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Objectives and themes

Academic journal "Political Science Issues" is an international peer-reviewed scientific periodical in the field of political studies. The journal has an international character because of the composition of its Editorial Board, its editors, its contributing authors and topics of its publications.

The scientific journal is published since 2011 at the "Publishing House "Science Today". Translated (eng.) version of the journal is published since 2016. Since its inception, the journal was guided by high scientific and ethical standards and today it is one of the leading political science journals in Russia.

The purpose of the journal is to promote scientific exchange and cooperation between Russian and foreign political scientists.

The journal is intended for the publication of the results of fundamental and applied scientific research. Thematic focus of the journal is reflected in the following permanent headings: "History and philosophy of politics," "Political institutions, processes and technologies," "Political regionalism and ethno-politics," "Political culture and ideologies," "Political problems of international relations and globalization."

Format of publications: scientific articles, reviews, scientific materials, materials of round tables, scientific reviews, scientific reports devoted to research problems in the field of politics and political science.

The Editorial Board and the editors of the journal in their activities are guided by the principles defined by VAK of Russia for scientific journals, including: presence of the institute of peer review for the expert quality assessment of scientific articles; information openness of the publications; availability and compliance with the rules and ethical standards for the submission of manuscripts by the authors.

The target audience of the journal is Russian and foreign specialists-political scientists, as well as graduate students and masters in the fields of political science, state and municipal management and international relations.

The journal strictly adheres to the international publishing standards and publication ethics identified in the *COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics)* document. **http://publicationethics.org.**

Full details of the journal and its editorial policy, requirements to the preparation and publication of articles, archive (issues since 2011) and additional information are available on the website: **http://voprospolitolog.ru**

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GLOBAL AND REGIONAL IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. IMPACT ON EDUCATION

In this article, the authors analyze the problems of education in the context of globalization and regionalization, considering the period before the pandemic and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors analyze the problems faced by the education sector at the global and regional levels, what actions are being taken by international organizations, governments and leaders of sub-state regions, some recommendations are given for solving the problems that have arisen.

Key words: *globalization, regionalization, education, COVID-19 pandemic.*

The impact of globalization and regionalization on the sphere of education is very relevant and requires academic approach. These two leading trends in the modern world have a great impact on changes in the educational space, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when international organizations, countries and regions are forced to develop the necessary strategies in difficult conditions and in a short time to find the means to maintain the stability of the education sector and conduct the educational process in the face of a global catastrophe.

Not long ago, academicians when considering globalization and regionalization, discussed energy issues and problems of natural resources, studied the food problem and environmental and climate issues, studied demographic and economic aspects, and created a unified educational space. Today, globalization and regionalization can no longer be considered without studying such a global phenomenon as the COVID-19 pandemic, which covered all macro-regions, almost all countries and regions and changed all spheres of life, including education.

The COVID-19 epidemic broke out in late 2019 in the Chinese province of Hubei, and in a short time the virus spread to other countries. In March 2020,

the spread of the virus was recognized as a pandemic. In April 2020, it covered almost all countries of the world, and each country, as the virus entered a particular region, faced the need to take measures to combat the consequences of the epidemic, including those for education.

Before the pandemic, globalization in education included global education, which took place in the world during the XX and XXI century, and meant formation of a single, unified world system of education, which gradually erased distinctions among various educational systems.

The international League of Nations Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (IISc) was established in 1922 [6]. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established in 1945 and it became successor to the IISc. The main goals of UNESCO were defined as follows: promotion of peace and security through increased cooperation between states and peoples in the fields of education, science and culture; ensuring justice and respect for the rule of law, and universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all peoples, without distinction as to race, sex, language, orientation or religion [7].

Immediately after its creation, UNESCO began to restore destroyed schools and establish broken contacts in the field of education in Western Europe, and in the 1950s, to protect human rights in the field of education. In 1953, the UNESCO network of associated schools was established, which involved pre-school institutions, primary and secondary schools, vocational education institutions, and teacher training programs. The associated schools paid special attention to the information about the UN and UNESCO, education in the field of ecology and environmental protection, the study of cultural and natural heritage, and human rights and freedoms. UNESCO has identified four main aspects in the learning process "learn to know, learn to be able, learn to live and learn to live together" [8].

In 1960, the Convention against discrimination in education was adopted [9]. Up to that point, activities in relation to developing countries have been haphazard and mainly focused on providing basic information from various fields. After new African states joined the organization in the early 1960s, UNESCO began to focus on the developing countries.

In the 90s of the XX century, secondary professional and higher education were involved in global processes. In 1991, the university cooperation program, also known as the UNESCO world network of departments, was established [10]. UNESCO departments were engaged in the exchange of experience, knowledge and technologies in the field of education, as well as training of teachers, which contributed to improving the quality of teaching, training and research. In 1992, a similar program was created in the field of vocational education, UNEVOC [11]. In the 90s of the twentieth century, the Bologna process was launched in the field of education.

In 2000, the world education forum was held in Dakar (Senegal). At the forum, the main strategy and goals of the "Education for all" program until 2015

were formulated [12]. The goals included compulsory free primary education, gender equality in primary and secondary schools, improvement of the quality of education, comprehensive measures for early childhood education, and satisfaction of the educational needs of young people and adults.

In 2009, the second conference was held to discuss the issues of higher education as a public domain, university rankings, etc. [13].

In November 2018, the third world conference was held in Paris, which was attended by the heads of 70 states. This high-level political forum has become the main UN platform for sustainable development [14].

The COVID-19 pandemic changed everything. To reduce the spread of the coronavirus, governments around the world have decided to close educational institutions in an attempt to contain the global COVID-19 pandemic. According to UNESCO data, in April 2020, 194 countries closed schools across the country, leaving almost 1.6 billion students, 90.1% of the total number of students in the world, out of classrooms (8). This could negate the global community's achievements under SDG 4 "Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all" [15].

UNESCO provides direct support to the countries in their efforts to minimize the negative impact of school closures on the educational process and to create conditions for continuing education, especially for the most vulnerable segments of the population. Although the UN, WHO and UNESCO make certain decisions at the global level, in the end, the problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have to be solved not only by each country separately, but also by each region.

Some countries have implemented school closures at the local level, and if these countries also order the closure of schools and universities nationwide, it will disrupt the educational process for millions of other students [16].

Students who studied abroad were required to return to their home countries and continue their studies remotely. Moreover, within different countries, students who did not study in their own regions were also requested to return to their regions of permanent residence and continue their studies remotely.

Many countrirs took one decision or another depending on the situation that developed within the country. For example, in China, all schools were closed and started to open as the quarantine eased; in Finland, education continued to be provided for pre-school children and grades from 1 to 3 for children whose parents worked in the sectors critical to the functioning of the society, as well as for the children with special needs from pre-school to upper secondary education. Early childhood education and care was provided to all children whose parents could not provide home-based care. At other levels of education, contact training continued if it was considered necessary to complete the training. In Iceland, primary schools could remain open if the number of children in a class did not exceed 20. In Japan, all universities were sent on spring break, and in the Republic of Korea, after an initial delay of two weeks, universities began the academic year online. In Romania, most universities remained open [2].

As for Russia, given the size of the country, a large number of its subjects (5, 2), different levels of socio-economic development, geographical location, different population density, etc., regions largely independently, based on the objective situation, decided what kind of regime in the subject of the Federation or its individual municipalities can be introduced in connection with COVID-19. The situation is constantly changing. And in different regions, even in their individual municipalities, it also develops differently. In April 2020, addressing the citizens, the President of Russia stated that "due to the fact that different regions and municipalities of Russia have different epidemiological situations, the subjects of the Russian Federation will have the authority to determine preventive measures independently. In some places, stricter restrictions must be observed, and in others, while maintaining a high level of readiness, local, point-based solutions are now sufficient. These features must be taken into account. In this regard the regions and heads of the regions of the Federation will be given additional powers under my decree" [17].

Measures in the education system that are being taken in various countries and regions have shown that countries face a number of problems.

Closing schools, even temporarily, has great social and economic consequences [1], especially for the poor: children and young people are deprived of opportunities for growth and development, this mainly affects students from low-income families who do not have access to education outside of school; many children have become malnourished because they have lost free or reduced-price meals provided at schools; children whose parents continued to work, such as doctors, nurses, orderlies, or other medical professionals, were left unattended, parents were forced to leave their children alone, which was sometimes dangerous for their life and health, and so on.

In order to minimize the negative consequences of closing educational institutions and create conditions for continuing education, especially for the most vulnerable segments of the population, many countries have introduced distance learning systems at schools and universities.

According to UNESCO, 53 countries have launched national educational platforms for distance learning [4]. Here again, countries and regions faced new challenges.

According to the World Bank, there are currently very few education systems that have good technical support to make a quick transition to distance learning. Success is more likely in countries where distance education was widely used before the pandemic [5]. Each country solves this problem in its own way (6). The second problem is related to the fact that the transition to distance learning requires huge costs. It is necessary to create high-quality and up-to-date digital training materials, to train digital skills and to implement auxiliary data and information management systems (3).

Distance learning leads to greater social stratification, for example, along the lines of rich – poor; urban – rural; with good academic performance – poor aca-

demic performance, etc. This aspect is particularly relevant for children in poor areas with limited or no Internet access. Low-income families and people living in rural areas often do not have the computers or other resources necessary for learning, which means that most students will have difficulty transitioning to distance education. Students from affluent families with existing distance learning experience will have an advantage.

There may be a problem for educational institutions when there is a question of choosing which subjects to teach online, and which to leave for students to learn independently. Only some teachers are able to make a quick and effective transition to an online learning model, since the processes of teaching remotely and in the classroom differ significantly from each other. In this regard, teachers will need support and additional training (4).

In the context of distance learning, parents who play a key role in supporting their children have also faced certain problems. Even under the best of circumstances, most parents are ill-equipped to provide effective educational support to their children, especially in cases where they do not have sufficient technical skills. In large families, there is a problem of distributing available devices between them. Families with children or parents with disabilities, or parents who are engaged in critical industries to fight the epidemic, have faced great difficulties.

What solutions to these problems can be offered?

1. It is necessary to ensure equal access of students and students to digital learning portals, especially for students from low-income families.

2. As recommended by the World Bank [5], it is necessary to use a single portal to host all programs, applications, platforms, and materials needed for learning, as well as use guides for students, teachers, and parents. In this area, providing access to materials using a wide range of devices, including mobile devices, becomes an important task.

3. In remote education, when students use different platforms, applications, and equipment, schools have fewer opportunities to monitor their quality. In such cases, it is important to take additional measures to ensure the safety of students, especially when it comes to the provision of programs by third parties or the lack of legal protection and regulation of this area.

4. It is necessary to use existing distance education platforms that may already contain the necessary course or training materials in various digital formats. If such platforms do not exist in the country, open educational resources can be used (5).

5. It is important to develop new educational platforms (virtual classes) (1).

6. It is necessary to develop cooperation with educational platforms. The main problem with existing educational platforms is that it is not always possible to use them with a large number of users at the same time. Some private companies provided their resources and services to educational institutions free of charge as a support measure against the spread of COVID-19 (2, 7).

7. It is important to establish international cooperation for the exchange of educational online resources. Different countries sometimes teach a similar set of

subjects, so it is necessary to consider the possibility of translating foreign materials and using them for educational purposes.

8. States need to provide teachers with online learning materials.

To address these global challenges, UNESCO has established a COVID-19 task force to provide advice and technical assistance to governments involved in providing distance learning to students. It also holds regular virtual meetings with education Ministers to share experiences and assess priority needs.

The organization has launched the Global Education Coalition and COVID-19, which brings together government agencies and the private sector, including Microsoft and GSMA, to support countries in implementing distance learning systems to minimize disruptions in the educational process and to maintain contact with students [3].

To sum up, it should be noted that in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the desire for openness in the world community has been replaced by a desire for closure and security. Global problems are solved at the regional level. Problems of social injustice have become more acute, which is clearly visible in the educational environment. States and their regions have simultaneously become subjects and objects of both globalization and regionalization.

The globalization processes have come to the fore and were sharply intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also increased interdependence of various countries, regions and peoples, have also led to a new level of understanding of this problem. Today, globalization and regionalization can be considered as the basis of the geopolitical balance.

NOTES:

(1) China and Singapore have successfully launched both public and private "virtual class" services.

(2) Cypriot banks and patrons provide children in need with electronic devices (6 thousand electronic tablets have already been received), and telecommunications operators provide free Internet access to provide distance learning. The Ministry of Education and Science has collected data on all schools in Cyprus to identify the needs of students.

(3) For example, Armenia has launched the unified University platform iUniversity, which allows remote learning during quarantine.

(4) For example, the Ministry of Education and Science of Cyprus conducts accelerated training of teachers in distance education through the Pedagogical Institute. A large number of materials for educational support are regularly posted on school websites and on the website of the Ministry.

(5) For example, in Cyprus, licensed software necessary for distance education was purchased at the state level. Tens of thousands of children and teachers logged in using the codes provided to them.

(6) In China, the state supports the translation of educational materials into digital format. The South Korean government has announced measures to sup-

port digital education. The new school year in the country began in online classes on April 9. (In Korean schools, the first semester of the school year usually begins on March 1 and lasts until mid-July).

(7) In Hong Kong, Microsoft provided free use of the Office 365 Education program for 50,000 teachers and 800,000 students.

(8) The data correspond to the number of students enrolled at ISCED levels 0-3: early childhood education, primary education, first stage of secondary education, second stage of secondary education, and higher education levels [ISCED levels 5-8] // Enrollment data based on the latest data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics // https://ru.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse.

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