

The Effectiveness of Online Learning

Sule Sani

Submitted: 01-07-2022

Revised: 10-07-2022

Accepted: 13-07-2022

Online learning can be defined as the acquisition of knowledge without necessarily sitting in a classroom. This system of education is commonly used in America having the biggest sector of online learning. This system of education obviously should have two sides of a coin which are its benefits as well as its disadvantages. In the body of this work we will be elaborating on positive, null and mixed/negative findings made by other authors not leaving out being bias in selection.

Online learning has a great deal of advantages as enumerated in Tuan Nguyen's research paper. It's good to know that this learning is good and efficient because it edifies and educates people all over the world not necessarily by sitting down in a class room. It's also good to know that Online learning still provides the best education for those who are interested in acquiring knowledge through school but can't possibly get themselves to that school in person could be because of distance and many other reasons. Online learning is affordable in terms of its cost because in recent years the cost of post-secondary education has been rising drastically, thus creating a big gap between the high school graduates and the college graduates which keeps widening with time. Making most students contented or comfortable having just a high school degree because of the cost of colleges which keeps rising as years go by, thus increasing the rate of student loan debt. Looking at the statistics of national student's debt in 2014 it amounted to about a trillion dollars. The above made many scholars and intellectuals tilt their minds towards the fact that online education is very important in fighting the cost of secondary education which could be done through several means such as sharing the cost of a class over many more students as compared to the regular classroom learning system. Online education turns out to be the best because it benefits a great deal of people. Meaning you can be anywhere, at any time and get your online education all you need to do is to have a steady or good internet access.

Carrying out this research Tuan the author had so many positive findings. After a systematic analysis carried out by (Navaro and Shoemaker, 2010) it was found that students learn better online

and get satisfied than with the usual traditional learning way. Also (Rovai and Jordan, 2004) examined both the traditional and online learning methods and they found out that those doing online learning have a better sense of community than those in the traditional learning format. Students who also did the online format scored higher and better than those doing the traditional format. There were a lot more researchers who tried comparing both the online and traditional format and they came up with a lot more assumptions gearing towards the same points as the researchers above, not leaving out the fact that the online format still remains a means of saving cost as compared to the other. With the everyday innovation in technology new tools are being created to aid online learning, and it can only get better. Given that there are a lot of positive findings to the effectiveness of the online method of learning there is no great assurance that this may hold true for every field of study. Some researchers carried out research In the Stanford Research Institute and they looked into 45 studies and had as findings that students in the online format still excel better than those in the traditional format. (Means et Al) who have the most cited work till date also show that online learning is better than the traditional learning.

Nevertheless Tuan also had Null findings in his research. He looked into various authors work such as (Thomas Russell, 1999) who was able to assemble more than 350 online and or distance studies, noticed that about 70% of people who carried out both studies found out that there was no significant difference between the online format of education and the traditional format of education. Other researchers like (Bernard et al, 2004) also carried out research and found out that the achievements and attitudes between online education and traditional education had no significant difference but there was rather diversity from students in both the online and traditional format of learning. (Zhao et al 2005) another group of researchers came up the same analysis of no significant difference between online and traditional learning but they also had interesting findings such as; they found out the effectiveness in the right mixture of human blending with technology meaning courses which group together

online and traditional learning are better off and more effective than those who rely on either of them, thus a student can get a blend of both learning methods. The overall summary of this finding is there is no significant difference between online and traditional learning, causing Tuan's interest on examining the mixed and negative findings so as to get a better conclusion.

On the other hand Tuan came up with mixed and negative findings in his research. Strangely enough some of the studies here are a contradiction to the positive results because according to this findings people performed better in the traditional format as compared to the online format in which people rather perform very poorly. Researchers such as (Brown and Liedholm, 2002) noticed that students who get better results are those who do the traditional format of learning as compared to those who do online learning. Statistics shows that those who do the traditional learning spend more time on their books and in class studying but those who do online studying spend less hours a week studying or even attending their online classes, some are only concerned when there is an assignment to be done, all this amounting to the number of time they devote being active with class work.

Furthermore Tuan thought that if students are left to self-select their format of education there is some bias in selection which needs to be looked into as well. But after carrying out research by some researchers they noticed both forms of learning are okay given that the outcomes of both forms of learning are the same.

Summarizing all the above findings it was noticed that over 92% of online education prove that online learning may not be better than traditional learning but there is at least some effectiveness in it. 3% show that the traditional format is more effective while 4% have mixed feelings. Thus none of the formats of education is better than the other but they are all effective.

It is too fast or easy to jump into conclusions about online learning because it's a new system that has been in place for a while and isn't perfect yet because with the passing of everyday new software's are put in place to ameliorate online learning that is to make it more accommodative and easy to use. But Tuan strongly holds the idea that online learning is almost if not as effective as the traditional way of learning. Online learning is still a work in progress and its future can only be determined by the present and future generations to come.