



Effects of E-learning education on both mental and physical health

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Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered new ways of learning. All around the world, educational institutions are looking toward online learning platforms to continue with the process of educating students. Covid-19 has caused destruction and devastation worldwide in ways nobody could anticipate. Life as we knew it changed. And this change became the new constant. Online education has drastically changed the way we study but the year and half of attending online classes from home have led to a string of mental and physical health issues for students and as well as teachers.

Keywords: E- learning, mental health, physical health, Covid-19 pandemic, students, teachers.

Introduction

Online education has drastically changed the way we study but the year and half of attending online classes from home have led to a string of mental and physical health issues for both students and teachers. Covid-19 has caused destruction and devastation worldwide in ways nobody could anticipate. The world in one way or another came to a standstill. Life as we knew it changed. And this change became the new constant. Educational institutions took to online teaching. The start of this change felt rather very enticing for the students with not having to rush and get ready to reach the institutions, and being in the comfort of their homes.

However, this peace didn't last as long. Online education has taken a huge toll on the mental and physical health of students as well as their teachers.

Definition:

Effects: a change which is a result or consequence of an action or other cause.

Mental health: a person's condition in which their psychological and emotional well-being.

Physical health: It is the soundness of the body, freedom from disease or abnormality, and the condition of optimal well-being.

E-learning: method of learning conducted via electronic media, typically on the internet.

Advantages and disadvantages.

As with most teaching methods, online learning also has its own set of Advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages of e-learning

- cheaper than traditional methods of teaching because it doesn't need paper or pencil
- It can be conducted in any place and any time
- More flexible environment for students
- Foster students' ability to set their own schedule, to complete tasks or assignments
- Facilitate students' monitoring their own learning progress
- Evaluations from teaching and learning perspectives can be conducted through electronic methods
- Progress tracking, record of date and time of assignment submission and completion can be done easily through electronic methods.

Disadvantages of E-Learning:

- Online student feedback is limited (one way communication)
- E-Learning can cause social Isolation
- E-Learning requires strong self-motivation and time management skills
- Lack of communicational skill development in online students
- Cheating prevention during online assessments is complicated
- Online instructors tend to focus on theory rather than practice
- E-Learning lacks face-to-face communication
- E-Learning is limited to certain disciplines
- Online learning is inaccessible to the computer illiterate population
- Lack of accreditation & quality assurance in online education

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Online learning also has its own set of positives and negatives. Decoding and understanding these positives and negatives will help institutes in creating strategies for more efficient delivery of the lessons, ensuring an uninterrupted learning journey for the students.

How online education affected mental health

1. Lack of interest

Humans are social animals, and the most introverted ones also need to see faces and have human interactions once in a while. The children have grown to lose interest in their online classes. Most of them switch off the camera and go about their other activities. They lose their interest in studies as well as other things related to classes. The pressure of after-school homework and assignments has triggered a great toll on the mental health and mood.



Fig:1 Lack of interest

2. Stress and anxiety

The concentration levels of students dropped in online learning as the eye meanders elsewhere on the screen. This in response made it difficult for most students to keep up with the teachings. The pressure to concentrate and produce the required results has resulted in a great amount of stress and anxiety. Tasks, assignments, and homework slacked. Most children were seen lagging behind and succumbing to the pressure. The mental state of the children was fragile and tampered with.



Fig: 2 Stress and anxiety

3. Zoom fatigue

Zoom fatigue refers to the exhaustion after having attended zoom classes. With the screen time increasing drastically, the mind is overwhelmed with information and the brain finds it rather difficult to register all the information. Parents are confined to the walls of their houses and have taken it upon themselves to get extensively involved with their children and their online classes.



Fig:3 Parents involved in online class

Effects of online classes on physical health

1. Eyesight problems

Increased screen time has increased the strain on the eyes, resulting in major headaches and vision problem. This was applicable to the students as well as teachers.



Fig:4 Eye sight problem

2. Lack of classroom ethics

The classroom ethics have been compromised to great lengths. The posture, regularity, lack of routine, attentiveness has all resulted in health hazards. Constant sitting has caused weight concerns as well. No physical activity has made the students restless and frustrated. This is leads to change in the eating habits, thus resulting in damages to the physical health.



Fig:5 Lack of classroom ethics

3. Bad ergonomics

Human factors and ergonomics are the application of psychological and physiological principles to the engineering and design of products, processes, and systems. Studying online has resulted in poor/bad ergonomics, thus resulting in a muscle strain, muscle imbalances, fatigue, back pain and fibromyalgia pains.



Fig:6 Bad ergonomics

4. Lack of physical activities

Children attending online classes at home are not bound to have classroom professionalism. The lack of physical activities has caused children to become obese. Muscle spasms, muscle rigidity, and lack of calcium, etc are all based on lack of physical activity.



Fig: 7 Lack of physical activities

5. Lack of Vitamin D

Online Education surprisingly has resulted in a lack of Vitamin D. Students are continuously at home and Infront of computer or laptop and Phone not exposed to sunlight, not maintaining diet, and not doing exercise have resulted in more problems than one could anticipate.



Fig: 8 Lack of Vitamin D

6. Calcium deficiency

The lack of physical activity and calcium has resulted in trivial injuries, thus resulting in extensive injuries further. Lack of Physical activity also leads to Muscle cramps, spasms and strains/tears are common with trivial injuries / bad postures when a child is having severe deficiencies



Fig 9: Calcium deficiency

Conclusion:

We can say that online education initially started as a great advantage but took a drastic turn and didn't work so much in the same spirit. With the increased screen time, eyesight issues, headaches, and strain have increased a great deal. Not only that, children have also been exposed to stress and anxiety from an early age and parents only add to the pressure. Physical well-being has gone for a complete toss. It is important for us to keep in mind all these aspects to prevent any future harm that might turn into lifelong problems.

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