

RECENT TREND IN EDUCATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE IMPACT OF E-LEARNING ON EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Education is the basic foundation on which any country can develop and progress. Without educated human resources, development of an economy is not possible. Some trends in education are still yet to become popular as they all subject to evolutionary changes. We can follow the change by identifying the trends and keeping ourselves flexible enough to adjust with the changes. Among recent trends one most important is E-learning. Technological advancement make collaboration among the students easier. In e-learning learners do not have to be face-to-face and it makes the learning easier and brings a more comfortable teaching environment to work. Comparing to traditional classroom e-learning brought an innovative shift which provides quick access to specific knowledge and information. Online instructions can be delivered anytime and anywhere through web-based courseware, online discussion groups, live virtual classes, video and audio streaming, web chat and virtual mentoring. To achieve the objectives of the study a survey was conducted. Questionnaires were distributed to 100 college teachers. It was found that E-learning was being used quite comprehensively as a preparation and presentational tool, and also as a medium for facilitating teaching and learning ,providing course material to learners for the purpose of developing learners understanding

Key words: E-learning, Technological advancement, evolutionary change, traditional classroom, Virtual mentoring

Introduction:

E-learning refers to the delivery of a learning, training or education program by electronic means. In an e-learning education process there is use of computer or electronic device in some way to provide training, educational or learning material (Derek Stockley 2003). Online learning involves using the internet or an Intranet. In this CD-ROM and DVD also can be used to provide learning materials. E-learning system is different from traditional classroom environment and it also present new challenges to instructors and learners both. So there is a need to identify the challenges and consider best practice solutions to ensure instructors and learners success.

Objectives:

The main objective of the study has been to establish relationships between e-learning use and outcomes for learners and teachers in further education. In addressing this aim, the study had the following objectives:

1. To provide an overview of the extent and nature of the use of e-learning
2. To evaluate the frequency of use of e-learning by teachers and learners both.
3. To study and analyze the teachers confidence to use e-learning and their experience
- 4 To study the impacts and outcomes of e-learning and to analyze the teachers views on the potential of e-learning.

Research Methodology:

3.1 Primary data: Questionnaire survey and personal interview. .

This study was conducted using questionnaire under convenient sampling method. 100 lecturers are selected from management and engineering colleges.

3.2 Secondary data: Informations are collected from books, articles and different websites.

E-learning: An overview:

In order to understand the challenges associated with an e-learning environment it is important to define what the term e-learning means. Clark and Mayer help define e-learning as instruction delivered by any technological mode intended to promote learning (2011). Teaching and learning in an e-learning environment happens differently than in the traditional classroom and can present new challenges to instructors and learners participating in this online learning environment. Technology-assisted learning tools is quickly changing the face of education, transitioning the classroom only learning environment to an online only or blended online learning experience. The possible challenges instructors and learners face in an e-learning environment must be considered in order to ensure learner success. In education, the digital divide is most commonly defined as the gap between those students who have, do not have, and know how to use the internet and the information technologies that are currently transforming education (Bernard, 2011; Hall, 2013). According to Warschauer (2003), the “digital divide is marked not only by physical access to computers and connectivity but also by access to the

additional resources that allow people to use technology well” (p. 6). Due to the affordability of many information technologies today the current meaning of digital divide is changing from having access, to knowing how to use the technologies (Bernard, 2011). In this way the digital divide still acts as a challenge for education and more specifically e-learning environments. In education the digital divide has, most recently, become more about closing the gap between using the resources appropriately to obtain quality educational outcomes than not having access to the technology (Warschauer, 2003; Bernard, 2011). The quality of learning outcomes, and more importantly the successful use of the expected technology resources, all hinge on the amount of experience and comfort level each learner has with these specific resource technologies (Warschauer, 2003). One solution to this challenge is for the instructor to implement a learning environment that encourages collaboration. Providing learners with the opportunity to collaborate, share, and create will increase the learner’s use of various technologies, enhance their e-learning experience, and support self-directed and ongoing learning (Clark & Mayer, 2011; Li & Irby, 2008). During this time the instructor must consider the learner’s technological incompetence’s and accept various ability levels; willing to allow learners choice with the expected performance objectives given it results in the appropriate learning outcomes (Bernard, 2011). The learner should ask questions, seek additional information from credible sources, reflect often, and interact with other learners in academic discourse related to the online learning objectives. Having an online community where learners can collaborate in a safe and respected learning environment will help close the gap of the new digital divide, and in doing so helps to create a culture of digital natives conducive to effective e-learning (Warschauer, 2003; Li & Irby, 2008; Clark & Mayer, 2011).

Learning Tools:

A. As a Medium for facilitating and managing learning. This includes using a VLE [virtual learning environment] or an intranet to access learning materials including video and online assessment, submit assignments electronically, and using email to send feedback and support...

B. As a Presentation Tool. This includes teacher preparation of materials e.g. Power Point presentations, worksheets; and presentations on interactive whiteboards. It also includes student use of word processors, desk top publishers, and... presentations to peers and tutors...

C. As a Learning Tool. The focus here is the use of technology by the students in supervised or unsupervised sessions, with interactive use of interactive whiteboards or distributed computers using software for: engaging with information, calculations and predictions, online data collection, and modeling.

Data Analysis and Findings:

Table 1. Teachers perceptions about frequency of use of e-learning

Use of learning	All of the time(%)	Frequently (%)	Occasionally (%)
Teachers prepare schemes of work/lesson plans	60	30	10
Teachers do research and access teaching materials	40	50	10
Teachers make course materials available to learners	20	45	35
Teachers present information in front of the class	20	45	35
Teachers communicate with learners outside the classroom	10	30	60
Teachers assist giving one-to-one attention to learners in the classroom	10	40	50

Source: Survey

This suggests that lecturers perceived that their greatest use of e-learning was to prepare for teaching, particularly in the areas of research, and the creation of teaching materials. Majority of the teachers responded that they prepare scheme of the lesson, research materials regularly and frequently. 60% of them responded that they communicate with learners outside occasionally. And they also responded that they assist and give one-to-one attention to the students very occasionally.

Table 2. Teachers perceptions about the Frequency of use of e-learning by learners

Use of learners	All of the time(%)	Frequently(%)	Occasionally(%)
Teachers Create visual presentations	20	35	45
Teachers Work independently	15	55	30
Teachers engagement with the subject in the classroom	05	35	60
Learners contact lecturer with queries	10	30	60
Learners catch up on missed lectures	10	30	60
Learners work collaboratively with peers outside of the classroom	10	30	60
Learners present written work/data	15	55	30

Source: Survey

These are also teachers opinion regarding the benefits of e-learning to the learners. 60% of them responded that learners get more benefit occasionally to engage with the subject in the classroom, and to contact lecturers, to catch up missed lecturers etc. 35% lecturers responded that they can create visual presentations more frequently and 45% said that occasionally. But 55% of them responded that students can work independently in e-learning environment.

Table 3. Teachers perceptions on current experience of using e-learning

Lecturers views	Strngly agreed (%)	Agreed(%)	Disagreed(%)	Strongly disagreed(%)
E-learning approach is just one useful tool for lecturers	35	55	10	-
I can readily accept and identify the opportunities in my subject for the use of e-learning	35	55	10	-
In this approach learners expect lecturers to use e-learning tools.	25	60	10	05
E-learning approach is too time consuming to use in teaching and learning both	05	05	25	65

Source: Survey

90% of the respondents agreed that e-learning is an usefull tool for learning. They also agreed that they readily accept and identify the opportunity to use e-learning approaches. Majority of them responded that learners also expect use of e-learning tools in the classes. They said it is not time consuming.

Table 4. Lecturers confidence in using e-learning

	Strngly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
I always feel confident to plan and prepare lessons.	60	30	10	-
I feel confident using the presentation tools to communicate with learners	60	35	05	-
I feel confident using presentation tools with learners in the classroom	65	30	05	-
I feel confident to track and monitor learners' progress	55	40	05	-

Source: Survey

More than 60% of the teachers responded that they feel confident while using lesson plans and presentation tools. They feel highly confident in the classroom to interact with the students. 55% of them responded that confidently they can monitor the learners.

Table 5. Factors having impact with intermediate outcomes for learners

	Strongly agreed (%)	Agreed(%)	Disagreed(%)	Strongly disagreed(%)
Learners use e-learning to work independently	55	40	05	-
Use e-learning to support learner-centered learning	55	45	-	-
Lecturers prepare and teach more effectively as a result of e-learning	50	40	10	-
Lecturers assess progress more effectively as a result of e-learning	50	40	10	-
Learners develop their knowledge more effectively as a result of e-learning	50	45	05	-
Lecturers consider that e-learning affected learners' motivation positively	55	40	05	-
Lecturers are proactive in their attitude towards e-learning	50	35	10	05

Source: Survey

There is a considerable positive relation between the use of e-learning and the outcomes for learners. More than 90% of the lecturers responded (Strongly agreed and agreed) that the learners can work independently which creates a learner-centered education, lecturers can assess the progress of the learners more effectively, learners also develop their knowledge with the effect of positive attitude towards learning.

Lecturers had mixed perceptions of the impact of e-learning on teaching and learning activities. 85% of them responded that they can meet the needs of the learners more effectively with different learning styles and 50% of them responded that they can achieve more in less time. 40% of them responded that no difference(no change) regarding classroom attention and creating teaching materials. 55% of them responded that they can develop learners understanding capacity more effectively.

Table 6. Impact of e-learning approach on lecturers teaching and learning activities

Teaching activity.....	More effectively	No change	Less effectively
Teachers can meet the needs of learners with different learning styles	85	10	05
Teachers and learners both can achieve more in less time	50	40	10
Teachers can assist in giving one-to-one attention to learners in the classroom	40	40	20
Teachers can create teaching materials	30	60	10
Teachers can develop learners' understanding level of the subject	55	40	05

Source: Survey

Table 7. Lecturers views on the potential of e-learning

	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
Potential to increase the flexibility of learning provision	40	50	05	05
There is a need to help stimulate better understanding	35	55	05	05
There is a need to equip learners more effectively for future employment	35	55	05	05
Potential to save lecturers' time by using online resources	30	60	05	05

Source: Survey

The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that e-learning had the potential to prove the teaching and learning experience in all the aspects listed above. 90% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the lecturers responded that e-learning has the potential to increase the flexibility of learning provision, to stimulate better understanding and to equip learners more effectively for future employment. 90% of them responded that there is a potential to save the time by using online resources.

Findings and Suggestions:

By developing e-learning system, time required for effective learning can be reduced. Employees can take the advantage and they can apply the tools for their tasks what they have just learned

from their computer screens. It is necessary to take the significant advantages of online learning as it accommodates preferences and needs of learners because it is student-centered. E-learning is very effective approach to keep up with new technology, to generate new ideas and to keep the employees fresh and inspired also. This study is an evidence that if in the college level, lecturers use e-learning technology more effectively for preparation and research for teaching they can achieve very positive outcomes.

Conclusion:

E-learning is an innovative approach to teaching and learning that meets the challenging needs of the society. It contributes for development of an environment made up of collaboration and choice that provides for successful online learning experience. The technology used for e-learning provides student motivation challenges with support from teachers and also learners will get success with these e-learning environments. Most important challenge for the instructor now is to focus on the overall elements and requirements of e-learning as a well developed course.

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