

Online Instruction vs. Face to Face Classrooms

Online instruction and face to face classrooms both provide different teaching and learning methods that influence students' education. In online instruction, additional efforts and motivation of the student are necessary because students may tend to lose focus easily and may most likely be unable to be efficiently caught up with coursework. Dr. Jim Riggs, a speaker from the forum, remarks that in an online learning setting, "students must be highly motivated, course material should be highly interesting and motivational, and there should be periodic checks made by the instructor". In addition, students' preferences for the type of method of instruction may also be affected by personal factors. Many different challenges are also faced with online learning. These difficulties are what cause it to compare less favorably to classroom instruction. Yet few programs such as Blackboard and Wimba have helped in improving the arrangement of online learning. Face to face learning is more interactive with university or college professors and cooperation is enhanced between student and teacher. There is better understanding of material taught in the specific course and teachers are better able to pinpoint any problems or areas students are struggling with. Various benefits that may be present include enhanced active engagement and participation, more frequent interaction and feedback from teachers, and connections to the real world. Thus, face to face classrooms exceed the benefits of learning over online instruction.

Today, online education is vastly growing and expanding in the present as well as into the

future. It creates new and more opportunities for students and provides better access to education throughout the nation for many. However, there are vast differences in teaching methods that affect the educational approach to learning. Many challenges are imposed upon this type of discipline. According to the article "Online or Face to Face? A Comparison of Two Methods of Training Professionals", "One of the most prevalent challenges is the need for collaboration and communication among professionals" (29). Collaboration and communication is a major challenge in online learning and instructors have a difficult time ensuring students' understanding and engagement in course materials. This results in a probable lower performance of students in their work. The uses of programs such as Blackboard and Wimba have helped improve the format of online learning immensely. These tools aid instructors in developing courses that are interesting, challenging, and personal because of the various features administered. Blackboard also provides a beneficial system that detects plagiarism in preventing the issue of academic dishonesty in education that has been a hugely debated topic among students and teachers at all levels according to the article "Perceptions of Academic Honesty in Online vs. Face-to-Face Classrooms". Another disadvantage for some students may be that there are also fewer students and teacher interaction where each student learns less about one another in a virtual classroom and some may be quite skeptical towards this idea. As a result, some students may be capable of learning better in a face to face format where there is often a more structured environment.

Face to face instruction involves stricter adherence to traditional classroom learning. So, a more structured, organized format may be followed. One of the benefits of teaching in a classroom is that students may experience strengthened communication with teachers. They also are able to gain stronger, long lasting friendships which aren't obtainable in an online setting where direct in person contact is unavailable. Another benefit of classroom learning is that

students are able to gain a better understanding of course material taught because of hands on materials given and more frequent cooperation with others. For instance, in a survey done from the article "Perceived Utility of Methods and Instructional Strategies Used in Online and Face-to-face Teaching Environments", instructional methods and strategies such as "student collaborative projects, hands-on practicum or lab work, lecture (direct instruction), student presentations, questioning and feedback to students, and e-mail communication with the instructor were identified as very useful" (269). Also, another advantage may be that the student doesn't feel that he or she is obligated to be solely responsible for achieving coursework altogether on his or her own. Participation and group discussions in the classroom can help with comprehending information, especially if it is difficult or complex. Hence, working in a face to face classroom environment excel the technique of employing one's self in an online class.

A personal consideration that affects students' choice of instructional format varies between motivational beliefs and achievement emotions according to the article "Online or face-to-face learning? Exploring the personal factors that predict students' choice of instructional format". A few of these motivational beliefs might include students' reasoning of their skills in successfully accomplishing academic tasks and course work in an online environment. Students may place value on certain tasks by means of "how interesting, important, and useful a course is to them" (272-3). Achievement emotions are detached emotions affiliated with achievement-related activities. For example, "enjoyment or satisfaction that results from learning something new" (273) and boredom due to an uninteresting lecture. Therefore, these two personal components from students influence decisions about specific formats of instruction.

Consequently, the use of face to face classrooms is far more beneficial than the educational approach of online instruction. In the future, classrooms will continue to be a

favorite traditional way of teaching and learning in an openly established environment. As a result classroom teaching has become a significant part of a rewarding education.

Works Cited

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