Mega Analysis: Distance Learning Education Impact on Self-discipline

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Abstract

The influence of technology on teaching and learning is becoming more and more evident in educational institutions. Distance learning refers to the teaching and learning situation in which the instructor and learner are engaging in interactive instructional settings when they are separated geographically and by time and place[5][6][10]. Distance learning takes advantage of currently available technologies to achieve two main objectives: (a) providing equitable access to quality education and (b) meeting the unique learning needs and styles of individuals [1]. Both the instructor and student rely on electronic devices and print material to deliver and receive instruction. This paper presents the relationship between distance learning and self-discipline and how it can be implied in practice.

1. Introduction

Distance Learning (DL) refers to instruction under circumstances wherein teacher-student face-to-face interfacing is limited or even entirely absent. In such circumstances, communication between teacher and students is realized by means technological mechanisms such as computers. The DL mode is most useful in situations in which considerable distances necessarily separate teacher and students. Typical technologies used for distance learning include satellite delivery, television-broadcast, compressed video, computer conferencing, multimedia, audio-conferencing, radio, and videotapes. These technologies enable the transmission of live, one-way or two-way, auditory and visual signals. The two-way transmission has improved the teacher-student interaction that is lacking in radio broadcasts, print, and telephone. However, the effectiveness of one-way or two-way live, interactive distance learning technology is not a guarantee that students will embrace it or use it successfully.

In addition to computers, DL implementation can rely on such options as telephone, audio and/or videotapes, Computer-assisted Instruction (CAI), Computer-Mediated-Communication (CMC) such as E-Mail, and others. DL may include, but does not necessarily require, some amount of direct teacher-student and/or student-student meetings face-to-face.

An outstanding appeal of DL is its potential for extending educational opportunities to spatially remote students and time-restricted students. Also, it requires only modest, if any, additional expenditures.

The Literature Review, in the first section of this paper, reviews in some details three studies conducted in the area of DL. The discussion section follows. The Discussion attempts to crystallize the major facts and implications of the study. An attempt is also made to relate DL to subjects encountered in the Philosophy of Science course. The viewpoint is primarily, but not exclusively, that of an educator. A modest attempt is made to extend thoughts beyond the specific subject of DL in cases deemed appropriate. The final section, Implications, attempts to summarize the major implications of the review and discussion.

2. Related works

Ridley and Husband [8] performed a study of online education, which focused on academic rigor and integrity. By academic rigor they meant the concern that instructors have applied comparable standards to assigning grades to online and traditional students. This was triggered by suspicions that more liberal grading tended to be applied to the online students. By academic integrity they referred to the actuality of online students doing their own work. This concern arose from the impression that online students had greater opportunity for cheating. Because online