

Impact of Online Classes on Students Essay

Introduction to Online Education

Online learning is one of the new innovative study methods that have been introduced in the pedagogy field. In the last few years, there has been a great shift in the training methods. Students can now learn remotely using the internet and computers.

Online learning comes in many forms and has been developing with the introduction of new technologies. Most universities, high schools, and other institutions in the world have all instituted this form of learning, and the student population in the online class is increasing fast. There has been a lot of research on the impacts of online education as compared to ordinary classroom education.

If the goal is to draw a conclusion of online education, considerable differences between the online learning environment and classroom environment should be acknowledged. In the former, teachers and students don't meet physically as opposed to the latter, where they interact face to face. In this essay, the challenges and impact of online classes on students, teachers, and institutions involved were examined.

Thesis Statement about Online Classes

Online learning has a positive impact on the learners, teachers, and the institution offering these courses.

Background study

Online learning or E learning is a term used to describe various learning environments that are conducted and supported by the use of computers and the internet. There are a number of definitions and terminologies that are used to describe online learning.

These include E learning, distance learning, and computer learning, among others (Anon, 2001). Distant learning is one of the terminologies used in E learning and encompasses all learning methods that are used to train students that are geographically away from the training school. Online learning, on the other hand, is used to describe all the learning methods that are supported by the Internet (Moore et al., 2011).

Another terminology that is used is E learning which most authors have described as a learning method that is supported by the use of computers, web-enabled communication, and the use of new technological tools that enhance communication (Spector, 2008). Other terminologies that are used to describe this form of online learning are virtual learning, collaborative learning, web-based learning, and computer-supported collaborative learning (Conrad, 2006).

Impacts of Online Classes on Students

Various studies and articles document the merits, demerits, and challenges of online studies. These studies show that online study is far beneficial to the students, teachers, and the institution in general and that the current challenges can be overcome through technological advancement and increasing efficiency of the learning process.

One of the key advantages of online learning is the ability of students to study in their own comfort. For a long time, students had to leave their comfort areas and attend lectures. This change in environment causes a lack of concentration in students. In contrast, E-learning enables the students to choose the best environment for study, and this promotes their ability to understand. As a result, students enjoy the learning process as compared to conventional classroom learning.

Another benefit is time and cost savings. Online students are able to study at home, and this saves them travel and accommodation costs. This is in contrast with the classroom environment, where learners have to pay for transport and accommodation costs as well as any other costs associated with the learning process.

Online study has been found to reduce the workload on the tutors. Most of the online notes and books are available to the students, and this reduces the teacher's workload. Due to the availability of teaching materials online, tutors are not required to search for materials. Teachers usually prepare lessons, and this reduces the task of training students over and over again.

Accessibility to learning materials is another benefit of online learning. Students participating in online study have unlimited access to learning materials, which gives them the ability to study effectively and efficiently. On the other hand, students in the classroom environment have to take notes as the lecture progresses, and these notes may not be accurate as compared to the materials uploaded on the websites.

Unlimited resources are another advantage of online study. Traditionally, learning institutions were limited in the number of students that could study in the classroom environment. The limitations of facilities such as lecture theaters and teachers limited student enrollment in schools (Burgess & Russell, 2003).

However, with the advent of online studies, physical limitations imposed by classrooms, tutors, and other resources have been eliminated. A vast number of students can now study in the same institution and be able to access the learning materials online. The use of online media for training enables a vast number of students to access materials online, and this promotes the learning process.

Promoting online study has been found by most researchers to open the students to vast resources that are found on the internet. Most of the students in the classroom environment rely on the tutors' notes and explanations for them to understand a given concept.

However, students using the web to study most of the time are likely to be exposed to the vast online educational resources that are available. This results in the students gaining a better understanding of the concept as opposed to those in the classroom environment (Berge & Giles, 2008).

An online study environment allows tutors to update their notes and other materials much faster as compared to the classroom environment. This ensures that the students receive up-to-date information on a given study area.

One of the main benefits of E-learning to institutions is the ability to provide training to a large number of students located in any corner of the world. These students are charged training fees, and this increases the money available to the institution. This extra income can be used to develop new educational facilities, and these will promote education further (Gilli et al., 2002).

Despite the many advantages that online study has in transforming the learning process, there are some challenges imposed by the method. One of the challenges is the technological limitations of the current computers, which affect the quality of the learning materials and the learning process in general.

Low download speed and slow internet connectivity affect the availability of learning materials. This problem is, however, been reduced through the application of new software and hardware elements that have high access speeds. This makes it easier to download learning materials and applications. As computing power increases, better and faster computers are being unveiled, and these will enable better access to online study facilities.

Another disadvantage of online learning as compared to the classroom environment is the lack of feedback from the students. In the classroom environment, students listen to the lecture and ask the tutors questions and clarifications any issues they didn't understand. In the online environment, the response by the teacher may not be immediate, and students who don't understand a given concept may find it hard to liaise with the teachers.

The problem is, however, been circumvented by the use of simple explanation methods, slideshows, and encouraging discussion forums between the teachers and students. In the discussion forums, students who don't understand a concept can leave a comment or question, which will be answered by the tutor later.

Like any other form of learning, online studies have a number of benefits and challenges. It is, therefore, not logical to discredit online learning due to the negative impacts of this training method. Furthermore, the benefits of e-learning far outweigh the challenges.

Conclusion about Online Education

In culmination, a comparative study between classroom study and online study was carried out. The study was done by examining the findings recorded in books and journals on the applicability

of online learning to students. The study revealed that online learning has many benefits as compared to conventional learning in the classroom environment.

Though online learning has several challenges, such as a lack of feedback from students and a lack of the proper technology to effectively conduct online learning, these limitations can be overcome by upgrading the E-Learning systems and the use of online discussion forums and new web-based software.

In conclusion, online learning is beneficial to the students, tutors, and the institution offering these courses. I would therefore recommend that online learning be implemented in all learning institutions, and research on how to improve this learning process should be carried out.

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