

Exploring Perspectives and Complexities of E-tutoring: Insights from Students Opting out of Online Tutor Service

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Abstract : In recent years, technology integration in education has transformed the learning landscape, particularly in online institutions. One technological advancement that has gained popularity is e-tutoring, which offers personalised academic support to students through online platforms. While e-tutoring has become well-known and has been adopted to promote collaborative learning, there are still students who do not use these services for various reasons. However, little attention has been given to understanding the perspectives of students who have not utilized these services. The research objectives include identifying the perceived benefits that non-e-tutoring students believe e-tutoring could offer, such as enhanced academic support, personalized learning experiences, and improved performance. Additionally, the study explored the potential drawbacks or concerns that non-e-tutoring students associate with e-tutoring, such as concerns about efficacy, a lack of face-to-face interaction, and platform accessibility. The study adopted a quantitative research approach with a descriptive design to gather and analyze data on non-e-tutoring students' perspectives. Online questionnaires were employed as the primary data collection method, allowing for the efficient collection of data from many participants. The collected data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Ethical concepts such as informed consent, anonymity of responses and protection of respondents against harm were maintained. Findings indicate that non-e-tutoring students perceive a sense of control over their own pace of learning, suggesting a preference for self-directed learning and the ability to tailor their educational experience to their individual needs and learning styles. They also exhibit high levels of motivation, believe in their ability to effectively participate in their studies and organize their academic work, and feel comfortable studying on their own without the help of e-tutors. However, non-e-tutoring students feel that e-tutors do not sufficiently address their academic needs and lack engagement. They also perceive a lack of clarity in the roles of e-tutors, leading to uncertainty about their responsibilities. In terms of communication, students feel overwhelmed by the volume of announcements and find repetitive information frustrating. Additionally, some students face challenges with their internet connection and associated cost, which can hinder their participation in online activities. Furthermore, non-e-tutoring students express a desire for interactions with their peers and a sense of belonging to a group or team. They value opportunities for collaboration, teamwork in their learning experience, the importance of fostering social interactions and creating a sense of community in online learning environments. This study recommended that students seek alternate support systems by reaching out to professors or academic advisors for guidance and clarification. Developing self-directed learning skills is essential, empowering students to take charge of their own learning through setting objectives, creating own study plans, and utilising resources. For HEIs, it was recommended that they should ensure that a variety of support services are available to cater to the needs of all students, including non-e-tutoring students. HEIs should also ensure easy access to online resources, promote a supportive community, and regularly evaluate and adapt their support techniques to meet students' changing requirements.

Keywords : online-tutor;, student support;, online education, educational practices, distance education

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