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ENHANCING ICT CURRICULUM FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME IN PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES IN UKRAINE

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The Russian war against Ukraine and the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic have forced the Ukrainian education system to make an urgent transition to distance learning [1]. This has highlighted the urgent need for teachers and students to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) effectively for teaching, communication, and collaboration. Professional education programmes must equip graduates not only to use ICT, but also to integrate it seamlessly into their work [2]. This study focusses on improving the ICT curriculum for a Master's Degree Programme in Professional Education and Computer Technologies in Ukraine to meet the pressing needs of distance education.

ICT skills are essential for living and working in today's digital economy. War and pandemic disruptions underscore the importance of ICT infrastructure and skills to sustain education in the midst of crises. Research shows that the COVID-19 pandemic requires strengthening the ICT components in teacher training programmes to enable continuous learning and rapid transition to online formats. Enforced distance learning technologies must be explored to help institutions cope and maintain quality education despite challenges [3]. Open source and free ICT

solutions should be considered given the financial constraints of Ukrainian schools. Updating ICT curricula based on stakeholder needs can improve graduates' preparedness and employability.

The study used an analysis of the content of research on ICT in education, stakeholder participation in curriculum design, and the impact of compulsory distance learning. A survey of educational stakeholders (principals, teachers, university faculty) identified priority ICTs for inclusion based on common educational technology categories: training, cognitive, problem-based learning, simulation / modelling, gaming, reference. Frequency and content analysis identified key ICTs to be included in the course «Digital Technologies in Professional Activities».

Most of the respondents rated ICT skills as very important for the programme and agreed that curricular ICT should support distance learning. For instructional technologies, Google Forms, Moodle LMS, Nearpod, and Socrative were the most recommended. For cognitive ICT, LearningApps and mind mapping tools were prioritised. Google Classroom, Moodle LMS, and Canvas led the preferences for problem-based learning platforms. The top choices for simulation/modelling included OneNote, Inspiration, Canva, and LearningApps. Nearpod and LearningApps were preferred for game-based tools.

The study led to the inclusion of additional technologies such as Google Classroom, Moodle, Nearpod, LearningApps, and mind mapping tools in the Digital Technologies in Professional Activities course. Improving the curriculum based on stakeholders' ICT priorities will better prepare graduates for forced distance learning situations caused by war and pandemics.

The study surveyed a limited sample of educational stakeholders in one country. A larger international sample could identify additional technologies for inclusion. The revised curriculum has not yet been implemented to assess its impact on actual learning outcomes. Follow-up research should examine the effectiveness in building ICT skills after students have completed the enhanced course.

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