

Online training of youth volunteers for projecting socially significant actions in the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges for the society and created a need for effective volunteer actions. This paper presents a novel online training program for youth volunteers who want to design and implement socially significant projects in the context of the global health crisis. The program is based on the following principles: online dominance, ICT literacy, project-based learning, gerontological and psychotherapeutic knowledge, self-preservation and self-organization skills, emotional and personal support. The program aims to develop a set of volunteer project competences among the participants, such as: problem identification, goal setting, action planning, resource mobilization, teamwork, communication, evaluation, and reflection. The paper describes the content and methods of the program, which include: motivational and organizational techniques, stimulation of project activity, humanistic and interactive approaches. The paper also reports on the experimental testing of the program and the assessment of its effectiveness using the criteria of readiness for volunteer project action. The results show that the program has a positive impact on the participants' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values related to volunteer projects. The paper concludes with some implications and recommendations for further research and practice.

Keywords

online education, volunteer projects, information and communication technologies, project method, crisis management

1. Introduction

The volunteer movement is one of the forms of civic engagement that can contribute to the social well-being and resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic [1]. However, the lockdown measures imposed by the authorities have limited the opportunities for face-to-face volunteer activities and increased the demand for online solutions. According to a survey by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation, more than 80% of Ukrainian citizens reported some impact of the pandemic on their public involvement, and many of them shifted their activities to the Internet [2]. However, compared to the previous years, there was no significant surge

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in volunteerism in Ukraine in 2020s, which can be attributed to various factors, such as: the ongoing war, the state's response to the crisis, the uncertainty and fear caused by the virus, and the information policy regarding COVID-19 [3, 4].

In this context, it is important to explore how youth organizations, which are a key source of volunteer potential, can adapt to the new reality and provide effective assistance to people in need. In particular, it is essential to examine how online education can be used to train and prepare young volunteers for designing and implementing socially significant projects that address the challenges posed by the pandemic. Online education has been widely adopted as a response to the lockdown [5, 6], but its effectiveness depends on various factors, such as: the content, methods, tools, and outcomes of the educational process. Moreover, online education can have an impact not only on the cognitive and professional development of learners, but also on their personal and social development, which are crucial for volunteerism [7].

However, there is a lack of research on the theoretical and practical aspects of online education for youth volunteers in Ukraine. Specifically, there is a gap in the literature on how to design and deliver online courses that aim to develop volunteer project competences among young people. These competences include: identifying social problems, setting goals, planning actions, mobilizing resources, working in teams, communicating effectively, evaluating results, and reflecting on experiences. Furthermore, there is a need for empirical evidence on how such online courses can affect the readiness and willingness of young volunteers to engage in project-based volunteer activities during the pandemic. Therefore, this paper aims to fill this gap by presenting a novel online training program for youth volunteers who want to create and implement volunteer projects that help people cope with the COVID-19 crisis. The paper also reports on the experimental testing of the program and its outcomes.

2. Related work and literature review

Volunteerism is a form of civic engagement that can have positive impacts on the society, especially in times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. However, volunteer activities require adequate preparation and training, which can be challenging in the context of lockdown and social distancing. Therefore, online education can be a viable alternative to provide young volunteers with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values for designing and implementing socially significant projects that address the needs and problems of people affected by the pandemic.

In this section, we review some of the relevant literature on volunteer projects and online education. We first discuss some of the psychological and pedagogical principles and recommendations for fighting the coronavirus infection and providing volunteer assistance to people in need. We then examine some of the theoretical and methodological approaches to social projecting and project-based learning. We also explore some of the information and communication technologies (ICT) that can be used to support online education and volunteer activities. Finally, we identify some of the challenges and opportunities of online education for youth volunteers in Ukraine.

2.1. Psychological and pedagogical aspects of volunteerism during the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges for the society and created a need for effective volunteer actions. However, volunteer work during the pandemic requires not only practical skills and knowledge, but also psychological preparedness and resilience. Therefore, it is important to provide young volunteers with psychological and pedagogical guidance and support that can help them cope with the stress, fear, anxiety, and uncertainty caused by the virus [8].

One of the sources that addresses this issue is the online manual “Psychology and Pedagogy in Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic” [9], which provides a comprehensive overview of the psychological and pedagogical aspects of fighting the coronavirus infection. The manual covers topics such as: psychological characteristics of different age groups during the pandemic; psychological effects of quarantine and isolation; psychological support for people with COVID-19; prevention and overcoming of panic, depression, aggression, and addiction; development of self-regulation, self-care, self-organization, and self-education skills; promotion of health culture and healthy lifestyle; formation of civic responsibility and solidarity; organization of distance learning and online communication; etc.

Another source that offers some useful insights for volunteer work during the pandemic is Kabysh-Rybalka [10], who formulated some psychological principles and rules for safe and effective behavior in the lockdown. These include: maintaining a positive attitude; avoiding excessive exposure to negative information; seeking reliable sources of information; following hygiene recommendations; keeping a regular routine; engaging in physical activity; maintaining social contacts; seeking professional help if needed; etc.

These sources provide valuable information and advice for young volunteers who want to help people during the pandemic. However, they do not address specifically how to design and implement volunteer projects that are relevant and meaningful for the target groups. Therefore, we need to explore some other sources that deal with social projecting and project-based learning.

2.2. Social projecting and project-based learning

Social projecting is a form of social activity that aims to solve or improve a certain social problem or situation by applying scientific knowledge, creative thinking, teamwork, communication, planning, evaluation, etc. [11, 12]. Social projecting can be seen as a way of implementing social innovations that bring positive changes to the society [13]. Social projecting can also be used as a method of learning that engages learners in authentic tasks that are relevant to their interests, needs, values, etc. [14].

Project-based learning (PBL) is an instructional approach that involves students in designing, conducting, presenting, and reflecting on projects that address real-world problems or questions [15]. PBL can foster students’ motivation, engagement, cognitive, social, and emotional skills, such as: critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, collaboration, communication, self-regulation, etc. [16]. PBL can also enhance students’ interest and achievement in various subjects, such as: science, technology, engineering, mathematics, arts, humanities, etc. [17].

PBL can be applied to various educational contexts and levels, including online education and youth organizations. In particular, PBL can be used to train and prepare young volunteers for designing and implementing volunteer projects that are socially significant and relevant for the pandemic situation. Volunteer projects can be seen as a specific type of social projects that aim to help people in need or improve the quality of life in the society. Volunteer projects can also be seen as a form of experiential learning that involves young volunteers in meaningful and authentic activities that foster their personal and social development [18].

However, volunteer projects require a set of competences that enable young volunteers to identify, plan, execute, evaluate, and reflect on their actions. These competences include: problem identification, goal setting, action planning, resource mobilization, teamwork, communication, evaluation, and reflection. Therefore, online education for youth volunteers should aim to develop these competences through appropriate content and methods. In the next section, we review some of the ICT tools that can support online education and volunteer projects.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Background information on the work of youth territorial clubs Falcons before and at the outbreak of the pandemic

The network of youth territorial clubs Falcons (hereinafter clubs Falcons) began operating in 2015 as a statutory activity of the public organization Love. The clubs were set up in many schools in a number of regions of Ukraine.

The main goal of the youth territorial clubs Falcons is the promotion of spiritual and patriotic education of adolescents and youth by means of various educational programs (e.g., the Cossack Magazine and The Pages of Eternal Stories programs). The main values that are fostered in the “falcons” include faith in God, love for Ukraine and respect for its history, language, and culture, brotherhood and sisterhood, high motivation for social work in the community, purity of body, soul and intersex relations, respect for the elderly, mercy for the needy, and patience for the little ones. The club members’ leading activity is planning, organizing and conducting social projects during the year. Before the pandemic, the results of the work were presented and evaluated in the form of a team competition at the annual Falcon Games, where the winners were determined and future projects were presented to apply for a grant. During the summer, club members were involved in holding summer camps for young local community members, during which the “falcons” developed such important character traits as purposefulness, resilience, leadership, responsibility, and communication. In July, the most active club member took part in a summer falconry camp, where they could continue their patriotic, civic and spiritual training.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed serious challenges to the Falcons clubs. The letter of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine of April 4, 2020 “On the organization of the educational process in out-of-school educational institutions during the lockdown” recommended to develop measures for partial use of telework and, if possible, for conducting educational classes, including, hobby groups, by means of online technologies [19].

Until March 2020, social projecting was part of weekly meetings of club members with their leaders or mentors. The clubs’ work was built on the close cooperation between the falcons, as well as with the administrations and students of educational institutions, and the residents of

territorial communities. However, in mid-March 2020, after the imposed lockdown, the activities of the Falcons clubs stopped. The lockdown was felt by absolutely all public organizations. As a matter of urgency, most organizations that focused on direct contact with the population had to limit their activities.

Members of the Love NGO immediately refocused on the volunteer movement. Thus, during March-April 2020, a pilot project Second Wing – Food Delivery as part of the local volunteer initiative Do Not Be Indifferent was launched to deliver food and medicines to the elderly who are at risk of COVID-19 in the town of Irpin. Under this project, more than 100 families were visited by the Falcons club members. In addition to delivering food and medicines, the falcons had short talks with care-receivers on the basic safety rules to reduce the risk of infection. Besides, the elderly were given religious support by pastors of the local Christian community. As part of the Second Wing project, in May 2020, young people from the Kyiv-city Falcons club visited a social hostel for graduates of a specialized boarding school for visually impaired children. The hostel residents were given material (food and antiseptics) and psychological assistance (friendly communication and answers to the questions about safe life in crisis conditions).

Unfortunately, the morbidity rate in Ukraine did not improved, it even worsened, which required better project activities of club members as volunteers and their greater competence in this matter.

3.2. The 2020 Falcons club's Zoom-based project, The Camp Maker

This project was created in order to develop club members' project activity experience. After all summer events were canceled in the spring of 2020 due to the spread of COVID-19, club members were invited to take part in a special project.

The management of Love NGO chose a convenient and easy-to-use Zoom platform to develop, organize and implement The Camp Maker project, which was aimed at involving club members in planning the activities of a day-camp, which has become traditional in recent years. While previously the falcons had been active participants and helpers in day-camps, that time they were invited to author the event program made up of the camp mission, planned activities, their schedule, team organization, etc.

All participants were divided into three large teams. Each team had two weeks to prepare and present a special project to the judges. There were three such projects, so the team-members worked together for 6 weeks. The teams had to prepare:

1. *The camp's business card.* This task included group work on the name, advertisement, logo, and the general concept of the future camp. It was also important to substantiate the choice.
2. *The camp's organization.* This task included counselor work schedule, a daily routine, and an event plan.
3. *The camp case.* The teams had to prepare a draft advertising campaign in the local community, the list of necessary equipment and materials for various clubs (stations), and a camp estimate.

During two weeks, team members met on the Zoom platform to work together. Each team was given a free hand in choosing a teamwork format. Some teams preferred group-work,

others were divided into threes to perform different portions of the task, while still others chose leaders to lead the work. Once a week, online meetings of all campers were held for general communication, data exchange, and interim reports.

The best project received a grant in accordance with the camp's budget, and its authors were given an opportunity to organize a similar camp in the future. The Zoom platform has proven itself effective in this work.

The results of the Falcons club's project activities allowed determining certain advantages of distance training compared to the traditional training. These advantages included trainees' high viral safety through individual and/or mixed work, a higher level of trainees' activity in solving tasks, better opportunities for trainees' mastering new technologies, a better opportunity to unify falcons from different clubs and regions of Ukraine, a good way to bypass direct personal contact restrictions, and a higher level of club members' psychological comfort.

3.3. The theoretical basis for solving the problem under consideration

The following definitions have been proposed based on the following scientific principle: the character of a particular activity is the basis for understanding the content of individuals' training and readiness for it. In our case, we first analyzed the character of pandemic-specific volunteerism, the structure of social projecting, and the online trainers' activities. Besides, Dyachenko and Kandybovich [20] considered individuals' psychological readiness, both general and situational, for an activity as a unity of individuals' motivational, cognitive and emotional characteristics.

Youth club members' online training in projecting volunteer activities during the COVID-19 pandemic is a holistic educational process carried out under the guidance of a distance counselor by means of special tools (Zoom, Moodle, Google Classroom, Google Docs, etc.). The main aim of this training is the development of trainees' readiness to create and implement socially significant projects to help people in avoiding a viral disease.

The appropriate readiness, which includes moral, psychological and practical components, is a complex quality of a young person and an indicator of his/her ability to mobilize their vital and axiological potentials and self-create (self-educate) for spiritual and moral purposes in order to act adequately in the pandemic.

The volunteers' holistic practical readiness to create a socially significant project in the pandemic is provided by their basic project competencies, which include: the ability to develop a logical organizational structure of the volunteer project; the ability to take the initiative and generate innovative ideas to help people during the pandemic; the ability to generate humanistic volunteer projects; the ability to develop a project based on the information about survival rate and economic downturn of people at risk; the ability to provide develop projects to help the community members adapt to the pandemic restriction; the ability to use different work forms, methods and means to get the best results from the volunteer efforts; the ability to find the necessary project resources and to plan and supervise the project's implementation.

Trainees' volunteer project-making readiness can be developed using the systemic, synergetic, axiological, competence, andragogical, personality, activity, and phenomenological approaches.

Theoretical and methodological analysis and synthesis allowed formulating the following principles of online development of youth club members' readiness for volunteer activities

projecting during the COVID-19 pandemic: online motivation of young people for creating socially significant volunteer projects; the focus of young volunteers' online education on communication technologies, project method, gerontopsychology, psychotherapy, psychohygiene, creativity, health culture and willingness to volunteer during the pandemic; the regular update of the content of volunteers' online education by new information on personal self-preservation and on panic, fear and anxiety management; the well-balanced analyses of volunteers' experience in projecting programs to help children with disabilities, the elderly and people infected with coronavirus; provision of personal online support for the youth club members' volunteer activities projecting.

Based on the above-mentioned principles, we have developed a 36-hour-long online training course called "Volunteer Activities Project as a Response to the Pandemic" made up of the following modules:

1. Personal meaning of projects to help people during the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. Essential minimum knowledge as values and means of development of volunteer activities projects;
3. A volunteer as a people's mental health harmonizer and an anxiety-/fear-management counselor during the COVID-19 pandemic;
4. Projecting volunteer assistance for the elderly and children with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic;
5. Medical and psychological support for projecting serious COVID-19-patients care programs.

The content of the first module is aimed at developing young people's motivation for projecting volunteer activities during the pandemic. Trainees' online volunteer activities projecting motivation using special techniques is the transformation of trainees' knowledge about the terrible consequences of coronavirus infection and ways and means of helping people into the trainees' personal values and as a result the development of the trainees' personal meanings and aims of appropriate volunteer projects.

The topics of the second module have been selected according to the importance of specific knowledge for quality projects to fight the pandemic. The second-module topics include: "The main competencies of a volunteer as an assistant to people during the lockdown", "The essence of social projects; the project method and its use in volunteerism", "Psychological support for volunteers during the lockdown", "Basic theoretical knowledge in valeology, gerontology and gerontopsychology", "The leading principles of sanitary and hygienic science, psychotherapy and psychohygiene", "Essential characteristics of volunteers' distance learning in the pandemic", "Basic volunteers' self-education and self-development technologies".

The third module aims at developing trainees' skills to control their own psycho-emotional state and to teach children and adults to preserve and harmonize their mental health as well as manage their pandemic-related anxiety and fear. The module trains volunteers to online-teach children and adults to distract from anxious thoughts using exercise, physical activity, and/or developing their sense of beauty/aesthetic taste. Optionally, volunteers can master special psycho-emotional management and resilience development techniques.

The fourth and fifth modules should develop club members' pandemic-specific volunteer activity readiness. This readiness includes club-members':

- 1) help to care-receivers' in their safe satisfaction of their needs, such as:
 - a) timely and trouble-free reception of pension;
 - b) reception of food, medicine and hygiene products from supermarkets and pharmacies;
 - c) direct, in particular, online contacts with family doctors, relatives and friends;
 - d) doing hard household work;
 - e) raising the general culture by online means, etc.;
- 2) ability to provide safe medical assistance to people who are self-isolated at home with a serious form of COVID-19 infection;
- 3) ability to attend to children with special needs, in particular, visually impaired children.

The methodology of the special online training used the following person-oriented and emotion-developing techniques: a special interactive lecture, emotionally-colored information (about the dangers of coronavirus infection, essentials of the technology of personal self-development, etc finding the personal meaning of specific volunteer activities; person-oriented approach to the educational material; development of trainees' positive attitudes towards volunteer activities (positive feelings towards quality projects, knowledge of their own moral, emotional and physical potentials, willingness to help people, self-education and self-development, etc.); trainer-trainee cooperation in creating bright images-standards of youth readiness for volunteer activity; infecting trainees with positive emotions when assessing their academic progress.

The online training project method has been updated to include volunteer project development exercises. The volunteer project activity development techniques included special online situations of spiritual and moral choice, group discussions, lockdown-specific volunteer project competition, cognitive and assessment games, online classes conducted by counselors and practitioners (psychologists, teachers, psychotherapists, epidemiologists, pediatric ophthalmologists, etc.).

3.4. Experimental verification of the effectiveness of the special training course "Volunteer Activities Project as a Response to the Pandemic"

The special online training course was tested for effectiveness at youth territorial clubs Falcons (Kyiv, Kharkiv, Rivne, Vasylkiv, Gostomel, and Skvira). The sample included 72 trainees who had some experience in volunteer educational and/or social work.

The club members were offered special literature on social projects and had to carry out a set of tasks to develop relevant project competencies. The trainees' self-educational and self-development activity was in line with their project work, in particular, the online project "The Social Project Maker", which was two months long (with general, team and individual meetings three times a week) and used the ZOOM platform. The trainees developed different components of the integrated social project launching competence. This required the trainers to be creative lecturers and discussion moderators as well as encouragers of trainees' innovative ideas. The trainers listened to and initiated discussions of the trainees' reports on volunteer activity projects, interviewed the trainees and gave them creative tasks, combined person-oriented lectures with case-studies on volunteer activity projects.

For example, D. G. Gryshchuk, besides giving open lectures called "Basic competencies of a volunteer as an assistance to people during the pandemic" and "The essence of social projects,

the project method and its use in volunteerism”, etc.), shared his rich practical experience of running successful volunteer projects, such as “The mission of service to children is to help orphans” (Donetsk region, 2004–2006), “Good House” (Donetsk, 2011–2013), and “Second Wing – help migrants” (Ukraine, 2014–2015). Other trainers and instructors of the Falcons club and the Love NGO also shared their experience in increasing volunteers’ community activities and in changing social values of volunteering into personal values. During the discussions, the trainees most often asked questions about the motivational component of volunteering, the psychological, psychotherapeutic and medical care to certain groups of the population. Often, such questions were answered by the invited specialists (epidemiologists, psychologists, psychotherapists and others).

It should be noted that the Vasylykiv Falcons Club (Kyiv region) and the Kyiv Falcons Club were the winners of the 2018 and 2019 Falcons Games, respectively, in the Best Social Project nomination. At the initial stage of the online training, only one of the three draft projects submitted for evaluation was based on the pandemic-relevant sanitary standards, but none of them contained a clear analysis of the sanitary-epidemiological situation in the neighborhood as a factor behind volunteerism to help those at risk from the pandemic.

Some of the tasks the members of the experiment had to carry out were aimed at developing collective projects. The most conceptually interesting individual volunteer projects were those related to the psychological and material support for the families of the deceased, the assessment of urgent needs of and the delivery of food, medicine and hygiene products to people with disabilities. At the project presentation stage, one of the Falcons teams stressed the importance of a free course to teach the elderly to make online utility payments, make online drug orders, top up cell phones online, and communicate with family members online. Another project team presented several online courses adapted for learning at home, city libraries and/or social centers. One winning project used a special program of communication with social services and local library administration. Another winning project, called SuperSTAR, estimated the purchasing of four computers and special programs to improve online learning. The project, which proved to be effective, was run for two months, and helped 30 elderly people to develop their basic Internet skills.

The You are Not Alone project presented to the contest featured a fundraising program made up of a number of special events (presentations, motivational videos, printed materials) to raise money for hospitals and specialized social institutions (rest homes, hospices, boarding schools, psycho-neurological clinics, etc.). The raised money was meant for buying oxygen concentrators to help people with coronavirus. This project also was aimed at providing targeted assistance to people who stayed at home through the purchase and delivery of food and medicines, and walking pets, etc.

At one of the video conferences, the participants of the online training noted the benefits of the information on mental health preservation during the COVID-19 pandemic and anxiety- and fear-management techniques [21, 22]. The trainees also stressed that their knowledge of the sanitary and hygienic principles and the essentials of psychotherapy and psychohygiene improved their project competencies.

Although online training had a number of advantages, it was not devoid of certain shortcomings, which were:

- low level of psychological comfort because of inadequate audio and/or visual perception of other team-members during online team work. Almost every second project participant felt uncomfortable, tired, and irritated after 40 minutes of online communication as a result of poor lighting, technical failures, and inability to see and/or hear other team-members.
- difficulties in moderating a large number of participants in online discussions, brainstorming and other organizational activities. For example, the ZOOM platform does not allow seeing more than 25 people on a single screen, which makes it difficult to respond promptly to the conference participants' remarks and questions, which lowers the quality of heuristic learning. The situation with smartphones is even worse as they fit no more than four conference participants into the screen.

The experiment participants' volunteer activity projects were assessed according to: the degree of the projects' humanistic orientation (focus on satisfying the needs of the most vulnerable community residents), the projects' general concept (the way volunteerism is visioned during the pandemic), the scientific substantiation of the proposed volunteer actions (i.e basing the lockdown-specific volunteer activities on the relevant principles of psychology, psychotherapy, valeology, gerontology, and gerontopsychology; the project teams' ability to build their work with children with special needs on the principles of medicine and pedagogy, etc.); the projects' technological character (a clear description of the stages, content, forms, methods, means, and algorithm of volunteers' social activities); the projects' logical structure (definition of the problem(s) to be solved by the volunteer project; presentation of the ideas about the long-term outcome of the project; setting specific goals and objectives for the near future; description of volunteer services to meet the requirements of people from risk groups, people with special needs and COVID-19 patients; description of the projects' resources; the projects' schedule: the terms of and persons responsible for the realization of each project task; youth club management's control over volunteers' actions); the projects' realism (compliance of the projects' financial, staff and material resources with the possibilities of the youth organization; the projects' sensitivity to the peculiarities of the regional social environment).

The evaluation of the projects presented by the youth club members allowed determining the levels of their readiness to run volunteer activities projects during the pandemic, which were high, sufficient and low, before and after their attending the special online course (see table 1).

Table 1

Distribution of experiment participants by their readiness to project volunteer activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Readiness levels	% of volunteers before the experiment	% of volunteers after the experiment
Low	59.7	12.5
Sufficient	37.5	76.4
High	2.8	11.1

As can be seen from the table, the training course increased the total number of volunteers with sufficient and high levels of readiness to run volunteer projects during the lockdown by 47.2%, in particular, the number of those with high readiness increased by 8.3%, while the number of those with low readiness decreased by 47.2%.

The obtained results show that the Love club volunteers have well-developed project competencies and can run high-quality social projects in crisis situations. All the experiment participants became deeply aware of their volunteer assistance's role in helping their community residents in the lockdown, which was demonstrated by their strong training and project-making motivation. In particular, the vast majority of trainees (54 people) developed the ability to set social projects' goals and objectives and determine their organizational structures for at-risk groups. 57 club members (79.1% of the total number of trainees) in their volunteer programs demonstrated knowledge of ways to provide practical assistance to the elderly, children with special needs, and COVID-19 patients.

The trainees had difficulties in generating original conceptual ideas for their pandemic-specific volunteer activities, in developing online/telephone methods for maintaining the mental health of retired people and children with special needs as well as in describing the psychological and sanitary support given online or over the telephone to COVID-19 patients in self-isolation.

4. Conclusions

In this paper, we presented a novel online training program for youth volunteers who want to design and implement socially significant projects in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is based on the following principles: online dominance, ICT literacy, project-based learning, gerontological and psychotherapeutic knowledge, self-preservation and self-organization skills, emotional and personal support. The program aims to develop a set of volunteer project competences among the participants, such as: problem identification, goal setting, action planning, resource mobilization, teamwork, communication, evaluation, and reflection. The paper also reported on the experimental testing of the program and the assessment of its effectiveness using the criteria of readiness for volunteer project action. The results showed that the program had a positive impact on the participants' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values related to volunteer projects.

Based on our findings, we can draw the following conclusions:

1. Online education for youth volunteers during the pandemic is a unique and important social phenomenon and a mechanism of supporting volunteerism, which can contribute to the fight against the pandemic. Under certain conditions, online education can enhance the social mobility and engagement of young volunteers by increasing their willingness and readiness to help people in difficult situations.
2. Online education for youth volunteers during the pandemic is effective if: 1) both learners and instructors are proficient in using ICT tools for educational purposes; 2) there are sufficient resources and infrastructure for conducting quality online sessions; 3) the content of online education is based on scientific principles and recommendations for preparing volunteers for work under lockdown restrictions and promoting the safety and well-being of people at risk.
3. The outcomes of online education for youth volunteers during the pandemic can have implications for: a) advancing scientific knowledge about the features and methods of social projecting and training young people in project management under crisis circumstances; b) improving online education practices and policies (in the context of youth organization

members' training); c) forecasting educational trends and challenges in unfavorable social conditions.

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