

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Education Through the Open University.

Outline

1. Introduction

- a. Importance of education
- b. Pros and cons of education through Open University
- c. Thesis statement

2. Strengths of Education Through Open University

- a. Allows for a flexible study schedule
- b. Increases adult education rate
- c. Helps women from traditional cultures to overcome cultural barriers in the way of attaining education
- d. It saves cost as compared to physical education
- e. It is more time saving as compared physical mode of education

3. Weaknesses of Education Through Open University

- a. It does not help in building social skills
- b. It does not teach the discipline and punctuality

c. Education through Open University is more prone to cheating

d. Remote areas with limited access to internet or postal services are at disadvantage

e. It does not offer technical education due to absence of labs.

4. Conclusion

Essay

"Seek education even if you have to go to China". This quotation of Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) emphasizes on the importance of education in one's life. Education allows a person to be a productive member of society. He is able to perform better in every field of life and make the best out of opportunities provided by life. But people usually do not have means to travel to far off places like China. Education through Open University offers them the chance to educate themselves and be the very best version of

themselves. The flexible study schedule offered by Open University allows the employed people to gain education and climb the ladder of success in their career. It allows the females of conservative societies to get educated. It is also time and cost saving as compared to physical mode of education. However, due to minimal physical interaction with fellow students and teachers in Open University, one does not learn social skills and discipline. It is also prone to cheating and does not work efficiently in remote areas with limited digital and communication infrastructure. In short, education through Open University has its benefits due to flexible study schedule it offers, more female friendly mode, and time and cost saving framework. However, it does not teach social skills and discipline and is prone to cheating.

First of all, education through Open University allows for a flexible study schedule. Due to ever increasing inflation many people have to start doing jobs at young age. Because of

this reason they are not able to continue their education through traditional mode of education by attending educational institutes in person. Open University allows them to continue their education along with their jobs as they do not have to take classes in physical capacity at particular times that may clash with their work appointments. Hence, Open University enables employed people to continue their education.

Secondly, education via Open University contributes to increased literacy rate. Literacy rate in Pakistan is 62% according to economic survey of Pakistan for 2022-23.

Developing countries like Pakistan need unorthodox means of education to increase the literacy rate. Education through Open University is one such mean. Due to being cost and time friendly, it provides a lucrative alternate to usual mode of education and thus can contribute to improved literacy rate.

Moreover, Open University

education can help females in conservative societies to overcome the cultural barriers in attaining education. Due to limited resources it is not always possible for governments to provide segregated education facility to girls. Due to cultural barriers, parents do not allow girls to get education from co-educational institutes. Open University education does not require the girls to leave the premise of their houses to get education. Thus, Open Universities allow the girl to get education as parents' apprehensions regarding gender intermingling in educational institutes are addressed.

Similarly, education attained through Open University is more economical than regular on campus education. It does not require massive infrastructure like multiple classrooms, playgrounds etc. So expenses of getting education through Open University becomes a more affordable option. It allows the students from humble background to attain education and makes them eligible for jobs, making them a productive member of the society.

Furthermore, Open University education is more time saving, as compared to on campus education. The students are not required to travel to university campus on daily basis to take classes, so the time required for daily commute to university is saved. In case of on campus classes, the timegap during various classes is also wasted which is not the case with Open University education. Thus, education through Open University is also time saving.

The various strengths of education through Open University are discussed in above paragraphs in detail. However, there are some weaknesses of Open University education too. These are discussed in upcoming paragraphs.

First and foremost, Open University education does not help in building social skills. Students are not required to come to university campus in case of Open University education. That is why they do not get a chance to interact with each other. On the contrary, on campus education allows the students to take part in various activities

that require team work and co-ordination, which helps them in acquiring necessary social skills required to survive in society, and thrive in it. This is not the case with Open University education, so it does not help students in developing social skills.

Similarly, education through Open University also does not allow develop qualities of discipline and punctuality which are trademark of on-campus education. Open Universities does not have classes at fixed time, so students feel no obligation to get through their syllabus in an organised manner. Classes at fixed time make it obligatory for students to be punctual, which is not the case with Open University educational system. Thus, education through Open University does not teach discipline and punctuality.

Moreover, education through Open University is more prone to cheating. Open University attaches a significant percentage of final results to practice questions and assignments which

are required to be done by the students on their own without any supervision. This lack of check ~~on~~ makes education attained via Open University more prone to cheating as compared to on campus education where quizzes and exams are ~~done~~ given under the observation of invigilators.

Moreover, Open University education is not an efficient mode of education in remote areas with limited internet services or communication infrastructure.

Education through Open University requires the students to access the educational material online or through the postal service.

In far flung areas of Balochistan and Gilgit Baltistan, such services are not that efficient. This renders education through Open University ineffective in such areas.

Lastly, education through Open University does not offer technical courses. Such courses require hands on practice and highly equipped labs. Technical and vocational education is one of the major means of enabling

youngsters to earn livelihood who can not be part of traditional on campus education due to financial constraints. Thus, ^{the} inability of Open University to provide vocational and technical education is its major drawback.

In conclusion, education through Open University has its strengths and weaknesses. On one hand it allows female education to prosper, offers flexible study schedule, and economical education. While on the other hand, it does not help in developing social skills, discipline and punctuality, is more prone to cheating, and does not offer vocational education. However, by addressing the drawbacks of Open University education by designing syllabus that requires group work, in camera exam sessions and combining theoretical knowledge with practical work through government sponsored internships, true potential of Open University can be achieved.