) have the most free time, and the least people aged 20-49 (3 hours and 45 min). In their free time, Bulgarians mainly watch TV – 2 hours and 43 minutes a day; talk to family or friends, relatives, acquaintances – 36 minutes a day; walk – 12 minutes a day” (6).

The same study emphasizes that „Compared to the period 2001-2002, the time spent on computer activities (searching for information, reading and surfing the web, reading, writing e-mails) has significantly increased ... and 21% of men and 15% of women engage in sports and outdoor activities in their free time. People who play sports spend 2 hours a day on this. 1 hour and 33 minutes are set aside for walking and hiking and as much for entertainment and cultural activities (cinema, theatre, concert). 1.5 hours are set aside for different types of hobbies and games (playing musical instruments, writing poetry, prose, collecting, playing cards, chess, dominoes, gambling, etc.). 1 hour and 20 minutes per day are set aside for reading books, and 50 minutes for reading periodicals and specialized literature. 4% of the respondents have read books and 15.3% - periodicals and other literature on the day of the survey” (6).

Ivaylo Stamenkov and Hristo Dokov point out that „The sports sector is one of the hardest hit in the first six months of the Covid-19 pandemic. Overcoming the crisis in the sector is globally vital not only because of its growing share of the gross national income of a number of countries in recent years, but also because of its strong impact on employment and its diverse impacts on society” (7).

METHODS OF WORK

The above opinions necessitated a study, which aims to study and determine the personal and professional profile of students from Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”, before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey was conducted in the period May – June 2020 among 92 students from Sofia University – 84.2% of them are in the specialty „Physical Education and Sports”, 10.9% in the specialty „Preschool and primary school pedagogy”, 2.2% of the specialty „Primary School Pedagogy” from the Faculty of Science, Education and Art and 2.2% of the

specialty „Pedagogy” from the Faculty of Pedagogy. For the purposes of the study, a questionnaire containing 30 closed questions was used. The obtained results are analysed and presented on the basis of the analysis of frequencies (f) and percentages (%). The data obtained from the survey were processed with Excel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the sample shows that the most active were the third and fourth year students. Their distribution is as follows: 17.4% – from 1st year, 10.9% – from 2nd year, 41.3% – from 3rd year and 30.4% from 4th year. The distribution by gender is approximately equal – 48.9% are women and 51.1% are men. The age range is from 19 to 50 years. 88% of students lived in the city and 12% in the countryside before coming to

study at the University. Respondents were asked questions that can be divided into two major groups – before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. In order to better illustrate the difference in the activities that young people were engaged in before and during the pandemic and to outline more clearly their personal and professional profile, the data analysis will be comparative.

Free time and the ways in which they organize it is one of the characteristics of young people. Asked how much free time they had before and during the pandemic, the results quite normally show that it has increased. If before the pandemic the students had 3-4 hours for entertainment (44.6%), then during the epidemic 65.2% said that it was more than 5 hours (**Figure 1**).

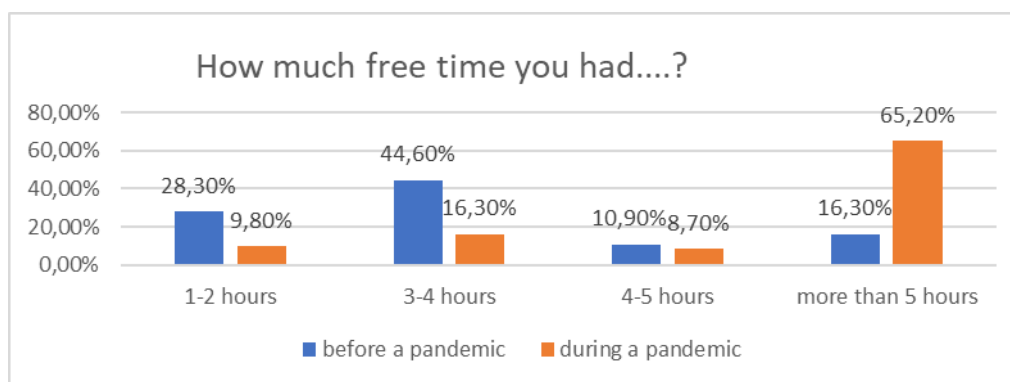


Figure 1. The free time of the students-future pedagogues

The main activity of the students is a learning. Therefore, they were asked how much time they spend studying. Before the pandemic, students studied from 30 minutes to 1 hour, or 2-3 hours. There was not a day that they did not take time to study. During the pandemic, 28.3% of them admitted that there were days when they did not study. This is probably due to the fact that the study was conducted in May and June, when the peak in the epidemiological situation. The second semester of the 2019-2020 academic year was also the time when students and teachers taught themselves to use the new online platforms. This is probably one of the reasons why the emphasis of the essence of learning has shifted to the way

it is presented. Teachers were additionally engaged in the preparation of presentations to illustrate the learning content, with the search for online ways to „reach” students. 13% of them admit that they have not had activities and activities related to their professional training. However, 44.8% say that during the pandemic they spent 2-3 hours on online work and activities related to their training. It is clearly proven that the students who have taken their education seriously before have continued this during the epidemiological situation. 22.8% spent 30 minutes – 1 hour, and 15.3% 4-5 hours (**Figure 2**).

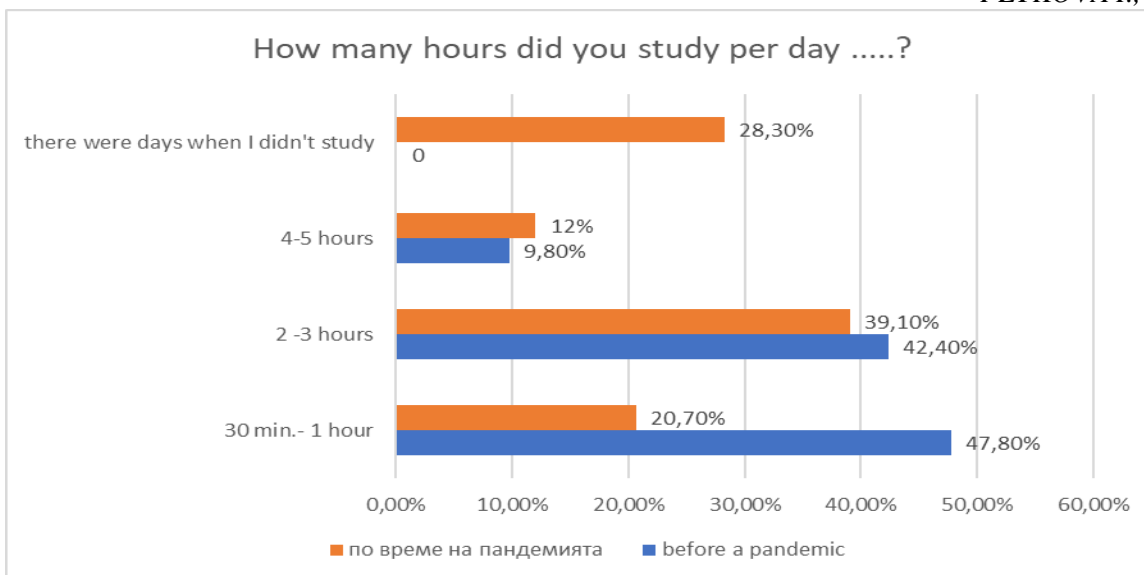


Figure 2. How many hours did you study per day?

The daily life of each of us changed with the advent of Covid-19. Therefore, the questionnaire included the question „What activities did you spend most of your free time on?”. Much more often, 3 to 5 times a week the respondents have engaged in online activities. This is a predictable response, given that current generations are constantly on the Internet. The time for listening

to music and watching movies has increased. Some of the young people also went to clean the house or the yard, as well as to sleep and read books. The only activity that has reduced its activity is sports activities. We attribute the explanation to the fact that the sports halls and gyms were closed. The movement of people was also restricted (Figure 3).

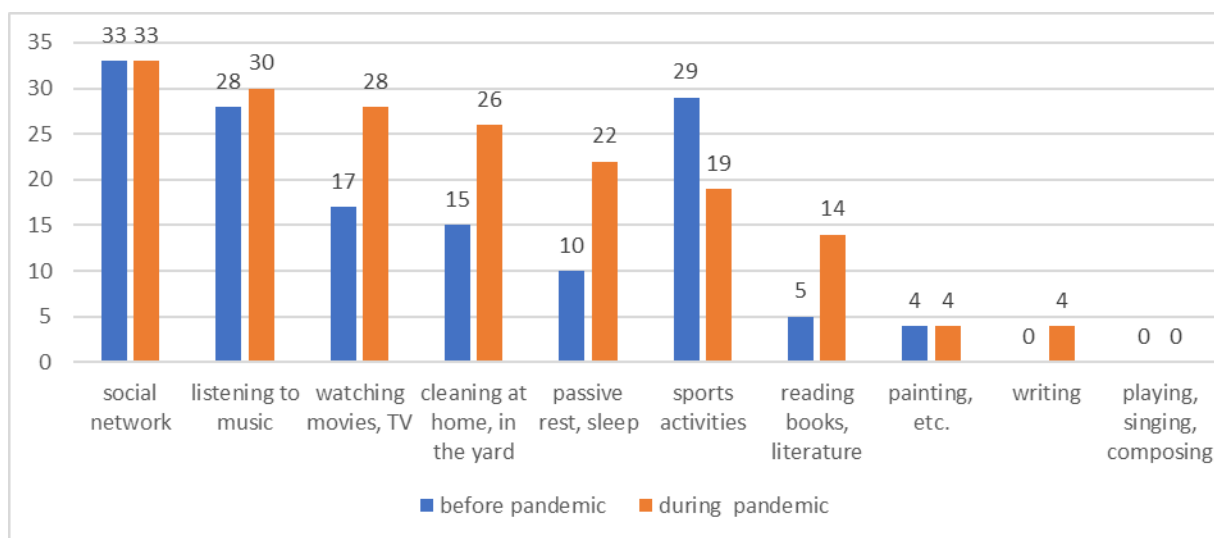


Figure 3. What activities did you most often fill your free time with (cash)

Young people are happy with how they use their free time. This percentage even increases during the pandemic. The reason for this may be that young people have found more time for activities

that they could not do before. Of course, there are those who are not satisfied, which can be a boost to demand for more efficient use (Figure 4).

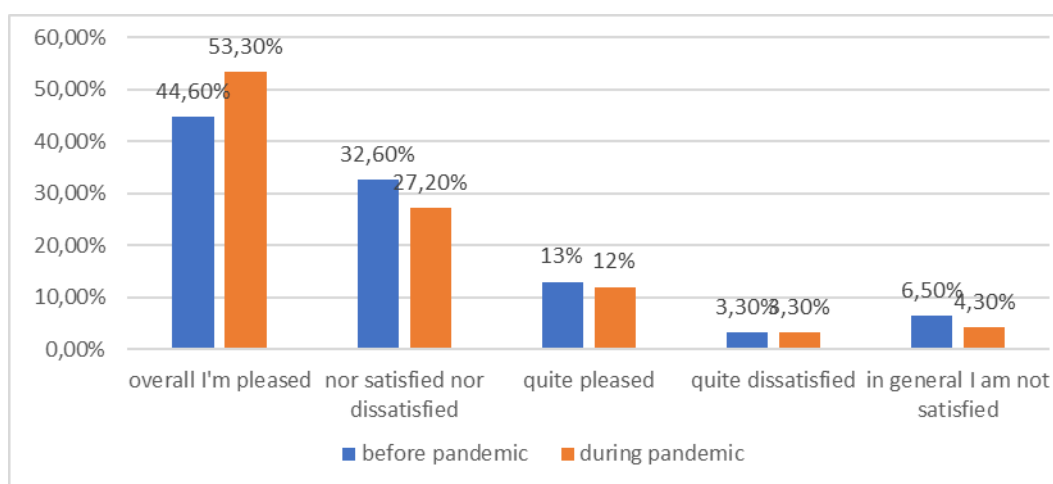


Figure 4. To what extent are you satisfied with the use of free time ...?

Most often we associate free time with sports activities. Therefore, the respondents were asked if they practiced physical / sports activities. The results showed that there was a difference in attitudes towards sports activities before and during a pandemic. Although in the previous

question they put sports activities only on the 6th place of all proposed activities, it is gratifying that the young people share that they have always practiced sports activities. Those who are not so active do so whenever they have the opportunity (**Figure 5**).

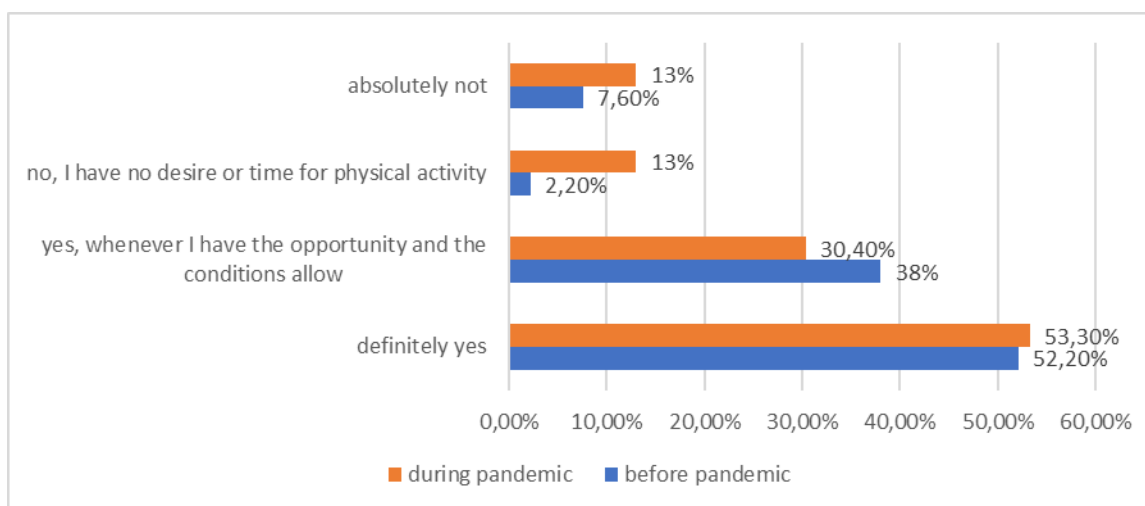


Figure 5. Did you practice physical / sports activities in your free time?

The way in which the pandemic has affected a person's personality and professional development is one of the main issues in this study. The answers show that a higher percentage (35.8%) state that there is no change whether the

time they spend is focused on personal or professional development, but at the same time 25% are categorical that they have spent much more time (25%) or more time (22.8%) for personal development (**Figure 6**).

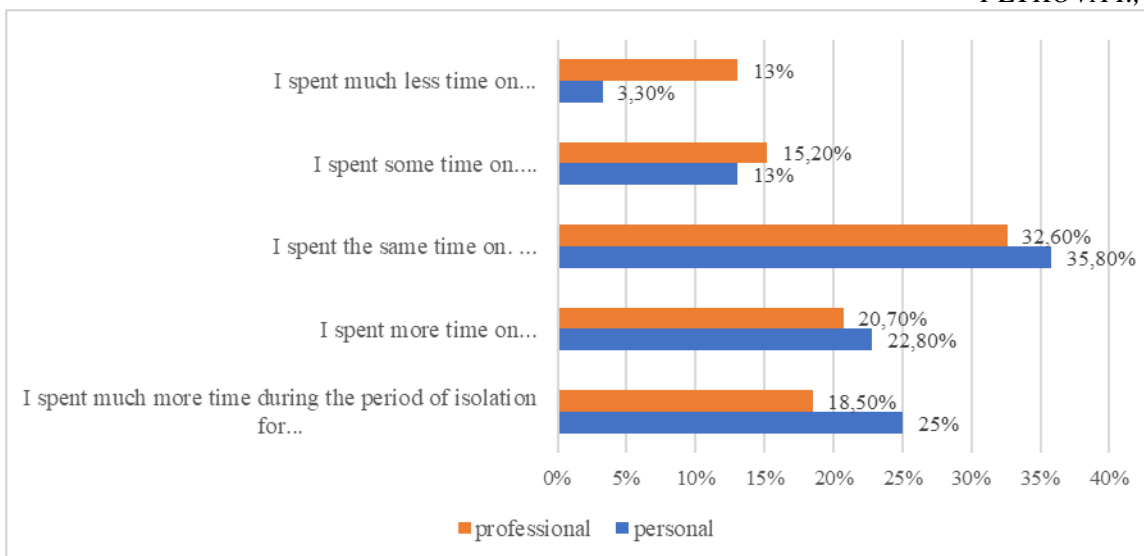


Figure 6. How much time did you spend on your personal and professional development?

The pandemic has made most students look inside themselves rather than looking for ways to improve themselves professionally. Therefore, they do not envisage a major change in their training. 35.9% do not anticipate major changes, but not a small percentage of those (35.9%) who believe that they will lose their knowledge and skills gained through lecture courses.

Of particular importance is the question of what aspects are the changes that have occurred in young people in personal and professional terms during the pandemic. The results show that most of their opinions are indifferent, i.e. consider that they will neither have nor will have an impact on

acquiring new knowledge, improving and perfecting old skills, providing new information and knowledge about segments of personal development, as well as connecting with friends, relatives and acquaintances.

In their professional development, the answers also remain in the middle range, i.e. there is neither impact nor change. There will be a partial impact on the consideration and awareness of new opportunities for improvement in the profession and in the way of providing information, and the biggest change is expected to be on the acquisition of new skills (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Aspects of professional development

Aspects of professional development	There is no impact and no change	No impact	Is / No impact	It has a partial impact	It has a very big impact and change
Getting new skills	23	25	28	6	10
Improving and perfecting old skills	20	29	25	9	9
Providing new information and knowledge about the segments of personal development that interest me (motivation, self-discipline, healthy eating, health, mental health)	22	22	25	15	8
Connecting with friends, relatives and acquaintances	21	24	27	12	8
Participation in new projects	28	23	22	10	9
Considering and realizing new opportunities for improving the chosen profession	22	15	25	21	9

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the analysis of the opinion of the students about their personal development and the use of free time during the pandemic of COVID-19, the following more important **conclusions and recommendations** can be made:

1. The free time of the students who have had prior to and during the pandemic, the results showed that it increased during the pandemic.
2. Before the pandemic, students studied from 30 minutes to 3 hours. There was not a day that they did not take time to study. During the pandemic, 28.3% of them admitted that there were days when they did not study.
3. During the pandemic, 3 to 5 times a week, the respondents spent on online activities. The time for listening to music and watching movies, cleaning the house and reading books has increased.
4. Young people are happy with the way they use their free time. This percentage even increases during a pandemic.
5. The results showed that there was a difference in attitudes towards sports activities before and during a pandemic. The young people say that they have always practiced sports activities.
6. The answers show that a higher percentage (35.8%) state that there is no change whether the time they spend is focused on personal or professional development, but at the same time 25% are categorical that they have spent much more time (25%) or more time (22.8%) for personal development (Fig. 6).
7. The pandemic has made most students look inside themselves rather than looking for ways to improve themselves. Therefore, they do not envisage a major change in their training.

The main conclusion that emerges from the study is that the Covid-19 pandemic had, has and will have an impact on our lives. The changes that occur are in both the personal and the professional life. Young people with their sensitivity feel that there will be transformations, both on specific activities and on their free time. However, all this should not be a cause for concern, but rather an incentive to devote more time to their personal and professional development.

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