
Impacting Student Satisfaction, Engagement and Motivation in Online and Traditional Classrooms

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic altered the higher education landscape in a number of ways. It, specifically, made the online/distance learning environment more prominent among institutions as 96% of colleges and universities in the U.S. shifted at least some of their course offerings online. The contrast of in-person and online teaching outcomes has become increasingly relevant due to these circumstances. Given the necessity and ubiquity of online classes, it is as important as ever to understand how to best implement an online course. The current project explored how student characteristics, instructor characteristics, and classroom characteristics in both traditional and online classes in the U.S. differed in terms of motivation, engagement, and satisfaction. Results indicate that only instructor rapport and credibility were perceived as important in online classes whereas perceived classroom interaction was important for in-person classes. Student reports of motivation, engagement, and satisfaction were higher for in-person classes than online classes.

Keywords: engagement, motivation, satisfaction, online class, COVID-19