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ONLINE LEARNING IS NOT ONLY
CONVENIENT BUT OFTEN MORE
EFFECTIVE THAN TRADITIONAL
CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION.

OUTLINE

1) Introduction

2) Online Learning is more convenient
than traditional classroom instructions

a. No complex infrastructure or
transport facilities are needed.

(District Education Report → 48% schools
lack adequate
infrastructure).

b. Financial constraints that lead to
low literacy rates could be avoided.

(62% literacy rate → 2% GDP
expenditure)

c. Gender gap in education could

be traversed.

(145/146 → World Economic Forum
Gender Gap Report 2022)

d. Rural-Urban divide in education
could be bridged.

77% Literacy rate → Urban	Economic Survey of Pakistan.
53% Literacy rate → Rural	

e. Online learning is more resistant
to disaster and catastrophes.

(24000 school destroyed and 3.5 million
children lost their schools in 2022
as per World Bank Report)

f. Online learning is far more
budget-friendly than traditional
classroom instructions.

(Research journal of StudyLink).

4. Online learning is more effective
than traditional classroom education

a. Research proves that students

learn better in comfortable environment.

(Finland case study)

b. Online learning ensures better mental health.

(Study of American Psychology Association:
65% of students exposed to mental health issues more due to academic pressure of school)

c. Online learning ensures better parent-teacher coordination.

(Periodic reports & instant notifications, etc.)

d. Better student-teacher coordination is provided by online education.

(Learning Management System, etc.)

e. Students get a learning experience beyond space and time.

(Recorded videos, presentation drafts, courses, etc.)

f. Online education offers vast tools for better learning. (Zoom, Google classrooms, Black, Gradescope).

g. Students develop critical skills on consulting multiple online resources.

(90% universities lack proper research environments → Syed Amir Gillani of the University of Lahore)

h. Online education brings uniformity in education.

(Madrassa Miraj by Azmat Abbas)

i. Online education enables one to access world-class education

(Online courses of the University of Harvard, the London School of Economics and the University of Derby, etc.)

5. Although online learning is more effective and convenient than traditional classroom instructions yet it has its own limitations.

6. Way forward to overcoming the limitations and bring the online education to best use.

7. Conclusion.

Bill Gates once said, "When I wanted to learn outside something of school as a kid, cracking open World Book encyclopedia was the best I could do. Today all you have to do is go online." Online learning is the future of education across the globe. It enables one to access education on any topic, at any time and place. The only tools need for the noble purpose of learning in online mode are device such as laptop, computer or smartphone and internet connection. It needs no complex infrastructure, or transportation. Online learning is pocket-friendly, bridges the prevailing gender gap in education, rural-urban divide is bridged and low literacy rates could be tackled. Furthermore, Online learning ensures better

environment for studies, and better mental health of students. In addition to it, it ensures, improved parent-teacher and student-teacher coordination. Online learning equip students with latest tools and education with freedom of time and space. Traditional classroom instructions are temporary and ends with the class whereas online learning can be stored for long-term use. There are plethora of evidences in the support of online learning in contrast to traditional classroom instruction. Therefore, online learning is indeed more convenient and effective than traditional classroom instructions.

One of the reasons that online learning is more convenient than traditional classroom instructions; no complex infrastructure or transport facilities are needed for the

online mode of learning. Complete infrastructure includes buildings where student can gather and learn. These buildings must be equipped with electricity, temperature control systems, and bathroom facilities. Another issue is that accessing these infrastructure, requires effective transport systems. Both the transport system and infrastructure arrangements are costly. In the context of Pakistan, due to rising inflation it is becoming tough day by day to manage prices of diesel, petrol and CNG. Furthermore, in many parts of Pakistan, roads are not proper and providing transport in such areas to schools and universities is just out of the question. Not only this, as per District Education Report, 48% of the schools in Pakistan lack adequate infrastructure. Online learning

gives student freedom from both the infrastructure requirements and need of transport. Thus, making it more convenient than traditional classroom instructions.

Moreover, online learning enables learners to avoid low literacy rates usually occurring because of financial constraints. Traditional classroom instructions puts lots of financial constraints on students such as daily lunch money, travel expenses, fee miscellaneous of institutions, and dressing cost, etc. Many students in under-developed and developing countries could not afford the financial burden that education brings with it; thus, resulting in low literacy rates. In Pakistan, 2% of GDP is ~~spent~~ spent on education with literacy rate at 62%. Parents cannot afford to send their children to traditional classrooms.

Therefore, online learning is the best solution to cater low literacy rate resulting from financial constraints of people.

In addition to that, gender gap in education could also be traversed by adopting online mode of learning. In Pakistan there is huge difference of admission intake of different genders. As per the Gender Gap Report 2022 of the World Economic forum, Pakistan ranks 145 out of 146 countries on the gender gap disparities index. This issue can also be catered by online learning. Many conservative families don't send their daughters to schools and female literacy ratio is decreasing day by day. As online learning don't require its learners to be present at a specific place, in a specific

dress code therefore, it has potential
potential to traverse the prevailing
gender gap in Pakistani society.

Online education can also
bridge the rural-urban divide in
education. Rural-urban divide is
widening because of improved
infrastructure, better employment opportunities
and promise of comfortable life
at rural areas in contrast to
urban. Rural areas provide better
education facilities and thus cause
thousands of students to migrate
from their homeland and comfortable
habitat to the hostels. For example,
in Islamabad, Pakistan students
from across the country, from
Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan
and Gilgit-Baltistan come for
studies and suffer home sickness
and brutal cultures of hostels.
As per Economic Survey of Pakistan

literacy rate in urban areas is 77% and literacy rate of rural areas is 53%.

Online learning discriminates between none. When the students will get quality education in their areas (rural areas), ultimately the rural-urban divide would be bridged. And the source of such quality education is the online form of education.

Furthermore, online learning is also resistant to disasters and catastrophes. Due to various reasons both natural and man-made, the world is often faced with disasters and catastrophes. Floods are the biggest example of such events. They disrupt the daily life and suspends schools for unlimited period of time. According to the World Bank Report 2022, the floods caused destruction of 24000 schools

and almost 3-5 million children lost their schools. Online learning as is free from the need of infrastructure and transport therefore, the impact of such catastrophes would be minimized if online learning mode was adopted. Thus, giving online learning further edge over the traditional learning.

Likewise, online learning is far more budget-friendly as compared to traditional classroom instructions. The expenses of traditional education mostly includes, living fee, food expenses, travel cost, hostel payments, and course fee. By way of online learning these expense could be reduced to just course fee. As per the research published by the StudyLink

by means of online learning one can save upto £6000 and £7200 per year in the United Kingdom. Expenses incurred in the traditional classroom settings is a global issue and online learning sets one free from these expenses. Therefore, it is safe to assert that online learning is far more convenient on the pocket as well.

Along with convenience, online learning provides effectiveness. Studies have proved that students learn better in comfortable environment. Nothing is more comfortable on earth than ones own habitat. Good environment relaxes nervous system of students and after being free of distraction and fear of survival, they can learn far more effectively.

Finland is the best example to study this. In Finland, the students are provided maximum ease, they study only 20 hours per week and their first exams is held at the age of 16 years. This relaxed environment has made them creative and effective. Finland's education system is one of the best education system. Thus, it is evident that relax students produce better results, fortunately online learning has the same potential. Thus making it more effective than traditional learning.

Moreover, online learning ensures better mental health. Mental health of student is necessary for his/her good performance and for effective learning.

For students with low self-esteem and lack of confidence, schools are often hell. These shy students suffer in group studies and often drop out. Addressing these mental issues take time but this worsely affect their education.

According to the study of American Psychology Association, 65% of the students are exposed to increased depression, anxiety and insomnia owing to pressure of school.

Online learning provides healthy environment to such students making their journey to learning easy. Thus, online learning provides better learning environment make it more effective.

Online learning also ensures better parent-teacher coordination. For successful and effective learning

role of both teacher and parent is necessary therefore, it is important that there must be coordination between the two.

Online learning systems has made this coordination very easy.

As an evidence, the teachers now can send periodic reports of students directly to parents via WhatsApp or Gmail. In

old times, teachers used to communicate with parents of student by writing short-notes or student's diary. Students

were able to hide those notes from the eyes of parents and keeping them in dark. Due to

online learning teachers can directly contact parents. Parents can also respond quickly and thus coordinate accordingly. Improve

coordination between parent and teacher has only resulted because

of efficiency of online learning.

Likewise, online education provides improved student-teacher coordination.

Student-teacher coordination is also foundational step of learning.

Many students are slow learners and some are shy. Online

learning system provides these student to learn at their

pace and if needed to contact teacher after class or after lecture

they may contact the respective teacher via LMS. LMS, Learning

Management Systems, mostly developed during Covid-19 times made

student-teacher coordination a piece of cake. Students may

upload files for assessment, leave queries or give feedback. Thus

online learning makes the learning

a two-way process, rendering it more effective.

Online learning along with many efficiency advantages give students a learning experience beyond space and time. If students miss a lecture or two in a traditional classroom setting, they would be behind others. The loss of absence could be remedied in such setting. But in the traditional online learning systems the presentations can be preserved and lectures can be recorded that can be accessed anytime, at any place. The contents teachers teach can be preserved and shared. Thus, a student if absent from a class or two would not suffer loss. This gives online learning a further edge over the traditional classroom education.

Furthermore, online learning systems

offers tools for better learning. In the changing environment adopting to latest technology has become a need of the society if one doesn't want to stay behind in life. These technical tools make our work easy and helps in effective learning. One of the biggest learning platforms is Youtube, if used the right way. The tools that enable one to adjust to the online mode of learning are Zoom, Google classrooms and Blackboard, etc. Zoom enables teachers to deliver and record lectures. Students can access these lectures even later on. Another software, Gradescope increases the efficiency of students by managing their homework assignments and giving them reminders. Thus, there is a variety of tools offered by online education for effective learning.

With the blessing of online learning, students develop critical skills on consulting multiple online resources. In traditional classroom setting students often limit themselves to the lectures but in online learning settings they had to, even if they don't want to, consult multiple resources and critically assess the information. Students had to pick up relevant information from the ocean of learning content online and this inculcates interest for research. According to Syed Amir Gillani head of University of Lahore, 90% universities in Pakistan lack proper research environments. On contrast online learning fills this lacuna left by university. Therefore, online learning often proves to be more effective.

Along with these characteristics of online learning, it further brings

uniformity in education. In Pakistan the education system is divided into madrasa system and conventional school system. Both systems have their own shortcomings but and benefits. The point of concern is that ~~the~~ both systems are poles apart. Azmat Abbas, in the book Madrasa Mirage, points towards the outdated curriculums, and failure of Madrasa systems to equip student with necessary skills. In Pakistan almost 1.5 million to 2 million students are in Madrasa systems. Online learning platform can enable such students to learn effectively the necessary life skill that will help them to survive in this earthly world. Online learning bridges the gap and establish connection of students making it effective.

In addition, online learning enables one to access world-class education. Because of the platforms provided by the online mode of education now it is easy for students to access education from their dream universities. Many world-class universities such as Harvard, Oxford, the University of London, the University of Derby, etc. provides online courses with or without certifications. Some courses are even free. Thus online education has brought the best education at the click of a computer. Therefore, online education is more effective as it connects one to the most efficient teachers and institutions.

There is no doubt that online learning is far more

effective and convenient than traditional classroom instructions. But in spite that it has its own short-comings. Many times teachers/students have to face cyber-security and bullying issues. Teachers are not well-trained and equipped with the tools of online learning. In under developing and developing countries like Pakistan many students cannot afford adequate equipment.

In online mode of learning there is high chance of cheating by students thus, indicating lack of transparency in assessments. Students are easily distracted by social media notifications and other apps while studying. All these create hindrance in the path of effective online learning.

There are some actions that can provide way-forward to overcome the short-comings of the online learnings and bring the online education to best use. Steps could be taken to ensure better cybersecurity. At state levels training workshops of the teachers can be arranged to make them able to adapt to online learning. Subsidies for students are also crucial to equip with need tools and technologies. Moreover, it is also important that more research is conducted on further successful models. By taking these pragmatic actions, online learning can be further made upto the mark and more efficient.

It is need of the time

to realize that online learning is the future. Online learning in comparison with the traditional classroom instructions is far more efficient, and convenient. Online learning is free from the boundaries of time and space thus requires no complex infrastructure but just a device and internet. Internet is the reality. Even in the areas where there are no schools or infrastructure, roads, etc. there is internet. This makes online learning accessible to everyone. Everyone has their own pace of learning. A fish cannot be judged by its ability to climb. Online learning ensures such personality difference and individuals can learn, what pleases them and when it pleases them. There are

many traits of online learning system that makes it more effective and convenient. These

traits are ; online learning ensures comfortable environment, have positive effect on ones mental health, ensures better student - teacher and parent - teacher coordination, gives exposure of world-class education, the content can be preserved for long time, develops critical skills of research and brings uniformity in the education. Right now the domain of online learning is developing, therefore, it has some limitations but by undertaking the efficient actions, the hurdles to effective online learning can be overcome and online learning can be brought to its best use.