ICT IN DANCE LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Abstract: The aim of the article is to show how it is possible to continue dance leisure time activities even at the time of distance learning, modified conditions, when limiting factors cannot be ignored. Thanks to the use of information and communication technologies in leisure activities, children and young people were able to continue to develop their skills and talents in special areas and to devote themselves to almost all activities that were already engaged in before the pandemic. Many activities were moved to a virtual environment, and some could be carried out with little modification based on the ideas and imagination of teachers, coaches and parents in real-world conditions. Throughout the pandemic period, when not only pupils but also teachers moved into the domestic environment, ICT helped to create suitable working conditions for teaching and learning. Thus, digital technologies have also become an alternative solution in the framework of organizing and implementing leisure time activities and have largely replaced real conditions.

Key words: leisure time activities, ICT, digital technologies, online education, dance activities.

1 Introduction

In a relatively short period of time, information and communication technologies have entered people's awareness and become part of their everyday lives. Education is an area where ICT has radically changed the way of teaching and has made it possible to develop and implement new educational technologies. Digital technologies not only diversify the teaching process and arouse students' interest in learning, but above all increase the effectiveness of education (Stoffová

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& Havelka, 2019; Hodáňová, Hyksová & Skultéty, 2020). New digital educational technologies in the distance form of teaching make them possible to carry out activities that require specially equipped classrooms, laboratories and teaching aids in the face-to-face form of education (Hyksová & Stoffová, 2020; Hyksová, Stoffová & Gabaľová, 2022; Stoffová, 2022).

During the COVID 19 pandemic digital technologies also found a place in the leisure activities of children and young people. The results of the studies carried out during this period show that digital devices and technologies are used to the highest extent by the 15 to 19 age group in their activities. The affordability of digital mobile devices allows them to be used in a variety of activities, whether for work or leisure. We can conclude that all people were forced to use ICTs. The frequency of their use was more intense as the number of days people had to spend in isolation increased, whether from work or school or from the various centres covering leisure activities. Especially children and youth who were used to going to their training sessions before the pandemic were very much looking forward to it as they got to meet their trainers, coaches and friends in person (Stoffová & Zboran, 2022).

Distance education during the pandemic placed high demands on the digital literacy of both teachers and students (Némethová, Stoffová, V. & Stoffová, M., 2022). High demands were also placed on the technical and software equipment of the environment (schools and home) where distance learning took place. Similar requirements applied to digital means of communication, internet connection and their security and reliability (Stoffová & Zboran, 2021).

2 Leisure education

The education of the emerging generation of young people can also be charac-terised as the interaction between the individual and the environment, or be-tween individuals and each other. In professional literature, education is defined as a deliberate, purposeful, formative, organised activity, an action aimed at the development of the personality, its psychological and physical aspects. The result of education is education" (Kratochvílová, 2007, p. 14–15).
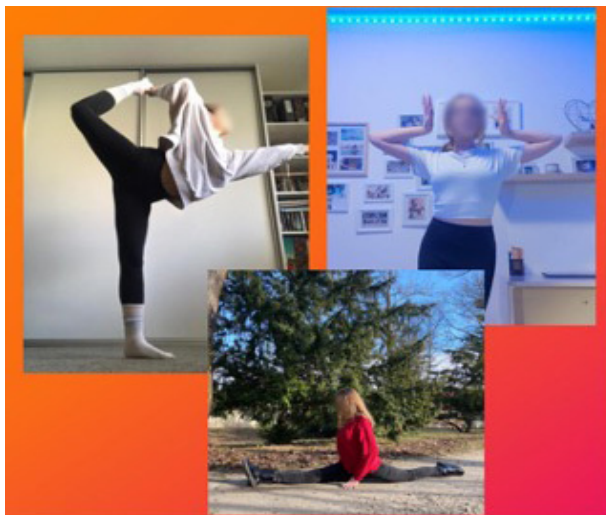
Fig. 1: Photo documentation of training during the COVID 19 pandemic – illustrative photomontage

A large extent was that children and young people have been able to continue and develop their activities they were doing before the ubiquitous threat of the COVID 19 pandemic entered our lives. During pandemic isolation was an issue and addressed in all forums, whether in everyday life, in the print media, in the news on radio or television, or in the daily press or in the workplaces. Ordinary life as we knew it has virtually come to a standstill and ceased to exist. Therefore, during the pandemic, ICT tools became a rewarding alternative, especially in the delivery of information and communication. In the development of new strategies in the organisation of teaching, which contributed to improving the digital literacy of teachers, educators, pupils and parents, and in the development of new strategies and ideas in the leisure activities provided by leisure facilities (Tomšík, Rajčániová, Ferenčíková, & Kopányiová, 2020; Rokos & Vančura, 2020).

3   ICT – one of trendsetters for leisure activities

ICT has also made the resources needed for education and other activities accessible to a wide segment of the population. In the same way, through ICT, children and young people have been able to develop not only their skills or their abilities,

but also their qualities and talents. In a relatively short period of time, ICTs have come to the fore and have found a place in leisure time for slowly every age group, although teenagers and therefore the age group of young people from 15 to about 18 years old use these technologies the most. Recently, and independently of the pandemic, but due to technological developments digital technologies have become more accessible to all people and are increasingly used in everyday activities. The good availability of ICT tools allowed children and youth to continue to develop and engage in almost all the activities they were engaged in before the pandemic. During the whole period of the pandemic, when initially not only pupils were sent out of schools to the home environment, life almost came to a standstill. ICT aids became a grateful and indispensable alternative, even in the development of new trends and strategies in leisure activities. Trends in implementation have been set by ICT in the areas of supporting the development of social moves, skills and ability development, talent development and last but not least, the availability of information needed to develop talents.

## 4 Children's and young people's views from the survey

The survey focused on a specific target group of young people who participate in dance activities at the dance academy. Respondents of the survey were visitors of leisure-time facilities educating in the field of dance training from the Trnava district. The pre-survey probe was carried out by the authors for a forthcoming research on leisure activities and their implementation through the online space. The questionnaire consisted of twenty-one closed, and open-ended questions logically divided into three parts The questionnaire was made available to the respondents in the month of January 2022 through the Google forms platform. The 96 questionnaires were sent to the respondents, the return rate of which was 56,25 %. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire anonymously.

The aim of the pedagogical experiment and questionnaire survey was to find out how the leisure dance activities in distance education were conducted and provided. The questionnaire contained 21 questions which were divided into 4 areas of investigation. In the first area, the questions were oriented to find out the children and youth's opinion about the implementation of online training. Furthermore, the authors wanted to find out what they liked, what they disliked and where they had problems in the implementation of online trainings, the reasons why they participated in online trainings and whether they would participate if

the same situation would occur in the future. Respondents were also asked to suggest activities that they thought should be included in the online trainings. In the questionnaire, the questions were mostly formulated as open-ended questions. We also categorized the respondents by open coding and grouped them based on serial number, gender and age category. From the questions and answers we select. In this paper, we will only address the evaluation of questions related to the age and duration of practicing the aforementioned activities of the respondents, their perception of the positives and negatives of the online implementation of the trainings, as well as their motivation to attend them.

In the next part of article, we evaluated a few select questions and answers from the in filled surveys, which we consider important and interesting for the continuation of online leisure activities in a distance form.

The age distribution of survey participants is shown graphically in fig. 2.
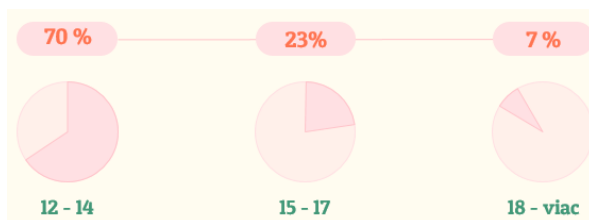
Fig. 2: Age categories of respondents

From the respondents' views, we select responses to three randomly selected questions, where in the first two questions we provide examples of respondents' answers and in the third question we evaluate the question both verbally and graphically. We conclude this section of the paper with a generalization of the survey probe.

What did you like most about the implementation of online dance activities?
R 2, F, 12–14 years old: That I could at least see people online and that I could do what I enjoy despite the pandemics;
R 3, F, 15–17 years old: I liked the most when we discussed classical dance terminology once in an online training session;
R 8, F, 15–17 years old: The fact that I somehow kept moving even during the quarantine;
R 10, F, 12–14 years old: The coaches' efforts to teach us something anyway.

What didn't you like about the online implementation of dance training?
Examples of answers:

R 1, F, 15–17 years old: I didn't like that I had technical problems and not enough space;

R 2, F, 12–14 years old: The fact that we had to do it at home and I didn't always have the opportunity to do a particular exercise because of the space;

R 3, F, 15–17 years old: That when we were learning new steps it was mirrored and we couldn't see the whole figure and it was hard to learn;

R 4, F, 12–14 years old: the choreography was quite difficult to understand because it was choppy for us;

R 12, F, 12–14 years old: Space to dance, not meeting friends;

R 15, F, 15–17 years old: Probably the signal first and the space in the room.

From the responses to the question: **What was your motivation for attending online training?** We select the following examples of responses:

R 1, F, 15–17 years: The fact that I had the opportunity to move, I enjoy dancing a lot and even though I might not really want to go and do something before the training, after the training I feel great that I have done it/overcame.

R 2, F, 12–14 years old: I really wanted to get into the **A** ensemble, and I wanted the coaches to see that I really cared about dance.

R 3, F, 15–17 years old: To move around a bit, to move.

R 4, F, 12–14 years old: I always felt good after and during practice because I really enjoy dancing and it makes me happy.

5, F, 12–14 years old: I liked to see everybody, I like to dance and I wanted to keep fit.

R 6, F, 12–14 years old: I don't stay lazy, I enjoy dancing so I was happy to join in.

How long (in years) have respondents been involved in leisure activities?

Fig. 3: Length of respondents' experience of leisure activities in years

Considering the findings, we can generalize that 47 % of the respondents to the question said that the biggest motivation for them to attend online training was the actual dancing and continuing it. The motivation to move was the biggest motivation for the respondents and 42 %, of the respondents said that they had no motivation and that the only motivation for them was to at least meet their friends in this way.
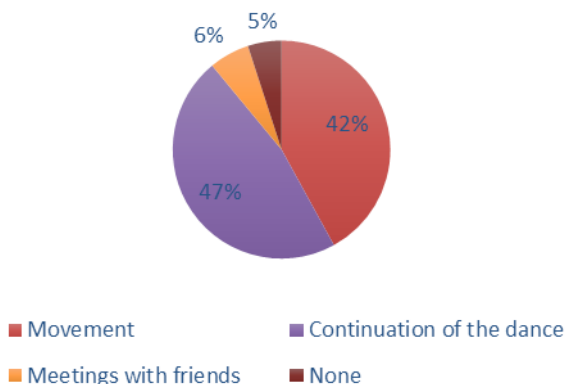
Fig. 4: Respondents' motivation to participate in leisure activities

The results of the survey showed a positive attitude of the respondents towards the distance form of implementation of leisure activities through ICT. The negative side was technical or space problems and limitations. Although the respondents actually preferred the face-to-face form and direct communication in the activities, they also accepted the distance form of their implementation as a certain substitute in limited and restricted conditions.

4 Conclusion

ICT provides some opportunities to implement leisure activities, even in periods when their implementation in person is not possible. Thanks to the introduction of digital technologies and the development of new strategies, space has been created not only to improve the digital literacy of children, but also of their educators. The availability of e-learning materials and portals, ICT resources necessary for children's education in extracurricular activities and for the implementation of

leisure, interest and entertainment activities, can replace the classical face-to-face extracurricular activities. Children and young people can develop their skills, talents, creativity and interests in a variety of areas. They can also develop social contacts in a distance form, albeit to a limited extent, by applying connectivism using various forms of electronic communication.

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7 Literature

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