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## THE MAIN DIRECTIONS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

**Abstract.** Compared to traditional forms of education, distance education optimally develops students' independence, activity, awareness, and creativity, effectively solves the strategic issues facing modern teacher training in the information society. The irreplaceable role and place of increasing the quality and effectiveness of higher education also highlight the relevance of distance education. It is also advantageous in terms of creating the same opportunity for them to study regardless of their place of residence, health status, the standard of living and financial support. On the other hand, distance education is also very profitable financially. It allows you to study without incurring additional costs (transport, housing and other expenses). It is these indicated factors that indicate the importance and relevance of the topic chosen for research. Integration into the world, globalization, rapid processes of information lead to significant changes in all spheres of modern society and increase the role of human capital as the main factor in the successful development of the state. Changes in the education system, especially in higher education, led to the need for talented, competitive specialists who can meet the needs of society and the state, along with their self-education, the issue of informatization of education. The application of distance education technologies in all areas was in the focus of attention of national leader Heydar Aliyev many years ago and in connection with this, he adopted the “National Strategy for information and communication technologies for the development of the Republic of Azerbaijan” covering 2003–2012 [5]. As a continuation of this, the announcement of 2013 by the head of state Mr. Ilham Aliyev as the “Year of Information-communication technologies” in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the foundation of the University of Information Technologies is one of the steps aimed at informatization of society and, accordingly, the training of competent and competent specialists. At the same

time, starting from 2007–2008, the use of electronic testing technologies for innovative development of Education, current and final assessment of the quality of education was started at the Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University. At the joint initiative of the administrative, professor and teaching staff, technical specialists of the university, the conduct of test exams has become more organized, which allowed students to more accurately test their knowledge using electronic resources. In addition, the experience of Azerbaijan on the informatization of education was presented at the “ITU World Telecom 2009” forum held in Geneva from October 5 to 9, 2009. At the events held in connection with this forum representatives of many countries were given information about the creation of the Azerbaijan Education Network (AZEDUNET), Information and Resource Center, “Electronic School”, as well as the National Education Program, and the achievements of the country in the field of application of information technologies were demonstrated. The transition to the information society makes the problem of the formation of modern thinking in the new generation even more urgent, creates the need for fundamental changes in education and creates a fundamental basis for students' adaptation to education and strengthening of distance learning tendencies. In modern conditions, young personnel must not only master the knowledge of their specialty, but also master the latest achievements of science and technology, be able to use distance education tools, and search for new sources of information to improve themselves every day.

**Key words:** modern teacher; integration; globalization; distance training; education.

## **INTRODUCTION / ВСТУП**

**Formulation of the problem.** Distance learning skills are formed in the course of independent activity through sources of information, in the search for information as an ability determined by the psychological and intellectual indicators of each student.

The main goal of the educational reform being carried out in our country is to make distance learning and independent activity of students one of the centers of attraction for education. From this point of view, the training of independent, competitive and enterprising personnel with creative thinking, universal knowledge, modern and broad outlook is one of the main goals of the education system [8]. In this regard, the main goal of using distance learning technologies in education is to form students' interest in self-education, prepare them for this activity systematically, consistently and purposefully, instilling in

them the necessary skills for independent activity. Thus, the introduction of distance learning into the educational environment leads to a fundamental change in the educational process. Proceeding from this, one of the national priorities in our republic is the informatization of education.

Mr. President puts forward the opinion that only in this case the younger generation can be formed as professional personnel in accordance with the requirements of the time. In his opinion, both logistics and modernization of the educational process should be carried out at the same level in each educational institution. Only then can the desired result be achieved. World experience shows that even the most prestigious universities are never satisfied with a well-deserved status. They are constantly striving for innovation. Therefore, reforms in higher education should be permanent. In other words, constant monitoring of scientific innovations, their comprehension, establishing relationships with higher schools with progressive experience can contribute to our education reaching the world level in the true sense of the word [3].

**Analysis of major research and publications.** When organizing distance learning, the solution of additional tasks in the organization of the educational process of the university also reveals the following needs:

- Creation of a pedagogical theory of continuous development of the individual based on the achievements of psychology, sociology, cultural studies, philosophy in order to ensure the unity of the processes of education, upbringing and development;
- comprehensive integration of universities with priority areas of scientific research on the initiative of both public and private organizations;
- integrated application of new information technologies in the educational process of the university;
- training of mobile, enterprising, creatively thinking specialists who are ready for continuous self-education throughout their lives.

We analyzed several papers to determine the degree of elaboration of the dissertation work N. Abdullaeva [1] «The program of self-education of teachers in pedagogy», R. Makhmudova [4] «Opportunities and ways of independent work of students in higher education», A. Alieva [5], I. Dzhabrailov [2] «Azerbaijani education in the period of independence: theoretical and practical aspects» and the works of other Azerbaijani researchers widely covered the issues of self-education and independent work. G. Akhmedov [3], R. Aligulieva, R. Makhmudova [4] and others in their works have widely considered issues related to distance education. Among foreign teachers M. Ali [6], T. Arat [7], R. Sagitova [10] and others raised in their works such issues as distance learning, self-education, learning to learn.

## AIM AND TASKS / МЕТА ТА ЗАВДАННЯ

The main **purpose** of the study is to study the main criteria for the development of the organization of distance learning for students in higher educational institutions.

In accordance with the goal, the following main objectives of the **study** are defined:

1. Determine the degree of development of the problem and the socio-historical prerequisites for the development of educational activities of students in the context of distance planning and organization of education.

2. Theoretically substantiate the motivational-activity approach, which determines the strategy for the development of students' educational activities in the conditions of distance planning and organization of training in higher educational institutions.

3. Prepare and theoretically substantiate the pedagogical concept of the development of distance learning for students in the context of the development of distance education.

4. Develop a model for the development of distance activities of students in the context of informatization of education, identify examples and justify its technology.

5. To identify and justify the possibility of creating optimal conditions for the development of distance learning activities of students by creating a distance learning environment at the university.

6. Determine the success of the process of developing distance activities of students in the context of informatization of education, develop possible criteria and indicators and theoretically substantiate them.

## THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS / ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ОСНОВИ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

The theoretical basis of the study is the study of the main provisions of the modern theory of the experience of foreign countries and Azerbaijan in the field of distance education of students' activities in the field of planning and organizing distance education of higher educational institutions, the adopted concepts and strategies for organizing distance learning. The theoretical significance of the study lies in the creation of a working system for the development of distance learning activities in the conditions of distance learning activities of students in the conditions of distance organization and planning of education in higher educational institutions that are of great socio-economic importance in the training of future teachers. The study includes theoretical

provisions related to distance education, personal development and the use of information technology, and the motivational-activity approach is presented in the work from the point of view of methodological regulation of the process of distance education development. The activity of students in the conditions of remote activity is described, as well as the organization and planning of training in the form of distance education in higher educational institutions is theoretically substantiated.

In the conditions of informatization of education, the main criteria for the availability of skills in organizing distance educational activities can be called the following:

- create an independent task based on the information received or be able to see the problem in a normal state;
- propose a method for analyzing, collecting and processing data;
- draw conclusions and see the possibilities of practical application of the obtained results;
- evaluate the results of their work and prove their correctness;
- use the possibilities of information technologies.

Thus, the introduction of distance learning into the educational environment leads to a fundamental change in the educational process. Proceeding from this, one of the national priorities in our republic is the informatization of education. Even in highly developed countries, the main financial resources are directed to the education and training of ICT-literate specialists.

Experience shows that the development of distance education plays an important role in addressing a number of the following issues:

- increases knowledge and experience to live and act in modern society;
- introduction of new forms and methods into the learning process improves the quality of education;
- gives every person of any age the opportunity to learn and improve their knowledge.

Informatization of education is the process of providing education with modern information technologies, along with theoretical and practical work carried out in educational institutions in the psychological and pedagogical direction. Informatization is an important condition for the implementation and management of educational activities, an important factor in the development of society.

The process of distance planning and organization of education in higher education institutions begins with equipping educational institutions with distance learning technologies, preparing electronic textbooks and personnel in this field. In the training of personnel for organizing and managing the distance

educational process, important issues are the creation of an educational and methodological base, the preparation of educational and methodological literature, and the organization of information infrastructure.

On March 28, 2013, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan adopted Decree No 2815 on approving the tasks defined in the field of information and communication technologies in accordance with the Development Concept "Azerbaijan 2020: Vision of the Future" and the "Action Plan for declaring 2013 the Year of Information and Communication Technologies" in the Azerbaijan Republic.

As you know, the lack of computers is the main factor slowing down the process of planning and organizing distance learning in higher education institutions. In accordance with the solution of this problem, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, by his order dated August 15, 2004, approved the "Program for providing general education schools in the Republic of Azerbaijan with information and communication technologies". After the implementation of this program, local production of computers was stimulated, software for managing educational institutions was developed, e-textbook portals were created, many educational institutions were provided with Internet access, etc. [6].

The distance learning process plays an important role in improving the quality of education as an important strategic issue, providing opportunities for students to receive higher education, forming self-education, interest and aspirations for learning, training national personnel in the field of ICT. Today, among our achievements are the creation of the Institute of Information Technologies at ANAS, the preparation of intellectual projects based on ICT in various fields, the creation and development of computer networks and systems. In the future, success in education, as in other areas, will depend on the development of information and communication technologies and their correct use.

Distance learning in higher educational institutions provides high-quality educational services of the following content:

- the necessary information is stored in memory for a long time;
- creates favorable opportunities in such matters as self-education of teachers, advanced training, attestation;
- the acquisition of knowledge is facilitated, conditions are created for the use of rapidly updated information, self-educational activities, etc.

As people around the world adapt to new ways of working, learning and communicating, we are seeing new trends emerge and evolve. In 2020, Future Learn commissioned You Gov to conduct a global study to explore the future of learning. The main themes of this study were personal development and career

aspirations, the power of education and online learning, and expectations for the future of education. According to research, self-education in the digital age is easier than ever. This is largely due to round the clock news and access to various websites that provide a constant flow of information. Perhaps not surprisingly, social networks play an important role in the organization of distance education. The study found that millennials (those born between 1981 and 1996) and Generation Z (those born after 1997) use all platforms to educate themselves. For example, 37% of Generation Z and 22% of Millennials use social media for learning. Referring to this information, it should be noted that information and communication technologies play an irreplaceable role in the development of self-education.

It is an undeniable fact that the development of human potential and the level of knowledge is higher in countries that pay attention to education and its organization. In recent years, in order to further improve the level of education in our country, schools have been built that meet new modern requirements, the material and technical base of educational institutions has been strengthened, textbooks have been updated, strategies and concepts have been developed. Therefore, in terms of literacy, Azerbaijan is ahead of many neighboring countries.

Despite the work done in the direction of the development of education, there are still problems that have not been fully resolved. One of them is that distance education, specified in the Law "On Education" as a form of education, is not widely used in higher education. For example, in connection with the coronavirus pandemic, which is one of the important problems of the current year, there is a need for online learning in educational institutions. Although teachers tried to conduct online lessons with programs such as "Teams", "Zoom", "Ekurs.az", they were not able to achieve the desired results. Despite all the planned efforts, the problems that arose in the first period were the lack of an Internet line at home for many students, the lack of psychological preparation of teachers and students for online classes, the lack of experience in the field of online communication, and the lack of skills in using IT equipment, lack of material and technical base in higher educational institutions, etc. However, in developed countries, the system of distance education quickly penetrated into all spheres of society. To do this, in such unforeseen situations, the most important goal and task of all higher education institutions should be to ensure the content and quality of distance learning, as well as their integration. However, it should be especially noted that over the past two years we have managed to achieve results that we have not achieved in ten years in the field of

distance education.

Distance education is one of the forms of lifelong education and implements human rights to receive education and information. It expands the educational opportunities of citizens within the country. Distance learning allows schoolchildren, students, the unemployed, military and legal entities to take advantage of the scientific and educational potential of leading universities, institutes, centers for advanced training and professional exchange. Distance education provides conditions for additional education along with the main activity and training.

Following the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, teaching in all educational institutions was temporarily suspended from March 3, 2020 in order to prevent the spread of the virus in Azerbaijan. A form of distance learning was introduced to overcome interruptions in education. Classes were organized through various platforms and applications, teachers conducted online training. Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams programs were widely used in organizing online classes [4].

#### **RESEARCH METHODS / МЕТОДИ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ**

The complexity and versatility of the topic under study requires reliance on a system of approaches aimed at the unity of personality, activity, society and cognition, which allows presenting various facts, patterns and dependencies of the development of students' ICT skills in the form of a unified theory. The methodological guidelines of the study are: a systematic approach to planning and organizing universities in a remote form and determining the systematic development of students' remote activities in the context of informatization of education in this direction; activity approach – empirical (test, observation, survey, conversation, interview); statistical (data collection, statistical summary, processing, generalization and description); pedagogical diagnostics; experimental (carrying out experimental studies, expert assessments) [9].

#### **RESEARCH RESULTS / РЕЗУЛЬТАТИ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ**

At the present stage of development of society, in the context of organizing and planning distance learning in higher education institutions, it became necessary to rethink the role of distance learning for students. Thus, the process of development of distance learning for students is one of the factors that meet the needs of the individual, society and the state. Targeted distance learning activity is an activity guided by the needs and motives of the students themselves, expressed in the setting of independent tasks, the search for ways to



achieve them in order to gain new knowledge and work experience. The organization of distance learning gives each student the freedom to choose their own path of learning throughout their lives. The organization and planning of distance learning in higher education institutions is an interconnected structure focused on the needs and capabilities of students. The structure and content of education, the integration of pedagogical technologies in combination with general educational goals presupposes the unity of the components.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH / ВИСНОВКИ ТА ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ ПОДАЛЬШИХ ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ**

The pedagogical concept of the development of educational activities of students in the conditions of distance organization and planning of education in higher educational institutions is based on the combination of these provisions:

- within the framework of the educational process of the university, the activity of distance education provides not only acquired knowledge, skills, but also individual distance education and personal development throughout life;
- the process of distance learning at a university involves the gradual formation of the student's subjective position, and motivation is built on the basis of an activity approach;
- the use of information technologies in the distance learning process of the university is based on the principles of their integration with pedagogical technologies;
- the development of educational activities of students in a distance form occurs in the process of solving problems on the basis of a conscious, independent choice, determining ways to achieve the goals, evaluating the final result, generalizing cognitive, personal and subject experience obtained in certain situations close to reality;
- continuous distance learning of students occurs under the influence of an innovative educational environment.

**Prospects for further research in this direction.** Based on the above, we come to the conclusion that in recent years the widespread use of computer technology in education has greatly facilitated the organization of distance learning for students. Thus, information and computer technologies optimize the academic discipline, distance learning, activities, the study of foreign languages, self-study, in-depth assimilation of professional knowledge, and the educational process of educational work. The use of information technology allows students to actively engage in work, acquire knowledge, improve the level of distance education and professionalism.

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## ОСНОВНІ НАПРЯМИ ДИСТАНЦІЙНОГО НАВЧАННЯ СТУДЕНТІВ У ВИЩИХ НАВЧАЛЬНИХ ЗАКЛАДАХ

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**Анотація.** Порівняно з традиційними формами навчання дистанційна освіта оптимально розвиває самостійність, активність, свідомість, креативність студентів, ефективно вирішує стратегічні завдання, що постають перед підготовкою сучасного вчителя в інформаційному суспільстві. Незамінна роль і місце підвищення якості та ефективності вищої освіти також підкреслюють актуальність дистанційної освіти. Це також вигідно з погляду створення для них однакової можливості навчатися незалежно від місця проживання, стану здоров'я, рівня життя та матеріального забезпечення. З іншого боку, дистанційна освіта також дуже вигідна у фінансовому плані. Це дозволяє навчатися без додаткових витрат (транспорт, житло та інші витрати). Саме ці вказані чинники свідчать про важливість та актуальність теми, обраної для дослідження. Інтеграція у світ, глобалізація, стрімкі інформаційні процеси призводять до суттєвих змін в усіх сферах сучасного суспільства та підвищують роль людського капіталу як головного чинника успішного розвитку держави. Зміни в системі освіти, особливо у вищій, зумовили потребу в талановитих, конкурентоспроможних спеціалістах, здатних задовольнити потреби суспільства і держави, поряд із їх самоосвітою, питання інформатизації освіти. Застосування технологій дистанційної освіти у всіх сферах було в центрі уваги національного лідера Гейдара Алієва багато років тому, і в зв'язку з цим він прийняв «Національну стратегію інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій для розвитку Азербайджанської Республіки», яка охоплює 2003–2012 рр. [5]. Як продовження цього, оголошення 2013 року главою держави паном Ільхамом Алієвим «Роком інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій» в Азербайджанській Республіці, заснування Університету інформаційних технологій є одним із кроків, спрямованих на

інформатизація суспільства і, відповідно, підготовка компетентних і компетентних спеціалістів. У той же час, починаючи з 2007–2008 років, в Азербайджанському державному педагогічному університеті було розпочато використання технологій електронного тестування для інноваційного розвитку освіти, поточного та підсумкового оцінювання якості освіти. За спільної ініціативи адміністративно-викладацького та професорсько-викладацького складу, технічних спеціалістів університету проведення тестових іспитів стало більш організованим, що дозволило студентам точніше перевіряти свої знання за допомогою електронних ресурсів. Крім того, досвід Азербайджану з інформатизації освіти було представлено на форумі «ITU World Telecom 2009», який проходив у Женеві з 5 по 9 жовтня 2009 року. Про створення Азербайджанської Освітньої Мережі (AZEDUNET), Інформаційно-Ресурсного Центру, «Електронної Школи», а також Національної Освітньої Програми, було продемонстровано досягнення країни у галузі застосування інформаційних технологій. Перехід до інформаційного суспільства робить ще більш актуальною проблему формування сучасного мислення нового покоління, породжує необхідність кардинальних змін у освіті та створює фундаментальну основу для адаптації студентів до навчання та посилення тенденцій дистанційного навчання. У сучасних умовах молоді кадри мають не тільки оволодівати знаннями за фахом, а й останніми досягненнями науки і техніки, вміти користуватися засобами дистанційної освіти, шукати нові джерела інформації для щоденного самовдосконалення.

**Ключові слова:** сучасний учитель; інтеграція; глобалізація; дистанційне навчання; освіта.

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