

**ANALYSIS OF VIRTUAL UNIVERSITIES ACTIVITY
ON THE EXAMPLE OF POLISH E-LEARNING PLATFORMS**

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Research methodology. The results were received by means of applying the following methods: comparison (the notions of virtual universities and a short overview of existing works on their classification), theoretical analysis (the importance of creating a universal classification of e-learning platforms), experiment (authors' classification and its detailed description; application of the classification is considered on the example of selection of 13 virtual universities of Poland), induction and deduction (the analysis of obtained results; further steps of the authors in the direction of virtual universities examination).

Results. The paper considers the phenomenon of e-learning platforms which presently occupy a growing niche at the Ukrainian market of educational services and which could soon become a complete replacement of a stationary education. The authors raise the question of the necessity to develop an expanded classification of virtual universities which will be universal for any of their types and will allow to conduct a thorough analysis of existing platforms, and which as well will be helpful for users in the process of selecting the optimal educational platform.

Novelty. The developed expanded classification allows to reveal major distinctions in the activity of e-learning platforms of any type and in any country. Statistical data received allow to improve understanding of the situation at the market of on-line education. Factors included into the classification reflect the most critical characteristics of virtual universities and help to analyze them from various perspectives.

Practical value. Practical value of the paper consists, first of all, in the fact that it was tested on the example of virtual universities operating in Poland. Such example allows to get a vision of the current state of Polish distant learning and also to compare the data with current situation in Ukraine. The developed classification contains a unique list of factors which should help to receive a full estimation of virtual universities from the point of view of different participants of the educational process, and to compile data on the number of users, teachers and courses types of study programs, possibility to obtain bachelor/master diploma or course certificate etc.

Keywords: e-learning platform, virtual platform, virtual university, classification, assessment.

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