

*Student Points of View – Pedagogical,  
Psychological, Social and Technical Issues*

## **ANALYSIS OF DISTANCE HANDBALL EDUCATION IN STUDENTS FROM THE NATIONAL SPORTS ACADEMY “VASIL LEVSKI”**

**Emil Avramov, Milena Avramova**

*National Sports Academy “Vassil Levski” (Bulgaria)*

**Abstract.** At a time when our whole daily life was organized in a new and unusual way, due to the epidemiological situation we were in, it is normal for students to be organized in a different way (remotely). That is why we surveyed and analyzed the results of the students from the Faculty of Pedagogy of NSA “V. Levski” regarding the conducted online handball training. The aim of our study is to study the interests and attitudes of students from NSA “Vasil Levski” to distance learning in handball. The organization of the survey is related to an online survey conducted on the platform “Surveynuts” from 01.06. to 10.06. 2020 To achieve the goal we used the methods: theoretical and logical analysis, survey method and mathematical and statistical method – alternative analysis. Based on the analysis, we found that 73% of students are completely satisfied with online handball training. The most effective and most frequently used training platform was that of the NSA (virtual). Although distance learning has its advantages, 69% of students do not think that this form should remain the main one, due to the fact that handball is a practical discipline.

*Keywords:* handball; survey; interests; training

### **Introduction**

Learning is a continuous process that requires the application of various and complementary techniques, which depend on the purpose of the training, the trainer, the trainees and the situation in which they find themselves. At a time when our whole daily life was organized in a new and unusual way, due to the epidemiological situation in which we find ourselves, it is normal for students to study in a different way (remotely).

With COVID-19 drastically changing everyday life, the world is having to adapt. As a result, universities are finding ways to support their students and plan for the start of a new academic year, with institutions now preparing for courses to be accessed online. (Rasheed, 2020).

Distance learning offers a number of advantages and opportunities for non-resident students from other countries seeking an accredited degree of some high

standard institutes. Possibly the most pertinent advantage involves easy approach of learning as a result keep away from the hassle of applying for a student visa to study in a specific country. Distance learning provides geographic flexibility to study in any convenient location with an internet connection and involves setting self-tempo for learning (Essays, UK, 2018).

“Distance learning is when the teacher and the learners are physically separated and when technology (sound, picture, print, etc.), often combined with direct communication, is used to make a connection between the two parties (Willis & Dickinson, 1997).

D. Mielke (1999) defines distance learning as “a method of learning in which the learner is physically separated from the teacher and the institution.” This method can be applied alone or in combination with other forms of learning, including the traditional way of learning “person in face-to-face instruction.

In some cases, it is a “method” (Mielke, 1999), in others the need to refer it to a more general concept is omitted altogether (Tait & Mills, 1999; Willis & Dickinson, 1997; Moore, 1989; Caspi & Gorsky, 2006). However, more and more authors consider distance learning as a form of learning, which we consider correct from the point of view of the essence of the method and the form as pedagogical concepts.

The types of distance learning can be divided into different categories, depending on the time and place in which the learning process takes place.

Belanger & Jordan, (2000) presented different categories of distance learning according to the time and place of the participants in the learning process.

The high level of technological development gives us the advantage to take advantage of text, audio and video broadcasting, video conferencing, online training, and computer broadcasting and even to evaluate our own progress. Distance learning requires activity on the part of the learners, which is available when it is related to subsequent career development. On the other hand, active learning has proven to be highly effective in learning, regardless of the age of the learners. Distance learning is a modern technique that helps increase the capacity of students through the immediate acquisition of knowledge and skills. Higher education provides this type of training as a way to improve the educational and qualification process.

In her report (Getova, 2020) on distance learning at NSA and Sofia University, she found that neither students nor teachers tend to agree with the statement that it should become a basic form of education. On the one hand, some disciplines related to practical exercises cannot be adapted for online teaching at all (in this respect the most serious problem is in the NSA). On the other hand, the distance learning process itself has limitations even for the applicable disciplines.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the study is to study the interests and attitudes of students from NSA “Vasil Levski” to distance learning in handball.

### Methodology

The organization of the survey is related to a survey conducted using an online survey on the platform “Surveynuts”. The questionnaires were sent online to the students during the period 01 – 10.06.2020. The object of the study is the attitude of students from the Faculty of Pedagogy to distance learning in handball. The subject of the research is the opinion of the students on the issues of distance learning in handball. The contingent of the research are 87 students from the Faculty of Pedagogy of NSA “V. Levski” The following methods were used for the realization of the set goals and tasks:

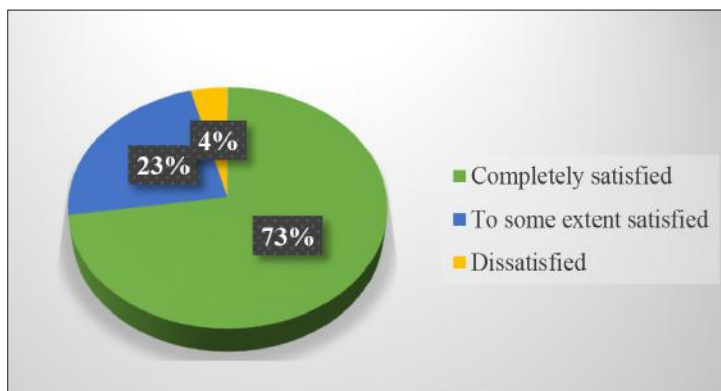
1. Theoretical and logical analysis, through which the literature sources were studied, in relation to distance learning in students.

2. Questionnaire method, used to establish the interests and attitudes of students, from the Faculty of Pedagogy to distance learning in handball. The students were interviewed using an online survey on the Surveynuts platform. The surveys are anonymous and are sent online to students during the period 01 -10.06.2020. The questions for the most part have a closed answer (9 questions) and only one of the respondents has the opportunity to give an open answer.

3. The mathematical-statistical method we used is an alternative analysis to determine the relative shares of the respective answers.

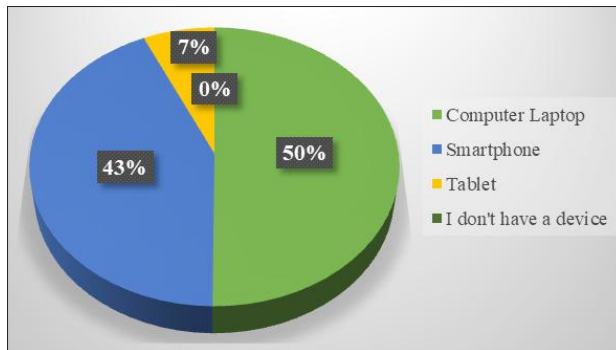
### Results and analysis

The first question of the survey is aimed at establishing the satisfaction of students with distance learning in handball. A large proportion of students, 73%, said they were satisfied with the distance learning of handball during the pandemic. The other 23% say they are satisfied to some extent. The answers, which are not positive, are only 4%, they say that they are not satisfied with the distance learning of handball.



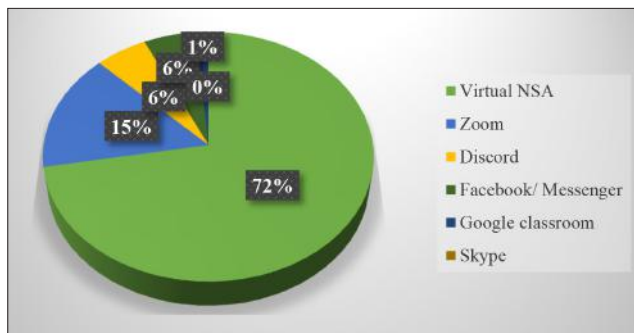
**Figure 1.** Relative share of answers to the question “What is the degree of satisfaction with online handball training?”

The answers to the question of what devices students have during online learning are presented in (Figure 2). The figure shows that there is no student of the respondents who does not have a device for online learning. In our opinion, this is normal for the modern communication society in which every young person has modern equipment. More than half of the surveyed students' study via laptop or computer (50%), others (43%) study via their phones. Only 7% of students use a tablet.



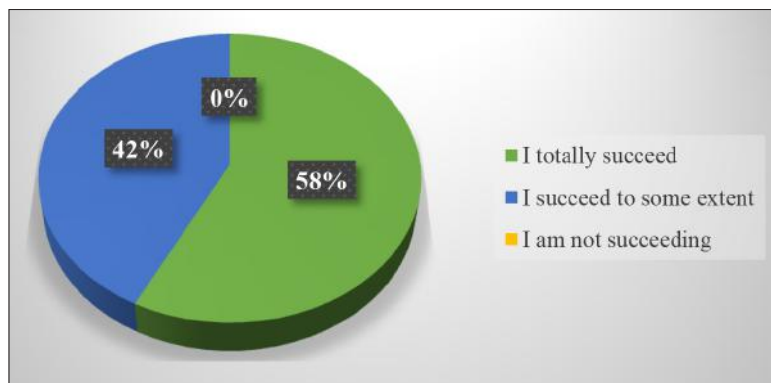
**Figure 2.** Percentage of answers to the question “What devices do you have for inclusion in online training?”

Regarding the question of which training platform do you consider the most effective, (72%) of the students believe that the NSA (Virtual) platform was the most effective in their training during the online training. In our opinion, this is normal, due to the fact that most of the training took place there. The next most usable platform is "Zoom" (15%), where the handball lectures of the students from the Faculty of Pedagogy were held. The other platforms used were Facebook / Messenger (6%) and Discord (6%). The least used is the digital classroom platform (1%).



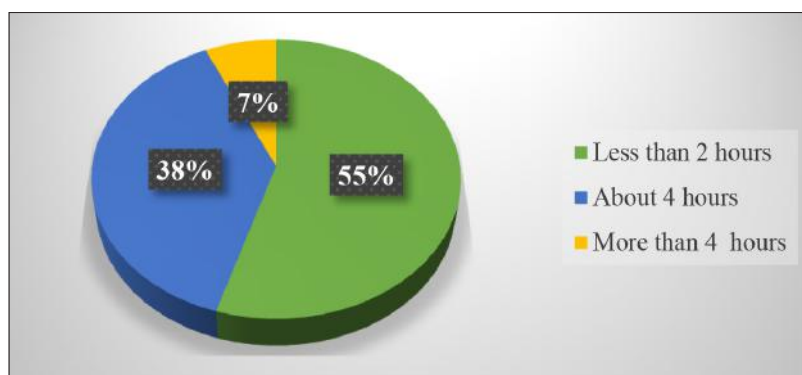
**Figure 3.** Percentage of answers to the question “Which training platform do you consider the most effective?”

On the next question, in what degree do you manage to cope with the assigned tasks (Figure 4), it can be seen that all students have coped with the assigned tasks. The majority of respondents (58%) have fully coped with the tasks. The rest (42%) had difficulty coping with the tasks and answered “somewhat”. We attribute this to the fact that students have difficulty when they do not have a live connection with the teacher.



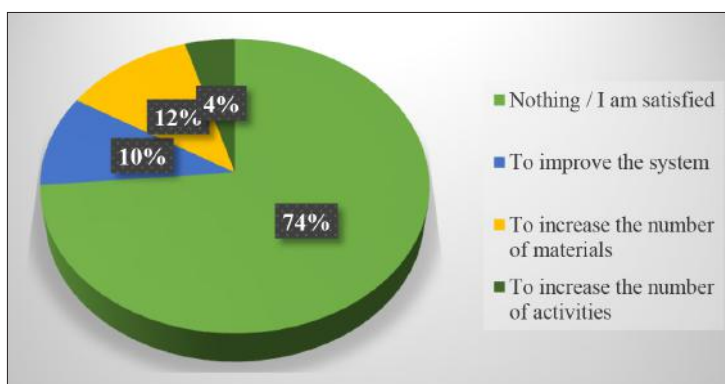
**Figure 4.** Percentage of answers to the question “To what extent do you manage to cope with the assigned tasks?”

The fifth question has to do with how much time per day students spend on online handball training. More than half (55%) responded within 2 hours. The rest (38%) responded within 4 hours, and only (7%) responded over 4 hours. Which, in our opinion, is enough.



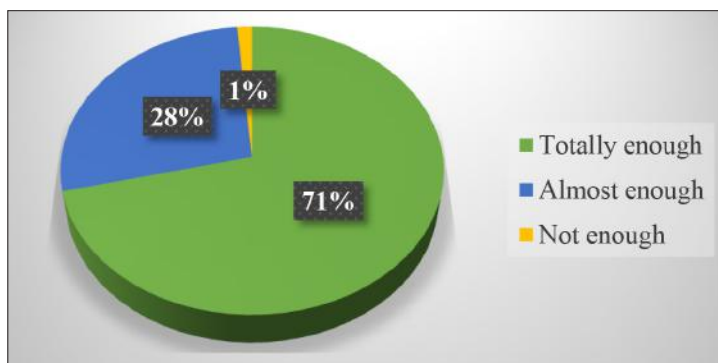
**Figure 5.** Percentage of answers to the question “How much time can you spend on online training?”

The next question in the survey is open-ended, we have processed and systematized the results in several ways compared to the answers received from students. A very large part of the students (74%) believe that the training went well and there is no need for improvement, others (10%) answer that the Virtual platform loads faster. The rest of the answers from the students are aimed at more online activities (4%), and only (12%) indicate that they need more materials uploaded to the platform.



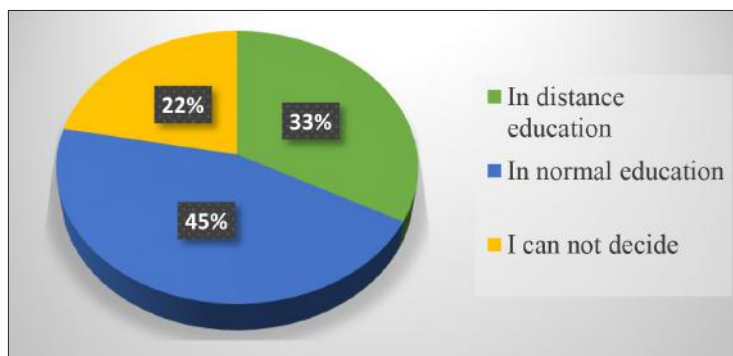
**Figure 6.** Percentage of answers to the question “Were the materials presented by the teachers enough?”

The next question is whether the materials provided to handball students during distance learning are sufficient. A large part of the respondents (71%) answered completely, with an answer to some extent (28%). And with only (1%) they answered that the materials are insufficient.



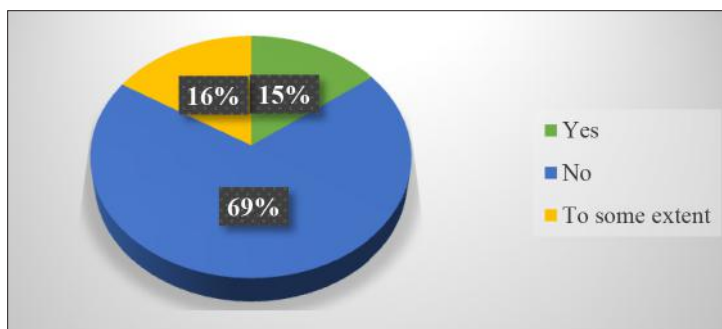
**Figure 7.** Percentage of answers to the question “Were the materials presented by the teachers sufficient?”

In (Figure 8) we have graphically presented the answer to the question in which variant of training the student's workload is higher. The largest percentage (45%) believe that the standard workload is higher, (33%) gave an answer in distance learning, and the rest (22%) cannot judge. This percentage of responses is normal due to the fact that some students prefer distance learning due to work commitments, which affects attendance, while others think we want more practical training.

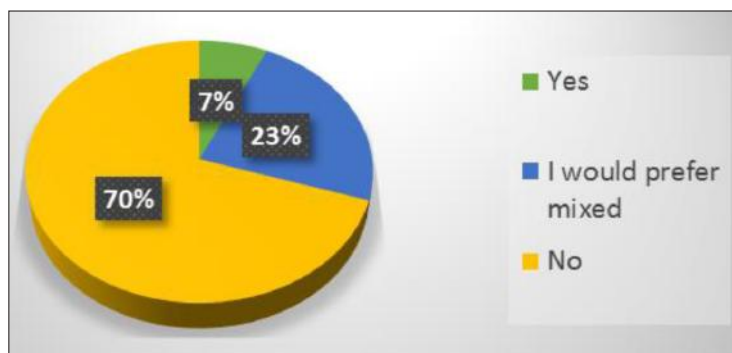


**Figure 8.** Percentage of answers to the question “In which variant of education, the workload of students is generally higher?”

The ninth question is whether online learning can replace practical learning. Naturally (69%) answered no, others (15%) believe that distance learning can completely replace the practical one, the rest (16%) answered mixed. The presented percentage ratio, in our opinion, fully corresponds to reality due to the fact that handball is a practical discipline and the pleasure of the game that student's experience, as well as the motor activity they perform in practice is lost.



**Figure 9.** Percentage of answers to the question “In your opinion, can online training replace practical training in NSA?”



**Figure 10.** Percentage of answers to the question “If it were up to you, would you switch entirely to distance learning during your studies?”

The last question in our survey was “If it were up to you, would you go all the way to distance learning during your studies?”. Regarding this question, the largest percentage of respondents (70%) answered “no”, (13%) answered to blended learning, and the rest (7%) answered “yes”. These answers of the students fully confirm our opinion that distance learning cannot replace the standard way of learning, especially in practical classes.

### **Discussion**

The students from NSA “Vasil Levski” at the Faculty of Pedagogy show satisfaction with the distance learning of handball during the state of emergency in which we were. In the majority of opinions (74%) advocate the view that the presented materials and lectures given by the lecturers are completely sufficient for their preparation. The difficulties that accompany students during distance learning are related to the speed of the platform and the need for more learning materials. Regarding the question of what type of training they prefer, the largest percentage of respondents prefer the standard form of training.

Everything written so far gives us reason to draw the following conclusion:

The distance form of handball training is well represented by the teachers, as the most used is the platform of NSA “Vasil Levski” (Virtual).

Although distance learning is gaining more and more popularity, especially now in the situation we were in with COVID 19, it cannot replace the standard in subjects where there is a need for practical training. Distance learning allows schools to train a large number of students with relatively few teachers, but at the expense of a lower level of practical training. Study conducted on a pilot project for students from NSA “Vasil Levski” and Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” in the period April 25 – May 6, 2020, with the help of an online survey, point out as the main advantage of distance learning



more flexible distribution of time and saving time from travel. Based on their experience with distance learning during a state of emergency, most students surveyed said they would not soon replace it entirely with distance learning.

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✉ **Emil Avramov**

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2081-3004

“Basketball, Volleyball and Handball” Department

National Sports Academy “Vassil Levski”

1700 Sofia, Bulgaria

E-mail: [emilavramov73@gmail.com](mailto:emilavramov73@gmail.com)

**Milena Avramova**

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9402-4534

National Sports Academy “Vassil Levski”

1700 Sofia, Bulgaria