A Study of E-Learning Use and Readiness in Higher Education Institutions

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ABSTRACT
In 21st-century classrooms, technology is changing the way that traditional teaching and learning approaches are used. Instead of making students into passive information consumers, the aim is to develop them into active, independent, and lifelong learners. This innovative educational strategy goes beyond the conventional textbook and enables students to gain a variety of computer technology, critical thinking, and information-seeking abilities. The effectiveness of an educational programme that fosters these attributes depends on the classroom instructor having access to the right technology. Information experts are respected and viewed in society. We, as contemporary satraps, are a group of professionals who have mastered the art of organising and managing education using both conventional methods and contemporary technical tools. Due to the persistence of information and communication technology, the intricate nature of the teaching and learning process is undergoing a significant transformation. A quickly developing trend in the realm of education is the idea of online learning. This essay discusses the potential of online learning as well as the staff and students of a commerce college's preparation and acceptance.

Keywords: e-learning, online learning, virtual learning, technology in education.

INTRODUCTION
Machine caused a stir in the 17th century during the industrial revolution. Every task was completed by a machine. The letter "e" is employed in daily tasks including commerce, banking, entertainment, and now education with such relative ease. The "e" refers to the usage of the Internet for a wide range of activities and stands for "electronic." People are becoming increasingly accustomed to the language of the Internet, and as the.com era progresses, we discover just how much it permeates our daily lives. As these words gradually integrate into our everyday lexicon, educators are now starting to hear concepts like e-teaching, e-learning, and e-education. E-learning includes the distribution and facilitation of knowledge through electronic methods as well as its acquisition and application.

Learning holds a significant part in our lives. What we learn and how we learn it affect much of what we do and don't do. Therefore, learning offers a key to our actions and character. In a broad sense, learning refers to all of the changes and adjustments a person's behaviour goes through over
the course of a lifetime. Deep social transformations have also been sparked by the technology and communication revolutions, which have produced new patterns of economic, industrial, and knowledge organisation. Conflict might result from such transformation because new technology undermines established cultural norms.

People now look to invest in education as a commodity for their own financial benefit, to promote equality of opportunity, and as a path to a better life. Higher education (HE) providers are consequently finding themselves in more intense competition than ever for students, financing, research, and acceptance by the general public. Even while universities have always had to deal with competition, historically national as opposed to worldwide competitiveness was the main focus. Higher education has "internationalised" during the past ten years as a result of the growth of virtual learning, or distant learning, and new communication technologies. Because providers can now export themselves, competition has expanded outside national borders.

E-learning can benefit individuals and organisations in four important ways.

1. Access to high-quality education: Students can enrol in classes regardless of their location or political or social affiliation thanks to the ability of top educators to share their expertise across borders. Information can be distributed internationally at low cost by recognised professionals.

2. Affordability of education: E-learning can significantly lower the price of higher education, making it more widely available and affordable. An full classroom in a Third World institution might gain knowledge from a faraway lecturer with the help of an Internet connection, a computer, and a projector.

3. Convenience and flexibility for learners: e-learning is frequently self-paced, and the learning sessions are accessible around-the-clock. Students are not required to physically attend classes on a certain day or at a certain time. Additionally, they have the option to pause lessons whenever they choose.

Growth of e-learning
At global institutions of higher education at the beginning of this decade, millions of students were taking courses online. Online courses are currently offered by a large number of for-profit colleges. However, just about half of nonprofit, private schools do. According to the Sloan report, which is based on a survey of academic leaders, most students seem to be at least as happy with their online classes as they are with their traditional ones. As the cost of such training drops, private institutions may get more involved with online presentations. Employing properly qualified personnel is also
necessary to deal with students online. These employees must be knowledgeable in the subject matter and have advanced computer and Internet skills. Online education is rapidly increasing, and online doctoral programs have even developed at leading research universities.

Components of E Learning:

E Learning means learning processes are assisted by electronic devices. Internet, Intranet, smart Boards, Computer Aided learning (CAL), computer based learning(CBL), web based learning (WBL), Online Learning(OL), Online web based Learning(OWL) , Asynchronous Learning, virtual Learning. There is an interesting method of teaching- learning “blended Learning” is preferred more today. As its name indicates it is the successful blending of class room teaching with electronic gadgets. Use of audio, video, seamless streaming on the course content widens the scope and develops concentration and interest in the students.

Scope of E Learning:
In the present class room face to face teaching environment can be moulded into E learning stage with small but strong will of the educators and students. A start with using ICT in education in a small way initiates curiosity in the student. The aversion to use technology, audio and visual media, the smart boards and the feel of lack of skills in the teacher are to be addressed in an effective way. Blended teaching within the classroom is a best approach to start with. E Learning is not all about teaching –learning, examination and assignment and assessment online. It is about the judicious implementation and inclusion of technology in education. Such a drive produces the computer/ information literate students. Results:

The Faculty
The demographic details of the staff are favorable for adopting E Learning technique

☐ They were provided with lap-tops for personal use, smart boards and free Wi-Fi available in the campus.

☐ Already using technology in the class-rooms
☐ Teaching mostly on ppt presentations
☐ With the help of projectors, audio- video elements are incorporated
☐ 76.28% pragmatic about E Learning mode of education

Undergraduate students:

☐ 100% were trained in MS Office, computer literacy
☐ 34% students use e resources in their classroom course
☐ 54.51%of students know how to exploit expansion and extension of study material

☐ 66.08% able to submit and access online assignments independently
Chart
1. Post Graduate/ Research Students:
2. Better equipped with technology; computer/information Literates
3. Good knowledge about e Resources; Participants in UGC Infonet, N List
4. Regular browsers of e Resources and cautious users of e content on net.
5. Accomplished communication and information technology users.
6. All PG and research students believe that e learning is a very pleasant alternative as they are accustomed users of ICT
7. 54.51% expansion and extension of study material
8. 89.1% agree to beneficial to gather information at PG level.
9. 73.03% agreed that E learning is an augmented/enhanced mode of learning
Chart
Motivation points mined out:
- Anywhere anytime learning
- More learner - centric
- Encouragement of learner autonomy
- Increase in the active student population
- Direct participation of student in learning
- Development of lifelong skills
- Demand from the students
- Demand from the management

Challenges and disadvantages: E-learning has the drawback that students must have access to both a computer and the Internet. They also require computer proficiency with applications like word processing, web browsers, and e-mail.

Accessing course materials may be challenging for machines with slow Internet connections or older hardware. The students could become discouraged and give up as a result of this. Without strong computer organising abilities, students can misplace or lose reports, which would delay their submission of tasks. Additionally, some of the students could have problems installing the course-required software.

The amount of time needed for class attendance and assignment completion is the same for regular classroom courses as it is for online courses. Since e-learning is self-paced and self-learnt, the student's attention span might not be sufficient for him or her to comprehend a topic. Because they complete all of their own work, pupils must be extremely motivated and responsible. Learners who lack enthusiasm or have poor study techniques risk falling behind.

Without the normal patterns of a traditional class, students may become lost or confused about the course tasks and deadlines, which could lead to failure or poor performance. E-learning has the additional drawback of making pupils feel distant from the teacher. Since support from the instructor is not always available, learners must have self-discipline to complete their job without it. E-learners also need to be proficient communicators and writers. It is possible to misunderstand what was meant when professors and other students don't interact in person.

Conclusion
The ability of teachers to see the potential of online chances and comprehend the culture of the new environment is essential to the growth and development of e-learning in a sustainable manner. As they advance, a technique that aids e-teachers in defining the landscape will provide them with assistance and inspiration. In order to create successful e-education programmes, careful preparation is a necessity. It would be wise for an academic to evaluate the programming and learning goals it expects to attain through e-education. By incorporating e-learning into the routine process, it will be possible to give adequate regard to pedagogical, staff development, and financial problems.
Reference: