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Benefits of Online Studying

Introduction

Digitalization has become an essential aspect of success in different sectors, including education. In recent years, many colleges and universities have invested significantly in E-learning, and the demand for online courses continues to rise. Besides, organizations have adopted online learning as the primary delivery method when training their employees due to the associated advantages. Online learning is the gaining of skills, knowledge, and information using electronic technologies (Barden). An increased adoption and demand for virtual education can be linked to the accessibility of technology and the capacious nature of the internet. Thus, online studying is an effective approach, and there are many rationales for offering and investing in it, such as reduced costs, increased internet accessibility, and flexibility.

Cost-Effectiveness

"Online Learning Revealing the Benefits and Challenges" is an article written by Gilbert. This article categorizes web-based learning into different groups, including fully web-based that is conducted entirely online; hybrid courses that are made of the classroom and virtual sessions; and traditional courses using web supplements where online technology is used as a medium for giving supplemental material for conventional classroom study (Gilbert 3). The article state that online learning offers a cost-effective learning option for most students if not all. Cost-effectiveness is evident through travel fees, rentals, and printing costs. Learners are saved from the need to travel to other cities for training or to get the needed study materials from particular institutions.

In contrast, Sun and Chen hold that with online learning, the need to seek accommodation through rentals is eliminated (160). If one studies from home or other preferred areas, he or she will avoid the cost of renting an apartment while studying. Sun and Chen outline that materials, such as handouts and readings should be sent via electronic means, through which they can be accessed and read (157). Thus, learners are exempted from incurring printing costs, which form a significant part of expenses in the traditional learning approach.

Institutions incur fewer costs while reaching a large pool of students. One of the main challenges that schools face is a declining budget while opportunities expand. However, this problem is effectively tackled through online learning (Gilbert 7). As a solution for such issues, Gilbert holds that, instruction compensation costs are significantly reduced when an institution introduces a hybrid instruction model for various courses (7). For instance, colleges can adopt interactive learning online software, which includes sophisticated machine guided instructions that could replace face-to-face learning. Conversely, some scholars note that the system is also designed to track learner progress and offer them targeted and practical guidance for optimal performance (Gilbert 7). Thus, online studying helps institutions to reduce the costs of tendering specific courses while maintaining the quality of education offered.

Sun and Chen, online learning presents an excellent opportunity for learners who hail from low socioeconomic backgrounds (168). They further note that such learners often find it challenging to enroll in typical educational programs due to the vast expenses, including fees, transport, and accommodation Sun and Chen 170). Online studies offers quality education at a lesser cost and is thus a suitable option for such students. Gibert reasons that since one takes their studies from their appropriate locations, the financial burden they have to bear is conical (8). Also, locational barriers are eliminated as one accesses the courses and programs without any traveling. Subsequently, online studying ensures quality education and equal opportunities for all learners regardless of their financial status.

Convenience for Diverse Learner Needs

Barden states that online studying suits the needs of different kinds of learners, including those students understaking traditional education classes. People with various requirements can conveniently adopt virtual learning. Online education caters to diverse groups, including employees who could be seeking professional development opportunities, homemakers, and persons with disabilities (Barden). Besides, Barden notes that there is no age limit for these courses; hence one can take them at any stage of their lives. The classes and materials can be accessed anywhere and at any time, which saves one from significantly altering their schedules. One can set time, such as evenings or weekends, where they can study at their comfort and convenience (Barden). Barden adds that for persons with disabilities, they are saved from the need to worry about whether an institution has the necessary supporting infrastructure to meet their needs. Thus, online studying platforms offer an excellent solution for such worries since they can access courses from convenient locations.

Barden further states that flexibility goes along with convenience to make online studying a practical and appealing option. It is worthy to note that learners with work and family commitments see virtual learning as an ideal approach to accommodate such since it ensures that they are not compromised. In contrast, Sun and Chen states that a significant part of the people in online studying is in the later life stages and, therefore, have many obligations that must be skillfully blended with education to achieve a fair balance (168). Thus, with e-learning, such people can get world-class education anytime and anywhere as long as they have access to the internet (Sun and Chen 170). Thus, virtual learning ensures flexibility, which is highly convenient for people with other commitments.

Learners can choose to study options that match their needs. Sun and Chen notes that online learning appeals to most students since they can work at a place and time that aligns with their learning requirements (176). He adds that students' attention is focused due to the added flexibility since they do not have to worry about issues, such as traffic and parking, which are typical in traditional class settings. Thus, this element adds to flexibility since a learner is not restricted to a particular schedule and ensures minimal time wastage (Sun and Chen 178). They

can visit the virtual classes for as long as they wish and cover a broad range of material. Besides, more time is left for learning, which enables one to master vast content within the available time.

Self-Regulated Learning

Hart and others affirm that online learning presents a convenient option for students who prefer learning devoid of many external regulations. E-learning, a student gets a chance to become more self-guided. Learners can plan their time effectively to focus more on concepts that require much time and spend less on the aspects they grasp quickly. Besides, virtual learning enhances one's time management and metacognition skills to track and reflect upon their studies. Further Hart and others reasons that as one goes through online studying, they become more self-motivated and well versed in planning their time to focus on the deadlines (Hart et al). Such skills are not only critical for a learner's success in their virtual course, but could be applied to other life aspects, such as making one stand out in their workplaces.

Hart and others state that the different and asynchronous modes of communication call for self-regulation and efficient planning. They highlight that some of the methods used for interactions in virtual studies, including peer, learner-to-content, and learner-to-instructor communications (Hart et al.). Such a setting calls for learners to be more proactive and self-governed in planning and reflecting on their learning to achieve excellent academic performance. A student must be amply disciplined to actively interact with their peers, educational materials, and instructors (Hart et al.). Besides, Hart and others remarks that establishing meaningful and disciplined connections is critical for student success. Online studying, therefore, calls for a learner to devise strategies to regulate their time and activities, which promotes the growth of self-discipline among them.

Using an online learning, a learner sets their pace and regulates it as they deem fit. Hart and others state that a student sets an individualized pace; hence slower learners have ample time to peruse over learning materials. In contrast, in the traditional learning environment, slow learners often feel overwhelmed or left behind by their peers (Hart et al.). Subsequently, they could end up cowering and unable to have their needs addressed in class. However, with online studying, they can work at their pace without any pressures. Conversely, some scholars record

that in a typical classroom, fast learners often feel agitated as tutors make repetitive explanations to cater for the slower learners. Online studies save them from such irked feelings as they can move on soon as they master the content.

Unlimited Access of Updated Study Material

Online studying allows learners to access content for as many times as they wish. They further remark that learners can watch the presentations and videos for an unlimited number of times whenever and wherever they get time (Roddyet al.). Unlike traditional studying, a student is saved from worrying about missing a lecture since they can view all lecture recordings at the comfort later. One can also view the lecture session several times to gain more understanding. For online studies, the materials offered are updated, and students, therefore, get the latest information (Roddyet al.). The content is regularly rationalized, and the systems are designed to ensure learners access the latest materials whenever they entrée to the e-learning platform. Thus, students are assured of learning the current trends hence equipping them with valuable information.

Learners access a wide variety of coursework, which enhances the quality of education they receive. Hart and others note that online courses have links that allow students to explore their interests, and they can access coursework appealingly and effectively. It is easy to reach the instructors and ask various questions in areas where they get some difficult in understanding. The tutors address each learner separately to ensure their needs are met. Additionally, there is a wide variety of courses and programs; hence learners can focus on the subjects they are interested in (Roddyet al.). Unlike traditional settings where students were limited on the courses to take, online studying offers an extended range and is thus more convenient for learners.

Easier Connectivity

Online studying is characterized by high responsiveness among learners and between students and the instructor. Sun and Chen notes that the lessons are founded on regular interactions between tutors and learners (180). Conversely, other authors such as Barden highlight that the lecturers present the different learning materials and provide feedback while learners interact with each other through class groups and discussion posts. As such, online learning brings

together remote tutors and students where questions are answered in real-time, hence providing a captivating learning experience. Besides, some softwares have been developed to create an appealing virtual setting for presentations, hands-on-training, and instruction effectively and at high speed (Barden). Such advances have enhanced online learning efficiency, making it a highly attractive option.

The anonymity of virtual classes enhances the effectiveness of online connectivity. In the traditional class setting, some students are discouraged from participating in fully in-class sessions as they feel uncomfortable while amongst people. Such learners also fear being treated unequally due to aspects such as their looks. Barden notes that online studying has no visual cues; hence tutors treat all students equally. Barden further adds that a learner identity is also hidden, which allows shy learners to actively participate in class discussions without any hindrances. Consequently, such learners have a fulfilling learning experience, which ensures optimal achievement from their studies.

Skeptics of Online Studying

Despite the advantages of e-learning, skeptics still hold that online studying is more difficult than traditional learning (177). For example, learners who are not well versed in self-directed learning could procrastinate due to the lack of a physical teacher and subsequently suffer declines in their performance. Sun and Chen argue that some learners lack the needed technological resources such as broadband, which hamper the smooth delivery of online lessons (178). On the other hand Hart and others note that the majority of online learners spend little time, approximately three hours per week, which reduces their content grasping. In contrast, face-to-face classes ensure learners spend at least seven hours a week on course material; hence such students demonstrate better performance. Moreover, online learning often calls for modification of some course materials to suit the particular mode of teaching (Sun and Chen 167). It, therefore, calls for considerable investments from schools for its successful implementation.

Conclusion

Overall, online studying has vast benefits and has grown attractive over the years. Students can benefit from the enhanced convenience since they can access course materials anytime and anywhere, and one can learn at their individualized pace. It presents an effective means for interaction, which enhances student engagement, particularly for shy learners. Online learning is also a suitable option for most students who have other commitments due to its flexibility and low-income earners since it is cheaper than on-school education. For optimal success, a student must be self-directed, to meet deadlines and follow through the program without supervision from tutors. Nevertheless, there are several skeptics of online studying, such as the minimal time committed to it and the inaccessibility of the internet by all students. Thus, online studying is an excellent option for learners due to its many benefits, but it is paramount to consider some key factors to ensure its utmost effectiveness.

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