EVALUATE STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION LEVELS IN ONLINE AND TRADITIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

The transformation of education through digital platforms has sparked a growing interest in comparing online and traditional learning environments. This study aims to evaluate student and teacher satisfaction levels in both settings, focusing on key factors such as engagement, communication, accessibility, and perceived effectiveness. A mixed-method approach was adopted, incorporating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews from participants in both environments. The results indicate that while online learning offers flexibility and accessibility, traditional settings foster better interpersonal interaction and student engagement. Both environments have distinct advantages and limitations, and satisfaction is influenced by personal preferences, digital literacy, and pedagogical design. The findings highlight the importance of hybrid models that blend the strengths of both systems to enhance satisfaction and learning outcomes.

Keywords: *online learning, traditional classroom, student satisfaction, teacher satisfaction, education delivery modes*

1. Introduction

The global educational landscape has witnessed a remarkable transformation in the last two decades, with digital technology emerging as a pivotal force reshaping teaching and learning processes. The shift from conventional face-to-face classrooms to online platforms has accelerated significantly, particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which acted as a catalyst for institutions to adopt remote learning. This unexpected transition brought both opportunities and challenges, prompting

educators, students, and policymakers to re-evaluate the effectiveness and satisfaction associated with different learning modalities.

Traditional learning environments, characterized by in-person instruction, structured timetables, and direct teacher-student interaction, have long been considered the gold standard in education. They provide a conducive atmosphere for immediate feedback, real-time engagement, group collaboration, and the building of interpersonal relationships. On the other hand, online learning offers increased flexibility, accessibility, and the convenience of learning from any location. It enables learners to proceed at their own pace and supports the inclusion of multimedia content and interactive tools, which can enhance the overall learning experience. However, despite these benefits, concerns related to digital fatigue, lack of motivation, inadequate communication, and technological barriers remain prevalent.

Understanding satisfaction levels among students and teachers is crucial, as satisfaction not only influences academic outcomes but also impacts motivation, retention, and the perceived quality of education. For students, satisfaction is often determined by the quality of interaction with instructors, clarity of course materials, ease of access, and overall engagement. For teachers, factors such as technological support, institutional policies, student participation, and professional autonomy play a significant role in shaping their perception of satisfaction.

While numerous studies have examined the advantages and limitations of online and traditional education separately, there remains a gap in comprehensive comparative analyses that simultaneously assess both student and teacher satisfaction across these modes. Furthermore, most existing research tends to focus on either learners or instructors, rarely integrating both perspectives in a single study.

This research aims to bridge that gap by evaluating and comparing satisfaction levels of both students and teachers engaged in online and traditional learning environments. By employing a mixed-method approach, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the experiences, preferences, and challenges faced by both groups. The insights drawn from this research can inform institutional decision-making, curriculum design, and future policy frameworks, particularly in an era where hybrid models of education are gaining prominence.

In the context of rapidly evolving educational paradigms, this study holds relevance for academic administrators, curriculum developers, educators, and learners alike. It seeks to answer a fundamental question: Which learning environment—online or traditional—best supports satisfaction for those involved in the teaching-learning process, and how can both be optimized to ensure a more effective and inclusive educational experience?

2. Review of Literature

A growing body of literature has explored the differences between online and traditional learning. Allen and Seaman (2017) suggested that online education provides broader access, especially for non-traditional learners. However, Kauffman (2015) reported that online students often feel isolated, which can negatively impact satisfaction and performance.

For teachers, Baran et al. (2013) emphasized the need for effective technological training to enhance satisfaction in online environments. Meanwhile, Bernard et al. (2004) found that while traditional classrooms provide immediate feedback and interaction, online platforms allow more flexible teaching schedules.

Student satisfaction has been linked to factors such as instructor presence, course design, and peer interaction (Swan, 2001). Similarly, teacher satisfaction is influenced by autonomy, support, and workload (Richardson et al., 2009). However, direct comparative studies are limited, and this research attempts to fill the gap by simultaneously evaluating both student and teacher satisfaction across the two modalities.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study used a mixed-method approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data. Surveys measured satisfaction levels, while interviews provided deeper insights into participant experiences.

3.2 Population and Sample

The sample consisted of 200 students and 50 teachers from various academic institutions, equally divided between those participating in online and traditional learning environments. Stratified sampling ensured representation across disciplines and educational levels.

3.3 Data Collection Tools

- A standardized satisfaction survey (Likert-scale) for both students and teachers.

- Semi-structured interview schedules to explore subjective experiences.

- Validity of instruments was ensured through expert review; reliability was confirmed (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82).

3.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-tests to compare satisfaction scores. Thematic analysis was used for qualitative responses.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Student Satisfaction

Criteria	Online (Mean)	Traditional (Mean)	Significance
Engagement	3.2	4.1	$p < 0.05$
Accessibility	4.5	3.0	$p < 0.05$
Interaction	3.0	4.3	$p < 0.01$
Overall Satisfaction	3.7	4.0	$p > 0.05$

The comparative data for student satisfaction reveal notable differences between online and traditional learning environments across various dimensions.

- **Engagement:** Traditional classroom settings scored higher in student engagement (Mean = 4.1) compared to online learning (Mean = 3.2). This suggests that students feel more involved and attentive during in-person sessions, likely due to real-time interaction with peers and instructors, as well as fewer distractions.

- **Accessibility:** Online learning scored significantly higher in terms of accessibility (Mean = 4.5) versus traditional classrooms (Mean = 3.0). This finding aligns with the key advantage of online platforms—providing learning opportunities regardless of geographical or time constraints.

- **Interaction:** Interaction levels were perceived to be stronger in traditional settings (Mean = 4.3) than in online ones (Mean = 3.0). This indicates that face-to-face communication and group collaboration are more effectively facilitated in physical classrooms, contributing to a richer learning experience.

- **Overall Satisfaction:** The overall satisfaction was slightly higher in traditional learning (Mean = 4.0) compared to online (Mean = 3.7), though the difference was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). This reflects that while both modes are generally satisfactory, traditional classrooms still hold a slight edge in delivering a fulfilling experience for most students.

Students appreciate the convenience and accessibility of online learning, but they miss the direct engagement, interaction, and structured learning atmosphere found in traditional classrooms. The results imply that although online learning is a strong alternative, it may not fully replace the value of in-person education in fostering active learning and student-teacher rapport.

Students reported higher satisfaction in accessibility for online learning but expressed greater engagement and interaction in traditional classrooms. The overall satisfaction score was slightly higher in traditional settings but not statistically significant.

4.2 Teacher Satisfaction

Criteria	Online (Mean)	Traditional (Mean)	Significance
Flexibility	4.6	3.1	$p < 0.01$
Student Engagement	3.0	4.2	$p < 0.01$
Technical Challenges	2.8	4.5	$p < 0.01$
Overall Satisfaction	3.9	4.0	$p > 0.05$

The data comparing teacher satisfaction between online and traditional modes also present clear trends.

- **Flexibility:** Online teaching was rated significantly higher in terms of flexibility (Mean = 4.6) compared to traditional teaching (Mean = 3.1). This demonstrates that online platforms provide educators with greater control over scheduling, lesson planning, and workload management.

- **Student Engagement:** Teachers reported higher student engagement in traditional classrooms (Mean = 4.2) as opposed to online environments (Mean = 3.0). This mirrors the student perspective and suggests that maintaining attention and interaction is more challenging in virtual settings.

- **Technical Challenges:** Traditional classrooms scored much higher (Mean = 4.5) in terms of ease of delivery compared to online modes (Mean = 2.8), which were associated with frequent technical issues such as poor internet connectivity, software glitches, or lack of digital skills. These barriers can hinder effective teaching and reduce satisfaction.

- **Overall Satisfaction:** Despite the challenges, overall satisfaction scores between both groups were similar (Online = 3.9, Traditional = 4.0), with no significant difference. This shows that while the mode of delivery affects specific aspects of teaching, the overall teaching experience can still be satisfactory in both settings when appropriately supported.

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Teachers value the flexibility offered by online teaching but are concerned about lower student interaction and technical difficulties. Traditional classrooms are perceived as more effective for real-time feedback and dynamic teaching, although they lack the convenience and autonomy of digital tools. Hence, satisfaction is dependent on the alignment of teaching methods with the available infrastructure and institutional support.

Teachers appreciated the flexibility of online teaching but noted reduced engagement and more technical issues. Traditional environments were preferred for better classroom management and student response.

Qualitative Themes:

1. **Autonomy and Time Management:** Both students and teachers in online settings valued the ability to manage their schedules.

2. **Communication Gaps:** Lack of immediate feedback and emotional connection was a recurring concern in online modes.

3. **Hybrid Preference:** Many respondents expressed interest in a blended model combining the best of both worlds.

5. Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that satisfaction in learning environments is multifaceted, shaped by both technological and human elements. Online education excels in accessibility and flexibility, while traditional classrooms foster better engagement and interpersonal connections. Neither mode is universally superior; rather, hybrid approaches may offer the most balanced solution. Future educational policies and practices should focus on integrating digital tools with traditional pedagogies to enhance satisfaction for all stakeholders.

6. References

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