

Role of E Learning In Higher Education: Issues and Challenges

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Abstract— Technological development and the Internet have changed people’s lives on different scale including teaching and learning. E-learning is being used to improve communication, collaboration, sharing of resources, promoting active learning, and delivery of education in distance learning mode. E-learning has become a necessity in higher education institutions and is being deployed in educational establishments throughout the world. Teaching and Learning in an e learning environment happens differently than in traditional classrooms and can present new challenges to instructors and learners participating in this new learning environment. Utilizing the internet to deliver e learning initiatives has created expectations in higher education institutions. Understanding issues & challenges in respect of e-learning is of significant importance and this paper attempts to identify the role of e learning in higher education.

Key Words: E Learning, Higher Education, Technology

I. INTRODUCTION

Convolutional encoding is one of the forward error correction E learning or web based learning is used nowadays as another option to face to face education. Its popularity has increased in the recent years. The educators are using e learning content which has made teaching and learning more interactive. Learners are using content that is full of multimedia as it has been proven that it has a significant effect on the process of learning. The impact of blogs and wikis has also been investigated on learners' collaboration and reflection and it was reported that they both have a positive effect. E-learning has been introduced as a tool in the learning process in the majority of the international universities worldwide. The term e-learning is defined as “any learning that involves using internet or intranet.” A year later definition more generalized indicating that it is “anything delivered, enabled, or mediated by electronic technology for explicit purpose of learning”. E-learning should not stand for electronic; it should be an abbreviation for “evolving, enhanced, everywhere, every time and everybody.” In fact, the quotation shows most of the advantages of e-learning for learners and instructors. Although the e-learning term and tools do exist for over a decade, the educational research field has not given enough attention to the study of student motivation under the effect of e-learning. E-learning has grown in significance as an educational tool just like technology has developed and progressed over the years. Interestingly, there have been more efforts at advancing technology than on attempting to understand the needs and learning styles of individual learners and instructional design. The 21st century has seen rapid progress with such things as the Internet and online learning. The increased use of e-learning among educational

institutions has led to a change in higher education. One of the main reasons for the increase in enrolment in e learning is it gives students' greater access to education in comparison to traditional methods of teaching as students can undertake their study from anywhere and at any time as well as being given the option to study part-time or full-time . E-learning has transformed the educational sector by enabling students to share information and data in a relatively easy way.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the role of e- learning in higher education
- To find out the issues and challenges related to e learning
- To highlight the importance of e- learning methods
- To understand the prospects of e learning

ASPECTS OF E-LEARNING

Although the base of education will always be reading, writing and arithmetic, today’s students need more application based learning So, e-learning has become an important medium of learning in higher education. Some of the important aspects of e learning are:

Live instruction:

Instructors can provide live instructions to the learners in certain curricula. Teachers can use live broadcast method to deliver the lecture sitting at one place to many students sitting at different locations. This will be specially applicable to students of higher education, for example towards advanced degrees in medicine.

- **Lecture delivery through video:** Videos of lectures can be recorded, documentaries and other video content may be delivered so that the material can be viewed when needed.
- **Exchange of ideas among students (video-conferencing):** Students can share their knowledge and ideas through video conferencing and may learn just as much from each other as they do from teachers. So communications technology can be used to connect students.
- **Online Examination System:** In some countries evaluation of students is done through tests. Students from various countries can give online examinations and their knowledge can be tested using this system.
- **The latest materials:** Digital delivery can help in keeping all the materials up-to-date. Textbooks are expensive to purchase, maintain and deliver. Digital delivery solves this issue when coupled with e-readers.
- **Self-learning:** Computer-based training or self-paced learning is common in higher education and trade-oriented learning. Kiosks to support this may be located close to under-served areas where populations already work.
- At the higher educational level, collaboration is vital to research. Post-graduate students in remote locations may be able to consult instructors at the university when needed. For example, in the medical field, tele-medicine can only be facilitated using broadband.

ISSUES IN E- LEARNING

1. Shift from traditional method to Virtual system

Students find it difficult to shift from traditional classroom face to face learning to computer based virtual learning. Many students cannot adapt themselves easily to the online learning environment. It takes time for them to get accustomed to the new system and the methods of computer-based education. Students in the traditional method are passive listeners whereas online system demands them to be active and take part in online discussions and sessions.

2. Technical Issues.

At some places the internet connection is not proper or not with high bandwidth which is required for online classes. This makes it difficult for the students to catch up with their virtual classmates. Most of the students live outside the campus and find it difficult to match the technical requirements of the course. Therefore, their learning experience becomes challenging. Some of them don't even

have their own computers and laptops and seek help in Learning Resource Centres for technical assistance.

3. Computer Proficiency.

Many students are not computer literates, they find it difficult to fix the problem they face and so are dependent on others. Many students cannot operate basic computer programs and so find it difficult to manage their course content. However technological competency is the demand of the online courses. As they do not have knowledge in this area they find it difficult to manage their assignments and other course related requirements.

4. Lack of Time

E learners have to devote lot of time on computers, finding the material, making the assignments, online discussions and therefore find it difficult to manage their time as they have other commitments too. They choose the elearning methodology because they find it difficult to attend the regular traditional method of learning.

5. Self-Motivation.

Many e learners lack motivation to pursue this medium for learning. After enrolling they find it difficult to handle the content technologically. It has found out that highly motivated students adapt this course very well and students who are not convinced tend to drop out as find it very challenging to meet the demand of this course.

6. Gender

The total number of e learning users is very less in developing countries because the trend is more towards male education than girls. Encouraging more girls in education can increase the number of users, particularly as there are evidences that girls learn faster than boys.

7. Support from Society

A stable and supportive study environment affect e-learning to a very large extent and some research suggest that this is perhaps the most important factor influencing drop out and retention Support from family, friends and employers is very necessary in e learning. It provides the flexible environment to the learners and they are free from any kind of distractions. There are many challenges faced by the teachers also. Some of them are listed below:

8. Technological confidence

The confidence of the trainer in using different technologies and computer plays an important role in e learning. The capacity of instructors to use their knowledge and innovation in bestowing information and aptitudes to the learners can

decide the effect to be made with e-learning. Their ability to use the innovative means depend upon their ease of using technology. If the confidence of the teacher in using the technology is low, the instructor would either not utilize it or utilize it inadequately.

9. Motivation and dedication

The absence of motivation and commitment can lead to mistrust and resistance to the implementation of e learning. Teachers should be motivated and encouraged to use e learning tools. They should be explained the importance of e learning tools so that they can resort to different means for their teaching and can make teaching learning more interesting and innovative.

10. Qualification and competence

The trainer's capability and ability in online teaching is also important. There is the idea that the instructor tends to acknowledge new things like the use of technology in teaching. This will enhance the competency and skill and fear of failure will be reduced. They should be given training from time to time to improve their knowledge. Research can also be carried out to ascertain their levels of development. Where this is not the focus of attention, any attempt to successfully implement e-learning can be flawed.

11. Time

The time accessible for creating e-learning materials and taking part in e-learning course matters is very important. Where enough time isn't made available to create and develop e-learning materials, the content made available will be of little help to the learners. Again the disappointment of educators to take part in e-learning exercises that enhances the instructing and learning capacities can incredibly influence the usage of e-learning.

CONCLUSION

As e-learning is definitely a growing field in the educational and training market and e-learning standard is a new emerging area, there are many challenges in implementation of undergoing technological changes and developments. The security of services, the encryption of messages and the common taxonomies to describe services and service access points in e-learning systems environments are all in need of consideration. However, Supporters of e-learning are always looking forward some new developments. Technology advancements will continue to reshape learning over the Internet with increasing use of advanced tools and techniques. So by employing the new technology in e-learning environment, one can make the system more

attractive and interactive for learner that may help to build a learner centric platform in this environment.

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