

Best Practices and Effectiveness of Online Learning

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Abstract

The 21st Century is the century of science and technology. During the pandemic situation, online learning was the only source of education. The University of Phoenix (1989) became the first institution to launch a fully online college, which was for Bachelors as well as Masters degrees.

Online learning offers solutions such as flexible study schedule and self-paced study patterns with tension-free environment. Students get great opportunities for effective learning. In India, online learning provides excellent opportunities for students to gain mastery over the content. Students can fill learning gaps through a technology-based education system. Online learning is flexible, it reduces cost, gives more free time, there is a variety of courses and we get immediate feedback. The government gives more focus on these courses with the help of DIKSHA, SWAYAM, NIOS, UGC, NCERT and Indira Gandhi National Open Schooling like these and many more institutions.

KEYWORDS

DIKSHA, SWAYAM, UGC, IGNOU, Open University.

Introduction

The 21st century is the century of science and technology. This century brought tremendous changes in every sector. Education is one of them. Before this, education was given with the help of classroom and traditional methods. In the traditional method, there is huge complexity and various challenges. However, with the help of technology, all these problems are solved successfully.

Brief History of Online Education

Online education began in the late 1900s when the postal services were developed in the US. This postal service was between students and teachers in the US. Ana Eliot Ticknor established the first official correspondence education program (Society to Encourage Home Studies) in Boston (Massachusetts) in 1873. In 1911, the University of Queensland (Australia) founded a Department of Correspondence Study. In 1946, The University of South Africa reshaped online education. Now this university is one of the world's biggest distance education colleges which are very popular for online learning. In the United States (1953), the University of House (Houston PBS) made distance-learning history, which was the first public television station in the United States. In this station, many of the courses were arranged in the evenings so that working students can join this class and view materials.

Television, Personal Computers and Internet are the important factors in online education. The University of Phoenix (1989) became the first institution which launched a fully online college, which offers both Bachelors as well as Masters Programmes. Glen Jones and Bernard Luskin started the web-based International University. The University of Toronto started the first-ever completely online course in 1984.

Definitions of Online Learning:

- “Education which takes place online or with the help of the internet is called online learning”
- “Online learning is the use of software programs to instruct students in content and skills and to facilitate learning in and out of the traditional classroom setting” – (Emotions, Technology and Learning, 2016)

- “Any form of learning conducted partly or wholly over the internet” – Bates (2016).
- “Online learning uses the internet as a delivery modality to offer thoughtfully designed, quality, student-focused learning experiences, built on proven best practices that create effective interactions between learners, peers, instructors, and content”
- “Online learning means educational activity in which instruction and content are delivered primarily via the internet and through emerging technologies”

Need for Online Learning:

1. It has the potential to support learning during challenging times

During the pandemic situation, online learning is the only source of education. Due to online learning, we can take continuing education. As a result, parents and students know the need of online learning during the pandemic situation.

2. Save students from dropping out

Dropout is a major problem in the Indian education system. There are various reasons for dropouts. Online learning is the only solution for academically backward, non – traditional and struggling students.

3. Online learning nurtures 21st-century skills

Independence is an important skill in the 21st century. In online learning students becomes independent. They learn various new things which are necessary for effective learning. They develop highly critical thinking, problem-solving and digital skills.

4. Voids of traditional schooling remain unresolved

Every year we see a lot of violence on school premises. For example – Ragging. Children and adolescents suffer from these issues. Looking at these issues schools and institutions are not safe for students. The solution for this problem is online learning. Parents and students feel free from these situations. It is the safest way of taking education.

5. Barriers to learning are hampering several students

School timing, traditional teaching methods, punishments, rules and regulations, school distance from home and many more are the barriers to learning that are hampering several students. Online learning offers proper solutions like flexible study schedules and self-paced study patterns with tension-free environments. Students get great opportunities for effective learning.

6. Helps in effective learning

In India, online learning provides a good opportunity for students to gain mastery over the content. Students can fill learning gaps through the technology – based education system. Therefore, online learning is as effective as traditional learning methods.

Importance of Online Learning

1. Connects students and teachers internationally

Online learning can connect students and teachers around the whole world. This is not possible in traditional education. Because the traditional education is given in a particular classroom. In online learning student can attain classes from any part of the world. Student can build their network and develop their international mindset.

2. Offers flexible learning hours

In the traditional classroom method, you have to follow the timetable. Online learning offers students to learn whenever they have time. Due to flexible time, they are comfortable joining classes from anywhere. They can balance their life. There is a time limit. You can get access when you want.

3. Allows children to create their own learning environment

The environment is very much necessary for healthy and comfortable learning. Sometimes this is not possible in a traditional classroom. You can learn anywhere in online learning. Every student is different from others. In this method, there is flexibility to learn anywhere to create a proper learning environment.

4. Considers individual learning patterns

Every child is different. They learn differently. In traditional teaching, you have less freedom. You have to follow rules and regulations in the traditional method. In online learning, children have more freedom to work in their own space, which will be helpful to improve learning experiences as well as better understanding.

5. Provides students with more control over their learning

In the traditional method, teachers and student have limited sources. However, online learning provides more flexibility and gives children control over their education. In online learning, there are various tasks for students. It allows students to learn different learning methods. This will help them retain information.

Advantages of Online Learning

1. Flexibility

While doing a service or job you can learn with the online method. However, in the traditional method, there is fix timetable. It is done as per institute availability. If you are currently doing jobs you cannot attain classes or you cannot complete these courses. Online learning method allows you to fix your schedule at your convenience. It means you can study whenever and whatever is convenient for you.

2. Reduced costs

Now a day's education is more expensive but online learning provides several ways for students to save money. Education fees, transportation, books, and course materials should be saved with the help of online learning.

3. More Free time

You make your planning for classes. There is no need to attain regular classes as per the institutes' availability. You can reschedule your classes also there is no need to go to campus. You can save time as well as money. You save transportation costs also. You will get extra time for your work as well as study.

4. Increased course variety

In online learning, there are various courses. There is a worldwide open platform for you. You can choose any course that you want. You are free to choose the course which you want. There is no limitations for choosing courses.

5. Carrier advancement opportunities

You are a master of your schedule as well as courses. Online learning provides you with several carrier advancement opportunities. Students prepare themselves very properly for better opportunities. You are free for doing any course which you want for your carrier.

6. Increased collaboration

Online learning students have better opportunities to collaborate with other students in virtual groups and online meetings and projects. Assignments, and feedback these types of activities are done in groups. Students get more time to one to one communicate with students as well as teachers.

7. Personalised Education

Shy students do not participate in classroom activities in the traditional method. But in online learning, students select their interesting courses. They have a lot of opportunities for practice. While doing class work-interesting methods are used so they can take active participation in various activities.

8. Enhanced Time management Skills

Online learning gives the flexibility to complete assignments and tasks. Students can manage time to complete these activities. Online learning teaches students how to manage time better. In this method, students gain knowledge as well as sharpen their management skills.

9. Immediate Feedback

In traditional learning, we have to wait days, weeks or months for results after examination. But in online learning when student uploads their assignments or exams we will get immediate results. Students will get proper feedback that is given by teachers. Due to this students' time will be saved also they get more time for other assignments.

10. Repeated Access to Course Materials

In the classroom, we have to give attention because it is taken only one time. We have to make notes also in lectures. If we are absent then there are various problems with understanding as well as notes. In online learning we have a lot of access also, we have video recordings. Students will use these videos as a supplementary tool to understanding concepts and assignments.

Disadvantages of Online Learning

- Social Isolation - Students learn alone so there is a fear of social isolation.
- Limited Teacher to student feedback – There are limited teachers. Therefore, the student-teacher ratio is not appropriate.
- Require Self-Motivation – we have to learn ourselves. There is no motivator for motivation.
- Health Issues- Due to more screen time there are health issues like- Eyes.
- No Cultural Exposure – There is only a learning process. There is no face-to-face communication. There are no rules, regulations or traditions for this method.
- Less importance to practicals – We cannot do practicals physically. Therefore, we will not get live experiences.

There are some disadvantages of online learning though it is very useful in today's generation.

Government Takes following steps for online education

- PM e - Vidya
- DIKSHA
- Swayam Prabha TV Channel
- Shiksha Vani
- Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY)
- PRAGYATA
- MANODARPAN
- SWAYAM
- All India Council for Technical Education
- National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning for Engineering
- National Institute of Open Schooling
- University Grants Commission
- National Council of Educational Research and Training
- Indira Gandhi National Open Schooling

Various Reports about Online Learning

- Online Education in India: 2021, the market for online education in India is expected to witness a magnificent growth of eight times in the three years – KPMG India and Google
- India's online education market is set to grow to USD 1.96 billion and around 9.6 million by 2021 from USD 247 million and 1.6 million users in 2016- KPMG in India and Google in 2017: -
- Online education has reduced the age constraint for learning. (KPMG in India & Google, 2017) 101 International Journal of Policy Sciences and Law Volume 1, Issue 1 Now, imagine the change in statistics and the importance of e-learning with the dawn of COVID - 19 where one thing that helped millions of educational

institutes across India and the globe are virtual classrooms and different modes of online education.

- Further, there was a report in the media on April 13, 2020, quoting the Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) as saying, among other things, that to maintain social distancing, online learning and e-education were the only way out, and that it was the need of the hour for students, teachers and the education system as a whole. (Menon, 2020)

Tips for Successful Online Learning

Learning Strategies

- Make your learning plan and stick with them
- Write brief summary in Video
- Organise small group discussions in small video break

Self-Care

- Identify your and your student's learning needs
- Take short breaks
- Maintain healthy habits

Time Management

- Add important due dates
- Minimize distractions
- Set aside time for learning

Logistics

- Make relevant information which is easily available to everyone
- Download all necessary software
- Make a plan for internet access
- Save your work every time

Conclusion

Today's world is the world of science and technology. The pandemic situation gives a gift to the world and that gift is online learning. In that situation, there is no alternative to education. Now a

day there are a lot of alternatives but online education is the best source of taking education. With the help of minimum expenditure, we can acquire various important skills in a limited period. Online education solves all the difficulties of students as well as parents.

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