

# Learning – Thrives In Pandemic Due To Digitalisation

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## Abstract

This paper “Learning – Thrives in Pandemic due to Digitalisation” discusses the compulsive need among the student community to opt for Digital Learning. Electronic gadgets like Mobile, Computer, Laptop & I pad have become very essential in the lives of the students and with no exaggeration, one can say that they are the extended limbs with a negative & malign effect on the eyes and ears of the students. The paper defines and compares the traditional education methods to the current rapid digitalization in the education system. Earlier, students were controlled, restricted and monitored while using the mobiles. Now, controlling, restricting and monitoring have taken a back seat due to rolling out of classes through online because of pandemic. Prior to pandemic, Digital Learning is a fancy phrase that attracted young minds to a new method of pedagogy. Now, due to Covid, “Digital Means” has become an inevitable source of acquiring, disbursing and assessing knowledge. It also discusses the various “Digital Tools” used by the educationalists to impart lessons and motivate the students towards learning. The pros and cons of E-learning.

**Keywords:** E-Learning, Traditional methods of learning, Electronic gadgets, pandemic, endemic, knowledge, students, on-line classes

## Introduction

The unprecedented pandemic has demanded unforeseen developments in the educational system. It has marginalized the necessity of leveraging digital methods in learning. With the lockdown in force and clueless closure of institutions for an uncertain tenure, the academic year 2020 has become a Digital compulsive era. The easiest way to get connected to students by the teachers is through digital means. Communicating one-on-one to large masses has been the sole necessity of every Educational Institution.

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Earlier, students were controlled, restricted and monitored while using the mobiles. Now, controlling, restricting and monitoring have taken a back seat due to rolling out of classes through online because of pandemic. Prior to pandemic, Digital Learning is a fancy phrase that attracted young minds to a new method of pedagogy. Now, due to Covid, “Digital Means” has become an inevitable source of acquiring, disbursing and assessing knowledge. It also discusses the various “Digital Tools” used by the educationalists to impart lessons and motivate the students towards learning. The pros and cons of digitalization and the scope for research in this area are discussed.

Worried Parents, flabbergasted teachers and easy going students are clustered in the world of technological media. Even illiterate parents got familiarized with the term on-line classes. Technology is no longer confined to one particular group of people. It has expanded its horizons to each and every branch of learning irrespective of their educational background. Even a teacher with no access to digital tools got adapted to the latest pedagogical strategies. Teachers who remained orthodox got stuck in their career. In some, the pandemic has brought out the latent abilities of rapid learning and quick transformation.

## Traditional Learning

Traditional method of learning is confined to time, place and person. It has several restrictions. It is teacher-centric and is driven by the teacher. It demands physical presence of both the teacher as well as the student. Attending classes physically is compulsory. Every activity is done under the strict surveillance of the teacher and it is designed to promote the learning abilities of the students. The class work is organized in such a way that all the students attend to the classes on time and in a way, students become habituated to a systematic way of learning and attending to the classes on time. This develops punctuality and discipline in them. Besides, students have an opportunity for peer learning and confidence building. They can face academic challenges collectively. Here the teacher

cannot customize the lesson plan categorizing to the needs of different levels of students. Still, this has its own advantages and it enables the low proficiency students to pick up threads from the high proficiency level students. Traditional learning compels the students to follow the academic schedule and gives no academic flexibility of creating their own learning.

### Traditional Teaching

Learning is the aim of teaching, as much as a student learns, a teacher gets success in the work. The process of teaching takes place chiefly in the classroom which is one of the traditional methods of teaching. In traditional teaching method, classrooms are teacher-centric. Teachers take responsibility as knowledge dispensers, not the facilitators. In traditional teaching methods, chalk and talk methods are highly used. The main motive of the teacher is to prepare the student for exams. In traditional method teachers through interesting and interactive activities keep the students simulated, resulting in high retention of the things taught. Recitation and memorization are the techniques in traditional teaching method. It ensures that students are rewarded for their efforts. The class room time is used efficiently and teachers have an opportunity to exercise rules and manage students' behavior. Traditional learning has many advantages .It develops self-discipline. It provides a place to all like-minded people. It gives an opportunity to interact and discuss with peers. It helps to motivate to pursue and complete the course. Traditional teaching method students can set up face- to face meeting with their professors to discuss. It creates relationship and encourages being a part of many individuals.

### Transformation in the Education System

The education system has been transforming and is introducing new methods of teaching which have a completely different angle and approach towards learning and teaching. In modern teaching method, teachers assume all students are different and apply different educational practices. Unlike old education, progressive teaching methods are based on activity, questioning, explaining, demonstrating and using collaboration techniques. Space learning method enables to switch quickly from learning to activities. It is more effective than traditional method of learning. Modern education system focuses more on the individual student's need rather than assuming all students are at the same level of understanding. Sonia Jackson in her blog post wrote about modern teaching method –“The traditional” chalk and talk method of teaching that is persisted for hundreds of years is now acquiring inferior results when compared with the more modern methods of teaching.”

### Digital Learning

Traditional classroom has been replaced by the Digital classroom. This has now transformed to online learning. Google classroom has become popular among the teacher and student community. Assignments and study material are being shared through it. Communication to the students became easy and it has crossed time boundaries. Communicating through whatsapp, email and telegram has become incessant especially during pandemic. Blackboard has been replaced by smart board.

The teaching and learning methodology has seen drastic changes. During the last years, smart Technologies have become a part of our everyday life. New strategies have been adopted to attract students, make them learn and explore new avenues that are untouched by them.

Educational potency is accelerated by using online learning opportunities, resources and technologies, stimulated the rate of learning and reduced overheads connected with developing material, delivery of content and optimal use of time. Rapid development in technology has made distance education easy ( Brianna et.al., 2019)

The advent of technology in education led to an unheard transformation from teacher-centric to student-centric education. Online learning is emerging as a Victor ludorum amidst this chaos. Online learning is defined as “Learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices (eg: mobile phones, laptops etc) with internet access. In these environments, students can be anywhere (independent) to learn & interact with instructors and other students”(Singh & Thurman, 2019).

### Advantages of Digitalisation & E- Learning

- The Advent of technology has paved way to numerous online teaching modes. The teachers can sermonize a large number of students at any time in any part of the world. E- learning has no time or place boundaries and the student can get access to the materials or content and also with the teacher by fixing up a convenient and suitable time to get doubts clarified.
- E-Learning has given a lot of scope for a huge choice in the selection of subjects of study through online. The availability of topics are exponentially large compared to that of the traditional system of education. A student who wishes to specialize in a particular course need not move from his place. He can opt to learn it online from his home itself.
- E- learning provides much flexibility to the students to learn as per their convenience. It means, the student who cannot attend to college as he needs to work can opt for this and learn at his own pace.

●The student here has an advantage of listening to the recorded lessons multiple times to enhance his or her understanding.

●E- learning is cost effective in the sense that it comes for an affordable price to the students as compared to that of the traditional learning as there is no need to employ many teachers for the same subject and develop infrastructure for huge number of students.

●The major advantage is that the teacher can customize the lesson plan as per the pace of the student's learning capabilities and can focus on the individual understanding.

●Tools like Kahoot, Quizizz, Ed-puzzle, Flipgrid have been used rapidly and faculty tried to grab the attention of the students through gamified way of learning.

### Disadvantages Of Digitalisation & E- Learning

Few years back using technology means using computer to do internet research or show power point presentation. But few years later smart phones, tablets, chrome book virtual reality devices and other new technologies entered and changed the teaching-learning process. In this process of learning, there are some cons.

●E- learning requires more discipline from student's side. This is not imposed by the teacher or someone from outside. No external compulsion is laid on the students. It's sheerly the students self discipline that makes him take the classes and go through the content. The student has to devote more time compared to that of the traditional learning methods. Here it is teacher led. There in the online mode it is as per the will and wish of the learner. If the learner is not disciplined and could not spend time on the content assigned, it leads to procrastination and the course completion period may exceed than expected.

●The chances of copying during exams are more in the online mode. When the student is given the carte blanche to take an exam at home, there is much scope for fraud as he can take support from someone who could help him write the exam to get through it. Monitoring becomes tough for the teacher in the online mode.

●Students are free from the shackles of the teacher's supervision in the Digital mode of learning. Hence there is ample freedom to the students and the probability of becoming lethargic is more unless the students are self motivated.

●One of the setbacks of E- learning is limited interaction with peers and faculty. Here learners are isolated from the classroom and interaction with classmates is confined to few minutes. Sometimes even this may not be there. Listening and speaking activities are not vibrant. Hence communication skills of the learners would be less if not focused by the student to improve. What naturally occurs in a traditional classroom needs efforts to acquire.

●The gregariousness of the traditional classroom ambience is not found in the online mode of learning. The sociable

behavior that the students pick up in the classroom is found missing in the online classroom. The rapport between the teacher and students; the love and affection that the students possess for the teacher take a back seat. The respect that they have seems to be artificial and temporary. Student - Teacher bonding never takes place.

The cons of E- learning may give the impression that it is not good. But the pros outweigh these and pave way for a new style of enhanced learning environment that is more flexible and adaptable for the student community to gain knowledge that is more inclusive and expansive.

### Conclusion

Every coin has two sides. Similarly Digitalisation & E- learning has its advantages as well as disadvantages. Traditional learning too has both the sides. A blend of both traditional and online learning would definitely be advantageous to the students. Looking at the disadvantages, one should not stop accepting the change. Change in every walk of life is inevitable. So is the field of education. Utilizing the technological developments for one's growth is the need of the hour. Moreover, the pandemic has demanded people's attention towards Digitalization and its compulsive need. Digitalization has dawned upon the human race as a boon and has spread its wings far and wide throughout the globe and proved to be endemic during this pandemic.

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