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**Lucie Zormanová**

Poland

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8004-8674>

## **Students' Motives for Attending E-Learning Master's Degree Courses**

### **Abstract**

This paper presents the results of a research study on the motives of students to study in the distance learning form at the University of Humanities and Economics in Lodz. The research was carried out using the method of semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted among students of the first year of the follow-up Master's degree in Pedagogy. The research was carried out in the years 2016–2019, in this period three stages of research were realised. The research group consisted of 20 students who had work and family responsibilities and were between 35 and 48 years old. In addition, respondents already had previous experience in combined and full-time studies. The interviews were recorded on a mobile phone and lasted about 40 minutes each. Data were analysed using open coding procedures. The goal of open coding was to thematically divide the analysed text. The analysed interviews were divided into units, which sometimes meant words, and sometimes sentences or paragraphs set according to their meaning, so the unit consisted of a semantic unit. A code has been assigned to each specified unit. Once the code list was created, we started to categorise data

**Key words:** distance education, University of Humanities and Economics in Lodz, semi-structured interviews, motive

## Introduction

Distance education become more and more common in our society. It can be said that distance learning is an integral part of education of these days (Kiryakova, 2009).

Based on some of the already conducted research, this form of study has a lot of advantages. Distance education is a more flexible form of study as compared with the traditional one (Kiryakova, 2009), which influences positively the balancing of family, work and study obligations (Zormanová, 2017). Among the assets of distance learning we can also consider reducing inequalities – this form of study overcomes some limitations for certain groups, such as elderly people, persons with disabilities, people from different social, cultural and economical groups (Kiryakova, 2009). Distance education is economically more efficient, because numerous learners can take part in distance learning courses (Kiryakova, 2009). It has its own pedagogical merit, too. For the benefit of distance learning we can also consider leading to different ways of conceiving knowledge generation (UNESCO, 2002). It has been concluded in research that distance education has a positive influence on performance in terms of knowledge acquisition (Leszczyński, Gotlib, Kopański, Wejnarski, Świeżewski, & Gałązkowski, 2015). Another conclusion is that distance education has a positive influence on teacher's interaction with students (distance education also can increase interaction among and between the students), especially in the case of introverted learners (Frankli, Yoakam, & Warren, 1996).

The preference for distance learning expressed by students is a largely because of effectiveness of distance education together with factors contributing the flexible balancing of time, place, and work obligations (Alam, Waqar, Zaman, Shehzadi, & Mehmood, 2012).

## Students' Motivation in Distance Education

Motivation is necessary for attaining success in anything. Students who are fully motivated will overcome barriers, find ways of improving skills and study successful with very little extra external support (Simpson, 2008).

Psychologist suggest different ways of thinking about motivation, including one that created two standard types of motivation – extrinsic motivation, which

arises from the outside, and intrinsic motivation, which arises from the inside (Lepper, Greene, & Nisbett, 1973).

Also, a number of theories was created which concern learning motivation of possible interest to open and distance learning educators (Simpson, 2008), for example: the Self-determination Theory (Aelterman, Vansteenkiste, & Haerens, 2019), Epistemological Identity Theory (Mansel, Greene, & DeBacker, 2004), Achievement Goal Theory (Skaalvik, 2004), Self-perceived Competence Theory (Pajares, 2004), Self-concordance Model (Kasser & Ryan, 2001).

## **Organisation of Distance Learning at AHE (The University of Humanities and Economics in Lodz)**

AHE (The University of Humanities and Economics) operates distance learning of Bachelor's degree programmes, Master's degree programmes and lifelong learning courses. Apart from its headquarters in Łódź, AHE also has a number of branches located in the following cities: Jasło, Trzcianka, Warsaw, Wodzisław Śląski, Sieradz, and Świdnica.

Teaching is organised as three meetings of students with teachers at the university during the semester, together with teaching in an online environment.

The physical meetings have the following purpose. During the first, so-called introductory meeting, the students learn the requirements for successful completion of the course. The purpose of the second meeting, the so-called midterm meeting, is to remotivate students and solve learning problems. The third meeting, the final one, is done for the purpose of course evaluation.

Distance learning takes place in an online environment that works 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. In the online environment, there are didactic materials to study: distance learning materials are both textual and audio-visual ones, and they include textbooks written specifically for distance learning; the digital environment also includes discussion boards and chats. Inside the environment, there is the possibility of measuring one's knowledge and continuous or summative evaluation of students by means of ongoing tasks, seminar papers, tests and quizzes.

## Research Methodology

The research was carried out in order to improve the ongoing distance study and to increase students' motivation to study. If we better understand students and their motivation to study, we can tailor the learning environment to suit their needs.

In order to discover the motives of students to study in this form at the University of Humanities and Economics, we conducted a research in 2016–2019, each time examining students of the first year of the follow-up Master's degree programme. During the said period three phases of the research were realised.

The first phase of the research was realised in the academic year 2016/2017. The fear of insufficient theoretical saturation caused the need for data acquisition. The results of the analyses carried out at this stage of the research are elaborated upon in Zormanová (2017).

The second phase of the research was carried out in the academic year 2017/2018. The fear of insufficient theoretical saturation once again prompted the need for data acquisition. The results of the analyses carried out at this stage of the research are elaborated upon in Zormanová (2018).

The third phase of the research was carried out in the academic year 2018/2019. The aim of this stage was to obtain data from a larger number of respondents, which ensured saturation and comparison of loose student testimonies.

Table 1  
*Number of respondents during each phase of the research*

Phase of the research	No. of respondents
First	10
Second	15
Third	20

Source: Own work

The research group consisted of 20 students who had work and family responsibilities and were between 35 and 48 years of age. In addition, respondents already had had previous experience in combined and full-time studies. The respondents were employed in various fields, such as: police, human resources, banking, consulting, healthcare, higher education, government.

From the research goal, the following research question arises: *What are the motives of respondents to study at the university?*

The main method of data collection was in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The first contact with the respondents was initiated via e-mail, in which they were informed about the purpose of the research and the topic of the interview, and later on, the date of the meeting was arranged. At the beginning of the meeting, the informants were acquainted with the research in more detail, anonymity was agreed upon and consent regarding the recording and subsequent processing of the interview for research was obtained. The interviews were recorded on a mobile phone and lasted about 40 minutes each. I also used online interviews via electronic communication to collect and refine/ data in some cases. All data were digitised to be archived on a computer and continuously analysed using the ATLAS.ti computer program.

The used analytical procedures were based on open coding. The goal of open coding was to thematically divide the analysed text. The analysed interviews were divided into units, which sometimes meant words, and sometimes sentences or paragraphs set according to their meaning, so the unit consisted of a semantic unit. A code has been assigned to each specified unit. Once the code list was created, we started to categorise data

A card laying technique was chosen to evaluate each category, based on which the text was compiled in such a way that it was a retelling of the contents of each category.

## **Research Results**

### **Students' motivation to undertake studies**

Given the wide diversity of respondents in terms of their professional careers, the motivating factors to undertake studies also varied greatly. The respondents worked in various fields, such as: police, human resources, banking, consulting, healthcare, higher education, and government.

During the research I identified eight categories of motivational factors:

- career advancement,
- need for continued education,
- need for a university degree,
- change of employer,
- change of professional field,
- finding a better employment,
- studying as activity productive use of free time,
- motivation from other people.

I will describe and explain individual motivational factors on specific examples.

### **Career advancement**

This motivational factor appeared in our research in connection with the prevailing external motivation to study, when the respondent is motivated to study by the employer. Respondents are frequently motivated by the employer's promise of career advancement.

At the same time, a low internal motivation to study was found for these respondents; they feel that they study not because they want to or are interested in the given field of study, but because they need to get a Master's degree. In the testimonies, there are references to the need to obtain a Master's degree, not to acquire the necessary knowledge, and skills in the course of the studies. These students also do not talk much about their field, rather they mention the need to obtain a Master's degree, a diploma that will lead them to career advancement. The main goal for these respondents is career advancement, a more lucrative job, not graduation in a particular field and the related acquisition of new knowledge, information, skills, and increased professional competences.

Above all, this motivational factor was observed in Respondent A, who started studying at AHE and MBA at VSB in Ostrava (Master of Business Administration) concurrently in February of 2018. It resulted from the pressure from the employer, who offered him a better job and better pay if he obtain an MBA title and finish a university. As the respondent in question reported: [...] *my motivation to study is the possibility to widen my chances on the job market and especially the career advancement in my current job* (Respondent A).

This motivational factor was also observed in the respondent who works at OKD (Ostrava-Karviná coal mining) as a white-collar worker and realises that there are more lucrative jobs in OKD that he might try securing if he finishes his Master's degree.

*I found out that many of the interesting jobs for me are conditioned by a completed second level of higher education. This is not to say that I think that graduation will provide me with a lucrative job right away, but with it, I can at least apply for it. Without a Master's degree, I am not even able to take part in the selection procedure for any of those interesting positions.*

Respondent B

### **Need for continued education**

This motivational factor is popular among respondents who have to continue their education due to their profession. Continued education is part of their job

position. They are respondents who work in civil service at clerical positions, at the police or as academic teachers.

*When taking education in general, then I study constantly. In my field of work, I see it as a must. People must constantly educate themselves, to keep up with the times and competition.*

Respondent C

*During my studies, I also keep myself in "good shape" when it comes to knowledge, which is very positive. Only a trained brain will stay in the labour market because the world is developing faster, the labour market is more dynamic, demands keep changing, and one has to keep up to be competitive. One needs to constantly learn. There are new technologies, new processes, production... Another motive for my continued education was to share information on news and trends in andragogy. This is a great asset for me, and for my work, and it's one of the main reasons I decided to study the subject at all.*

Respondent Q

### **Need for a university degree**

Although this motivational factor is also present in the respondents of the two previous categories, who study because of the fact that their job requires a Master's degree, or the respondent is promised to get a better paid and more prestigious job if they graduate, only Respondents E and Respondent G named this motivational factor directly.

Respondent E, working as a psychotherapist and coach, perceives her studies as necessary for her profession. She realises that she needs to get a formal education, a degree that will help her improve her position in the labour market, and be successful in the field of her work.

*Mainly the degree. I need formal education for my job and profession, and to be able to move forward. My goal is to do what I enjoy doing and what I am good at, and earn money doing it; this requires experience, practise and also formal education.*

Respondent E

Respondent G works at clerical position in government and is aware of the importance of a Master's degree in view of her potential career advancement and salary increase. She says that in the state administration it is not as important what

one studies or has studied, but rather just holding a degree, getting a diploma. In her statement, she mentions that many people in her field and with the same employer study “any discipline” only to have the necessary “paper” that will open another door for their further career advancement.

*For me personally, formal education is very important and I care about completing university studies successfully. The Bachelor degree is fine and has opened many [previously] closed doors [for me]. In the case of charted salaries, I got a little extra pay compared to graduates from secondary school. At the same time, however, I feel that it is only a halfway and Master's degree is my goal. I do not know whether it is my feeling or a fact that in the area where I am active professionally, the Master's degree is the lowest needed to be taken seriously. Maybe it's not really the case, and only I feel like this. Anyhow, it is very important to me to complete the postgraduate level of university studies. My notion is that I will then be done and at peace in terms of formal study and letters around the name*

Respondent G

### **Change of employer**

This motivational factor appeared in our research in relation to career growth, the possibility of getting a better, more prestigious and better-paid job that these respondents could hold with another employer if they completed their Master's degree.

*I want to expand my knowledge in the field. The aim is to complete the postgraduate level of university education and have a complete university education. I do not consider a Bachelor degree as anything special. In the event of a job change, I consider the university degree to be necessary. For me, the motivation is my family and the opening career growth, as well as a change of my current job.*

Respondent F

### **Change of professional field**

This motivational factor appeared in our research in connection with the interest in studying at a university in a given field of study. The following are the respondents who found that after several years of employment, their graduated field of study was no longer fulfilling and they began to be interested in pedagogy.

*I identified my first educational need in self-reflection at the age of 18 when I was a men's tailor and worked in clothing production. During the*



*first year of employment, I realised that this is not the work and stereotype I want to experience long-term and the idea that it would look like this until the end of my life really scared me so much that I decided to do something about it. If I didn't want to do this all my life, I'd have to go back to school. I knew I wouldn't move forward without another school. So I went and I have been studying something ever since.*

Respondent G

Frequently, these respondents have decided to change the field of study in relation to a life change, such as the birth of a child, taking up maternity leave. This motivation factor was also true for Respondent D. She was on maternity leave in the time of the research. She had been a nurse before it, practising this profession for several years until she took the parental leave but she had felt that her job was not fulfilling, and she had also realised that it would have been complicated to reconcile the work of a hospital nurse in a three-shift operation with her motherly responsibilities.

*Primarily, I wanted to completely change my field of work. I work in healthcare, but I felt like I wanted to do something completely different.*

Respondent D

While on her maternal leave, the respondent started to think about a new way of self-actualisation and realised she wanted to work as a career counsellor. This student says that her motive to study “is above all, the prospect of finding a new job after [her] studies, which I hope will be more fulfilling.”

This motivational factor was also recognised in three respondents who are currently working in the Czech Republic as a part of police force and are satisfied with the current employment, job position and remuneration. Given that respondents have been over 40 years old, they realise that they will one day end working for the police, and therefore, they want to secure their employability in another sector, in which the Master's degree should be of help.

*To broaden my horizons, get to know new things when I'm done with the police, which is happening one day. With a Master's degree, I believe in my better usefulness in the civilian sector.*

Respondent I

What results from their considerations is frequently a choice teaching profession, as they want to pass on their knowledge and experience, therefore choosing the pedagogical studies.

*By successfully completing this further education (Master's), I could and would like to open a pedagogical door for the period when I finish my activities with the Police of the Czech Republic, i.e. the period during which I would like to teach.*

Respondent O

*My main motive in further education was that I would like to teach at the Police Academy of the Czech Republic in the future. In order to teach at the academy, it is important to have a university degree that I am currently extending to a Master's degree. The Careers Regulations of the Police of the Czech Republic do not allow police officers without university education to achieve non-commissioned officers and officers' ranks, for example, to be the head of the district department.*

Respondent K

### **Finding a better employment**

This motivational factor appeared in our research in relation to barriers in the labour market (a respondent who is a person with disabilities or a mother with two young children) which are currently faced by respondents who realise that if they had a Master's degree, then despite the previously existing barrier remaining, they would still have a better position in the labour market. These respondents say they hope to find a better job thanks to their postgraduate education. This motivational factor was observed in Respondent L, who works in a commercial-administrative position, but does not find the necessary self-actualisation in her work and has been looking for another job for some time. Her handicap, as she claims, is the fact that she is a mother with two small children of preschool age.

This motivational factor was also recorded in Respondent H, who has been a person with disability for several years, which significantly restricted her opportunities in the labour market. Due to her disability, after the termination of her employment, the respondent had a problem finding a satisfying job with adequately salary.

*And because I am an active person, I thought right after the graduation of my children that only occasional work was not suitable for me. And again I started thinking about studying. One year later, I chose the field of study according to the possibilities I would have, considering my disability, in the labour market. After exploring the educational possibilities and getting the information that even in Česká spořitelna, a.s. where I had worked before, there was a position where I could utilise the education.*

Respondent H

The foregoing motivational factor is frequently connected with potential financial reward:

*With the follow-up Master's education, I would like to broaden my horizons and possibly hope for better salary in the future.*

Respondent H

*I want a better future for my little children.*

Respondent L

### **Studying as productive use of free time**

This motivational factor appeared in our research in relation to a lifestyle focused on personal development. For these respondents, education is productive spare-time activity, as they consider personal development and education to be a need in their lives.

Above all, this motivational factor appeared in a female Respondent M working in a trading company, satisfied in her job. This respondent is married, her husband is also studying, thus they both motivate each other. They already have adult children, and they feel they have more free time because they no longer need to care for and raise their children.

*What was my motive to start college? Originally, I wasn't interested in getting a university degree. In my life, I was influenced by my colleague from work, whom I saw as my role-model. She was constantly educating herself, finishing up college... This had started my continued education. Not only by studying this field but also through other influences, inspired by work colleagues, I started to attend lectures by František Hroník, I attended a certified coach course, started to attend webinars on the topic of personal development and leadership, and overall changed my attitude to education. Now I can't imagine my life without it. I think it would be empty, dismal. I try to relay my motivation to learning and education to the people around me, be they colleagues at work, family members or friends. Of course, a by-product and a part of my motivation today is the achievement of a complete university education, and thus the possibility of a better position in the labour market.*

Respondent M

This motivational factor frequently occurs in respondents in relation to lifestyle changes, the emptying of family "nest," and the respondent's subjective feelings of additional free time and more room for their own activities and hobbies.

*My current life situation (more free time, a sense of unfulfillment) has offered me more room for education thoughts. And I realised that I desire again to fulfil my subjective educational needs.*

Respondent R

### **Motivation from other people**

This motivational factor appeared in our research in connection with the perceived respondent's inferiority complex stemming from the fact that they had not graduated from university, while many people around them had. These respondents frequently said that they felt they wanted to "prove something" either to themselves or to others.

*The goal of my university studies was to prove to myself, my parents and my surroundings that I was not stupid. Throughout my studies, the goal has changed and I perceive education as a possibility of development and knowledge-expansion in certain fields that I would not otherwise have access to.*

Respondent N

*Another motivation for further education was that I wanted to prove to myself that I could finish the studies; because self-fulfilment is very important to me. With this, I've got an amazing experience.*

Respondent S

*It turned out that the main motive of my further education is the desire to achieve something, to prove to myself that I am still able to develop and work on myself.*

Respondent T

This motivational factor also appeared in our research in connection with contact with people who were around the respondents and inspired them to start a Master's degree – acting as certain role-models. One of the respondents said in her testimony that the people around had a large impact on her decision to start studying again, they became her role-models and inspired her. The inspirational persons she met around her, whether in the family or among her subordinates at work, had a complete university degree. This respondent says she always wanted to study at university, but unfortunately, childcare did not allow her to do so previously; when her children had grown up and did not require that much care, she had begun to think about realising her dream of achieving a complete university

education. At that time, she began to evaluate the educational level of people around her and began to notice people who were in a similar or identical situation to her and were studying Master's programmes or had already graduated. She began to perceive these people as role-models.

*I always wanted to study at college. Unfortunately, it didn't work out right after school. When the children were older, I wanted to complete my education. For my own satisfaction, and also because I have subordinates in my work, who have a university degree, so I found it appropriate, and I was also motivated by my younger sister, who hold a Ph.D., last but not least was my husband with whom we talked about studying many times. So we went to study together.*

Respondent J

This motivational factor appeared in our research in other respondents, who frequently said that their family, close relatives or friends had encouraged them to take up studies. They provided them with confidence and the sense of being able to "do it" when the respondents doubted themselves. In connection with this motivational factor, respondents frequently mentioned scepticism over their learning abilities. The scepticism was caused by their previous study failures.

*I already studied at university right after grammar school, unfortunately, it was unsuccessful, which is something I never quite got over. I have toyed with the idea of going back to school almost constantly, but I was afraid of further failure... But I wanted to prove it to myself. Then when I discovered the field that interested me, it was a coincidence that my eternally optimistic sister (unlike me) pushed me into it at the right moment... And I would never think of continuing with a Master's programme a few years ago, my original goal was "only" bachelor's degree...*

Respondent E

The motivation from people around was also noted in the respondent, who says that earlier, although he wanted to study, he was unfortunately not capable to do it for various objective reasons, and at present he felt old for studies; fortunately, his wife pushed him into it.

*I have always wanted to study at university, but work, the birth of children and the associated problems or building a house prevented me from starting my studies before the age of 40.*

*Motivation: For various motivational (professional) reasons, my wife wanted to go to university and I supported her. She told me to also send an application. I did it, but only to conclude the reality that I had at least tried but was already too old for university.*

Respondent O

These respondents frequently mention that they can cope with the difficulty of their studies thanks to the support from the people around them, their family, who motivate them to study and support them in difficult moments when learning failures occur. The family is also very helpful in reconciling work and family responsibilities, and sometimes also provides financial support.

*I am also motivated by the responsibility to the whole family, which is a big part of the help I get to be even able to study at all (especially my husband and parents help with babysitting, my parents help me financially as well, because at the moment, when I'm on parental leave, my study is quite challenging for all my loved ones...). The big motivation is also my sister, who graduated from PhD studies, so I would like to come close to her a bit, but mainly she supports me psychologically, encourages me and gives me energy because I often do not believe in myself and I am afraid that I will not manage...*

Respondent D

## Conclusions

The results of the research show that for most respondents their main motive to begin and finish studying was their current job position or potential future job position or change of employment.

Although the work was a frequently mentioned topic in the motivation category, it was not the only driving force. Respondents also sought to increase their professional competence and work on their self-development. Respondents felt the need to educate themselves and acquire knowledge to apply in practice. This category of motivation was frequently associated with a change in lifestyle, with the acquisition of more free time that respondents could devote to their hobbies and interests, usually in connection with the separation of children.

A certain motivation for respondents is also the support from the people around, from family and relatives, who motivate them to start their studies, encourage them during the studies, help them overcome obstacles, bridge learning problems and help to reconcile family, work and study responsibilities. The people around them are a frequent motivating factor for respondents; not only encouraging them or “kickstarting” them to study, but also due to the fact that respondents see the people around as role-models worthy of following, they see people who are in the identical or similar situation and still study or graduate with a master's degree, and the respondents say that they see inspiration in these individuals, a source of motivation to study.

Because motivation from the surroundings is important for students, it is necessary to motivate students in a virtual environment. Increasing students' motivation to study will be achieved by a tutor providing quality feedback or by an interactive online environment in which collaboration between study participants takes place. Collaborative tools include discussion forums, brainstorming, group activities, chat, tutoring, mentoring, online meetings, virtual classroom and simulation, giving students the chance to test their knowledge without risk. Feedback provided by the tutor allows students to track their own progress, increases student motivation to study, and also reduces the risk of student procrastination. A. Barešová (2011) states that participation in distance learning means that collaboration is one of the most effective stimulants.

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Lucie Zormanová

## **Motywy studentów do studiowania na studiach magisterskich niestacjonarnych na odległość**

### **Streszczenie**

W artykule przedstawiono wyniki badań na temat motywów, dla których studenci zdecydowali się studiować na studiach niestacjonarnych na odległość w Akademii Humanistyczno-Ekonomicznej. Badania przeprowadzono metodą wywiadu półustrukturyzowanego. Grupą badaw-



czą byli studenci pierwszego roku studiów magisterskich na kierunku pedagogika. Badania przeprowadzono w latach 2016–2019. Grupa badawcza składała się z 20 studentów w wieku od 38 do 45 lat, którzy mieli obowiązki zawodowe i rodzinne. Ponadto respondenci już wcześniej studiowali na studiach stacjonarnych oraz zaocznych. Wyniki badań pokazują, że główną motywacją respondentów do studiów był awans zawodowy czy zmiana pracy. Respondenci starali się również zwiększyć swoje kompetencje zawodowe i był dla nich ważny samorozwój. Respondenci odczuwali potrzebę kształcenia się i zdobywania wiedzy, która byłaby do zastosowania w praktyce. Respondenci podkreślali także motywację pochodzącą od otoczenia, rodziny i krewnych mobilizujących ich do rozpoczęcia nauki, zachęcających do podjęcia studiów, wspierających w pokonywaniu przeszkód, rozwiązywania problemów i w godzeniu obowiązków rodzinnych, zawodowych i studenckich.

**Słowa kluczowe:** kształcenie na odległość, AHE, metoda wywiadu półstrukturyzowanego, motyw

Lucie Zormanová

### **Мотивация студентов к обучению в магистратуре при заочной форме обучения**

#### **А н н о т а ц и я**

В данной статье представлены результаты исследования мотивов обучения студентов в дистанционной форме в Университете гуманитарных наук и экономики в Лодзи. Исследование проводилось с использованием метода полуструктурированных интервью. Интервью проводились среди студентов первого курса магистратуры в области педагогики. Исследование проводилось в 2016–2019 годах, в этот период были реализованы три этапа исследований. Исследовательская группа состояла из 20 студентов, в возрасте от 35 до 48 лет, имеющих рабочие и семейные обязанности. Кроме того, респонденты уже имели предыдущий опыт смешанного и очного обучения. Интервью записывались на мобильный телефон и длились около 40 минут. Данные были проанализированы с использованием процедур открытого кодирования. Целью открытого кодирования было тематическое разделение анализируемого текста. Анализируемые интервью были разделены на единицы, которые означали слова, иногда предложения или абзацы, установленные в соответствии с их значением, поэтому единица состояла была семантической. Код был присвоен каждой указанной единице. Как только список кодов был создан, началась классификация данных.

**Ключевые слова:** дистанционное образование, гуманитарно-экономический университет в Лодзи, полуструктурированные интервью, мотив

## **Motivos de los estudiantes para estudiar estudios de maestría a distancia**

### **R e s u m e n**

Este artículo presenta los resultados de un estudio de investigación sobre los motivos de los estudiantes para estudiar en forma de aprendizaje a distancia en la Universidad de Humanidades y Economía de Lodz. La investigación se realizó utilizando el método de entrevistas semiestructuradas. Las entrevistas se realizaron entre estudiantes del primer año de la maestría de seguimiento en pedagogía. La investigación se llevó a cabo en los años 2016–2019, en este período se realizaron tres etapas de investigación. El grupo de investigación consistió en 20 estudiantes que tenían responsabilidades laborales y familiares y tenían entre 35 y 48 años. Además, los encuestados ya tenían experiencia previa en estudios combinados y de tiempo completo. Las entrevistas fueron grabadas en un teléfono móvil y duraron unos 40 minutos. Los datos se analizaron mediante procedimientos de codificación abierta. El objetivo de la codificación abierta era dividir temáticamente el texto analizado. Las entrevistas analizadas se dividieron en unidades, que a veces significaban palabras, y a veces oraciones o párrafos establecidos según su significado, por lo que la unidad consistía en una unidad semántica. Se ha asignado un código a cada unidad especificada. Una vez que se creó la lista de códigos, comenzamos a clasificar los datos.

**P a l a b r a s c l a v e:** educación a distancia, Universidad de Humanidades y Economía de Lodz, entrevistas semiestructuradas, motivo