

# CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS OF ONLINE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

## ПРОБЛЕМИ ТА ПЕРЕВАГИ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ ОНЛАЙН

**Abstract.** The global pandemic forced the whole world to switch to online education. But teaching and learning online were not new trends before the global health crisis. Distance learning is far more widely used in postsecondary educational settings. Higher educational establishments are involved in making online both teaching and learning engaging and effective.

**Key words:** online learning, students, benefits, challenges, face-to-face training

**Анотація.** Глобальна пандемія змусила весь світ перейти на онлайн - освіту. Але викладання та навчання онлайн не були новими тенденціями до світової кризи в галузі охорони здоров'я. Дистанційне навчання набагато ширше використовується в умовах вищої освіти. Вищі навчальні заклади беруть участь у тому, щоб викладання та навчання у мережі були цікавими та ефективними.

**Ключові слова:** онлайн-навчання, студенти, переваги, проблеми, очне навчання

Today, there are a plethora of terms to describe the application of digital technologies in learning including distance, online, open, flexible, blended, flipped, mixed and MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses). To help make sense of these terminologies, Bullen and Janes have conceptualized a continuum of technology use ranging from face-to-face to fully distance environments [2].

The global pandemic forced the whole world to switch to online education. But teaching and learning online were not new trends before the global health crisis. The spread of online classes and enrollment in higher education has expanded exponentially. Many teachers, mentors and instructors have been

conducting online lessons using the diversity of available platforms as the place of venue.

Distance learning is far more widely used in postsecondary educational settings. In the “2013 Survey of Online Learning,” conducted by Babson Survey Research Group, revealed that the number of higher education students enrolled in at least one online course was above 7.1 million, approximately 33 percent of higher education students [1].

Higher educational establishments are involved in making online both teaching and learning engaging and effective.

The benefits of online learning provide flexible education concerning time and place. First of all, learning at your own pace thus allowing students to be involved in other activities, the resources or study material are available from anywhere and at any time thus creating learning without papers which is very convenient.

On the one hand, online learning was reported beneficial for students because they had high interaction to rich learning materials regardless time and place as well as high opportunity to experience digital learning programs [4; 5; 8]. Moreover, the high interaction also occurred in the forms of virtual communication among teachers - students, and students - students which resulted vast capacity of sharing information and experience [6; 7].

On the other hand, online learning has a number of challenges. We will discuss the most important from the point of view of the teacher.

Most of training material is mastered by the students individually. This requires responsibility and self-control. The motivation regarding online learning during the coronavirus outbreak was reported contributing inconsistent effects in higher education. The online learning has caused lack motivation for some students to learn whereas others were highly motivated [3].

Simamora in his study reported that students with lack motivation were greatly affected by external factors like learning environment, learning time, and instrumental supports which in turn affected the achievement [9].

Lack of practical knowledge is another disadvantage of online learning. It is not easy to learn subjects that involve a large number of practical exercises remotely. Students need practical applications to comprehend abstract theories. According to data released in the 2014 Learning in America Survey conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of Everest College, 52% of Americans listed active participation through hands-on training as the best learning method [6].

Preventing cheating. So far, the video surveillance is the most effective tool to see if a student has passed exams or credits honestly and independently, which is not always possible, therefore students have to come to the final exam in person to visit the university. Sometimes students can let another person help or take the test for them. Without having the proper system in place to prevent cheating, students can easily pass their courses.

Difficulty teaching particular subjects. Due to circumstances, some subjects are much harder to transfer in online setting. Humanities and social sciences are much more favorable in an online learning environment than engineering and medical fields. Moreover, many extracurricular activities are removed, such as music and physical education.

To overcome these disadvantages of online learning creative strategies can be incorporated. This will help solve some issues of hands-on learning, isolation and unproductivity. To avoid cheating, classroom management software may be used; blended learning in its turn involves both online learning and traditional face-to-face training which may optimize practice, assigning self-directed projects is helpful for students to understand concepts and being able to apply them in the real world as creating their own projects students deepen their knowledge about the idea or concept; minimizing distractions and time

management are of great importance as well; and boosting motivation by gamification is an excellent way to involve the students into the study.

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