Read the text and check your ideas.

Online Learning - Advantages and Disadvantages

E – learning or online learning is the use of electronic technology in teaching or learning. Most of the people who are working are also able to use the facilities of e-learning to persuade their education.

The concept of E-learning was first used at the CBT (computer-based test) systems seminar. Recently, India's e-learning market has become the second largest after United States. The e-learning sector of India is expected to grow at a combined annual rate of 17.4 % between 2013 to 2018. Let's take a look on the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning.

Advantages of e-learning

1. **Convenient time** – People who attend online learning can take up the class anytime as per their convenience. People who work during the day can take the evening classes. Usually, online classes are available 24*7, so that the people can take the class anytime on any day.

2. **Save money** – Online learning has less cost per credit hour and students are exempted from the transportation expenses. Individuals who have kids at their home, can study from home by saving the cost of the child care.

3. **Reach** – Online learning can be accessed with the help of a computer/ laptop and an internet connection. The use of computers and new technology helps to improve the technical skills of an individual.

4. **Flexibility** – People can join the online discussions at any time or visit the classmates or instructors remotely in the chat rooms. Students can study when they are at the peak of their energy. Course syllabus and materials are always available online and thus, students do not have to spend their time searching the materials.

5. **Immediate results** – Most of the online learning technologies combine the online quizzes and other tools to evaluate the pace of learning rapidly. Feedback is also received within a span of seconds. Doubts can be clarified through a direct chat with the instructors.

6. **Variety of courses** – Today, higher education offers wide options for the students. Students can find various online programs from science to other subjects within a few clicks. Online learning has also made it easy to earn a recognition from a degree certificate to a doctorate.

7. **Comfortable working environment** – Online learning provides a comfortable working environment as there are no physical class sessions. You can dress up in any comfortable costume and attend the class. Learning materials are sent to the student electronically. They just need to read them and complete the assignments and again, send it back electronically.

8. **Career developments** – Students can take up the online course and achieve more than one degree at a time. They can complete their degree course while they are working or raising their family. Earning a degree while you are working shows that you are an ambitious employee and you are ready to face new challenges.

Disadvantages of e-learning.

1. **No face to face interaction** – The main disadvantage of online learning is the lack of face to face interaction. Students have a tendency to believe that they would never meet the instructors or other classmates. There is a less possibility of building a good and healthy relation with the instructor and classmates.

2. **More work** – Students who pursue e-learning need to devote more number of hours for their study. Online learning requires a greater amount of reading and assignments than the traditional classes. They are expected to spend at least 10 hours per week for each online course.

3. **Self direction** – Online learning requires a higher intensity of self direction. One needs to be active in finding the information that they need. They should ensure that they are taking the right classes for their career. People who are taking online learning should plan their time management skills accordingly.

4. **Less instructional support** – Although there are frequent interactions between the student and the instructor, the students may face the issue of two way communication or face to face interaction. A lack of communication between the instructor and the students can create a frustration among the students who are struggling with their material courses.

5. **Isolation** – Though online learning offers a flexibility, it may also create a sense of isolation among the students. Online learning is a solo act and it may make the learners feel that they are completely alone.

6. **Health related problems** – Online learning requires the use of computers for a long time. It can cause eye-strain, bad posture and several other health effects on the learner. Before taking up an online course, it is better to go through the sitting posture and other necessary guidelines.

7. **Lack of accreditation** – Before you enroll in any online course, ensure that the program is accredited. If you earn a degree from a school with no accreditation, your degree would remain useless. Verifying an online program's accreditation is a small step and it can avoid the hurdles that lie in the long run.

With the help of developing technology, e-learning can also be applied to schools and colleges. It can help a high school teacher to engage their students in a more interactive way. Before taking an online learning course, make sure that you also go through their cons.