

Role of E-Learning in Higher Educational Institutions

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ABSTRACT

E-Learning refers to a technology in which teaching and learning is conducted via a computer and internet. E-Learning tools helps study at home. It makes a bridge between a teacher and student in two different geographical locations. The revolution in multimedia and internet technology enables the E-Learning process. Due to pandemic crisis of COVID-19, E-Learning has become mandatory component of all educational institutions. The present study reveals the importance of E-learning process considering its advantages as well as disadvantages.

Key words: E-learning, COVID-19, Educational, Learner.

Introduction

The Internet has become one of the prominent ways for both students and teachers to make available resources for research and learning to share and obtain information. E-learning incorporates the use of the internet and other important technologies to enable the access to online learning and teaching resources. The term 'E-learning' can be applied in different views such as dispersed learning, online-distance learning and hybrid learning (V.Arkorful, et.al, 2014).

E-learning has been defined as the use of information and communication technologies in various processes of education to support and enhance learning in institutions of higher education. It includes the usage of information and communication technology as a supplement to traditional classrooms, online learning or mixing the two modes. The term E-learning refers to the accomplishment and use of knowledge that are primarily expedited and distributed by electronic means (J. T. Abbit et.al, 2007). The features of E-learning process are mainly focussed on the internet, global sharing and learning resources. It involves information transmissions and knowledge flow by way of network courses. It also provides flexibility of learning via computer-generated environment for learning to overcome issues of distance and time.

The concept of E-learning was proposed mainly focussing on distance learning thus allowing transmission of lectures to distant locations by way of video presentations. The E-learning approach was centred mainly on the learner with its design involving a system that is interactive, monotonous, self-paced and customizable. E-learning systems support concerted communication in which users have total control over their own circumstances. E-learning provides networks for retrieving information.

Most important thing is that this technology allows for the systems to be executed freely on various kinds of computer operating systems. The new environment for learning provided by e-technology

centered on electronic networks has allowed learners in universities to collect personalized support and also to have learning schedules that are more appropriate to them as well as to other learners (D.A Adams et.al, 1992). This enables a high communication and association between mentors or teachers and aristocrats than traditional learning. At higher educational levels, E-learning can permit students to acquire their education persuing their personal objectives at the same time with no need to attend traditional classes subjected to rigid schedule.

E-learning characterized by the use of multimedia concepts made the process of learning more dynamic, fascinating and pleasant. The main parameters that have made E-learning the most auspicious educational technology include cost, service, quality, and speed. It can increase the number of courses online as a result of the accomplished benefits for both learners and universities [4,5].

Types of E-learning

There are various methods to classify E-learning process. There are mainly four types of E-learning processes namely asynchronous, synchronous, knowledge databases and online support. Asynchronous training can be considered as traditional type of learning in which learners can get in contact with instructor through e-mails, online discussion groups etc. On the other hand the synchronous method is more organized form of training. In this there is a particular schedule when students can come online and will communicate directly with instructor as well as each other [1-3]. This training involves usage of audio or video conferencing, internet websites etc.

The knowledge databases are basic form of E-learning. There databases are usually reasonably interactive. Student can either type in the word or idiom to search from a list maintained alphabetically. The online support is similar in structure with knowledge databases but it is more interactive. It is in form of chat rooms, e-mail forums and instant messaging etc.

Advantages of E-learning

The implementation of E-learning in higher educational institutions has several advantages. The prime important factor is cost effectiveness as there is no need for the students or learners to travel. It is also cost effective in the sense that it provides opportunities for learning involving maximum number of learners with no need for big infrastructure. It has advantage to focus on the needs of individual learners (N.Yang et. al, 1999). It provides flexibility in consideration of time and place. Every learner has the flexibility of choosing the suitable place and time. E-learning boosts the efficiency of knowledge and qualifications by means of accessibility to a huge amount of information. E-learning eliminates barriers hindering participation due to the fear of talking to other learners. E-learning encourages students to interact with other mandatory for sustain learning. E-learning compensates for shortage of academic staff, including teachers as well as organizers, lab technicians etc.

The process of E-learning helps attaining the objectives in the shortest span of time with less effort. The E-learning is more beneficial than traditional learning if used and applied in appropriate ways (C. Coman et.al, 2020). It provides instructors with several means of interaction with learners as well as providing them instantaneous feedback.

Disadvantages of E-learning

Inspite of providing so many advantages, the process of E-learning has some disadvantages also. The most obvious conviction of E-Learning lies in the complete absence of vital subjective interactions, not only among learners and instructors, but also between colleague learners. So the method of E-learning

makes the learners experience scrutiny, inaccessibility as well as lack of interaction. The E-learning method might be less effective when described in terms of clarifications or explanations, as well as interpretations than the traditional method of learning [2-5]. It also has a negative effect on improvement in communication skills of learners. E-learning may also depreciate institutions' role as well as instructor's role in the process of education. Most important of all is that all fields or disciplines can't employ the e-learning technique in education for example the purely scientific fields including practicals. It may also lead to heavy use of some websites thus causing unimagined costs.

Conclusions

The process of E-learning involves utilizing digital tools for teaching and learning. It comprises both the training, knowledge transmission as well as exchange and respect of different point of views. It provides ease in communication. Despite some disadvantages discussed, the role of E-learning in higher educational institutions has made a strong impact on teaching and learning process. Its implementation in educational institutions can provide a healthy environment for association among students leading to improved academic standards.

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