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THE WAR BIGUNS: ONLINE LEARNING VS FACE TO FACE LEARNING

¹Dr Pratima Mishra and ²Dr Rekha Pathak

¹Assistant Professor and ²Principal

^{1&2}Dr. D. Y. Patil College of Education

Pimpri, Pune, Maharashtra, India

Abstract: Covid -19 pandemic taught us the importance of online learning. And during this period of time online learning and teaching were very relevant and important. Now things are again coming back to the earlier track and again classroom teaching and learning started. But each and everything has its own pros and cons. In this time of Covid -19 Endemic The war is started which one is more important and what should we adopt as a medium of instruction. But we should not fight for which one is good but we should choose a middle path as per our own requirement and our aim should be focused on excellent teaching and learning environment.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic, Covid-19 Endemic, Face to Face Teaching-Learning, Online Teaching-Learning.

Introduction

Face-to-Face Learning

When teachers and students are sitting in front of each other this type of teaching and learning happens. Face-to-face learning refers to the traditional, classroom-based method of learning. This style of learning involves in-person sessions with an instructor. The pace of learning is set by the instructor and students in this setting are passive learners. Face-to-face learning is considered effective due to the benefits of live interaction between the instructor and the learner. Face-to-face learning is how we've historically been learning. It usually takes place in a classroom and most times is centered around the lecturer. There are of course other ways to organize the classroom like group learning, learning with a partner, and/or a mentor.

Face-to-face learning requires that you are at a specific location at a specific time. It also usually requires interaction or participation at times. For most people, going to a specific location, at a specific time, is what puts them in the learning mindset and helps them concentrate. For all of these reasons, students prefer this type of learning. This is the reason for the wide popularity of face-to-face learning. It continues to be the default learning method in most institutions are there are plenty of reasons why.

The advantages of face-to-face learning are

- You can share and compare notes with your classmates.
- You get answers and feedback in real-time
- Discussions
- You don't have to worry about the schedule

The disadvantages of face-to-face learning are:

- Face-to-face tuition can be quite expensive.
- You will have to pay for your textbooks
- Commuting
- Scheduling
- Organizing and managerial costs
- Professor cost

Online Learning

Online teaching and learning are not a traditional method. Any type of learning that occurs on the internet could be considered online learning, also known as e-Learning. Today, virtual learning is most often used to refer to asynchronous learning material, which allows for learners to engage with instructional material at their own pace, from anywhere, available at any time.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, online teaching and learning flourish due to its worldwide and contactless approach it becomes very useful. An online learning program encourages self-study and could refer to anything from a digital employee training seminar such as a LinkedIn Learning course to a full-fledged, virtual college degree program. For both classroom and corporate learning settings, this method is utilized to create and publish courses, connect learners and learning materials, monitor progression, and more.



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The advantages of Online Learning are

- It is cheaper
- Less time consuming
- It's flexible
- Adaptable to people's preferences

The disadvantages of Online Learning are

- Hard to follow if you have no self-discipline
- Cheating
- Isolation

LMS

An LMS is a perfect way to distribute educational courses. Learning management systems were designed to identify learning gaps by analyzing reports and data. That way, we get to understand the way people learn, what works best, how we can improve training materials, and what are the most effective training methods for employees.

An LMS embodies all the benefits of eLearning. One of them is the ability to work on any device without compromising the quality of the training material, even on mobile devices. Mobile-friendly LMSs are the future of learning.

Some skills just can't be taught through a computer. You can't expect the medical student to finish their studies online. That job just requires that we are face to face with our tutors. Other skills are perfectly fit to be taught through eLearning. This is why both teaching methods are valuable and will survive the test of time.

Blended Learning

As per the requirements and needs of students and the availabilities of teachers when we choose our strategy of online or offline teaching-learning this is called blended learning. Blended learning is the concept of implementing both face-to-face learning and online learning together into a hybrid approach, allowing learners to benefit from both methods of learning. This style of learning is also popular in corporate settings, where learning and development leaders will use data to create an adaptive learning style that is personalized to the needs of different roles and departments.

Differences Between Online Learning and Face-to-Face Learning

Both types of learning can be beneficial, depending on the goal of the lesson plan and the circumstances of the learner. Here are a few of the most important differences between online learning and face-to-face learning.

1. The Learning Environment

In a traditional face-to-face learning scenario, classes are planned and structured according to a fixed schedule. This system of learning is thus more disciplined. Classroom learning also happens in a group setting and may spur more discussion, interaction, and involvement.

Online learning is more spontaneous when compared to a planned, in-person session. Learners may choose to take up a course or a learning module online whenever inspiration or curiosity strikes. Best of all, they can do it at their own pace – whenever they choose. Since this kind of learning doesn't involve a live instructor, the learner is by themselves in this setting.

2. Type of Learning Content

Face-to-face learning methods usually only involve traditional learning materials such as textbooks and lecture notes. An online learning session is more interactive in comparison, with many different types of training.

With the advancement of technology, eLearning modules are supported via digital textbooks, live chat support, community forums, online discussion boards, video and audio materials, interactive quizzes, virtual announcements, and much more.

For example, below you can see how enterprise organizations now embed a self-help learning module direct into their digital apps and processes – allowing employees to learn in the flow of work.



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3. Pace of Learning

The instructor leads the learning pace in a traditional classroom setting, and students are likely to learn passively. There is little scope for the learner to slow down and re-learn difficult concepts in a live, instructor-led scenario – as this hinders the entire group.

On the other hand, the learner is free to move at their own pace in an eLearning setting. They can pause whenever needed and revisit modules for better clarity before proceeding with the rest of the course. With the addition of assessments and interactive tools at various points in the learning module, the learner is no longer passive but is active in the learning process.

4. Types of Assessments

In a traditional learning scenario, the instructor often tests students after delivering a fixed set of learning modules. This is most likely an in-person test that is closely monitored and occurs at a specific date, time, and place.

Assessments in eLearning contexts are generally more flexible when compared to traditional methods. Today, eLearning modules have frequent knowledge checks and short assessments in place to ensure that the content has been well received. Exams in an eLearning scenario might be timed and may use screen recorders to ensure integrity.

5. Asynchronous vs. Synchronous Interaction

In an online learning scenario, learner-instructor interaction is often asynchronous. The learner is able to study at their own pace, but queries are usually posted on an online forum to be answered by an instructor. This leads to some delay in interaction, which can be minimized via timely virtual support.

Traditional classroom-led teaching involves live interaction between an instructor and a student, thus facilitating instant discussions and query clarification.

Is Online Learning or Face-to-Face Learning Better? This question will be always there. But both online and face-to-face learning methods have their own set of unique advantages and disadvantages. Let the situations and circumstances decided which one is good. While a lot of learners may still prefer the discipline and familiarity that face-to-face learning brings, there is no denying the immense benefits of online learning. The self-paced nature of eLearning content may be highly favourable to the modern learner – as well as organizations searching for new ways of managing employee development and training in a post-COVID world.

This type of learning is more flexible than traditional learning and is generally more practical for learners. However, a lot of learners still prefer the presence of a live instructor to assimilate content better because of the unique advantages of instructor-led training. Both learning methods are highly effective in their own ways. Choosing one type of training over another is purely dependent on an individual's learning style and preference – as well as the course material at hand. Learning has been a great part of human history over the years. People have always been looking for ways to advance their knowledge, understand the world better, and make their lives easier. The ways of learning have definitely improved but the goal remains the same. How do we learn to do something in the most effective and efficient way?

We must realize that online learning is indeed a more cost-effective choice for many students out there. It reduced expenditure of coming and going for study. It cut down the fees for hostel and other expenditures.

It is very important to know that online learning is more cost-effective than its face-to-face counterpart. Our thinking of pursuing another profession is because we have additional knowledge on certain things such as psychology. With that not everyone is equipped with fast-connecting internet, Wi-Fi, or has data plans that support the online learning environment. Many people live in rural areas where high-speed internet service or Wi-Fi is not available. Data plans and internet plans can be expensive, so people that are on a strict budget tend to stray away from costly internet and phone data plans. Sometimes internet connections can be interrupted by bad weather and can cause problems with your online learning experience. You may even lose your work if there is a power outage or your internet connection is interrupted. If you have a deadline, this could be a very bad situation.

Face-to-face learning in an actual classroom is proven to be the better alternative when it comes to being a student. Despite our ever-increasing use of technology, online learning fails to prepare a well-rounded student that is prepared for the real world. By increasing social interactions, becoming more structured in your schedule, and learning how to interact with authority figures, students



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are far more successful in their careers by accessing the traditional classroom option. However, as more and more online learning opportunities increase, face-to-face learning may fade away forever.

Face-to-Face learning is better than online learning because the interactions and examples of face-to-face learning will benefit the learner the most. One of the most beneficial means of physically being in a classroom is the response time that a person receives from an actual person, such as a professor, versus an online class instructor. During face-to-face learning, a person's questions will get an immediate answer whereas online learning means waiting for a response. Studies show that immediate and efficient feedback response time is crucial to effective learning. In a classroom environment, you may also have the advantage of working in small groups where you can collaborate on difficult topics and receive immediate feedback from your peer groups as well. Sometimes, discussing issues or problems with your instructor in person is a lot easier than typing it out or trying to explain it in face-time online.

Efficient and effective constructive feedback is imperative to proper learning environments, such as what a person would receive in an actual classroom. Attending classes in person also creates a disciplined, structured student.

In today's society, it is crucial that students become more structured by attending scheduled classes. Abiding by a class schedule, this trains the student for "real world" situations, such as being on time for a job interview or important business meetings. The online environment is usually more flexible as far as time constraints. A person does not have to attend class at a specific time and can-do household chores, take care of a baby, etc. Many people may see this as an advantage. (Lim, Doo Hun, Michael L. Morris). However, this is actually a disadvantage because it creates a carefree, lazy, and distractive environment. This type of climate cannot possibly properly prepare a person for a job, profession, or career. The online classroom is at an extreme disadvantage when trying to properly prepare a student for a structured, business-type atmosphere.

One of the best ways to make new friends and meet new people by socially interacting with them is in the classroom. Meeting new people is a great way to sharpen your social skills and where else better can a person do that but in the classroom. Socializing with others is a perfect way to make future job connections, acquire new friends, maybe meet your soulmate. Online learning depletes a person of these socializing opportunities. It even impairs them further. Socializing face-to-face is becoming a trait that is harder to find in employers today. With increased amounts of text messages, social media sites, and other less invasive ways of interacting with other people, employers are struggling to find employees that know how to interact face-to-face effectively. They are a dying breed as we speak. Collaborating with others offers several more benefits for a student to be successful in the real world instead of spending time behind a monitor at home.

A great way to learn how to interact with a superior is by being a student in an actual classroom environment. Interacting with your professor prepares a student how to effectively talk, respond, and "work for" a superior. Personalities sometimes do not mesh, they may even clash, but learning how to deal with other personalities, develops a more well-rounded individual socially speaking.

Trial and error in how you respond and/or get responses gets students ready for real-world problems, such as how to properly talk to your boss, how to handle difficult situations with co-workers, maybe even how to settle differences with your spouse. (Smith, Nigel V). By learning how to answer to a superior, even though it may be a professor or professor's assistant, interacting with different types of people as your superior trains a student to become a more successful individual later in life. The classroom also offers several opportunities for a student to learn kinesthetically, whereas the online classroom fails the student in this area.

Online learning obviously offers opportunities for visual learning, but it does not offer much else. The classroom offers so much more, such as hands-on training, visual and hearing enhanced learning, and other kinesthetic, or physical means, of acquiring information. By incorporating different learning styles, the success rate of learning highly increases. This creates a more successful learning environment for everyone. The online learning experience is very limited in capturing different learning styles and ultimately fails the student. The online classroom actually offers more opportunities to become distracted and stray away from better learning versus the physical classroom. Since the traditional way of learning has always been in a classroom, many people think that students become more distracted in this type of environment. (Bowen, William G., et al).

However, the opposite is true. By doing online learning from home, office, or in a public venue, students are increasingly more distracted by other people, family members, and cell phones.



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Many classrooms limit students to being on their phones or laptops, therefore, decreasing the number of distractions. Online learning actually increases the number of distractions because most people access their online classrooms from home, their office or place of work, or in a public place such as a coffee shop. People with conditions such as ADHD or other learning disabilities are at even more of a disadvantage for a successful online learning experience.

Conclusion

Finally, not everyone is equipped with fast-connecting internet, Wi-Fi, or has data plans that support the online learning environment. Many people live in rural areas where high-speed internet service or wifi is not available. Data plans and internet plans can be expensive, so people that are on a strict budget tend to stray away from costly internet and phone data plans. Sometimes internet connections can be interrupted by bad weather and can cause problems with your online learning experience. You may even lose your work if there is a power outage or your internet connection is interrupted. If you have a deadline, this could be a very bad situation.

Face-to-face learning in an actual classroom is proven to be the better alternative when it comes to being a student. Despite our ever-increasing use of technology, online learning fails to prepare a well-rounded student that is prepared for the real world. By increasing social interactions, becoming more structured in your schedule, and learning how to interact with authority figures, students are far more successful in their careers by accessing the traditional classroom option. However, as more and more online learning opportunities increase, face-to-face learning may fade away forever.

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