

Pros and Cons of Distant learning

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1.PROS AND CONS OF ONLINE LEARNING

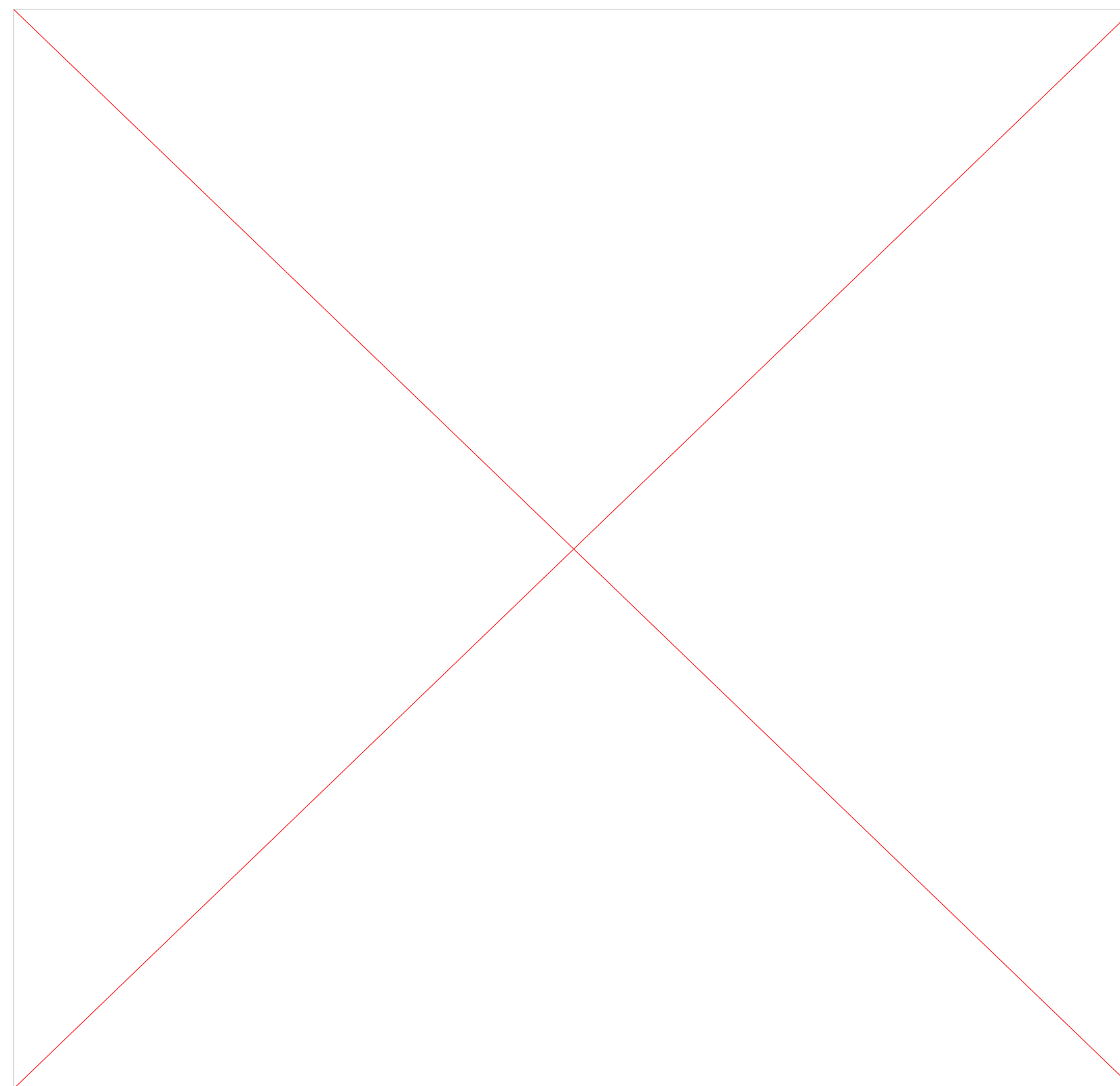
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Distance education: advantages and disadvantages of the point of view of education and society

Educação a distância: vantagens e desvantagens do ponto de vista da educação e da sociedade

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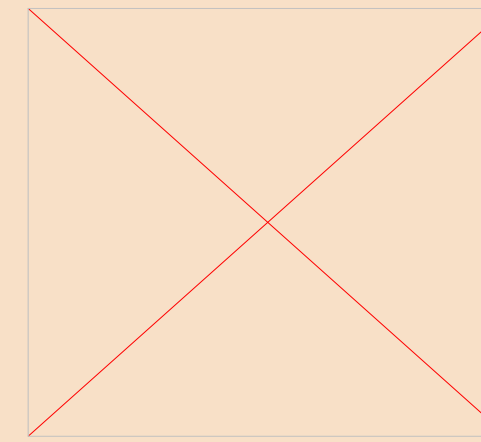
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Abstract: This article aims to identify the main advantages and disadvantages of distance education for both students and the educational enterprise. The methodological procedure chosen was an exploratory case study aiming at an analysis of how effective this modality can be in relation to other traditional forms of teaching. In the course of the research it was possible to identify that the main advantage for the institution is the increase in the number of students attended. From the student's point of view, the main advantage is the flexibility offered by distance learning courses. It is possible that the distance modality continues to grow steadily, but it still seems utopian to say that at some point in the history of education, face-to-face teaching will become obsolete and thus be totally replaced by EAD. Not all students have the profile required to enter a distance learning course.

Keywords: Distance education. Business. Educational Technologies.

Resumo: Este artigo pretende identificar as principais vantagens e desvantagens da educação a distância, tanto para estudantes, como para o empreendimento educacional. O procedimento metodológico escolhido foi o estudo de caso exploratório visando uma análise do quanto eficaz pode ser essa modalidade em relação às demais formas tradicionais de ensino. No decorrer da pesquisa, foi possível identificar que a principal vantagem para a instituição é a ampliação da quantidade de alunos atendidos. Do ponto de vista do discente, a principal vantagem consiste na flexibilidade oferecida pelos cursos ministrados a distância. É possível que a modalidade a distância permaneça em crescimento constante, mas ainda parece utópico dizer que em algum momento da história da educação, o ensino presencial venha a se tornar obsoleto e, dessa forma, seja totalmente substituído pelo EAD. Nem todos os alunos possuem o perfil necessário para ingressar num curso a distância.



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HEADS IN THE CLOUD: PROS AND CONS OF ONLINE LEARNING

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Abstract:

The present paper deals with possible positive and negative experiences of using online technologies in teaching and learning. Here, the word possible is central as completely generally applicable issues may hardly be traced. The aim of the paper is to highlight such advantages and disadvantages of online learning that tend to recur rather frequently in a number of pedagogical situations and contexts.

Keywords:

E-learning, online technologies, advantages, disadvantages, education research

1. INTRODUCTION

E-learning practices, similarly to other educational activities, require complex evaluation before they can be implemented in the process of teaching and learning. An integral part of such evaluation is the consideration of specific gains and losses of using particular education technologies, methodologies, etc. This consideration is rather crucial: it usually serves as the basis for various decisions whether concrete tools and methodologies could and should be applied in a specific pedagogical situation.¹

At the beginning, we would like to stress one important premise upon which we build the following discussion. It is the assumption that there are no e-learning advantages or disadvantages which we could hold as absolutely universal. Moreover, it could be quite inadvisable to mechanically adopt patterns and frameworks which were devised and tested in a different (cultural) context. We subscribe to the idea that decisions about educational technologies should always be made with increased awareness for the full range of conditions of each learning situation in question. Any list of generally applicable advantages and disadvantages of e-learning implementation can thus serve more as a source of inspiration framing the actual decision-making processes, rather than a set of hard and fast rules.

2. INVESTIGATING THE LEARNER'S POINT OF VIEW

2.1. Advantages

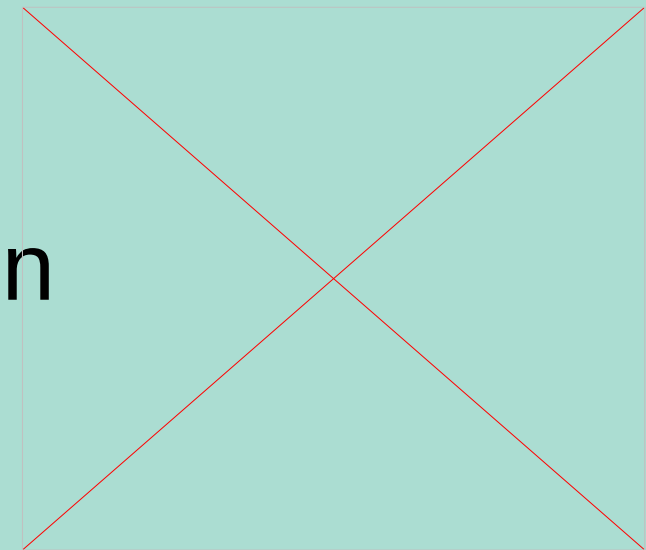
Given the recent boom in the development of Internet and mobile technologies, one of the major advantages for present-day learners is the almost unrestricted access to information, knowledge and learning. If allowed by concrete copyright regulations, various study materials in electronic form can be saved to personal computers and mobile devices, so that they are readily available for quick searching and information retrieval. Similarly, such digital materials can be stored and shared among a learning

¹ This paper is based on the recent publication *E-learning: Learning with online technologies* (2012) by J. Zounek a P. Sudický (in Czech). The original text has been shortened and edited to suit this volume.

Research Questions:

The research questions, the answers to which we try to find in this study, are:

1. What are the positive aspects of distance education in the university?
2. What are the negative aspects of distance education in the university?
3. Does distance education contribute to the development of students' independence and skills of self-education?
4. Can the traditional form of teaching in universities be replaced with distance



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THE PROS AND CONS OF DISTANCE LEARNING

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Abstract

Distance education is becoming more and more in demand in the Russian higher educational institutions and all over the world. This study is devoted to the analysis of both positive and negative features of distance education. The positive features include: access to education for a wide range of people; the chance to learn from home; the opportunity for students to save money on transport, accommodation, textbooks, etc. as well as for universities to spend less on renting lecture halls and salaries for a large staff. Students can also save time by studying only those subjects that seem necessary for them. Other positive features are: the opportunity to check the acquired information and receive feedback from the authors of the course; organization of training courses for working professionals with greater convenience. Besides distance courses form the ability to search and process information independently and develop the need for self-education, essential in the future career of a student. The negative features of distance education include: the absence of a continuous live communication between subjects of the educational process; insufficient time for developing skills, revision of the material; imperfection of the test system for assessing the knowledge gained; rapid obsolescence of lecture materials and, consequently, the need for their constant updating. The need for proctoring final attestation of students and constant moderation of the educational process together with unpreparedness of teaching staff of the majority of universities to create distance learning courses pose other serious problems.

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Keywords: Distance learning, education, innovative technologies in teaching, problems of distance learning, the advantages of distance learning, teaching in higher educational institution.

The present paper deals with possible positive and negative experiences of using online technologies in teaching and learning. Here, the word possible is central as completely generally applicable issues may hardly be traced. The aim of the paper is to highlight such advantages and disadvantages of online learning that tend to recur rather frequently in a number of pedagogical situations and contexts.



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