



CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN ONLINE EDUCATION

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ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: online education, distance, culture, individualism.

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Abstract: This article explores the multifaceted challenges associated with online education in contemporary contexts, focusing on cultural, infrastructural, and gender-related barriers that affect students' learning experiences. It examines how cultural differences influence students' approaches to online learning, highlighting disparities in educational expectations and communication styles. The study also addresses technical difficulties, such as unstable internet connectivity and frequent electricity outages, which disrupt the continuity of remote education. Furthermore, the article brings attention to gender-based challenges, particularly the disproportionate burden on female students who are often expected to fulfill domestic responsibilities, limiting their ability to fully engage in online learning. By analyzing these interconnected issues, the article advocates for more inclusive, culturally sensitive, and equitable approaches to the design and delivery of online education.

ONLAYN TA'LIMNING ZAMONAVIY MUAMMOLARI

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MAQOLA HAQIDA

Kalit so'zlar: onlayn-ta'lim, masofaviy ta'lim, madaniyat, individualizm.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada zamonaviy sharoitlarda onlayn ta'lim bilan bog'liq ko'p qirrali muammolar, xususan, talabalarning

ta'lim olish tajribasiga ta'sir ko'rsatuvchi madaniy, infratuzilmaviy va genderni oid to'siqlar tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda madaniy farqlarning talabalarning onlayn ta'limga bo'lgan yondashuvlariga ta'siri ko'rib chiqilib, ta'limiy kutishlar va muloqot uslublaridagi tafovutlar yoritiladi. Shuningdek, maqolada internet aloqasining beqarorligi va elektr energiyasi ta'minotidagi uzilishlar kabi texnik muammolar masofaviy ta'limning uzluksizligiga qanday salbiy ta'sir ko'rsatishi tahlil etiladi. Bundan tashqari, gender bilan bog'liq muammolarga ham e'tibor qaratilib, ayniqsa talaba qizlarning uy yumushlarini bajarish majburiyatlari tufayli onlayn ta'lim jarayonlarida to'laqonli ishtirok etish imkoniyatlari cheklanishi muhokama qilinadi. Ushbu o'zaro bog'liq muammolarni tahlil qilish asosida maqolada onlayn ta'limni tashkil etish va amalga oshirishda yanada inklyuziv, madaniy jihatdan sezgir hamda adolatli yondashuvlarni ishlab chiqish zarurligi asoslab beriladi.

СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ОНЛАЙН-ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

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О СТАТЬЕ

<p>Ключевые слова: онлайн-образование, дистанционное обучение, культура, индивидуализм.</p>	<p>Аннотация: В данной статье рассматриваются многоаспектные проблемы, связанные с онлайн-образованием в современных условиях, с особым вниманием к культурным, инфраструктурным и гендерным барьерам, влияющим на образовательный опыт студентов. Анализируется влияние культурных различий на подходы студентов к онлайн-обучению, включая различия в образовательных ожиданиях и стилях коммуникации. В исследовании также рассматриваются технические трудности, такие как нестабильное интернет-соединение и частые перебои в электроснабжении, которые нарушают непрерывность дистанционного обучения. Кроме того, статья обращает внимание на</p>
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гендерные проблемы, в частности на непропорционально высокую нагрузку на студенток, от которых нередко ожидается выполнение домашних обязанностей, что ограничивает их возможности полноценно участвовать в онлайн-обучении. На основе анализа этих взаимосвязанных проблем в статье обосновывается необходимость разработки более инклюзивных, культурно чувствительных и справедливых подходов к организации и реализации онлайн-образования.

Introduction. Technology significantly affected the world throughout the latter half of the 20th century and the early years of the 21st century. In doing so, it led to the beginning of a new age for dozens of fields including education. So, the quality of education has improved, and students now have more options to gain information thanks to the numerous new technologies. In particular, the development and affordability of the Internet and mobile devices have led to the formation of online education in the system. As a result, even people in the most remote areas can use the knowledge of the world's most developed educational systems, learn the experiences of knowledgeable teachers, and acquire the necessary skills from them. Along with numerous educational accomplishments, this new system also presents difficulties and intense discussions. Here are some debatable issues in this field. How effective is the online education system for the contingent of different cultural backgrounds? Are the opportunities of the genders equal, and how effective are they at learning information compared to one another in this new educational approach? Additionally, to what extent are the opportunities of different social class students in the e-learning system, and how different are their attitudes towards this new system? Some researchers conducted field research on the aforementioned issues and this essay is based on these research results to answer the above issues. Hofstede's four-dimensional module and Bourdieu's theory of space, time, and capital help to analyze the issues of this essay.

Today, many prestigious higher education institutions in developed countries are adopting new and innovative educational methods to enhance the learning experience for students. As one of these, we can mention introducing and implementing an online study system in some directions. Many overseas students who come from different cultural backgrounds will have more opportunities to study and advance their experience under this new approach. However, how effective online studying is in learning and developing knowledge in a class that includes multicultural diversity students? In many cases, the online learning system is formed based on the Western education system (Ashong et al., 2012, cited in: Kumi-Yebaoh et al., 2022).

Furthermore, according to Luyt (2013, cited in: Kumi-Yebaoh et al., 2022), online learning includes colonial ideology. These cause international students to reduce the benefits they get from online studying and change their perceptions of this system. In particular, there are several differences between the Eastern and Western educational systems based on cultural identity. Hofstede revealed these differences using his four-dimensional module (Hofstede, 1986, cited in: Chin et al., 2000). According to him, cultures differ based on four-dimensional modules: power distance, individualism and collectivism, masculinity and femininity, and uncertainty avoidance. This cultural diversity directly interacts with the online studying system of the individual and shows the effectiveness of student's study. As Vatrapi (2008, cited in: Gómez-Rey et al., 2016) stated, culture greatly influences social behavior, communication, cognitive processes, and pedagogical technologies.

Methodology. According to Hofstede, individualism represents Western culture while collectivism represents Eastern culture (Hofstede, 1980, cited in: Becker et al., 2012). Thus, in the Eastern educational system, learning processes are carried out collaboratively, via the sharing of ideas and under the guidance of the teacher (Biggs et al., 1996, cited in: Liu, 2010); in contrast, in the West, students learn best through discussion, and teachers are encouraged to take part in the discussion as participants rather than supervisors (Robinson, 1999, cited in: Liu, 2010). Furthermore, it is uncommon for students in Asian cultures to voice their ideas during class discussions because of the teacher's absolute dominance over the class (Chang et al., 2000). Since communication is a key component of online learning, Asian students' efficiency in e-learning is diminished by their cultural identity. Secondly, while the Asian educational system is teacher-centered, the Western one is student-centered (Chang et al., 2000). Considering that the learner manages individually the majority of online learning procedures, Asian students seem to receive less help from teachers and it leads to a decline in academic achievement (Chang et al., 2000). Thirdly, one of the biggest problems in online teaching is the widespread use of educational methods and materials of the dominant culture (Wilson et al., 2003 cited in: Kumi-Yebaoh et al., 2022). This leads to minor culture students not fully understanding the lessons, and their academic potential decreases. As Boone et al. (2002, cited in: Kumi-Yebaoh et al., 2022) stated, assignments and discussions in online classes should be organized based on the cultural background of students to increase the productivity of international student learning procedure. Fourthly, students' attitudes to online classes are also analyzed by dividing culture representatives into high-context and low-context communication types. According to Hofstede (1980, cited in: Becker et al., 2012), representatives of low-context communication (western culture) prefer short and meaningful conversations that follow online conversations. At the same

vein, Munro-Smith (2002, cited in: Ashong et al., 2012) found that Singaporean students were more inclined than Anglo-Saxon Australian students to endorse face-to-face conversation. Furthermore, another factor influencing people's views toward innovation is their cultural background—individualism or collectivism. In collectivistic societies, workers prioritize collective opinion more than their interests (Hofstede et al., 1998, Becker et al., 2012). However, in individualistic societies, the individual's opinion is essential, often leading to create innovation or approaches. Considering that the people of the West mainly live in an individualistic society, they will easily adapt to the online education system as they tend to live innovatively. From the above examples, it is clear that the working mechanism of online studying is more suitable for Western culture. As a result, many international students face difficulties in mastering the lessons due to their cultural backgrounds.

Results and discussion. Gender is also a hot topic of discussion and interest in online learning. Although many researchers have conducted studies on the performance of men and women in e-learning, there is still no clear answer as to which gender is more successful in this educational system (Ashong et al., 2012). Existing stereotypes in the upbringing of children directly affect their future interests. For instance, girls are typically given toys that are symbolic of grace and beauty, like dolls, whereas boys are typically given toys that are connected to technology, like cars. This has a direct impact on their future interests and abilities rendering boys more interested in technology and science, while girls are better at literature, art, and language (Korlat, 2021).

Many studies usually analyze gender equality through biological sex when assessing people's technology proficiency, which ignores the importance of gender role self-concept (Korlat, 2021). However, digital proficiency is not dependent on biological sex, and any person who has the spirit of masculinity (independent, competitive, and brave) in his or her psyche can achieve success in technology management (Wolter et al., 2016, cited in: Korlat, 2021). Individuals with feminine traits are passionate about art and literature, and each gender has a certain amount of these traits (McGeown et al., 2012, cited in: Korlat, 2021). Furthermore, individuals with high masculinity and femininity traits - androgynous individuals - are people who quickly adapt to any conditions (Bem, 1981: cited in Korlat, 2021). It can be concluded that the proficiency or incapability of students in online learning does not depend on their biological sex.

However, gender's use of the Internet and technology can also indicate their potential and achievements in distance learning. Tsai and his research indicate that women are more likely than males to utilize technology and the Internet for social networking and communication

(Johansen, 2011, cited in: Ashong et al., 2012). Rovai et al. (2005) and Gonzalez-Gomez et al. (2012, cited in: Ashong, 2012) provided researches that support the same idea. In e-learning, of course, student cooperation and idea sharing are crucial, since this process develops students' e-learning skills and helps them grasp the material more thoroughly. So, most women's aim of using the internet which is for communication is appropriate and helpful to develop their knowledge in online learning as well. At the same time, cases of distance learning reducing women's education potential in certain cultures were also observed. Researcher Sandhu focused on the views and perspectives of female graduate students on online learning during the COVID-19 epidemic in Indian higher education institutions (Sandhu et al., 2023). He emphasized that female students cannot spare time for studying due to the large number of responsible household chores in the family, as a result of which academic performance decreases. Although it is hard to judge how beneficial it is for someone of a certain gender to teach online, women's access to higher education is becoming less and less owing to cultural quirks.

During the pandemic, the online study covered students from all classes of society. It is interesting to consider how online study affects children from families of different social classes. In this case, Bourdieu's theory of space, time, and capital is critical to apply this issue. In doing so, it is possible to see that people's attitudes and opinions towards online study differ based on their social background (Bourdieu, 1989, cited in: Lidegran et al., 2021). Lidegran and his colleagues studied the attitude of children from three different social class families in Sweden: urban upper-middle-class, immigrant working-class, and rural working-class families to online classes (Lidegran et al., 2021). Particularly, children from upper-middle-class families felt insecure about online classes. The reason is that the assignments given by the school are complex, and it is difficult to understand and fulfill them. This caused them to worry about their grades because their goal is to get into prestigious universities, and school grades play an essential role in achieving this goal. As for the children of immigrant working-class families, most of them were students trying to enter higher education. However, their attitude to online study was different. They mainly needed more teacher support, technical equipment, and workspaces at home. As we know, immigrant adults live as families in tiny houses, and this has hindered children's education. At the same time, they needed support from their teachers more than children from other class families because they had many additional difficulties, such as language barriers and lack of finances. However, they could not get support via an online study. That is the reason they felt betrayed. Children of rural working-class families were in a completely different situation. Most of them went to vocational courses and school and academic results were not so important for them. Therefore, in contrast to the representatives of the above

two classes, the school for the children of rural working families did not move to the house and they experienced boredom and a sense of holiday. The school was not only a place of study, but also a place of social interaction and entertainment for them. From the processes experienced by the children of the three classes above, it can be concluded that space, which is family classes shapes children's opinions about online study.

Conclusion. In conclusion, even though e-learning creates access to science for every individual of the world, it also triggers some issues after students engage with this system. For instance, university students from diverse cultural backgrounds do not all benefit equally from online learning. One of the main reasons for this situation is the formation of the online learning system based on the dominant culture and the different cultural identities of international students. As a result, they face many problems in learning lessons and applying them in practice. Secondly, although it is impossible to determine which gender is better in e-learning, certain cultural traditions impose additional tasks on many girls. As a result, the study efficiency of girls in remote learning is decreasing compared to boys and hindering their learning process. Finally, students' family social class affects their attitude towards online classes. Students with good family support are worried about many inconveniences in getting more knowledge, while children of migrant families mainly feel loneliness and lack of teacher support. Students from rural working families mostly feel isolated and lack social and friends interaction. Although international students undergo some inconveniences of online education, this new approach is continuing to give wide access to students who are truly needed for education.

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