

Розділ 1. Методика дистанційного навчання: проблематика та інноваційні підходи

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DISTANCE EDUCATION AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING IN PRISM OF POSTMODERN PARADIGM

Discussing issue of distance education and life-long learning in prism of postmodern paradigm, many scholars argues that today, when science is more and more managed, it becomes less scientific and more technologies-dependent. Despite this today learning as process and meta-narrative in which pre-modern, modern and post-modern elements collide and exists together in harmony within different spheres of societal domain: in business, culture, architecture and in university. Globalization reshapes all societies with different speed and magnitude by changing traditional borders and spaces of intercultural interactions as like as forms, instruments and means of human communication [6, p. 93-94]. That is why development of international cooperation in higher technical education has different implications for universities depending on their readiness to meet up international requirements for quality (i.e. national and international accreditation of quality management system) and digitalization of their educational services (i.e. distance learning).

Encyclopedia Britannica defines distance learning (also known as distance education, e-learning, online learning) as form of education in which the main elements include physical separation of teachers and students during instruction and use of different technologies to facilitate student-teacher and student-student communication. Also distance learning traditionally has focused on nontraditional students, such as full-time workers, military personnel, and nonresidents or individuals in remote regions who hasn't opportunity to attend classroom lectures [1]. Despite this distance learning has become an established part of educational world, with trends pointing to ongoing growth especially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Here we can agree with B. Lockee, who underlines that distance learning supports and facilitates to continuity of teaching, wider audience instruction and in the same time it reshapes traditional concept of learning ecosystem [4, p. 5; 5] (see figure 1).

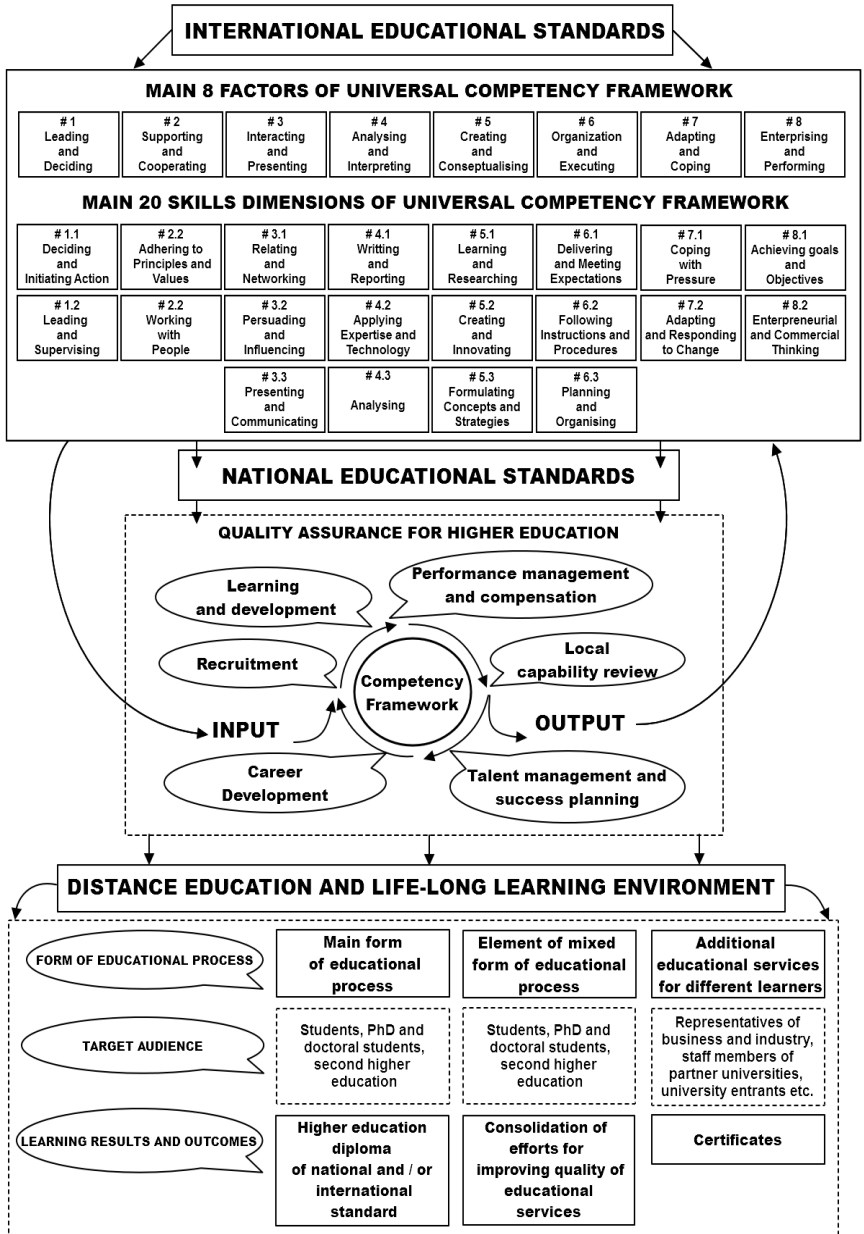


Figure 1. Distance education and life-long learning in prism of postmodern paradigm

Sustainable development of university depends on its educational environment flexibility, especially from such factors as digital literacy of its staff and readiness to provide educational services in e-learning format. Thus universities to be competitive on international level should have staff of high-experienced and well-trained educators, required material-technical base and methodical support as like as required level of readiness of their abroad structural units (i.e. educational centers, faculties etc.) to provide educational services for learners on high quality level.

Our university - Kharkiv Petro Vasylenko National Technical University of Agriculture - has started to provide distance learning services long before the COVID-2019 pandemic that is why capacity of its informational environment and digital infrastructure allowed us to perform smooth transition to distance learning during term of quarantine restrictions introduction.

Traditionally administration of Kharkiv Petro Vasylenko National Technical University of Agriculture provides needed resources and informational-methodical support for its learners and educators for training them to work within modular object-oriented dynamic environment Moodle and on digital online platform Google meet. Also for all participants of educational process are provided free corporate access to Scopus and Web of Science digital resources.

Digitization of educational content for each discipline was carried out long before threat of mentioned above pandemic, including lecture texts, guidelines for preparation for seminars and workshops, guidelines for students' independent work, multi-level sets and other tasks for module and final control. Additional attention was paid to digitization of engine components and mechanisms for online calculations and work with digital models that takes additional human and material resources. Distance learning environment also helps in preparation of university entrants and providing additional educational services as like as advanced training corporate courses for representatives of relevant industries [2, p. 341].

Aimed on studying of COVID-2019 pandemic impact on quality and other aspects of distance education, UNESCO Department "Philosophy of Human Communication", Social Sciences and Humanities has conducted relevant sociological survey among participants of e-learning process. And its results show that: 49.2% of respondents believe that distance learning develops self-control skills; 43.9% - that it promotes development of independence in work with important and required information.

Amazing that vast majority of students consider e-learning materials are completely understandable, but at the same time admit that on the start of distance learning they have faced with difficulties in adaptation to on-line classes that is related with mental-psychological readiness for communication in digital educational environment and interaction with machine-learning technologies (i.e. key aspects of engineering psychology) [7, p. 230]. Among other advantages and disadvantages of distance education in postmodern perspective analyzed in prism of its positive and controversial aspects we can list only few of them relevant to most of contemporary universities around the world (see figure 2).

Conclusions and perspectives for further discussion of obtained results we can start from point that competencies, acquired by students during distance learning in form of behavioral patterns that work as tools to achieve desired learning outcomes.

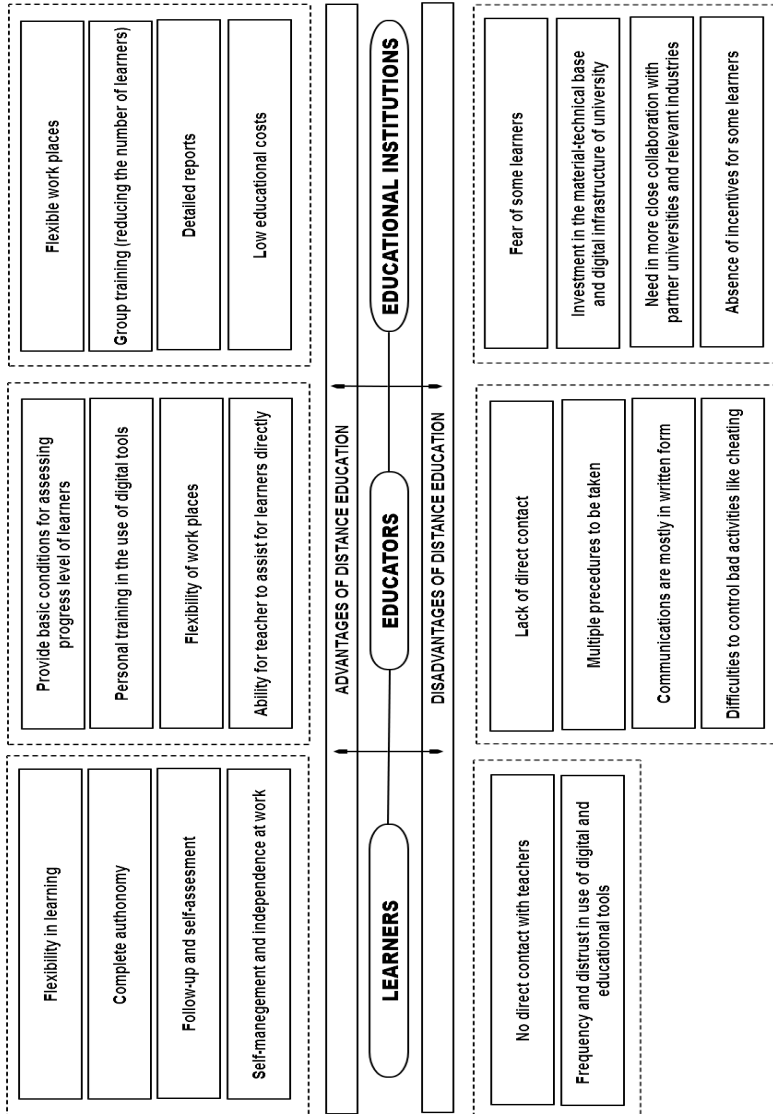


Figure 2. General aspects of distance education [3]

Competences in business context (i.e. additional educational services for different groups of learners) are tools that support the achievement of goals in context of a particular organization strategy (i.e. thematic corporate training). Even if in text of national educational standard competence is mentioned as capability, but irrespective of used term, in the context of distance learning focus is on behavioral aspects of learner not on his/her technical knowledge or skills.

Nowadays students and higher educational institutions embrace distance learning also as brilliant chance. The advantages of distance learning are: flexibility (opportunity to present course material, taking into account training levels and abilities of students); relevance (possibility to introduce for wider audience latest pedagogical, psychological, methodological developments); convenience (ability of studying at convenient time, in certain place, getting an education without leaving main job, no time limits for learning the material); modularity (material is divided into separate functionally complete topics, which are studied as they are mastered and correspond to abilities of individual learner or students group as a whole); cost-effectiveness (this method of teaching is cheaper than traditional, due to the efficient use of educational facilities, easier adjustment of e-learning materials and multi-access to them); ability to simultaneously use educational information in large scope by any number of students; interactivity (active communication between students in group and their teacher, which significantly increases the motivation to learn, improves assimilation of material); greater opportunities for controlling quality of education, which include discussions, chats, the use of self-control, the absence of psychological barriers; lack of geographical boundaries for education (chosen courses can be studied in different educational institutions around the world). Special interest is analysis which aspects of e-learning will remain in next generation of education, when threat of COVID-19 no longer being main emergency factor for society.

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