Impact of e-learning - A Study

Radheshyam Acholiya*
Nidhi Joshi**

Abstract

With the help of e-learning students can update their knowledge with all the latest happing of their subject. e-learning avails students the option of selecting learning materials that meets their level of knowledge and interest also students can study wherever they have access to a computer and Internet. With so many advantage of e-learning it is in demand. But not many students are aware of this technology tool which has hampered their academic growth. This paper has tried to study the concept of e-learning, knowledge of studied students about e-learning. What kinds of facilities are available to university students for e-learning at their college campus. Further the attempt has been made whether e-learning depends on branch of study of students and their career plans.

Introduction

e-learning is the best technology tool which can improve students in all spheres of their life. Many students will already be used to accessing information via mobile phones and the web. e-learning engages younger students and can help faculties meet the needs of students' with various varied learning styles.
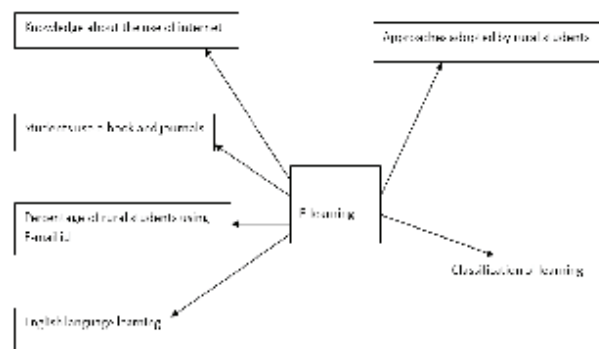
e-learning is the need of hour. The university education can only give theoretical approach of various subjects. Successfully completing online or computer based courses builds self-knowledge and self-confidence and encourages students to take responsibility for their learning. So sincere effort must be made to promote e-learning and thus try to simplify the process of e-learning as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Need of Study

With the globalization whole world has become a small house. To days education needs to be more flexible and industry oriented. The latest tools like internet, audio – video equipments have reformulated whole education system. If student wants the competitive edge over his subordinates, he must be familiar with all the latest happening in his field and in general world. With the help of e-learning student particularly at university level can learn new values that too at very cost effective rate. So with ever increasing importance of e- learning there is a need to motivate university students towards e- learning. This paper has made an attempt to study how university students are using e-learning and what impact it had on them.

e-Learning

e-learning is essentially the computer and network-enabled transfer of skills and knowledge. e-learning applications and processes include Web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual education opportunities and digital collaboration. Content is delivered via the Internet, intranet/extranet, audio or video tape, satellite TV, and CD-ROM. e-learning comprises all forms of electronically supported learning and teaching. The information and communication systems, whether networked learning or not, serve as specific media to implement the learning process. The term will still most likely be utilized to reference out-of classroom and in-classroom educational experiences via technology, even as advances continue in regard to devices and curriculum. With e-learning Class work can be scheduled around personal and professional work. This will in turn reduce travel cost and time to and from colleges. e-learning is essentially the computer and network-enabled transfer of skills and knowledge.

Empirical Model of e-Learning

*Assistant Professor, Pioneer Institute of Professional Studies, Indore
**Assistant Professor, Pioneer Institute of Professional Studies, Indore

Definition

e-learning is content and instructional methods delivered on a computer (whether on CDROM, the Internet, or an intranet), and designed to build knowledge and skills related to individual or organizational goals.

Literature Review : Challenges of e-learning by Vasaanthi Vasudev, The Hindu, Tuesday, September 18, 2001

The use of technology in education is highly positive but the caveat is to avoid falling through the looking glass. The true challenge is for education to freeze a model that captures quality and computer technology into an integrated communication system. Such a bled will zoom educational goals to dazzling heights of sublimity. If we bear the key idea in our mind that the true power of educational technology comes not from replicating things that can be done in other ways, but when required , do things that could not be done without it, we realize that most of our concerns are resolved. Technology is no doubt the revitalizing antidote for a stagnating educational system, but the ideal situation would be a judicious blend that optimizes the advantage of both the traditional and telematic educational system.

e-Learning helps Strengthen Education, by R. Rajalaksmi, Director of Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), The Hindu Wednesday, Oct 26, 2005, Namakkal

The Union Government is encouraging e-learning particularly to benefit the people in rural areas ,Director of Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) R. Rajalakshmi said, she was delivering the keynote address at the inaugural of the two day International Conference on e- learning organized jointly by the PGPcollege of Engineering and Technology (PGPCET) and the University of West Bohmia, Chez Republic and supported by the STPI here on Tuesday. She said that theGovernment was keen on providing computer literacy to the rural people. Already countries such as Singapore, Japan and Indonesia were making a lot of progress in e-learning.

e-Learning in India – e-Learning Asia Day Presentation By Dr. Sanjaya Mishra

In Technology – Over 20 Billion USD software exports to over 100 countries in the world- market share above 20% software development world wide- one third of e-commerce telephone subscribers added every year. **Mobile Subscribers**: 233.6 million (sept 2008)- **Internet Users** : 42 million (3.7% only). Higher Education in India 2006 – Central Universities: 20- State Universities: 217- Deemed to be Universities: 106 – Private Universities: 10-institutes of National importance: 13- institutes established under act: 5-colleges: 17625.

Copparapu S.H.N Murthy, Amity School of Communication, Amity University, Noida UP, India

While the conventional education system with different forms of e-learning and rigid academic instructive curriculum could not bring desired changes in specific timeframe, work at the rural level in the targeted communities and groups, a multiprongned sociological approach with sociable and flexible curriculum in elearning programs becomes the need of hour. The impact of socializing influence of these e-learning programs should be properly exploited to motivate and inspire the rural target groups. The benefits of e-Learning then becomes extensive and soon integrates with the needs of lower starta of the society in order for achieving a rapid social transformation in the lives of the framers, vocational groups, artisans and small income self help groups comprising of women, girls and physically challenged people. The paper suggests a number of new generation e-Learning programs as strategies of development communication with a promise of high returns for the industry for its investment in these programs with socially relevant message and media convergence.

Factors Associated with E-Learning: Finlayson *et al.* (2006) found that the pedagogical approach of the lecturer influenced the extent to which they used ILT resources, sometimes more than the technology available to them. They highlighted the importance of technical support and the time available for lecturers to integrate e-learning into their everyday teaching and learning practice and to explore how it could be most effectively used in their subject area. They characterized e-learning use into three main aspects which were as follows:

• e-learning as a **medium for facilitating and managing learning** –whereby e-learning is a '*conduit*' for learning materials and the extent of

its impact is dependent on the content of these materials.

- e-learning as a **presentation tool** – whereby e-learning is used as part of face-to-face sessions or for preparation of materials by teaching staff and learners. The impact of this type of e-learning is said to be contingent upon the pedagogical skill of the lecturer and the extent to which e-learning is used interactively with learners.

- e-learning as a **learning tool** – whereby learners use e-learning interactively, either supervised or unsupervised. Through this approach, learners are said to use e-learning as an integral part of their learning such as for engaging with information, calculations, design and modeling.

Basic Advantages of e-Learning

The e-learning companies in India offer e learning solution to numerous organizations in creating training materials which has multitude advantages. The basic and prominent advantage an e learning company India provides is that it design and develops a learning platform which is available all the time to the learner and is effective to them as it is developed with a certain demand and requirement of the learner. For example, if a pharmaceutical company requires an e learning material for their organization the e learning development team will keep the design and develop learning material with the requirement of the pharmaceutical industry. It helps learners a lot as anything regarding to the specific industry is provided to them anytime. This is why, most of the organization takes help of the e-Learning India Company to develop their training module.

More importantly, the e-learning is available and accessible to number of people at a time which means multiple people can benefit with this at any given time. The effectiveness of the e-Learning can be gauged by its importance in saving time.

e-learning Company India is gradually getting popular in India. Apart from big organizations, a lot of small and medium businesses are taking the help of the **e-learning companies** to get the benefits of e learning training process.

Approaches to e-Learning Services

e-learning services have evolved since computers were first used in education. There is a trend to move towards blended learning services, where computer-based activities are integrated with practical or classroom-based situations.

Two popular tools for e-learning are Blackboard Inc. and Moodle:

Blackboard Inc. has over 20 million users daily. Offering six different platforms: Blackboard Learn, Blackboard Collaborate, Blackboard Mobile, Blackboard Connect, Blackboard Transact, and Blackboard Analytics; Blackboard's tools allow educators to decide whether their program will be blended or fully online, asynchronous or synchronous. Blackboard can be used for K-12 education, Higher Education, Business, and Government collaboration.

Moodle is an Open Source Course Management System. It is free to download and provides blended learning opportunities as well as platforms for distance learning courses. The Moodle website has many tutorials for creating a program or becoming a Moodle student.

- **Computer-Based Learning:** Computer-based learning (CBL) is the use of computers as a key component of the educational environment. While this can include the use of computers in a classroom, the term more broadly refers to a structured environment in which computers are used for teaching purposes.

  The type of computers has changed over the years from cumbersome, slow devices taking up much space in the classroom, home, and office to laptops and handheld devices that are more portable in form and size and this minimalization of technology devices will continue.

- **Computer-Based Training:** Computer-based trainings (CBTs) are self-paced learning activities accessible via a computer or handheld device. CBTs typically present content in a linear fashion, much like reading an online book or manual. For this reason they are often used to teach static processes, such as using software or completing mathematical equations. The term Computer-Based Training is often used interchangeably with Web-based training (WBT) with the primary difference being the delivery method. Where CBTs are typically delivered via CD-ROM, WBTs are delivered via the Internet using a web browser.

- **Computer-supported collaborative learning**

(CSCL): Computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) is one of the most promising innovations to improve teaching and learning with the help of modern information and communication technology. Most recent developments in CSCL have been called e-Learning 2.0, but the concept of collaborative or group learning whereby instructional methods are designed to encourage or require students to work together on learning tasks has existed much longer. It is widely agreed to distinguish collaborative learning from the traditional 'direct transfer' model in which the instructor is assumed to be the distributor of knowledge and skills, which is often given the neologism e-Learning 1.0, even though this direct transfer method most accurately reflects Computer-Based Learning systems (CBL).

Using Web 2.0 social tools in the classroom allows for students and teachers to work collaboratively, discuss ideas, and promote information. After initial instruction on using the tools, students also reported an increase in knowledge and comfort level for using Web 2.0 tools. The collaborative tools additionally prepare students with technology skills necessary in today's workforce.

- **Technology-enhanced learning (TEL):** Technology enhanced learning (TEL) has the goal to provide socio-technical innovations (also improving efficiency and cost effectiveness) for e-learning practices, regarding individuals and organizations, independent of time, place and pace. The field of TEL therefore applies to the support of any learning activity through technology.

Lecturers' Views on The Impact of e-Learning

One of the primary objectives of this research was to establish the scale and extent of the impact of e-learning among lecturers in the subject areas of business, science, and health and social care.

Lecturers' reflections of their current experience and practice of using e-learning, and the extent to which it had helped them to be more effective, are reported.

Many lecturers indicated that e-learning had assisted them as a **preparation and presentational tool** and had helped them as a **learning tool**. However,

noticeably fewer indicated that e-learning helped them as a **medium** for facilitating and managing learning more effectively.

Lecturers identified **improved access to equipment**, **better training**, and **more time for lesson planning** as the three main aspects that would help them most in better facilitating the use of e-learning in their teaching and learning.

Reason Behind The Popularity of e-learning

The development of E learning has opened a whole new world in front of the learners who want to gain knowledge without going to the classroom. The distance education, a part of the online learning system has gained popularity over the last few years. The approach is simple, to provide learning material and course items online to the students under their fingers tips. The advantage of electronic education, E learning is that it saves time and energy which can be used to different productive activities by the learner. e-learning system isn't constrained by the place and time which in typical classroom set up cannot be ignored or avoided. Moreover, it provides a platform where a student can interact with the teacher whenever required.

However, designing and development of an e-learning course needs a professional and skilled team of developer, graphic designer and instructional designer who can prepare the course material as per the demand and need of the student. To make a course more interesting and engaging, the e learning company uses graphics, animation and videos apart from the texts to keep the interest of the students with the course.

A graphic designer primarily creates the graphics in relation to the storyboard or theme of the subject which includes static like illustrations, digital drawings or at times, 3D models and animated where 2D and 3D technologies are used to prepare the e learning courses. It is the job of the graphic designer to provide the graphics to the programmer in the form and format required to develop the e learning course. It is the graphic designer who helps the instructional designer during visualization and manages the video, audio shoot.

Extent and Nature of Use of e-learning in Further Education

e-learning was reported to be used less often to facilitate and manage learning such as to make course

materials available to learners, or to colleagues, or to communicate with learners outside of the classroom. e-learning was also used less often to manage individual target setting or track learners' progress. Moreover, while around half of respondents said that they used e-learning to develop their learners' understanding, fewer used it to deliver differentiated lessons or to provide one-to-one attention in the class.

- **Impact of e-learning on teaching:** There were strong similarities between the areas where lecturers used e-learning and where they perceived it to be effective, with the most commonly reported impacts being on planning, preparation and sharing materials with lesser effects on aspects of the teaching-learning interface and the smallest impacts on administration and management or efficiency. For instance, around three-quarters of lecturers considered that they were able to prepare for teaching, through researching and creating materials, more effectively as a result of e-learning. A smaller proportion (around two-thirds) felt that they were more effective in presenting information in front of the class and in making course materials available to learners due to e-learning use, with around a half believing they were more effective at developing learners' understanding. However, just over a quarter felt they were more effective at tracking learners' progress, and only one third felt that e-learning had assisted them to save time.

- **Impact of e-learning on learners:** There were also similarities between lecturers' use of e-learning and their perceptions of its impact on learners. The majority felt that e-learning had helped learners become more effective at creating visual presentations, presenting written work and researching topics. Seven out of ten thought e-learning had helped make learners more effective at reinforcing their knowledge, half felt that learners engaged more effectively with the subject in the classroom and nearly half felt that learner motivation had increased because of e-learning use. Use of e-learning had a positive impact on some aspects of learners' ability to independently manage their own learning.

- **Lecturers' attitudes and confidence:** On the whole, most respondents to the survey indicated that they were confident in their use of e-learning to plan and prepare lessons, to communicate with learners and to teach in front of the class. However, fewer indicated that they were confident using e-learning to track and monitor learners' progress. Overall, lecturers were positive and proactive in their attitude towards the role of e-learning in supporting their teaching practice.

Conclusions and Implications

In a context of overall positive attitudes, on the part of lecturers, towards e-learning, the research findings indicated that there were some possible barriers and enablers to e-learning use in further education. These included:

- Having an **ethos and environment** within an institution through which lecturers can improve their confidence, see the potential for e-learning, and have a positive attitude towards its use, could contribute to increasing its use among lecturers and, in turn, learners.

- Ensuring that lecturers have **sufficient access** to e-learning resources to use in the classroom, in addition to outside class, could be a key enabler in developing lecturers' confidence in the use of e-learning and increasing its use at the teaching and learning interface. In turn, increased use by lecturers could lead to an increase in the use of e-learning in this way by learners.

- Providing sufficient **support** for lecturers, particularly in terms of providing enough time for them to develop and embed their use of e-learning in their everyday teaching practice, could be a key enabler for increasing the use of e-learning in FE and supporting the achievement of intermediate outcomes, such as the development of learner understanding and independent learning.