

UDC 027.54:001.32(477):005.963:[37.041+37.018.43]

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Distance Learning as an Efficient Way to Stimulate Self-Education of Librarians of Scientific Institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

Objective. The research is aimed at the representation of distance learning as an efficient way to stimulate self-education of librarians of scientific institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. **Methods.** The research results were obtained due to the application of a complex of general and special methods of scientific knowledge, among which the systematic and logical approach, structural-functional and information-analytical methods were decisive. **Results.** The library is substantiated as a conceptual component of a fundamental stabilizing society development factor in Ukraine under the conditions of global challenges of the 21st century. The work reveals functioning of the advanced training system for librarians of scientific institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine under the quarantine. The **conclusions** reasoned the expediency and for the first time proposed the necessity of creating a virtual university on the basis of the V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine.

Keywords: distance learning; virtual university; self-education; V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine; National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

Introduction

The rapid digital development promoted modernization of the modern education system and personalization of the educational process, actualization of lifelong learning and transformation of advanced training strategies. Scientists interpret distance learning as a form of educational organization, when participants are distant from each other in space and time and communicate through technical and technological means. With such an organization of education, which becomes more accessible and universal, the educational process occurs in a place convenient for everyone and at an agreed time. Therefore, the difference between distance learning and traditional learning is obvious in terms of interaction forms between the educational process participants, the involvement of innovative methods and tools of learning. It should be noted that distance learning has long been widespread in the world, and with the introduction of quarantine restrictions caused by COVID-19, it has become the most popular. For example, in Canada, as an alternative to traditional education, virtual universities have long been established, where everyone can get an education on basic distance courses at the basis of any university. Athabasca University (Canada) founded in 1970 following the example of the British Open University, uses television, electronic curriculum technologies and distance education tools to provide lifelong learning. Courses and programs are implemented considering the needs of the country's economy. The main target audience of this university are students who already have work experience and continue to work during their studies (Oros, 2018). The Canadian Virtual University, a consortium of 11 leading universities in the country, and the Telelearning University of Quebec operate on the same principle.

Thus, virtual education is distance learning that occurs through the Internet and requires certain efforts (internal motivation, self-organization, discipline), which contributes to real results.

Methods

The research results were obtained due to the application of a complex of general and special methods of scientific knowledge. In particular, the use of a systemic approach made it possible to justify the library as a conceptual component of a fundamental stabilizing factor of the society development in Ukraine. The logical method revealed, and the descriptive method presented the distance learning of the librarians of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine as a proven means of stimulating self-education. In the way of scientific knowledge of distance learning as an effective means of stimulating self-education using the methodological tools of source study analysis and synthesis, the publications of recent years were included in the circle of our research. The application of the structural-functional method contributed to the revealing of the functioning of the advanced training system characteristics for librarians of scientific institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in modern conditions. The information and analytical method made it possible to argue the expediency and necessity of creating a virtual university on the basis of V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine.

Analysis of the latest research

The relevance of the chosen topic is evidenced by the constant attention of practicing teachers and scientists to the issues of the essence of reforming the national education system, which is aimed to preserve centuries-old traditions and best assets. N. Bachynska, V. Kasian, O. Klymenko, T. Kolesnykova, T. Novalska, A. Solianyk, M. Tsyvin, I. Shevchenko and others highlighted the peculiarities of the specialists training in the speciality 029 “Information, library science, archival affair,” which includes such issues as the development of modern forms of the educational process, the introduction of innovative methods, and the adaptation of tools and means of distance learning. O. Klymenko and O. Sokur thoroughly illuminate the achievements and prospects of the advanced training organization for the librarians of scientific institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in the conditions of global challenges of the 21st century (2021a, 2021b). The publications of T. Kolesnykova and O. Matveyeva (2019, 2021) are devoted to the study of the foreign experience of university libraries in working with open educational resources (Open Textbook, OT, video lectures, etc.) and the prospects of starting a similar project in Ukraine.

Results and Discussion

In European countries, open universities of distance education have been created, when several institutions of higher education implement distance programs in cooperation. For example, the Virtual University of Bavaria (Germany) is a community of 32 state or state-recognized universities in Bavaria. All online courses are developed by professors from Bavarian universities, the vast majority of which are taught in German, only a fifth in English. Open courses in the university program are designed for everyone with sufficient level of language proficiency and are free of charge. They cover a wide range of academic-level themes (Lutsk National Technical University, n.d.; Deineha, 2021). According to Zou Chengzhang (2016), “the virtual university itself not only changes the cultural environment, but also acts as a product of these changes, embodying the basic principles of open education with its own existence” (authors’ transl.).

In November 2005, the Central and Eastern European Virtual University (CEEVU) was founded in Ukraine on the basis of the National Technical University of Ukraine “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute.” It was implemented under the auspices of UNESCO. This project

involved 12 technical higher education institutions from eight countries of the region. Each of them developed the courses in which this particular institution specializes and is competitive in the market (Bohuslavska, 2005).

Therefore, a virtual university is a distributed educational institution. It does not have a separate building, but functions only through communication between institutions of higher education based on the pooling the information resources, which are jointly developed and used by participants (Lviv State University of Life Safety, n.d.). The methods of such education involve the use of new information technologies including television and computer networks, multimedia, etc. Currently, teleuniversities, tutoring centres (multimedia training), information centres (Internet training) are gaining popularity in the world.

These forms of distance education and self-education open new prospects for the organization of librarians training in the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (NAS of Ukraine) because the advanced training of librarians takes an important place in the scientific-methodical and scientific-organizational work of the V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine (VNLU), a methodological centre of the library network of the NAS of Ukraine. The Department of Scientific and Methodological Work of the Institute of Library Science of VNLU coordinates this activity. In accordance with the plans of advanced training of librarians of VNLU and the libraries of scientific institutions of the NAS of Ukraine, this department organizes seminars, workshops, lectures, trainings, internships, and working meetings in all areas of library and information activities.

We interpret the distance learning of librarians of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine as a proven means of stimulating self-education, which, due to its speed, results in a significant increase in the initial value of the acquired competencies, a significant increase in the professional level, and a real increase in the possibility of career growth. It should be noted that, on the one hand, realities of the present (globalization, digitalization, information technology, European integration, social transformations, war, etc.) induce a paradigm shift in the training of specialists for the library and information sector in Ukraine. On the other hand, it is the invasive nature of the library as a special social institution designed to provide access to information and knowledge 24/7 that is a conceptual basis of humanistic character of sustainable development of society and is realized in the cultural development of society through the introduction of actual trends and new services in the post-print period. That is, today the library has become a fundamental stabilizing factor and a holistic platform for the development of civil society due to the ability of adequate response to the challenges of the time (professional legal assistance, professional digital skill training, multipronged activities during the war).

The quarantine, which was introduced in Ukraine in March 2020 to prevent the spread of an infectious disease caused by the coronavirus infection COVID-19, forced the reorientation of the advanced training system for library workers of scientific institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine to a new format – remote one. Thereby, practical steps to the formation of new information and communication competencies of network specialists were initiated.

All activities on advanced training of librarians of scientific institutions of NAS of Ukraine in 2020-2021 were conducted in online and mixed format: consulting, informing, questioning, seminars, lectures, conferences. From the very beginning of the quarantine restrictions, individual consultations of library specialists of scientific institutions of the NAS of Ukraine were arranged, which were conducted in telephone mode using e-mail and a Viber group (accounting and preservation of funds, subscription, access to foreign databases, exhibition work, legal issues, etc.). Collective information was regularly provided, in particular, regarding current regulatory legal acts and the updated operation mode, the functioning of free platforms for improving professional competencies, etc.

Among the VNLU activities for the employees of scientific institutions of the NAS of Ukraine in 2020–2021 the following seminars planned by the leading scientific libraries of Ukraine were organized: “Institution Profile in the Web of Science: Functions, Possibilities, Creation, Correction” (February 13, 2020), “Library of the Scientific Institution: Results, Tasks and Activity Priorities” (December 3, 2020) (librarians of Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Lviv for the first time met on the online platform Zoom), “Modern Trends of Exhibition Activity of Libraries of Scientific Institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine” (March 2, 2021), “Modern Subject Cataloguing in Scientific Libraries: Theoretical and Practical Aspects” (April 6, 2021), “Electronic Exhibition: New Opportunities in the Digital Age” (June 16, 2021), “Interaction of Academic Libraries in the Conditions of the Development of the Electronic Communication System: Tasks and Main Activity Areas” (December 14, 2021). There was also organized an overview lecture on free educational courses and scientific and communicative events (April 22, 2021) (Klymenko & Sokur, 2021b).

Let us note that the topic of the events is defined by the key requirements of users that are decisive for the organization of information and communication activities of the network under conditions of digitalization: creation of thematic electronic databases, work with the library fund, popularization of the achievements of Ukrainian science in the world through the preparation of bibliographic indices and electronic exhibitions, which are a reference point for the further development of advanced training system for library employees of scientific institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Klymenko & Sokur, 2021a).

Traditionally, VNLU cooperation with Ukrainian and foreign institutions of higher education develops in several time-tested directions, in particular, international cooperation is implemented through document exchange, organization, and joint participation in scientific events (symposia, conferences, round tables, etc.), membership in editorial boards of specialized publications.

Since February 24, 2022 Ukraine is in a state of war because of the treacherous attack of the Russian Federation, which finally confirmed the expediency of organizing continuing education in a remote format as a process aimed at the all-round development of the individual, systematic updating of knowledge, and improvement of professional competence. Therefore, a promising direction is the establishment of a virtual university on the basis of the V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine through partnership interaction with Ukrainian branch institutions of higher education, and in the future – with leading universities of the world. This form of training, which will be held in close cooperation between librarians-practitioners and teachers, will contribute to the further training of highly qualified personnel in the speciality 029 “Information, library science, archival affair” of the scientific industry “Social communications” for library and information sphere of Ukraine.

Today, there is an urgent need to change the strategy of student practice and internship programs in the educational institutions of the country. Training on the basis of libraries as promising employers will positively affect the quality of training of future specialists due to the organic combination of theoretical and practical components of a high-quality educational process, will help the conscious choice of a profession and full self-realization. In the future, this will positively affect the development and progress of librarianship in Ukraine, optimal integration of national information space into the world one.

Conclusions

The change in the paradigm of specialists training for the library and information sphere of Ukraine is caused by such factors as globalization, digitalization, information technology,

European integration, social transformations, war, etc. The century-old experience of the system of advanced training for librarians of scientific institutions of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, for which the V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine is the main methodical centre, allows speaking about the systematic nature of such work and the intellectual potential and scientific resource for creating a virtual university based on the main library of the country.

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Дистанційне навчання як дієвий засіб стимулювання самоосвіти бібліотечних працівників наукових установ Національної академії наук України

Мета. Дослідження зосереджене на репрезентації дистанційного навчання як дієвого засобу стимулювання самоосвіти бібліотечних працівників наукових установ Національної академії наук України. **Методика.** Результати дослідження отримані завдяки застосуванню комплексу загальних та спеціальних методів наукового пізнання, визначальними серед яких були системний підхід, логічний, структурно-функціональний та інформаційно-аналітичний методи. **Результати.** Обґрунтовано бібліотеку як концептуальний складник фундаментального стабілізуючого фактора розвитку суспільства в Україні в умовах глобальних викликів ХХІ ст. Розкрито функціонування особливостей системи підвищення кваліфікації бібліотечних працівників наукових установ Національної академії наук України в умовах карантинних обмежень. У **висновках** аргументовано доцільність і вперше запропоновано необхідність створення віртуального університету на базі Національної бібліотеки України імені В. І. Вернадського.

Ключові слова: дистанційне навчання; віртуальний університет; самоосвіта; Національна бібліотека України імені В. І. Вернадського; Національна академія наук України

Received: 15.07.2022

Accepted: 20.11.2022