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Academic Success in the Context of Distance Learning

The events of 2020 drew the attention of the whole world and society to distance learning technologies. The COVID-19 pandemic has made full-time study impossible in a few months, and distance learning has become the only available form of higher education. Distance learning is one of the forms of learning that emerged and improved with the development of Internet technologies, and today has clear characteristics, principles and certain methodological developments. Until now, distance learning has been a chamber form, usually for adults or students who sought to improve and deepen their knowledge and skills in a particular field. The methodology of distance learning is in the process of formation, and the principles of distance learning and its features have become serious challenges for the education system as a whole.

Annotation

The content of this article reflects the state, problems and prospects of distance learning in the conditions of quarantine measures at the time of the Covid outbreak in Ukraine, as well as to improve self-education and training. The advantages and disadvantages of distance learning are analyzed.

The relevance of research is due to changes in thinking, the emergence of new technologies, the growth of information flow, and, as a consequence, the complexity of social processes. The rapid digitalization of our world, the emergence of new professions and teaching methods, have led to the fact that the traditional education system has begun to transform. Today, the current level of socio - economic development of mankind is accelerating and needs to adapt to all changes in

economic, social, political and cultural life and, as a result, requires more and more diverse, multilevel and diverse training. In the current reality of events taking place around the world, and undoubtedly the events that affected Ukraine, and the introduction of all those measures and changes, including in the learning process. "Distance learning" has become one of the most popular way in education today. Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 215 of March 11, 2020 introduced quarantine throughout Ukraine [2], which means that all educational institutions are moving to distance learning. In recent decades, distance education has become a global phenomenon of educational and information culture. Nevertheless, distance learning is not widely used in the educational process of schools, colleges, gymnasiums and other secondary special educational institutions. [4]

And it was "quarantine" that intensified the problem of distance learning and showed the real situation and implementation of measures to identify shortcomings in the implementation of distance learning, as the system of general vocational education was not ready for the transition to full distance learning, which would be a real threat its existence in general [1].

But, thanks to timely decisions and implementation measures, and the establishment of the learning process - this problem has been solved and worked in a short time. [3]

Keywords: distance learning; model; component; interaction; information computer technologies; synchronous; asynchronous.

Formulation of the problem. New global challenges and threats force educators to respond quickly and change the form of learning, adapt the content and create the necessary conditions. Educational institutions of different levels of accreditation in most countries of the world are actively introducing distance education due to the ban on attending educational institutions. Distance form as a way of getting an education is a component of the general education system, which involves the study of all disciplines in accordance with the curriculum, specialty and course.

It is worth noting that in Ukrainian free economic zones before the pandemic were dominated by full-time (full-time, evening), part-time, mixed education,

external studies, each of which has advantages and disadvantages. The rapid development of information technology has formed the need and interest in distance learning at the beginning of the XXI century. However, the successful implementation of distance learning requires specially designed courses, proper technical support, trained professionals and effective teaching methods. Unfortunately, there is still no perfect method of organizing distance learning. That is why educational institutions practiced mostly mixed learning - traditional with elements of distance learning.

Research analysis. Theoretical, methodological problems of distance learning have been the subject of study of Ukrainian and foreign researchers: J. Andersen, V. Bykov, Art. Wheeler, S. Vitvitskaya, T. Edward, G. Kozlakova, K. Korsak, R. Kravets, V. Kukharenko, M. Moore, A. Petrov, E. Polat, V. Rybalka, O. Tishchenko, A. Franz, B. Holmberg, A. Khutorsky, B. Shunevych, V. Yasulaitis. Peculiarities of introduction of distance learning in higher education institutions were studied by R. Gorbatyuk, R. Gurevych, T. Gusak, V. Oliynyk, L. Romanyshena, P. Stefanenko.

The purpose of research is to clarify the features, advantages and disadvantages of distance learning, analyze different models of learning and propose the most effective structural and functional model of organizing a network course of distance learning that meets the needs and realities of modern Ukrainian education. [8]

Presenting main material.

Distance education, structured learning in which the student and instructor are separated by time and place, is currently the fastest growing form of domestic and international education nowadays. What was once considered a special form of education using nontraditional delivery systems is now becoming an important concept in mainstream education.

Due to the rapid development of technology, courses using a variety of media are being delivered to students in various locations in an effort to serve the educational needs of growing populations. In many cases, developments in technology allow distance education programs to provide specialized courses to students in remote geographic areas with increasing interactivity between student and

teacher. Although the ways in which distance education is implemented differ markedly from country to country, most distance learning programs rely on technologies that are either already in place or are being considered for their cost effectiveness. Such programs are particularly beneficial for the many people who are not financially, physically, or geographically able to obtain traditional education.

Advantages of Distance Learning

1. Greater Flexibility

With distance learning programs, students can pursue and complete their desired courses from anywhere with the use of computer and internet connection. A larger percentage of those that enroll for distance education are actually persons who are working. **Distance education** allows such students to find convenient time to study without interfering with their already busy schedule. One can study after work, in the middle of the night or during weekends. Learning materials and instruction can actually be obtained online at any time. So working students can learn as they earn.

2. No commuting

Distance learning takes place online, which means students don't need to spend money and time commuting to and from class venues. Students can take lessons and complete assignments from the comfort of their home. Most institutions that offer distance learning programs deliver lectures and tutorials through online video conferencing. That means students don't have to be stuck to the classroom. One can actually enjoy class sessions from the comfort of their living room couch, bedroom or garden. Video conferencing solutions like ezTalks Cloud Meeting offer innovative whiteboards and screen/file sharing options that make classes more interactive. Its full HD video and audio experience duplicates the real-life class scenario that makes online lectures more meaningful. [4]

3. Significant Cost Savings

The cost of online-based education programs is generally lower compared to those offered in brick-and-mortar institutions. Undertaking an online course or program also eliminates the costs associated with commuting, renting an apartment and/or getting meal plans. That means distance learning an economically viable

option for both students and parents. Apart from the convenience of pursuing a course from home, students will have a perfect opportunity to save more on their studies.

4. Convenient Learning

For most of the working class students, going back to the classroom is rather intimidating. Asking questions about a hard concept about a given topic can also be embarrassing for shy students. But that's not the case with distance learning. A disciplined and self-motivated student can learn at his or her own pace. Online education combines the use of tutorials, eLearning materials and video conference class sessions to deliver knowledge to students. That means learners with different abilities can have the opportunity to understand the course in much detail. [5]

Disadvantages of Distance Learning

1. Lack of Social Interaction

Learning in a brick-and-mortar institution presents students with the opportunity to meet and interact with people from different locations on a personal level. Distance learning only limits students to classes and learning materials that are based online. Though students can interact through chat rooms, discussion boards, emails and/or video conferencing software, the experience cannot be compared to that of a traditional campus.

2. High Chances of Distraction

With no face-to-face interaction with instructors and other students, those who are enrolled on an online program might find it hard to keep track of their course work and assignments. That's because there are no constant reminders about pending assignments and/or deadlines. It only requires one to be self-motivated and focused to be able to complete a course successfully. Hence distance learning cannot be a good option for students who keep procrastinating things or those who aren't able to stick to deadlines.

3. Complicated Technology

Any student seeking to enroll for a distance learning program needs to invest in a range of equipment including computer, webcam and stable internet connection.

There is absolutely no physical contact between students and instructors as instruction is delivered over the internet. This overdependence on technology is a major drawback to distance learning. In case of any software or hardware malfunction, the class session will come to a standstill, something that can interrupt the learning process. Moreover, the complicated nature of the technology used in distance learning only limits online education to students who are computer and tech savvy.

4. Questionable Credibility of Online Degrees

Despite its convenience and affordability, distance learning is still not the best option for many due to lack of quality faculty members. Even when the instructors are fully qualified and experienced, they might not find it comfortable to teach in an online environment. The design and delivery of every course differs greatly. Sometimes the instructor might find little time to talk about trivial details of a given topic, which are otherwise important to helping students understand better a given concept. That, plus a host of other challenges like lack of proper assessment make credibility of distance learning degrees questionable. [5]

As a matter of fact, there many employers out there who do not accept online degrees as they still find stigma attached to distance education. That means students have to evaluate whether or not their online degrees can be ideal for the target job or future learning. This discourages many students from undertaking a distance learning program even when the degree being offered is genuine and competitive in the market.

One more important fact of Distance learning is synchronous vs asynchronous of the learning process. [6,7]

Distance learning falls into two main categories:

1. Synchronous
2. Asynchronous

We should understand what the difference between synchronous vs asynchronous is. Different types of distance learning fall into one or both of these categories.

Synchronous means “at the same time.” It refers to a method of education delivery that happens in real-time. It requires live communication online. It uses technology, such as teleconferencing, to achieve this.

Synchronous learning proves less flexible than other forms of distance learning. After all, students must meet with their instructor and sometimes their classmates at pre-scheduled times.

This approach limits the student’s ability to learn at their own pace. It may frustrate some learners who crave the freedom of the asynchronous classroom.

As for asynchronous distance education? Students receive clusters of weekly deadlines. They have the freedom to work at their own speed.

Asynchronous distance learning comes with more opportunities for student interaction. Students can access course content beyond the scheduled meeting or class time and interact through online conversations, quizzes, or video comments on their own schedule. Both faculty and students benefit from the flexibility of asynchronous learning as it allows them to create and consume content when it’s convenient for them.

Benefits of asynchronous learning

In today’s world, both professors and students realize that external factors contribute to odd hours and disjointed schedules. The flexibility of asynchronous learning allows them to create and consume content when it’s convenient for them and learning materials can be accessed at any time, anywhere.

Reach and engagement

With hectic and unpredictable schedules, faculty can extend course content beyond the scheduled meeting and class time through pre-recorded videos and other content. Faculty can leverage live recordings or create videos, and then get analytics, generate captions, have conversations, add quizzes, and integrate content right into an LMS. [5]

Student motivation

Asynchronous teaching methods help motivate students to review content on their own time and on whatever device they prefer.

Students can go at their own pace and when it's convenient for them. Self-paced learning accommodates various learning needs and preferences and enhances student success. Students can refer then back to the content to study for exams, have discussions, and consult the content beyond. [8]

Complement synchronous learning experience

There's always a need for virtual, live interaction, but asynchronous communication complements that to extend live sessions beyond a singular class.

For example, rather than simply having a Zoom meeting, professors can do a lot more with recording. They can:

- Post the Zoom recording for rewatching
- Interact around the content
- Get analytics on participation
- Generate captions for accessibility

Conclusions

Despite its numerous drawbacks, distance learning still provides better learning options for students wishing to enjoy greater convenience and flexibility in pursuing a course nowadays. The greatest benefits of distance education is that it allows students to access numerous learning tools using minimum financial resources. Studying online is even made more interactive with the use of video conferencing software. That improves the ability to acquire and retain knowledge on a given subject.

However, distance education limits social interaction, involves use of complex technology and has a negative perception among some employers. Any student wishing to enroll for distance learning diploma or degree should weigh between its pros and cons to determine whether or not it's a good option. Generally, distance education can be the perfect option for working students.

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Заявка на участь у монографії

Modern management: theories, concepts, implementation

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