

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ONLINE EDUCATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This literature review explored the landscape of online education in the higher education arena. Online education is growing rapidly. This type of education seems to be taken firm root in our society however; the growth of online education is not without growing pains. It is critical that the growth of online education is consistently paired with a close look at what is working, what needs to be adjusted and what needs to be discarded. It is a mistake to consider the constraints that govern a face-to-face classroom are consistent in an on-line medium. The structure of online education is evolving in such a way that speak to the imminent need for the infrastructure to grow at a proportional rate. This lit review explores the need to continue to develop assessments, teaching strategies, infrastructure, and technology among other things to be sure on-line education remains a responsible choice.

KEYWORDS: Online Learning, Higher Education, Face-to-Face

INTRODUCTION

Online Learning in Higher Education

Bowen, Nygren, Lack and Chingos (2013) collected data from institutions that offered associate and baccalaureate degrees in an online format to compare the learning outcomes of the students. They were able to do this by isolating and using random samples of students in a statistics course. The constraints of the study considered students at six public universities that were enrolled in either a hybrid or face-to-face class. A diverse group of 605 students out of 3046 agreed to participate in the study. Limitations of the study dealt with not being able to randomize or choose teacher quality. The research found that learning systems couldn't significantly deliver an improved education. However, if the system provided a great degree of interaction it should be considered comparable to a face-to-face class experience.

Generational Perspective of Higher-Education Online Student Learning Styles

Williams, Matt and Frances (2014) investigated how generational stimuli of students in online classes are affected by different learning styles. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to compare the relationship of learning styles, and generational groups and online learning satisfaction. One-way ANOVA, multi-linear regression model, and Chi-square test were used to analyze the data in this study. A strong correlation exists between learning styles and generation. Because the demographic of online learning is increasing, it is imperative to adopt or create online elements to cater to the different generations: Millennial, Baby Boomers, and Generation X. The study found that online education should do a better job of offering course material that caters to different learning styles. Future study can be done to determine if provided students with learning style training would increase student satisfaction.

Online Courses and Online Teaching Strategies in Higher Education

In the article Mitchell (2014) conducted a literature review to determine the best strategies for teaching online

classes. Because online education is growing, it is critical that the online courses work to engage students as face-to-face classes would. There are a plethora of different strategies that could enhance the online experience for students and enhance perceived student learning, engagement and satisfaction. Some of strategies suggested are: Opening the class 1 week prior to class start, participation in weekly discussions should be standard, and having posted office hours among others. Along with the aforementioned teaching strategies it is critical that the most current technology be utilized to facilitate online classes.

Toward a Framework for Evaluating Online Instruction in Higher Education

Warford (20114) is concerned that the rate that online education has taken off that the evaluation of the teachers in this realm is not keeping pace. In other words, many times schools are attempting to evaluate teachers in the online format using the same tools and processes of face-to-face classes. Warford has suggested rubrics and processes needed for engagement with the current standards of teacher evaluation. Online education should work to engage students and provide them with meaningful discourse.

Drivers of Student Retention: System Availability, Privacy, Value and Loyalty in Online Education

This article (Kilborn, Kilburn, & Tommy Cates, 2014) emphasizes how student retention is fundamental to the conversation in institutions of higher learning. With many students taking online courses our infrastructure to support such a surge can be over taxed. In particular technology, teacher-student communication and teaching pedagogy is challenged. Schools must take great care not to undermine the teaching superiority and technical value of the institution. This study examines how perceived value (privacy and system availability), a factor in student loyalty affects retention. It was found that students are not overly concerned online privacy as much as when comparing it to the importance of their education. However, when considering an online education the availability of the infrastructure takes a prominent position above privacy.

Rethinking Dropout in Online Higher Education: A Case of the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya

The study attempts to explore the reasons that students become a part of the dropout community in online education programs. The emphasis in this study is to clarify the definition of a dropout in order to track the group uniformly. This paper defined dropout as students who stop going to school when the school did not have a continued enrollment requirement. The study found that there is a difference in the definition of drop out of schools that require previous experience vs. those that do not. In addition, the there was significance in dropout between certain programs and first-semester enrollments (Grau-Valldosera, 2014).

Online Self-Assessment and Students' Success in Higher-Education Institutions

Cukusic, Garaca, and Jadric (2014) compared the results of three different sections of the same class for three consecutive years to determine how the introduction of online self- assessments test affected student learning. A correlation what noticed that the higher in the point's students made with the self-assessment and the higher scores to the midterm-exam. In addition, institutions of higher education should put greater effort in the methodology involved in teaching online courses by being sure to include formative and self-assessments to increase class pass rates. One of the strengths of the research would be in the 1300 participants in several universities and the statistical methods used to analyze the data. The main weakness sighted concerned the internal and external validity of the study. However, the results support the idea that formative assessments have added value to online education.

Online Interaction in Higher Education: Is There Evidence of Diminishing Returns?

One of the prominent aspects of learning in face-to-face classes and online classes is the interaction. This study included taking a close look at 17,090 students in three Catalan universities and the varying interaction intensity. The results of this study indicate that the interaction of students in online classes is far inferior to the interaction of students in face-to-face classes. Schools should work to consider what the optimum level of interaction should be pursued when designing courses. Future research can be conducted on the cost of using the Internet to facilitate online education (Castano-Munoz, Sancho-Vinuesa, & Duart, 2013).

Synergy between Authentic Assessment Activities and Learner Autonomy: How Does this Stimulate Shared Authenticity in Online Higher Education?

This investigation focused on determining how authentic assessments and student autonomy joins to form mutual authenticity in learner and teacher. An online module of adult professional development program was used a case study. It was found that when realistic assessments and autonomy were used that legitimacy was unavoidable. When the learner can choose the assessments that are relevant to them, it provides the learner with opportunities for more engagement and transfer of knowledge outside of the classroom (Gikandi, 2013).

Student Participation in Online Discussion Boards in a Higher Education Setting.

In this analysis Dalelio (2013) provides information on the different aspects of the discussion board in an online class. Students that submitted more messages in the online discussion board were the ones that earned higher grades. This represented a positive correlation. This report defined four categories of communicator in the discussions: starters, responders, activators and latecomers. In particular the starters and responders fared better than the activators and latecomers.

A Connectivist Perspective of the Transition from Face-to-Face in Online Teaching in Higher Education

This is a study that gathers the data of eight educators from the UK with some significant experience in the classroom. In particular, the transition from teaching face-to-face to online classes was monitored. The instruments that were used to compile the data were: survey, interview, and focus groups. There eight areas of connectivism were used as the framework in this study. The results of this survey of 46 educators in the UK found that continued self-fulfillment and the desire to be life-long learners was a reason to embrace professional development. Further research would explore the need to enlarge the sample size in the UK (Cowan, Neil, & Winter, 2013).

ENGAGING STUDENTS IN ONLINE CLASSES

The growth of online classes in institutions of higher education is exploding. The need to engage the students in any class is essential to the learning environment. In many face-to-face classes the use of group assignments and assessments is commonly used to facilitate student engagement. Jacobs (2013) works to introduce how group projects can be a benefit to student engagement even in an online platform. In addition, the research offers suggestions for other appropriate assessments and ways in which they can be used to work in face-to-face classes that translate in an online class: reflection papers, the minute paper, self-assessments, roll play, and hook questions.

Implementing Teacher-Centered Online Teacher Professional Development (OTPD) Programme in Higher Education: A Case Study

Choo and Rathbun (2013) because Teacher Professional Development is critical to the effectiveness of education it is imperative to improvement of the educational process. However, the traditional way that professional development occurs seem to be constrictive to active participation and the amount of information that translates into viable learning tools for teachers. This case study explored how an online teaching problem for teachers would translate. This program was designed so that the teachers could create usable knowledge that could quickly be tested in a classroom setting. This study offers lessons, examples, and findings that could be implemented in an online teacher professional development plan for faculty in higher education.

THE ANATOMY OF ONLINE OFFERING

Hoskins (2014) highlighted the fact that many schools are trying to transition from an exclusive face-to-face institution to starting to offer more and more online classes. Many times schools try to find start the program without putting in place the supporting cast to make the transition as smooth as possible. It is more than a notion and starting such a program means more than creating an online curriculum. It's critical for institutions to understand that online classes need expanded services that the school must be willing to provide. The library services help desk, tutoring, registrar, and administrators must be in place to accommodate the virtual twenty-four hour, seven days week.

ONLINE EDUCATION: PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS

Online education is multiplying tremendously. This study seeks to explore the triumphs of online education and to uncover the areas that can use some more progress. This article defined what is meant by online education system and explored the different progress that has been made in Learning Management Systems to course delivery. Being online offers many advantages such as convenience and accessibility. However some other things that are challenging in this new educational venue is technology and motivation of students. Administrators will find online education is the face of education and schools must stay on the cutting edge of the technology that makes it work (Mbuva, 2014).

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