

IMPACT OF VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

In the today's learning environment the the virtual learning process has become very popular. Baccuse, of the COVID 19 pandemic situation, the use of the virtual learning process has become demanding. However, there are several advantages as well as disadvantages of this virtual learning process that has been faced by both the students and the teachers. In the current study discussion will be made on both the advantage and disadvantage of this learning process along with better strategy to implement this process with better outcomes.

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Introduction

A virtual learning environment refers to the online-based program for the students and teachers to discuss problems and gain digital solutions for an exceptional learning experience. The digital learning program has been proven effective for students for many years. But for the last two years during pandemic situations over the world, virtual learning platforms had become the most necessary program for every student to get solutions for their problems. The virtual learning environment means a digital system that offers the educator digital solution for creating interactive, analytics and active learning environment. This is a type of program that can be accessed from anywhere anytime and generally via an online or computer-based system. Previously, the distance learning degree programs, professional certification courses and instructional videos are shared by professors to their students digitally, but due to the effect of the pandemic, all schools, colleges and universities had become adapted to this type of e-learning program.

Background of the research

The virtual learning program was previously optional in many countries for students and professors. However, the recent pandemic had done it mandatory for every student for their learning and doubt clearances. This study is based on the effectiveness of virtual learning program for students and how it creates a better learning environment for learners to overcome educational challenges. The biggest key for success in an online learning program is perhaps the persistence of a certain student (Herrera, 2017). Students who can tolerate and solve technical problems, seek help whenever needed, work in the class daily and persist through learning challenges may become successful online learners (Lacka and Wong, 2021).

The virtual learning programs help students from different parts of the world to learn digitally through engaging in online sessions of several online learning platforms such as Coursera, Skillshare, Lynda.com and more like these irrespective of the time and place (Al-Azawei and Al-Masoudy, 2020). The background of the study is to analyse the impact of these online learning platforms for creating digital learning experiences for the students of different places. Moreover, the acceptance of this online learning experience has been evaluated in this report by constructing a survey of students from different places by collecting primary data.

Research aim

The research aims to analyse the positive and negative impact of the digital learning environments on students' wellbeing. Moreover, the target is to improve students' digital skills and online learning abilities within the digital learning platforms as well as provide awareness for the importance of analysis of information and its transition into knowledge for the students.

Research objectives

- To identify the most engaging activities that can happen for students in the virtual learning classes
- To understand the way to stay focused and concentrate on the class through digital learning platforms
- To understand the way to reduce the effect of network issues during an online class and connect with the internet to resolve learning problems

Research questionnaire

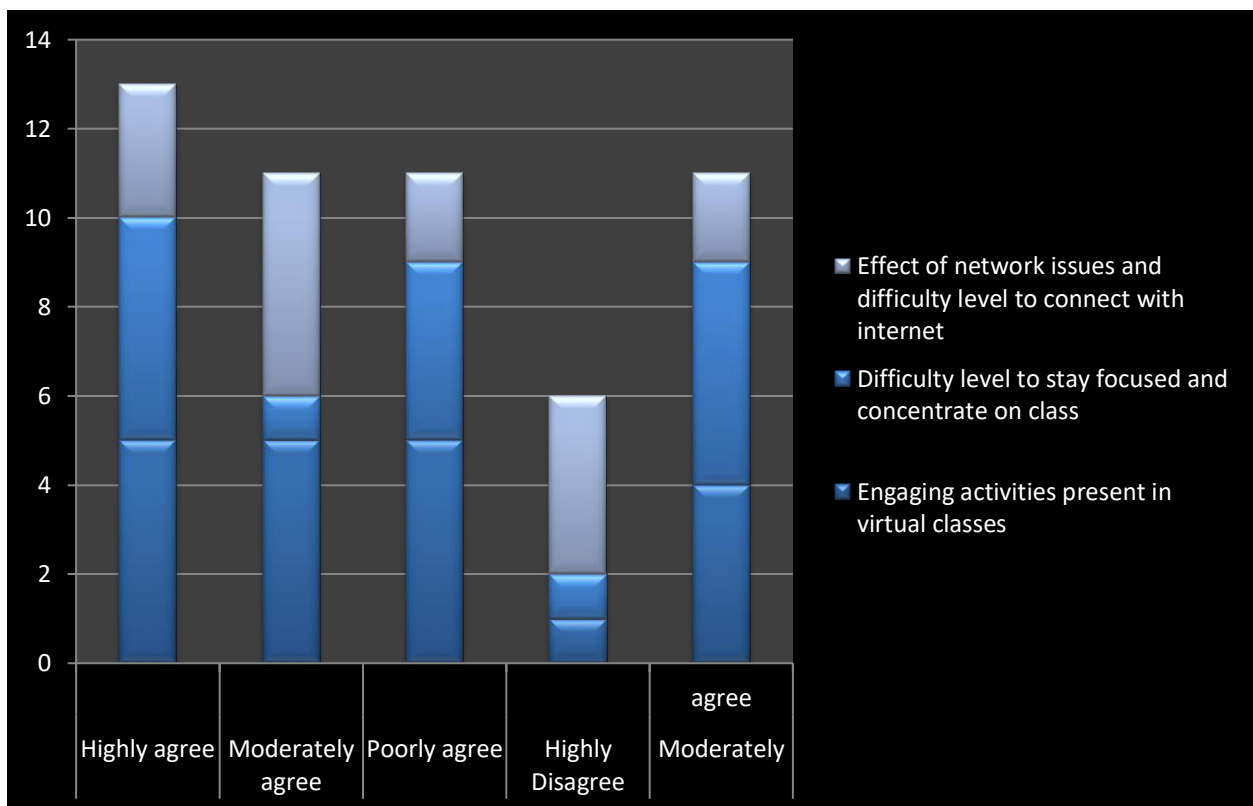
- What are the most engaging activities that can happen for students in the virtual learning classes?
- How difficult or easy it is to stay focused and concentrate on the class through digital learning platforms?
- How to reduce the effect of network issues during an online class and connect with the internet to resolve learning problems?

Research survey

Based on the questionnaires the following survey can be made by asking five different students opinions regarding the digital learning method.

	Highly agree	Moderately agree	Poorly agree	Highly Disagree	Moderately agree
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Engaging activities present in virtual classes	5	5	5	1	4
Difficulty level to stay focused and concentrate on class	5	1	4	1	5
Effect of network issues and difficulty level to connect with internet	3	5	2	4	2



Graph 1: Research survey

Analysis

Analysis of the research survey

From the above survey, it is observed that most of the students are feeling comfortable with the virtual learning programs as it is engaging students through different online activities during the class. This method of learning is creating curiosity in the students and engages them to understand the subjects as well as develop their technical skills (Awoyemi and Awoyemi, 2021). On other hand, it is seen that most of the students are facing difficulty in staying focused in the class and concentrating to hear the topic. The conventional method of learning help learners to more concentrate on their study as the teacher can provide individual care to the students. Moreover, the network problem sometimes creates difficulty to continue the study digitally which affect the concentration level of the learners.

In this case, the survey shows that most of the learners face difficulty with the connection of the internet which makes them disgusted and their concentration breaks. The internet problems depend on the location of the learner when they are in live online classes (Alotebi *et al.*, 2018). In that case, the virtual learning platforms provide the learners with a better opportunity to understand the subject or a particular topic by providing them with learning videos that can be accessed offline also after downloading.

Analysis of appropriate use of contemporary techniques

The contemporary techniques of learning help students from all curriculum areas and learning stages to develop their skills and capabilities in this rapidly changing and interconnected world. As stated by Mai and Muruges (2018), the contemporary technique of teaching that is the offline teaching methods help students to connect with their teacher more effectively and engages their sense of curiosity. Moreover, contemporary teaching helps the teachers to identify the individual needs and talents of the students. The attachment with students physically helps the teachers to understand their strengths and weaknesses and guide them accordingly to produce a better result for them. In this context, collaborative learning and the VAK teaching method can be the most modern methods of learning and teaching through which teachers can encourage the learners to study profoundly and study to mitigate their curiosity effectively.

Collaborative Learning: Earlier during an examination or before an examination, learners can only study their learning in isolation. However, in the modern teaching method, the learners can form a group where they can use collaborative learning in presence of a teacher. This method

helps learners to solve their problems, debate on different topics of the subject and clear their doubts (Hizam *et al.*, 2021). Moreover, the collaborative method of learning helps learners in developing their social skills and understanding the subject matter faster.

VAK teaching: VAK teaching method comprises of three categories which are Visual, Audio and Kinesthetic. In this method, the teachers have to understand that in which category their students are related to. In this method, Visual represents seeing the data, Audio represents gathering information by hearing the data and Kinesthetic represents feeling the data (Xiaoyun and Siqi, 2018). This method of learning helps students to catch and understand the information given by their teacher either by seeing, or hearing, or feeling and helps them to present the same topic in different ways.

Impact of Virtual Learning Environment on Students learning experience

A virtual learning environment is today's online-based platform that uses to offer students effective digital solutions that can enhance the learning experience of the student effectively.

a. Virtual Learning Environment can provide a secure environment for children's social interactions, mainly during their early developmental years. Thus, the Virtual Learning Environment is helping them to learn skills such as setting boundaries, empathy as well as collaboration (Lacka and Wong, 2021).

b. In the case of the Virtual Learning Environment students can travel across the world using virtual classroom software without ever leaving their classroom. Virtual Learning Environment also supports them in real-time that can enable them to connect with others and learn from experts in a range of subjects. They can participate in seminars and lectures on the other side of the globe.

c. Remote learning, as well as the Virtual Learning Environment, can also help students in providing them with new skills, more freedom, as well as the ability to study on their own time (Dung, 2020). This Virtual Learning Environment also helps the students for better problem-solving opportunities in their free time learning. This in turn helps the students in domestic responsibilities. This in turn helps both the teachers and the students in balancing the learning, professional and family time.

d. Teachers can utilize virtual learning environments to plan classes as well as to manage administrative tasks in their free time that can enable them to assess students' performance. This also supports the teachers to provide supplemental materials to the students at the extra time.

e. Another benefit of virtual communication is that it reduces the cost of transportation. Therefore, using Virtual Learning Environment, by cutting personnel operations costs, businesses can spend

more money on other tasks. On the other hand, transportation is time-consuming and needed by the physical effort of the student. In the case of a Virtual Learning Environment, the student is needed for lesser time and effort for learning.

Negative impact of virtual learning

a. There are several issues involved with the Virtual Learning Environment. This can create issues of poor learning effects, issues with the completion of the courses as well as the lack of interaction with other students (Memon et al, 2020). This can negatively lead to poor motivation of the students to the learning. Therefore, this may lead to lesser numbers of students completing college and school degrees. Apart from this, the Virtual Learning Environment also does not allow the students to successfully fulfill their psychological needs and thus the psychological growths of the students are reduced.

b. It also lacks human-to-human interaction and therefore this uses to limit the team-communication skill, playing activities, brainstorming and so on. Switching to online learning has impacted learning, grades and motivation in the case of several students. Apart from this, the Virtual Learning Environment cannot help the students in managing the practical experiences that can negatively affect the technical skill of the student for better potentiality in the practical field.

Advantages and disadvantages of Virtual learning environment

In the current situation, the virtual learning environment is providing a great opportunity for the learners to mitigate their curiosity and clear their doubts. One of the most effective advantages of this virtual learning program is that it saves so much time which a student can utilise it in their study (Jusuf et al., 2021). Moreover, virtual classes can be accessed from anywhere at any time which reduces excessive pressure from students as in offline learning most of the students have to make a long journey to reach their study centre. On other hand, it is also beneficial for the teachers as they do not have to travel long distances to reach their workplace and do not have to provide long day classes. The virtual learning environment can engage learners effectively when the facilitator asks questions and provide opportunities to share ideas and perspectives regarding certain topics (Vaidyanathan, 2018).

Besides, the virtual learning environment has some drawbacks too from which the most prior disadvantage is that it cannot create a physical connection between students and teachers thereby minimising the encouragement towards learning (Hantoobi et al., 2021). Many students are feeling bored as they cannot go to their classrooms and meet their friends as well as experience the open learning program. As opined by Diab-Bahman et al. (2021), a virtual learning environment might not be the most effective way to teach someone to build or use a complicated

piece of machinery. Moreover, the teachers are unable to teach their students discipline and appropriate manners through virtual classes. This method cannot be useful to understand a student's ability and talent. The teacher cannot able to analyse students' strengths and weaknesses during their learning.

Recommendation

In order to gain better success in the today's virtual learning process the teachers and students must be careful regarding several factors. These are as follows

- 1) Communicate with Instructors: better communication with the instructor can help the students to make better understanding on the study chapter.
- 2) Engage with Classmates: the effective engagement with the classmates may positive ly impact on the better social interaction as well as collaborative learning process for the students.
- 3) Stay Focused During Class: the better focus leads to better understanding on the learning modules of the students. Therefore, the students can become successful in order to manage better marks in exams.
- 4) Set Clear Goals: setting a clear goal is useful for the teachers to make the appropriate lesson plan to complete all the chapters on time. Moreover, this leads to a systematic learning process for the students.
- 5) Practice Using Technology: implementation of better technologies is useful to avoid technical issues in the class that can negatively impact on the learning of the students. This can help the teachers to continue the learning process with no issues.

Conclusion

From the study, it can be concluded that the virtual learning environment can engage students effectively through different online activities but it can also create discouragement to the students as the personal interaction is absent in this form of learning. Moreover, the virtual learning program can be attended from anywhere at any time and it also saves a lot of time which create a chance for the students to utilise the time in their study. In addition, it can also be concluded that collaborative learning and VAK teaching methods can be the most effective learning methods for the current generation as it enhances the technical and analytical skills of the students. The virtual learning environment can also help the students for better problem-solving opportunities in

their free time learning. It may also be concluded that the VLE can negatively lead to poor motivation of the students to the learning.

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