

E-Learning and Disaffected Preschoolers in the Covid Era: The Greek Teachers' Concerns

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ABSTRACT

Student disaffection, as a social phenomenon, has taken concerning dimensions. Educators and research community have become preoccupied about the increasingly high levels of student 'detachment' from learning, emphasizing the growing complexity of contemporary students' social, emotional and behavioral reactions. This concern on the alarming increase of the disengaged students has been more obvious in the Covid era. The sudden and forced transition from traditional to on-line education has affected students', reactions to learning, since their engagement level depends not only on commonly accepted engagement factors, such as students' cognitive background, emotional state etc., but also on their proficiency in using online tools and the instructors' manner in conducting e-learning activities.

The present research project attempts to cover this contemporary research gap, investigating how the Greek teachers perceive student disaffection during the Covid-19 pandemic. Through one to one, semi-structured interviews based on Creswell's (2008) interview model, with a mixture of open-ended and close-ended questions, we investigate 25 in-service teachers' perceptions on the construct of student disaffection and the frequency, as well, at which the disengaged preschoolers of their class display disaffection manifestations during e-learning.

Based on qualitative and quantitative data analysis, we infer that disaffection is a multifaceted concept, since the disaffected preschoolers display various cognitive, emotional and behavioral reactions to e-learning with indifference and amotivation being core manifestations. Teachers express their concerns indicating that engaging preschoolers in e-learning activities should be considered an undeniable challenge, if we take for granted that engaging young children in the natural and traditional educational context, the class, demands effective teaching efforts and strategies.

Keywords: Covid era, E-learning, Semi-structured interviews, Components & frequency of student disaffection, Teachers' opinion

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