

Role of e-learning in higher education system

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Abstract

The modern era demands growth and development in each sector of the society. Educational development of any society results in the overall advancement of the society. E-learning is an important key for the educational development of any country in the present era. E-learning is learning by utilizing digital or electronic technologies and multimedia environment, making the learning process more active, enjoyable and interesting for the learners and it is easily accessible anywhere. This review article aims at the role of e-learning in Indian educational sector specially in higher education. This review article discusses e-learning and its tools, difference between the traditional methodology of teaching and teaching using information and communication technology (ICT), advantages and disadvantages of e-learning and its requirement for implementation in higher education.

Key words: Educational development, e-learning, multimedia, information and communication technology, higher education

Introduction

E-learning is an important key for the educational development in the present era. Online resources are now blended with education so as to facilitate learning and training process. E-learning is an innovative approach for promoting delivery of learning in higher education. E-learning offers an alternative for traditional classroom education and allows students to access information without any geographical constraints or time restrictions [1-3]. E-learning provides interactive learning, which promotes idea sharing and collaboration among learners and tutors [3]. This approach of learning may be helpful in saving operational costs such as costs for travel, accommodation and need of physical classrooms which requires all its employees to attend the classroom physically. Few learning activities such as completing assignments, watching the training videos and rehearsing pre-learned skills can be completed offline. The e-learning process can be improved by implementing certain check points such as conducting weekly tests and online or offline assignments to keep a track of knowledge and skills of the learners [4]. Another approach is to combine online learning activities with classroom based teaching, as classroom learning helps learners to focus on their knowledge and core skills [3]. This review article discusses e-learning and its tools, advantages and disadvantages of e-learning, difference between the traditional methodology of teaching and teaching using information and communication technology (ICT) and its requirement for implementation in higher education.

Discussion

Education Scenario in India

Indian education system has been using the traditional teaching learning methodology from a long time. Foreseeing the global education scenario, there is need for change in Indian educational system. The Indian education system is bifurcated into various categories such as Elementary education, Secondary education, Higher education, Adult education, and Technical and Vocational education. Concept of e-learning is now being introduced in Indian education system but its implementation is slowly paced. E-learning may provide as a useful medium by which education resources could reach to the unreached in rural areas and also motivate the learners for higher education [5]. Education acts as a powerful tool in order to work and survive in this competitive world, one has to be competent enough to survive. It is only by educational development of a society that the progress of its people may be guaranteed. E-learning is the best alternative to achieve these goals.

Concept of e-Learning

E-Learning is utilization of electronic technologies to access educational information. Simply stating, it is learning that is delivered online through the internet and this ranges from online learning to distance Education, computerized learning, internet learning and many others forms. E-learning may be summarized as courses which are specifically delivered via internet to anywhere other than the traditional classroom.

Advantages of e-learning

Several studies [5-7] have stated the benefits of e-learning in education system especially at higher education level. The main advantage of e-learning is that it focuses on individual learning which is an important aspect of education system. E-learning is flexible related to time and place. The learner has luxury of choosing time and place suitable to him. The availability of huge amount of information in e-learning increases the effectiveness of knowledge and qualifications. E-learning provides opportunities and motivates learners to interact with another via different forums, thus increasing the interactivity between learner and instructor during content delivery. E-learning is a cost effective method of learning as it saves costs related to travel, accommodation and there is no need of physical classrooms as well. In e-learning individual learners differences are also kept in consideration. It also helps compensate for shortage of academic staff or teachers.

Disadvantages of e-learning

Improvisation of e-learning in education system has several advantages but at the same time it has disadvantages too. E-learning makes the learners undergo remoteness, contemplation and lack of interaction, which may require time management skills and motivation to reduce such effects. It has been observed that learning is much effective and easy in face-to-face process rather than in e-learning [7]. E-learning may also produce a hindering effect when related to building of communication skills of the learner. There are many courses which require practical knowledge such as science and engineering which may be hindered by e-learning. E-learning may also increase in activities such as cheating, copy and paste, plagiarism and piracy.

Conclusions

E-learning uses digital tools for teaching and learning process. It gives the liberty to the learners to access education anytime and anywhere and also focuses on individual learner abilities. E-learning provides a wide access to information and it is also a cost effective method. E-learning process may be improved by implementing few check points such as online or offline assignments and conducting weekly tests to keep a track of knowledge of the learners. Despite of its disadvantages, if e-learning is blended with traditional educational methodology in India then it will help in overall educational development of the nation.

References

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