

PROS AND CONS OF ONLINE EDUCATION

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Abstract

The physical classroom learning nowadays is no longer applicable for the current younger generations. Internet and distance learning which is generally known as online education plays a vital roles in the country's education system. It is undeniable that online education provides ample of benefits to young learners. Nevertheless, there are also many negative implications from online education. Limited collaborative learning, increase in time and effort are the several negative implications from online education. This study examines the implications of online education among students especially in a private higher learning institution and its effect towards Malaysian national education system. Information has been collected through surveys, interviews and together with secondary data, and were analysed using SPSS. The studies found that there are various serious issues regarding online education and on its effect on the quality of Malaysian Education System to certain extend. Several problems have been identified and these issues have to be solved in order to sustain the quality of education for future generations. Furthermore, Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) should formulate a standard policy, monitor closely the implementation of online education, evaluate and review the method used in teaching and upgrade to maintain the quality of online education in private higher education institution.

Key words: collaborative learning, ministry of higher education, malasyan education system

Introduction

Online teaching is **the process of educating others on virtual platforms**. This type of teaching involves live classes, video conferencing, webinars, and other online tools. The online teachers use digital resources to share with their students and are accessible to so many people. It provides a lot of freedom to individuals to learn, teach, and develop skills at their own pace. This type of teaching supports one-on-one basis interaction with the students. It makes them comfortable with tough subjects. Teaching online requires strong network connectivity and computing device systems. Nowadays, more mobile applications are developed as they are easily accessible by a large population. The mobile versions of the live teaching app have helped in increasing the attendance and registration of students.

Reasons for emergence of online teaching in India

With the lockdown situation as a result of COVID-19 academic activities of every educational institution come to a halt and the adverse effect of the same is widely visible among the learners. Fortunately, the technology advancement of 2020 provided the scope for creating the virtual classroom by making a bridge between the teachers with learners from their home. It is a big challenge now towards the teaching end to make online teaching more useful. The online teaching in India has got a long history with broadcasting space provided by the All- India Radio and the Door darshan for telecasting recorded educational programmes for not only higher education but also for school-going children. Though many educational institutions including UGC, IGNOU and NCERT using the services provided by All India Radio and Door darshan still there was a need for interaction from the learners to be fulfilled since all these broadcasting was in recorded form. In 1994 there was a paradigm shift as the ISROU provided the teleconferencing facility at IGNOU headquarter in New Delhi for the first time. It was a one-way video and two-way audio communication through phone line providing scope of live interaction for the learners. The teleconferencing facility was a booster for a large number of online courses like management studies, computer science and especially for teachers training in India. For several years a large number of educational institutions and various government and private organisations utilizing the service of teleconferencing provided by ISROU at IGNOU headquarter. In the year 2000, the teleconferencing got the recognition as an official education channel under the Gyan darshan platform. Along with other channels of Gyan darshan it was then made available in the DTH as GD-interactive channel. There was still the need for two-way video communication to be fulfilled. In 2005 an effort was made by ISROU in collaboration

with MHRD and IGNOU in this regard with the launching of EDUSAT satellite designed by late “APJ Abdool Kalam” during his tenure as President of India. Despite all efforts, EDUSAT could not fulfil the need as expected as the communication technology still to be developed to support such an initiative. In 2020 one may find it very easy today. But it is a fact that even 15 years back from today it was a big challenge to establish a two-way video communication between one to many.

Tools of online teaching

Digital learning tools that can be used by teachers and students to expand their knowledge and make learning easy and fun. It includes the following

- Google Classroom. ...
- Seesaw. ...
- Khan Academy. ...
- Pataskala. ...
- Kahoot.
- Google meet
- Zoom meetings
- Learning Management System(LMS)
- Teach mint
- Swayam
- Moocs
- Arpit

These are the important tools of online learning. Out of this, google meet is the most widely used technique of online learning. In google meet there is no time constraint, we can engage classes for many hours, but strong network is required. Learners can mute the video and audios and whenever required they can unmute and talk or clarify their doubts. It is possible to share the screen and make the learners to view it.

Advantages of online teaching:

One of the most oft-used terms after the pandemic is the term “new normal”. The new normal in education is the increased use of online teaching. All the educational institutions in the world are looking towards the online learning platforms. Today digital learning has become the important resource for learning by the students. Not only for studies, even for extra-curricular activities also are educational institutions using digital tools. Following are the advantages of online learning:

1. Efficiency: Online teaching offers an efficient way of delivering lessons to students. It has a number of tools such as videos, PDFs, podcasts etc which makes the online classes more interesting and efficient.

2. Accessibility of time and place:

Online classes allow students to attend classes from any location of their choice and it allows schools to reach out to a more extensive network of student. it allows the students to access the learning material at a time of their comfort .

3. Affordability:

Another advantage of online learning is reduced financial cost . online education eliminates the cost points of transportation ,meals and real estate. All the course are available online ,thus creating paper less learning which beneficial to the environment

Problems of online teaching :

Online student feedback is limited

In traditional classrooms, teachers can give students immediate face-to-face feedback. Students who are experiencing problems in the curriculum can resolve them quickly and directly either during the lecture or during the dedicated office hours. Personalized feedback has a positive impact on students, as it makes learning processes easier, all the while raising the motivation levels of the students .E-Learning, on the other hand, still tends to struggle with student feedback. Students completing regular assessments become dissatisfied when they experience [a lack of personalized feedback](#). The traditional methods of providing student feedback don’t always work in an E-Learning environment, and because of this, online education providers are forced to look towards alternative methods for providing feedback. Providing student feedback in an online setting is still a relatively unresearched

topic area, and it might take a while for any specific strategies to become fully research-based and proven to be effective.

E-Learning can cause social Isolation

The E-Learning methods currently practiced in education tend to make participating students undergo [contemplation, remoteness and a lack of interaction](#). As a result, many of the students and teachers who inevitably spend much of their time online can start experiencing signs of [social isolation](#), due to the lack of human communication in their lives. Social isolation coupled with a lack of communication often leads to several mental health issues such as heightened stress, anxiety, and negative thoughts.

E-Learning requires strong self-motivation and time management skill

[Lack of self-motivation](#) among students continues to be one of the primary reasons why students fail to complete online courses. In traditional classrooms, there are numerous factors which constantly push students towards their learning goals. Face-to-face communication with professors, peer-to-peer activities, and strict schedules all work in unison to keep the students from falling off track during their studies. In the setting of an online learning environment, however, there are fewer external factors which push the students to perform well. In many cases, the students are left to fend for themselves during their learning activities, without anyone constantly urging them on towards their learning goals. Students taking E-Learning courses will find that they are often required to learn difficult materials in a comfortable home setting without any of the added pressure normally associated with traditional colleges. As a result, keeping up with regular deadlines during online studies can become difficult for those students who lack strong self-motivation and time management

Lack of communicational skill development in online students

E-Learning methods are proven to be highly effective at improving the academic knowledge of the students. However, developing the communicational skills of the students is an area often neglected during online lessons. Due to the lack of face-to-face communication between peers, students and teachers in an online setting, the students might find that they are unable to work effectively in a team setting. Neglecting the communicational skills of the students will inevitably lead to many graduates who excel in theoretical knowledge, but who fail to pass their knowledge on to others.

Cheating prevention during online assessments is complicated

Unfortunately, one of the biggest disadvantages of E-Learning continues to be [cheating](#) through various methods. Compared to on-campus students, online students can cheat on assessments more easily as they take assessments in their own environment and while using their personal computer. The students cannot be directly observed during assessments without a video feed, making cheat detection during online assessments more complicated than for traditional testing procedures. Additionally, without a proper identity verification system in place, students taking online assessments might be able to let a third party take the assessment instead of themselves, resulting in a wholly fraudulent test result.

Online instructors tend to focus on theory rather than practice

Although this drawback of E-Learning is starting to be addressed and fixed by some of the more innovative online learning platforms, the problem has yet to disappear completely. The problem is that a large portion of E-Learning training providers choose to focus largely (in many cases entirely) on developing theoretical knowledge, rather than practical skills. The reason for this is evident – theoretical lectures are considerably easier to implement in an online learning environment than practical lectures. After all, without face-to-face communication and physical classrooms to use as a workshop, implementing practical projects in an online course requires significantly more prior planning than theoretical training.

E-Learning lacks face-to-face communication

The lack of face-to-face communication ties together with many of the previously mentioned disadvantages of online learning. A lack of any kind of face-to-face communication with the instructor inhibits student feedback, causes social isolation, and could cause students to feel a lack of pressure. A [lack of pressure is a disadvantage](#) in the sense that it causes students to abandon their studies more easily. Constant nudging by professors may be undesirable for many, but it's an effective method for improving student retention.

E-Learning is limited to certain disciplines

All educational disciplines are not created equal, and not all study fields can be effectively used in e-learning. For now, at least. E-Learning tends to be more suitable for social science and humanities, rather than scientific fields such as medical science and engineering which require a certain degree of hands-on practical experience. No amounts of online lectures can substitute an autopsy for medical students or real-life industrial training for a budding engineer. While this could change in the future, we are currently not yet a point where we can fully teach all professions solely through E-Learning.

Online learning is inaccessible to the computer illiterate population

[96% of Americans own mobile devices](#), and around [73% of Americans own a personal computer](#).

Therefore, it would be easy to argue that online education is easily accessible to most people. However, these statistics don't paint the whole picture. Despite the booming growth in technological capabilities, the rates of computer literacy are still far from perfect.

In other parts of the world, the situation is often direr. In India, for example, despite the country being one of the major players in the world of E-Learning, there is still a [large gap in computer literacy](#) in the population. Until such gaps in society exist, online education will not be able to reach all citizens. Therefore, it's highly important that we look at online learning as an addition, rather than as a replacement to traditional education.

Lack of accreditation & quality assurance in online education

If E-Learning is to be considered as effective and authentic as traditional learning, it must be ensured that all online schools are qualified and accredited. Unfortunately, at the current point in time, there are still a vast number of online learning platforms which are unaccredited and where all the materials are quality checked by no one besides the instructors themselves. As such, poor quality assurance and a lack of accredited online learning providers continue to weaken the legitimacy

Conclusion

From 2020 onwards both the teachers and learners must be fortunate to have so many apps developed for two-way communication even in mobile. Now the challenge is not with technology but with ideas that how to make the online teaching more useful. I have been associated with online teaching for more than 25 years as a service provider and during this period I have observed a few things which could help the online teaching more useful.

One of the observations is that in every online course the learners already receive the study material either in printed form or as e-content. So no point in reading a lesson which is already available with the learners wasting the valuable time of online teaching.

In the limited time frame of online teaching where a teacher has to address a large number of learners and it may not be possible to respond to the queries of all of them and many of the learners may not get the chance to ask their queries. Hence online teaching must be supported with some other mode of communication such as Email, What's App, etc. through which learners can send their queries prior and at the same time the teacher must be prepared to answer those before going to the online classroom. Many times, the teacher may find similarities in the queries received from the learners and get an idea about the common difficulties of the learners. In such a situation separate session needs to be organized to address such issues. Finally it must be taken for granted that the future mode of teaching will further develop with more and more scope with online learning. But the most important thing we should keep in mind is that the usefulness of online teaching always depends on live interaction rather than silent participation

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