"A Study on E-Learning among Government and Private College students"

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Abstract

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.[1]Information & Communication Technologies [ICT] have become a powerful force which are transforming and will continue to transform all aspects of education. E-learning applications and processes include Web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual education opportunities and digital collaboration. The growing influence of technologies on all aspects of life, including the education sector, requires developing countries to follow the example of the developed countries and adopt technology in their education systems. The use of ICT in education helps to establish virtual campuses in many universities and colleges to provide an advanced platform for learners and instructors. E-learning is becoming more and more popular. Along with numerous universities and colleges heavily relying on e-learning environments to train their students and faculties, the design and development of adaptive educational hypermedia that customize the content and navigation for each student has gained importance and priority all around the world.
This study aims to describe
Keywords: e-learning, ICT, Learning Management System, Information, VRes ORT

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Introduction

E-learning has evolved from its predecessor, namely distance learning. Distance learning attracted many learners from all over the globe, mainly because of its flexibility. It is not surprising to see more and more companies venturing into the e-learning businesses, when the global market for e-learning in 2002 reached US$90 billion (Yong, 2003). Another case cited by E-learning has become one of the powerful supporting tools which have diversified the traditional context of learning in colleges. On one hand, e-learning is not confined to geographical barriers. Students can engage in self-directed learning,and learning resources can be repeatedly used. On the other hand, e-learning provides flexible learning materials and consistent information. The learning content is easy to update. With the rapid development of technology, the Internet as a delivery platform has motivated colleges to invest their resources on developing online programs.Morgan (2001) refers to Fortune Magazine's estimation in May 2000 that the online learning market will reach US$22 billion by 2003. These figures seem to suggest a bright market for e-learning. The popularity of e-learning is not only limited to working adults who are seeking higher qualifications without leaving their jobs and losing their earning power (Lau, 2003). This trend seems ever increasing as the Internet and computer technology become widespread as a daily necessity of the younger generation. According to

Lau (2003), research revealed that 16 to 18 year old teenagers are really keen towards on-line learning or e-learning.

Despite e-learning's current popularity, does it have any limitations? Evan & Hasse (2001) found out that learners are moderately lacking in computer proficiency and, since e-learning is centered on computer technologies, it is a barrier to those learners without good computer skills. In addition, studies of Evan & Hasse (2001), O'Regan (2003) and Rovai & Jordan (2004) found out that learners face limited physical interactions among themselves in e-learning. The main purpose of this paper that is to explore some limitations in this learning method. This is done by extensive literature review from major e-learning journals from all over the world. At the end of the paper, the author will discuss some well researched limitations of e-learning.

E-learning definition: Schank (2002), Roffe (2002), Sambrook (2003) and Tsai & Machado (2002) refer to e-learning as "communication and learning activities through computers and networks (or via electronic means)". To be more specific, Fry (2000) defines e-learning as "delivery of training and education via networked interactivity and a range of other knowledge collection and distribution technologies." Wild, Griggs & Downing (2002) also had the same definition as Fry's – they defined e-learning as the creation and delivery of knowledge via online services in the form of information, communication, and education and training. Bleimann (2004) stated that e-learning is a self-directed learning that is based on technology, especially web-based technology. He also stressed that e-learning is collaborative learning. Internet and web technology is important in e-learning; Horton (2001) defines e-learning as "the use of Internet and digital technologies to create experience that educate fellow human beings." Apart from web-based technology, e-learning seemed to require multimedia based courseware (Evans & Fan, 2002; Lahn, 2004). Therefore, it is clear that e-learning is centered on Information and Communication Technology (ICT). It is not surprising that Hamid (2002) and Lytras, Pouloudi & Poulymenakou (2002) mentioned that e-learning evolved around Information Technology to enhance the learning performance and efficiency. Furthermore, Evans & Hasse (2001) pointed out that technology is indeed needed in e-learning to educate the learner through the usage of two-way video, two-way computer interaction, cable, satellite downlinks and Internet. Honey (2001) provided many good examples of learning activities that involved ICT. These examples include learning from e-mail, online research, online discussion and coaching by e-mail. From these definitions and examples, we can therefore define e-learning as learning activities that involve computers, networks and multimedia technologies. Although e-learning (and various blended approaches that integrate online components into traditional classes) continues to grow rapidly, it still remains at an early stage of development. Consequently, developers and deliverers of online learning need more understanding of how students perceive and react to elements of e-learning (since student perception and attitude is critical to motivation and learning) along with how to apply these approaches most effectively to enhance learning (Koohang & Durante, 2003).

Review of Literature

The present study is an attempt to add one grain in the vast field of educational research. It is presumed that the survey of related studies will make the present investigation more correct and to the point. It enables the researcher to perceive the gap in the concerned field. Some of the studies conducted on e-learning are as following:

Ellen Wagner (2005) found that Adobe's solutions for eLearning are all based upon creating and extending rich-engaging learning experiences that connect learners with instructors, other

learners, and rich learning content assets, regardless of physical location. Engagement is the conceptual glue that holds distributed, distant and eLearning experiences together. Being able to determine the kinds of outcomes that a learning engagement should enable guides the development of instructional designs, concept specifications, functional specifications, and technical specifications. These experiences also provide metrics for evaluation. Interactions that promote and enable a strong sense of social presence help keep learners engaged and motivated. The significant role played by technology mediation, and the value that rich, engaging content creation, distribution, and management tools contribute to the eLearning experience, enables new levels of engagement and participation among all learning stakeholders.

Garrison et.al (2004) studied the framework which explores how integrating online learning into traditional college classrooms could be transformative for universities. Blended learning represents an opportunity to support deep learning. The authors build on earlier work using community of inquiry model to support why institutions should invest in transforming learning. The paper outlines what colleges and universities need to do to move forward blended learning.

Gurmak Singh et.al (2005) suggested that ELearning may provide universities with a means of exceeding the newly formed competition, by taking full advantage of their traditional, already established reputations. For students, eLearning can provide an educationally-superior alternative to traditional lectures, in which learning can take place outside the lecture hall. ELearning can also provide a model for students on how to become self directed independent learners, which may assist them to become 'life long learners'. For lecturers, networked learning may cause changes in work patterns and even change their professional role, but in addition, eLearning provides them with the opportunity to test students in real business situations and new methods to evaluate each student's learning. ELearning programmes represent a change in teaching style.

Irina Elgort (2005) suggested approaching the e-learning innovation as a multidimensional process located in two planes: the plane of technology and the plane of pedagogy (or teaching and learning). Conflating these two separate aspects when evaluating the progress of e-learning adoption is counter-productive. At any given point in time both individual and institutional adoption of e-learning can be undergoing different adoption cycles; and it appears that currently the adoption of e-learning technologies, especially LMS, is located at a more advanced adoption stages compared to the teaching and learning innovation. This is why research in e-learning adoption discussed above indicates that the roots of the problems with e-learning are primarily associated with teaching and learning processes, rather than with the use of technology per se. This can be referred to as the e-learning chasm. The chasm, in this case, is not located within a linear adoption process but between the two interrelated but distinct components of e-learning: adoption of the e-learning technology innovation and adoption of the e-learning pedagogy innovation.

Jeekim et.al (2011) revealed that e-learning has become a dominant delivery method in workplace learning setting across organizations of various sectors and of varying areas. Although many organizations are recognizing the potential of e-leaning to bring closer to employees, there appears to be some issues to be addressed in delivering e-learning. It has also been emphasized that technology tools might still be on the periphery of our learning radar screens are about to be adopted widely by those who serve. Thus, there is need to develop an understanding of and familiarity there now, the learners who currently turned to us behind (Signorelli, 2010).

Kramer et.al (2009) discussed the need to evaluate student's performance in On-line distance education course. It focuses on so called "generic" or "key" competencies, which are increasingly in termed as part of academic competence goals. Also, the works on elearning and e-infrastructure have been adopted most widely. E-learning is preferred to "On-line learning" as it appears to be considered a more often comparing term across the countries (Venkatraman, 2009). It has been seen that learner identity needs to and can be developed in our rapidly changing digital globalised world. Two tools for learning are discussed in relation to this notion of development of learner identity and personalized learning. The first is the VResORT (Virtual Resources for Online Research Training) The second tool for learning is the Virtual Interactive Platform (Joyes, 2008).

Kayte O'Neill (2004) suggested that universities failing to embrace technological progress made during the 1990s will be unable to meet the needs of knowledge based societies and as a result will not survive the change in the paradigm of education. However, the implementation of eLearning brings forth implications for all stakeholders in Higher Education, and poses a number of risks which cannot be overlooked. Students are also greatly affected by the implementation of eLearning, principally by the shift in learning styles required to be successful in an online environment. Universities should be aware that dependent learners will require courses tailored to suit their educational needs, potentially offering a blend of face to face and virtual interaction. Failure to provide for these needs will lead students to shop elsewhere. The critical factors for success will change with the implementation of eLearning programmes: prior experience of using technology; the technological infrastructure; and the lecturer will be the new key elements in the success of the learning experience. HE institutions can help students to achieve success by doing three things. Firstly, a face-to-face session familiarizing students with the courseware will help to overcome the issue of prior experience. Secondly, the functionality of the technological infrastructure should be ensured before the course is implemented. This should be backed up by technical support from either the lecturer or a course facilitator. Finally, human resources should be committed to the project at an early stage and lecturers should be selected based on their attitude towards technology, teaching style and ability to control to technology.

Laura Asandului et.al (2008) revealed that the number of hours spent in front of the computer does not differ by the two groups of respondents: those who had taken an e-course and those who had not. Also, 41 % of those who had already taken an eLearning course have assessed the experience as very interesting, and 58 % of the respondents assessed it as interesting.

Modritscher (2006) studied that e-learning and distance learning tend to get more and more important for all kind of organizations, researchers and practitioners are becoming aware of the fact that a simple technology-focused approach does not guarantee successful teaching and learning. Thus, a shift to pedagogy-based initiatives can be observed within the field of e-learning. The study examined the implications of commonly known learning theories on online courses.

Nicole Wagner et.al (2008) proposed an e-learning Stakeholders' Responsibility Matrix in which each stakeholder group has an important role to play while working together towards the common goal of enhancing the overall learning experience. Students and Instructors should participate as proactively as possible; provide feedback to improve future experiences, and communicate the learning possibilities that e-learning creates. Institutions should provide the technical infrastructure and support needed to enable comprehensive solutions. Content and Technology Providers should provide high quality, interoperable solutions that consider learning principles. Accreditation Bodies should provide and enforce clear guidelines for this new form of learning delivery. Employers need to recognize the validity o f this form of education and work with other stakeholders to ensure that graduates meet the needs of the job market. The framework is derived from the motivations/needs and concerns of stakeholder groups as noted in the literature. This methodology would allow for in depth study of the success of a particular application in light of the levels of cooperation achieved according to the Stakeholders' Responsibility Matrix. This matrix shared responsibility between the various e-learning stakeholders. When all stakeholders fulfill their responsibilities to create effective and meaningful e-learning experiences, positive outcomes extend beyond success in specific courses and programs to facilitate lifelong learning and discovery.

Sabine Seufert (2001) concentrated on the U.S. and the corporate segments, especially the IT training. Several E-Learning business models coming from the academic and corporate sector have been introduced and could be grouped into E2B, E2E and E2C strategies. Human interaction is a critical component for learning. For a number of individuals, technology-based training is not the most efficient learning method, as their learning style is kinesthetic as opposed to visual. The classroom also provides guidance and structure. These elements are important for individuals who lack the motivation and confidence to succeed in a self-study-only program. E-Learning may require more dedication and discipline. E-Learning may not be perfect, but it is practical. While technology-based learning is unlikely to completely replace the school and university Experience, it offers a lot of opportunities for corporate training and continuing education. The most promising market within the education industry might be corporate E-Learning, E2B market. Companies face more economic and social pressures to find new ways of training delivery, and fewer regulatory, bureaucratic, financial, and technical barriers to implementation of E-Learning than other segments of the education industry. The most successful E-Learning models of the future will likely be hybrid E-Learning networks that are combinations of academic, professional and corporate content.

Sangeeta Kakoty et.al (2011) found that content packaging and content managing is got the highest priority in e-learning research where yet lots of development has to be made. Learner's prospect and interest is increasing very rapidly as the technology is growing. They also found that the most neglected areas of e-learning are the cultural differences in global distance learning programs and cooperation which should receive much more attention. It has been seen that globalization of education, cross-culture aspects and culturally complex student support system in distance education as well as in e-learning environment is a prospective research area. We can improve these areas by integrating new technologies and ICT tools. A promising technology for realizing e-learning requirements is the Semantic web that can provide flexible and personalized access to the learning materials.

Sevgi Ozkan et.al (2009) proposed a conceptual model through both theoretical constructs and empirical analysis. It provides an innovative approach to e-learning assessment. It demonstrated the importance of undertaking a systemic view of learning management systems (LMSs) evaluation addressing the conceptualization and measurement of e-learning systems success in higher education. *It* adopts a quantitative case perspective and derives a conceptual model for e-learning assessment (Hexagonal e-learning assessment model – HELAM).The model is empirically tested for validity and reliability in the university setting. The findings support the flexibility and relevance of HELAM as an e-learning assessment model. It highlights a number of success measures which are grouped under six dimensions.

Sulcic (2007) presented online tutoring as a solution to quality issues of e-learning that elearning providers from all over the world are facing. The study briefly presented different roles of online tutors and the skills needed to perform these roles successfully. The online tutoring system was introduced to support students of e-learning courses at the faculty. The researchers showed that tutors can improve study outcomes (although not so much students' grades) and that their activity is well accepted by students (especially part-time students).E-learning is a form of learning in which the educational process is supported by information and communication technology (ICT). With the gradual introduction of ICT in traditional education, the teaching/learning methods were transferred to traditional education because of their innovative approach to teaching and learning. In this context new forms of learning emerged, varying from computer based learning, online learning, web-based learning, e-learning etc. All these new forms of learning that use ICT can therefore be called e-learning.

Schweizer et.al (2003) examined how groups of learners work together in blended learning and e-learning environments. Three pure e-learning courses were compared to one blended learning course where participants formed learning teams who met at three points in time. All participants received joint learning material, in order to build shared knowledge, and individualized information to build unshared knowledge. Variables analyzed include students' extent of online activity, the groups' task performance, and coherence of the groups' discourse. Results indicated that achievement in a particular group does not depend solely on the mode of communication used in the course. From the above literature review it has been seen that various attempts have been made in this context from time to time to understand the concept of elearning or on-line learning. Thus, there is a gap to proceed further, the researcher attempts to know the role of e-learning in education

Objectives

1. To measure the perception on e-learning among Government College students running Traditional Courses and Private College students running Traditional Courses.

2. To measure the perception on e-learning among Government College students running Traditional Courses and Private College students running Professional Courses.

3. To measure the perception on e-learning among Government College students running Professional Courses and Private College students running Traditional Courses.

4. To measure the perception on e-learning among Government College students running Professional Courses and Private College students running Professional Courses.

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant difference in the perception of e-learning among Government College students running Traditional Courses and Private College students running Traditional Courses.

H02: There is no significant difference in the perception of e-learning among Government College students running Traditional Courses and Private College students running Professional Courses.

H03: There is no significant difference in the perception of e-learning among Government College students running Professional Courses and Private College students running Traditional Courses.

H04: There is no significant difference in the perception of e-learning among Government College students running Professional Courses and Private College students running Professional Courses.

H11: There is a significant difference in the perception of e-learning among Government College students running Traditional Courses and Private College students running Traditional Courses.

H12: There is a significant difference in the perception of e-learning among Government College students running Traditional Courses and Private College students running Professional Courses.

H13: There is a significant difference in the perception of e-learning among Government College students running Professional Courses and Private College students running Traditional Courses.

H14: There is a significant difference in the perception of e-learning among Government College students running Professional Courses and Private College students running Professional Courses.

Research Methodology

It is an exploratory study based on primary data. A self designed questionnaire has been used to measure perception of e-learning among college/Institute students in Indore city. The questionnaire was on 5-point Likert Scale, where 1 indicated high level of dissatisfaction and 5 indicated high level of satisfaction consisting of 14 items has been used. In the study, convenience sampling method has been used. The questionnaire has been distributed to 128 students of Government and Private Institute of Indore running Traditional Courses and Professional Courses. The Z-test has been used for analysis.

Result and Discussion

Table of Z values

S No.	Study Between	S	Z
1	Government Colleges running Traditional Courses Vs Private Colleges running Traditional Courses	5.6116	0.22278
2	Government Colleges running Traditional Courses Vs Private Colleges running Professional Courses	5.96305	0.77561
3	Government Colleges running Professional Courses Vs Government Colleges running Traditional Courses	5.3535	1.30759
4	Government Colleges running Professional Courses Vs Private Colleges running Professional Courses	5.72077	0.19665

Table.1

I. $Z_{\mathbf{0.22278}} < Z_{1.96}$ Hence it means that H0 is accepted.

II. $Z_{\mathbf{0.77561}} < Z_{1.96}$ Hence it means that H0 is accepted.

III. $Z_{\mathbf{1.30759}} < Z_{1.96}$ Hence it means that H0 is accepted.

IV. $Z_{\mathbf{0.19665}} < Z_{1.96}$ Hence it means that H0 is accepted.

Discussion-With the above results we can infer that it is immaterial that student is studying in government college or in professional Institute in the context of perception on e-learning.There is no significant difference in perception of Students studying in government colleges or private colleges. Wernet, Olliges, and Delicath (2000), who surveyed students who used WebCT in a social work course, found that all of the respondents considered the online course materials beneficial to their overall learning experience. Carnevale (2000) found that regardless of the learning format, students took into consideration knowledgeable instructors, interaction with instructors, and additional features that create a sense of community when evaluating courses for merit. The importance of technological preparedness, willingness, and the overall mindsets of students has also been acknowledged by educators as playing a crucial role in both the hybrid and online learning equations. Further, Sanders and Morrison-Shetlar (2002) cited the importance of student attitudes toward technology as a significant determining factor in the educational benefits of online learning resources and experiences. e-learning as a supplement to face-toface instruction enhances the overall learning experience (Allen I. & Seaman, 2003; Buzzetto-More & Sweat-Guy, 2006; Lorenzetti, 2005; Young, 2002) and that online learning has the ability to provide learners with more choices, greater flexibility, expanded resources, and increased opportunities,while offering faculty an opportunity to teach

using alternative delivery and assessment methods (Matheos & Curry, 2004). It has also shown that asynchronous instruction can result in high levels of student satisfaction (Buzzetto-More & Sweat-Guy, 2006; Sanders & Morrison-Sheltar, 2002; Yip, 2004). With the various facilities of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the rapid growth of e-learning, computers are now used by students in many education processes and are valuable tools in learning in higher education. Accessing online learning resources has become flexible and fast without any geographical barriers (Sivapalan and Cregan 2005, Concannon and Campbell 2005**).** The aim of this study is to investigate students' attitudes towards Information and Communication technology ICT in Kuwait's Higher Education.

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