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A System Model and Tools for Modernization of Federal and Regional Digital Services of Statistics and Data Analytics in Education



Evgeny E. Kovalev 

Abstract The paper considers the main directions of digitalization of the education system in Russia, analyzing the infrastructural and technological aspects of the new strategic directions of teacher education—“Pedagogy based on data” and “Education management based on data.” The author analyzes information systems and services in education, considering the possibility of using technologies for analytical data processing. Currently, the problem of using data analytics tools in education is the lack of uniform formats and tools for integrating information systems. Data in education accumulates in various solutions that do not share the results of the educational process. Thus, it is impossible to build a clear system of end-to-end interaction between systems on common platforms. The author aims to solve this problem by modeling an integrated solution for data analysis at all education levels. The paper proposes technical and organizational solutions for creating integrated analytics services that allow accumulating and transmitting data on educational results during the transition of a student between learning levels. The analysis tools are based on the use of big data technologies. Technologically, it is advised to integrate the proposed solution into the national data management platform.

Keywords Digitalization · Information systems and services · Integration · Education management · Data management · Data analysis · National data management system in the Russian Federation

1 Introduction

Recent global changes taking place in the digital technological order in today’s world led to a sharp avalanche of information. International Data Corporation (IDC) predicts that the digital universe will reach 40 ZB in 2020, up to 5 ZB from the previous forecast (Goepfert et al. 2020). In total, since the beginning of 2010, the volume of data grew 50 times, and around the world will be created and used 2.8 ZB

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1

26 of data. The current trend in the development of digital technologies for extracting
27 the necessary information in a form convenient for processing and perception is
28 now creating large data arrays and the use of analytical tools, especially when
29 making management decisions. Solutions of this type allow us to optimize opera-
30 tional processes, apply forecasting and strategic planning tools, and work with arrays
31 of heterogeneous data obtained from various sources.

32 Another trend is the growth in the total volume of information, which occurs
33 due to automatically generated data—by 2020, their volume increased by about 15
34 times (Goepfert et al. 2020). In this case, large amounts of useful data are lost.
35 Today, less than 3% out of 23% of potentially useful data is used that could be
36 used with Big Data technologies (Deloitte Insights 2019). The general trend in the
37 development of information and communications technology [ICT] in the process
38 of digital transformation is the integration of various levels of systems to conduct
39 the necessary analysis and forecasting of the behavior of system components and the
40 entire environment.

41 In Russia, such a breakthrough direction is the project for creating and oper-
42 ating a national data management system (NDSM) for the National project “Digital
43 economy.” It establishes uniform requirements for data management as a set of
44 mandatory or recommendatory rules for execution by public sector bodies and orga-
45 nizations’ management of government data at each stage of their life cycle. It also
46 considers such activities as the creation of (1) a digital analytical platform for the
47 provision of statistical data, (2) a unified register of objects of statistical observation,
48 and (3) a unified register of forms of statistical observation, indicators, and relevant
49 information resources (Government of Russian Federation 2019).

50 In the digitalization of education, such transformations are necessary to form
51 current competencies and identify optimal ways to develop the entire education
52 system. According to the project “Digital School” of the National Project “Edu-
53 cation,” it is necessary to create by 2024 a modern and safe digital educational
54 environment that ensures high quality and accessibility of education of all types
55 and levels. The project also provides for the automation of workflow, reporting, and
56 accounting, digitalization of the learning process with access to individual trajec-
57 tories, and continuous online teacher training (Government of Russian Federation
58 2018).

59 Within the project “Digital School” (“Digital Educational Organization”), it is
60 necessary to use technologies of “big data,” “cloud” data storage, and artificial intelli-
61 gence to ensure a complete electronic document flow of the educational organization,
62 including (1) conducting administrative and economic, financial and economic activ-
63 ities (“Management,” “Office work,” “Cloud accounting,” “Electronic reporting,”
64 etc.), and (2) ensuring the educational and disciplinary process (“Electronic diaries,”
65 “Electronic assessment journal,” “Teacher’s electronic office,” “Student’s electronic
66 portfolio,” “Online education,” etc.) (Government of Russian Federation 2018).

67 At the same time, based on long-term forecasts of the development of society
68 and technology, it is necessary to highlight the key direction of personnel training,
69 which is necessary to ensure transformations of education digitalization. Such a

70 change presupposes the development of a new area of pedagogical knowledge—
71 “Data-Driven Pedagogy” (Fiofanova et al. 2020).

72 Besides, it should be considered that digitalization should cover both the open
73 state data system and data related to the non-formal and informal education of a
74 person. Until now, digitalization covers only formal education, while the role of the
75 non-formal and informal will only increase and store many data that must be consid-
76 ered in analytical processing. In sum, it will contribute to the breakthrough scienti-
77 fic, technological, and socio-economic development of the country, the creation of
78 opportunities for self-realization, and the disclosure of each person’s talents.

79 2 Materials and Methods

80 The current state of information systems and services in education is characterized
81 by a large number of discrete software products. Each of them accumulates digital
82 traces of the learning process and generates output data in its own, sometimes ad
83 hoc, formats. This makes it impossible to perceive the picture of the state of the
84 education system and makes it difficult to exchange data between systems. Some of
85 these systems do not generate data in formats suitable for reuse and application by
86 third-party systems. In this regard, the primary task is to analyze the available data
87 in education, assess and classify them, and model the data integration process in the
88 form of big data technologies suitable for use.

89 According to the Learning Activity Management System [LAMS] concept, the
90 following basic data classification was used in the analysis of data in education
91 (Government of Russian Federation 2019):

- 92 1. **By data types.** In the public sector, the following types of data with different
93 norms are distinguished:
 - 94 • Regulatory and reference information. References and classifiers should be
95 applied wherever a reference or classifier can be generated. If it is frequently
96 used in the public sector, it should be uniform and used by all partici-
97 pants in information interaction. There are backbone reference books and
98 classifiers—all-Russian classifiers. They should also be accessible using
99 information systems;
 - 100 • Registry data. Maintaining registers of data (lists of objects that can be objects
101 or subjects of legal relations or facts) should switch to the type of register
102 keeping in the form of a “registry model”: confirmation of a legal fact is
103 an entry in the register (transition to paperless interaction). To do this, it
104 is necessary to define reference data, improve their quality, and implement
105 mandatory use. Only then will the transition to the “registry model” be the
106 most “painless.” The reference data will have increased requirements for
107 quality and protection due to their high importance;

- 108 • Reporting. Reporting refers to data provided by individuals, legal entities,
109 state authorities, and local authorities on a regular (or conditionally regular—
110 on an event) basis. The collection of reports should be minimized. Minimiza-
111 tion can be carried out in three directions: (1) reduction of reporting forms
112 (through systematization), (2) transition to the collection of reports in other
113 ways (for example, using Internet of Things technologies), and (3) obtaining
114 consent from the reporting provider to reuse the provided data;
115 • Other types of data: unstructured (audio, video), “streaming”, “large”, etc.
116 Due to the increasing typing of data, any type requires special treatment and
117 may also have special requirements.

118 2. **By the nature of data use.** Data that a state body transfers to other state bodies
119 and organizations to pursue the powers of these state bodies and organizations,
120 and data that the state body creates and uses for official purposes. There will
121 be different requirements for maintaining data required only for internal use
122 and those transmitted in some form to any recipients since the quality of the
123 transmitted data is more important and easier to control.

124 3. **By the type of information resource in which the data is maintained:**
125 (1) federal information resources, (2) regional information resources, and (3)
126 municipal information resources.

127 Such data represent:

- 128 • An ordered set of state data contained in information systems or posted on
129 the official websites of state bodies on the Internet;
130 • An ordered set of state data, formed as a result of a collection of reports by
131 state bodies or other persons determined by Federal Law;
132 • A set of state data formed as a result of the collection of statements by state
133 bodies of a constituent entity of Russia;
134 • A set of municipal data contained in municipal information systems or
135 posted on the official websites of local governments in the information and
136 telecommunications network Internet;
137 • State registers, cadastres, databases, and data banks for the formation of
138 which state bodies are authorized.

139 4. **By data access level.** The legislation defines types of data according to the level
140 of restriction of their availability.

141 The research makes it possible to systematize the main information resources
142 that collect and aggregate data on the educational process, identify possible means
143 and opportunities for their integration, and consider existing technical means,
144 classifications, and data use recommendations.

145 The author considers the formats of the provided data as one of the criteria for
146 systematization, which can be used for exchange between information systems and
147 their subsequent integration.

148 Data sets currently provided by information systems:

- 149 1. Contact information of educational institutions and basic information about
150 institutions;
- 151 2. The number of students in organizations carrying out educational activities in
152 educational programs of primary general, basic general, and secondary general
153 education;
- 154 3. The share of students in general education programs, additional general educa-
155 tion programs for children, and educational programs of secondary additional
156 education, for whom a digital educational profile and an individual training
157 plan are created using the federal information and service platform of the digital
158 educational environment, in the total number of students in these programs;
- 159 4. Aggregated data on the forms of the Russian Classification of Units of Measure-
160 ment: (1) on the number of educational institutions; (2) a contingent of students;
161 (3) the number of graduate students; and (4) a number of teachers; (5) several
162 students per teacher in the constituent entities of Russia (according to the SSRF
163 handbook);
- 164 5. Information about the in-depth study of individual subjects;
- 165 6. Information about the material base and technical condition of buildings of
166 institutions;
- 167 7. Data on specialized training in institutions implementing general education
168 programs;
- 169 8. Information about the sources of funds received by institutions implementing
170 general education programs;
- 171 9. Expenditures of state (municipal) and non-state institutions implementing
172 general education programs;
- 173 10. Budgets of educational institutions;
- 174 11. Information about inspections, results of inspections;
- 175 12. Registers of educational programs, standards, and methodological develop-
176 ments;
- 177 13. Navigator of universities;
- 178 14. Exam Calculator;
- 179 15. List of Olympiads with the ability to save the results of queries and configure
180 alerts;
- 181 16. Consolidated register of licenses of educational institutions;
- 182 17. Ratings and Independent Evaluation Results.

183 The author concludes that the main disadvantages of the processed analytical data
184 are their depersonalization. There is practically no possibility to identify personal
185 results and information about the results of educational activities of a particular
186 student. Besides, there is an insufficient set of data for the formation of data sets to
187 integrate information systems of different levels, for example, in the transition of
188 students to the status of students.

189 Also, from a systematic approach and the possibilities of using data analytics
190 point of view, the following are other disadvantages of existing solutions:

- 191 • Discreteness of platforms and piecewise data analysis;
- 192 • A large amount of unstructured data, own (other than classified) data presentation
- 193 formats;
- 194 • Impossibility to complete reuse of data;
- 195 • Lack of integration and the ability to exchange data between platforms without
- 196 preliminary processing and adaptation;
- 197 • Lack of logical links between assessment criteria at different levels of education;
- 198 • Poor data visualization;
- 199 • Poor ability to collaborate on existing platforms, implement project work, and
- 200 crowdsourcing, as well as the possibility of replicating the obtained results.

201 As a result, the education system at various levels weakly interact with each other
 202 and the participants in the educational process. This leads to the impossibility of
 203 building in a single format, a general picture of the education system's state and the
 204 implementation of continuity between its levels.

205 In this regard, it is necessary to recommend executive authorities, software devel-
 206 opers, and professional communities to consider the possibility of developing infor-
 207 mation services that can format and lead to uniform quantitative and qualitative
 208 indicators of various metrics and methods for assessing the state of the educational
 209 process results both at the student and education level. Such services should identify
 210 and eliminate data duplication, highlight the need to transfer data from one part of the
 211 system to another when students move between educational levels, integrate (instead
 212 of separate) ICT tools for analyzing statistical data. This common data analytics
 213 generation toolkit can be visualized, transferred to other systems or a new level
 214 of education, and used in the automation of making organizational and managerial
 215 decisions in education.

216 The main obstacle standing in the way of creating unified information and analyt-
 217 ical space is the lack of the ability to transmit in electronic form and in established
 218 formats information about learning outcomes to a specific student and provide a reli-
 219 able assessment of the transmitted learning outcomes. This does not allow creating a
 220 single technological platform for storing and exchanging information and introducing
 221 a completely electronic document flow between participants in educational relations.
 222 The situation is aggravated by mergers and acquisitions, leading to the inheritance of
 223 new information systems and applications, an extremely heterogeneous IT landscape
 224 containing applications and software components from different manufacturers that
 225 are implemented on different platforms and often duplicate separate functions.

226 To achieve single information and analytical space, it is necessary to integrate and
 227 interoperate data, ensure its availability, while information systems must interact with
 228 each other in the same language. A prerequisite for this is uniform rules for data inter-
 229 pretation and a single data ontology (information exchange model), considering the
 230 specificity of the education industry, which will unify data management technolo-
 231 gies. According to uniform established rules, all information services and systems
 232 must connect to the data management, analysis infrastructure, and exchange data.
 233 The data management infrastructure may not be designed to store the data itself; in

234 this case, it performs technical and technological functions, storing only informa-
235 tion about the data: their description (passports), data registers, data accounting, data
236 transfer rules, and quality control. In part, these functions should be performed by
237 modernized information systems of the e-government infrastructure or departmental
238 management information systems. It is also necessary to use the recommendations
239 to create the National Data System [NDS] and its technical features.

240 The basic algorithm for data integration and processing assumes the following:

- 241 1. Extraction of structured data (conforms to a data model, has a well-defined
242 structure, follows a sequential order, and can be easily accessed and used by a
243 human or a computer program). Extraction of information based on ontologies,
244 a terminological dictionary of synonyms or relationships;
- 245 2. Cleansing of unstructured data (does not have a predefined data structure or is
246 not organized in an established order. Unstructured data is usually presented
247 in text, which can contain dates, numbers, and facts. This leads to difficul-
248 ties in analysis, especially when using traditional programs designed to work
249 with structured data), extraction and removal of “noise,” a transformation of
250 the maximum possible types of unstructured data, selection of data suitable
251 for analytics (text files and documents; photos, drawings, and other graphic
252 information; biometric data);
- 253 3. Obtaining data in a machine-readable format that allows information systems to
254 identify, process, and transform such data and its constituent parts (elements)
255 without human intervention, and provide ranked access to them for system
256 users, including public access;
- 257 4. Data validation. Formation of a reliable assessment of the transmitted learning
258 outcomes (trust data register). Formation of metadata that makes it easier to
259 extract the necessary data for analysis;
- 260 5. A selection of related data, which can store semantic queries and show data
261 that affects the selection;
- 262 6. Obtaining analytical data;
- 263 7. Introduction of the Application Programming Interface (API);
- 264 8. Application of criteria for evaluating analytical data;
- 265 9. Formation of analytical data in formats suitable for (1) consumer and decision
266 making, (2) reuse, and (3) accumulation in databases;
- 267 10. Uploading data in formats for exchange between systems, visualized data, and
268 generation of reports in established forms to support the electronic document
269 management system.

270 Pre-design work involves considering the following factors:

- 271 • Study of the potential demand for relevant datasets by potential consumers;
- 272 • An assessment of the degree of readiness, characterized by the availability of the
273 necessary data in electronic form, as well as the readiness of the organizational,
274 technical, technological, and other means necessary for the publication of data
275 sets;

- 276 • Publication costs (financial, time, and labor) are required to publish datasets and
277 keep them updated.

278 As a proposed solution, it is necessary to develop a single portal with entry points
279 for system participants at various education levels to download and exchange data
280 and obtain statistical information. After the accumulation and cleaning of data, it is
281 possible to identify inter-component groups of indicators and criteria for assessing
282 education, which can be transferred and adapted between the levels of the education
283 system. With the further development and refinement of interaction mechanisms
284 between participants in educational relations, it will be possible to build a quality
285 management system based on Deming principles, adapted to assessing the education
286 system and continuous quality standards.

287 In the light of the indicated solutions for the modernization of existing systems, it
288 is necessary to use the technology of accumulation, processing, and big data analysis.
289 They allow (1) to process large volumes of data in comparison with the “standard”
290 scenarios, often in different formats, and (2) to work with rapidly arriving data
291 with a quick update period in large volumes. Moreover, such data is continuously
292 growing, allowing us to work with structured and weakly structured data in parallel
293 and different aspects.

294 The relevance of big data use is confirmed by the fact that education policy began to
295 be built on educational analytics, new analytical and managerial methods (Fiofanova
296 2019, 2020a).

297 The integration of information and services based on collecting relevant infor-
298 mation from numerous heterogeneous applications and databases is relevant. This
299 solution will also allow supporting end-to-end processes at different system levels for
300 various categories of information consumers. The ability to use the functionality of
301 already created and legacy systems for their support and adaptation is also important.

302 3 Results

303 System model of a single information resource based on the integration of information
304 services of various levels of education and the proposed algorithm for multi-level
305 integration and data processing:

- 306 1. Data collection at the level of integration of functional subsystems of informa-
307 tion systems, information services, and streaming data;
- 308 2. Cleaning, structuring, and formalization of data;
- 309 3. Application of analytical subsystems and decision support tools.
- 310 4. Application of analytical subsystems and decision support tools;
- 311 5. Application of quality assessment and performance indicators;
- 312 6. Data visualization, generation of reports and data sets in the form required for
313 end-users, government information systems, and services;

- 314 7. Formation of tools for joint work on the received data sets and organization of
315 document management;
- 316 8. Formation of databases, registers, and data repositories suitable for reuse;
- 317 9. Setting up the personalization of consumers of analytics results.

318 When developing and implementing the model, the next stage should solve the
319 problem of converting educational results (when the results from the database at the
320 school level will be converted into the data of applicants during the transition to the
321 next stage of education (college, university)). So far, such solutions are represented by
322 objects of piecewise informatization. They are implemented only based on individual
323 local information systems of universities and exist only at the level of sufficiently
324 closed data of individual universities (i.e., Higher School of Economics, Omsk State
325 Technical University). At the same time, the data collected by the local information
326 systems of universities cannot be integrated into a single system. The main collected
327 data sets include (1) information on the results of the Olympiads and creative events,
328 (2) information on the preparation of applicants for the Unified State Exam, (3) and
329 the development of additional education.

330 There is still no comprehensive software solution at the state level; therefore, the
331 most critical vector for the further development of an integrated system should be an
332 integration with the systems of universities for social support of potential applicants
333 and making decisions about future students.

334 4 Discussion

335 The research shows the options for further use, namely:

- 336 1. Identification of potential applicants;
- 337 2. Formation and analysis of the competencies of schoolchildren for the develop-
338 ment and modernization of their own educational standards and programs;
- 339 3. Integration with ICT of universities, subsystems Entrant, and Admissions
340 Committee;
- 341 4. Formation of targeted advertising;
- 342 5. Analysis of potential consumers of services in territorial and social aspects;
- 343 6. Development of a socially oriented “environment of opportunities” for quality
344 and affordable additional education.

345 Thus, summarizing the results obtained, we can conclude that the further develop-
346 ment of educational data analysis is possible with the comprehensive implementation
347 of education projects and their integration into the currently implemented National
348 projects. In particular, within the National project “Digital Economy,” it is necessary
349 to:

- 350 • Improve the regulatory framework for the mechanism of accumulation,
351 processing, and analysis of educational data, analytics of the education system,
352 and data exchange between information systems and resources at different levels
353 in education;
- 354 • Develop methodology and technologies for the analysis of educational data; mech-
355 anisms for integrating the services of analytical, educational data and educational
356 statistics;
- 357 • Develop technological platform solutions and technological infrastructure of
358 education for the accumulation and exchange of educational data between various
359 existing systems in education;
- 360 • Integrate educational data at the level of general education institutions with addi-
361 tional education systems, the formation of a unified landscape of data formats
362 for integration, data exchange, and extraction in formats suitable for making
363 decision-making;
- 364 • Develop indicators to assess and consolidate data, a system for assessing the
365 effectiveness of educational data.

366 5 Conclusion

367 The current research results can become the basis for the formation of documents on
368 the management of analytical systems and data in education. The documents should
369 describe the general target data management and determine the procedures for data
370 analytics formation. The requirements to manage specific datasets and data formats
371 should be a set of techniques used for each specific task. The methods should be
372 refined and refined constantly, in the implementation of the flexible approach and
373 continuous quality improvement. The development of methods should correspond
374 to the current needs of the information and analytical system and be accompanied
375 by personnel training with the information system at all levels.

376 Within the framework of the national projects “Human Resources for the Digital
377 Economy” and “Digital School,” it is necessary to develop competencies and profes-
378 sional standards of technology to analyze educational data and its integration into
379 professional development programs for education personnel; implementation of
380 professional development programs for teaching and management personnel in the
381 logic “Data-Driven Pedagogy,” “Data-Driven Education Management” (Fiofanova
382 2020b).

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