



ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF ONLINE TEACHING LEARNING DURING PANDEMIC

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Abstract: Since the COVID -19 pandemic has disrupted the normal lifestyle of people across the globe, the virtual world has come to the rescue. Amongst many institutions, schools have also shifted their base to virtual platforms to conduct classes online. More than 300 million students worldwide are having their education disrupted by the spread of Corona virus. Schools and universities haven't faced this level of disruption in generations, but unlike any time in the past, we have the ability to continue education even when schools are closed. The expansive nature of the Internet and the accessibility of technology have generated a surge in the demand for web based teaching and learning. Taking online classes is a different experience than learning from a teacher's offline. That's why the advantages of offline classes are the disadvantages of online classes. Online learning methods are less costly, easily accessible, various courses, and freedom for everyone but there are some disadvantages too. This paper explores whether students could benefit from online courses and examines the potential challenges and drawbacks of online coursework.

Index Terms - pandemic, technology, education, online classes.

I. INTRODUCTION

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

The COVID-19 pandemic took the world by surprise. Globally, everything has stopped. Projects have been delayed; workplaces closed and schools shut down. The world seems to have ground to a halt because of the novel corona virus. However, students continue their education through online learning and via video calls with their teachers. The model is currently the best alternative as keeping schools open poses a safety risk for students. Amongst many institutions schools have also shifted their base to virtual platforms to conduct classes online. Consequently, catering to the needs of all stages of education from pre-primary to university level, online education has emerged as an alternative to ordinary face to face classes. Accordingly, various stakeholders such as government and private organizations are trying their best to assist each other by sprucing up their existing online platforms, apps and providing training to teachers to use these apps and platforms to the optimum level. Moreover, efforts are being made by both government and non-government organisations and detach companies to support the school system to make a smooth transition to the virtual world. Up skilling and motivating teachers, organising counselling sessions for stakeholders such as teachers, parents and students are some of the important measures taken by the administration in the recent past. Making a continuous effort to provide customised teaching-learning material suitable for online classes is another way of facilitating the schooling of children. The Central government has recently launched the PM e-VIDYA platform, with 12 new DTH channels, one for each class to reach out to all strata's of society. These efforts have proved beneficial to a sizable chunk of the school-going population.

BENEFITS OF ONLINE EDUCATION

An online education is preferred by individuals who may not be able to make it for classes in a traditional brick and mortar kind of college due to various reasons. Below we'll examine some of the benefits this exciting education provides to such students.

1. Flexibility

Students have the freedom to juggle their careers and school because they aren't tied down to a fixed schedule. In a traditional classroom setting, class meeting times are set, and the student has no power over this, forcing them to work their schedules around these dates. Most people who choose online learning tend to have other commitments, and prefer this mode of learning as it gives them power over how they will delegate their time towards their different projects.

2. Reduced Costs

Online education can cost less due to a variety of reasons. For example, there is no cost for commuting. Assorted costs that are related to transport, such as fuel, parking, car maintenance, and public transportation costs don't affect the online student.

3. Networking Opportunities

Online education also provides students with the chance to network with peers across nations or even different continents. This often leads to other opportunities in terms of collaboration with other individuals in the implementation of a project. At the same time, it makes them culturally sensitive and able to fit into other environments easily given their exposure to other cultures.

4. Documentation

All the information that you will need will be safely stored in an online database. This includes things like live discussion documents, training materials and emails. This means that if there's ever anything that needs to be clarified, the student will be able to access these documents fast, saving valuable time. This is especially useful for individuals that need to carry out research for a project and submit their findings to a panel.

5. Increased Instructor - Student Time

Students in traditional classrooms may not get the personalized attention they need to have concepts clarified. Although class sizes are small at CCA, most schools and colleges have classes of students that number in the hundreds. This is not a problem for this type of education because online guided discussions and personal talk time with their teachers is a hallmark of online classes. This increases the chance of a student performing well due to the time their instructors give them. This also enhances their problem-solving and communication skills, as well as knowing how to defend their arguments to superiors if needed.

6. Access to Expertise

An online college education might give students access to specialized degree courses that may not be available in an easily accessible or local institution of learning. Online classes allow the sharing of expertise that helps more people have access to education that is not readily available in certain geographic locations.

Students and teachers also have their own struggles while accessing these online platforms. Due to financial constraints, students are not able to access the internet, and are devoid of electronic gadgets and laptop, phone or computer or even radio and TV. Those students who have facilities to attend to online classes face barriers in terms of unavailability of physical space, which is equally applicable to teachers who are supposed to conduct online classes from their home. There are also social barriers such as discrimination against girls as they are expected to do household chores instead of attending online classes in the mornings. In rural areas, boys are often expected to work on the family farmlands. In homes where TV and radio are available, the question of who has control over these gadgets is important. Most of the time, girls are not allowed to watch educational programmes.

Disadvantages of Online Education

- **Lack of Interaction**

As studying an online degree takes place on the computer, there can be minimum or no face-to-face interaction with professors and classmates. In most cases, you will be communicating only through email. For some students, it can be difficult to study in such a situation.

- **Issues With Technology**

The important thing required to get an online degree is knowledge of technology. If the teacher and the learner don't have required knowledge of technology, it may become a hurdle in completion of online teaching-learning process. Problems with technology can make online learning frustrating, especially if one can't access materials and notes if there is no great Internet connection.

Requirement of Self-Motivation

There will be no one to motivate you to study except yourself. And sometimes it may be difficult for you to keep yourself disciplined and motivated, especially when you are busy with other work and commitments of life or you can easily get distracted while studying at home.

- **Can be frustrating**

Online communication can be frustrating for some students who prefer in-person communication with all the verbal and non-verbal expressions. For those who struggle to communicate in writing, online learning is an entirely new and pressure task.

- **Less motivated**

Video conferencing is great but it is not the same as bonding in person. Many of the students don't feel comfortable talking when they can't meet the person personally.

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 at a point where we can fully teach all professions solely through E-Learning.

Health-Related Concerns

E-learning requires the use of a computer and other such devices; this means that eyestrain, bad posture, and other physical problems may affect the learner.

As a student participating in the home-learning program, online school was confusing to adjust to as we had not been prepared through simulations or practices beforehand. Students reported the home-learning program to be even more stressful than regular classrooms. Some of the common reasons for this went along the lines of: "Normal classes may have been difficult, but having friends makes it so much more manageable and less stressful. Online classes take out the benefits of having friends to socialize with and being stuck alone with nothing but assignments."

Many students participating in home-learning programs also say that the workload of online classes is larger than that of regular classes. The general consensus is that home-learning programs — although highly beneficial and a good alternative to school as schools are closed — still require some getting used to by students, as it is a novel concept and not many are experienced with them.

Conclusion

Today is a very exciting time for technology and education. Online programs offer technology-based instructional environments that expand learning opportunities and can provide top quality education through a variety of formats and modalities. While an online method

of education can be a highly effective alternative medium of education for the mature, self-disciplined student, it is an inappropriate learning environment for more dependent learners. Online asynchronous education gives students control over their learning experience and allows for flexibility of study schedules for non traditional students; however, this places a greater responsibility on the student. In order to successfully participate in an online program, students must be well organized, self-motivated, and possess a high degree of time management skills in order to keep up with the pace of the course. For these reasons, online education is not appropriate for younger students (i.e. elementary or secondary school age) and other students who are dependent learners and have difficulty assuming responsibilities required by the online paradigm. Personally, I feel that traditional methods of teaching-learning are a great alternative to normal in-school classes.

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