

learning enables students to study under the guidance of their teachers as their mentors whether in campus-based or distance learning systems. Apart from providing virtual education, E-learning can be used to improve classroom learning processes as well as blended learning. The application of ICT in traditional systems is bound to have a significant impact on the overall education system by enhancing the accessibility of adverse education opportunities and improving its qualities within minimum costs. For maximum benefits of E-learning at minimum costs, proper policies and strategies must be implemented to integrate the available local technologies with the current education system. To meet the increased demand for flexible learning systems in the local and international market today, the University Grants Commission (UGC) in India has resolved to take advantage of ICTs to improve virtual education through E-learning in most of its institutions of higher learning. This calls for the development and implementation of a well-designed E-learning plan both at the national level as well as the institutional level.

2. E-LEARNING

A learning system based on formalized teaching but with the help of electronic resources is known as E-learning. While teaching can be based in or out of the classrooms, the use of computers and the Internet forms the major component of E-learning. E-learning can also be termed as a network enabled transfer of skills and knowledge, and the delivery of education is made to a large number of recipients at the same or different times. The technology based e-learning encompasses the use of the internet and other important technologies to produce materials for learning, teach learners and also regulate courses in an organization (Fry, 2001)² E-learning has a promising future in India due to increasing internet connectivity and masses using e-learning as an aid to gain knowledge. But most of students and knowledge seekers are unaware of these amazing E-learning. E-learning raises the level of education, literacy and economic development in countries where technical education is expensive, opportunities are limited and economic disparities exist...



A learning system based on formalized teaching but with the help of electronic resources is known as E-learning. While teaching can be based in or out of the classrooms, the use of computers and the Internet forms the major component of E-learning. E-learning can also be termed as a network enabled transfer of skills and knowledge, and the delivery of education is made to a large number of recipients at the same or different times. Earlier, it was not accepted wholeheartedly as it was assumed that this system lacked the human element required in learning. E-Learning involves the use of digital media and technology to deliver learning experiences. A learning experience attempts to simulate the real-world classroom learning process. It involves assembling great content, distributing it to facilitate learning, managing the learning process and providing validations. In the current era, where technology is rapidly evolving, education has also taken the support of ICT and now offers convenient ways to help increase the knowledge, education and literacy status of people. E-learning platform provides anywhere, anytime easy access for upgradation of knowledge and skills. It provides a platform wherein the individual gets a customized package related to key thematic areas, through a self-guided process.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Richard and Haya (2009)¹, “The internet has become one of the vital ways to make available resources for research and learning for both teachers and students to share and acquire information”

Fry (2001)², “Technology based e-learning encompasses the use of the internet and other important technologies to produce materials for learning, teach learners and also to regulate the courses in an organization”

Abbad et al (2009)³, “E-learning refers to the use of information and communication technologies to enable the access to online learning/teaching resources”

Smedly (2010)⁴, “The adoption of e-learning provides the institutions as well as their students or learners the much flexibility of time and place of delivery or receipt of according to learning information.

Hameed et at (2008)⁵, “E-learning, in spite of the advantages that it has when adopted in education also has some disadvantages. Studies support that e-learning process some disadvantages.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

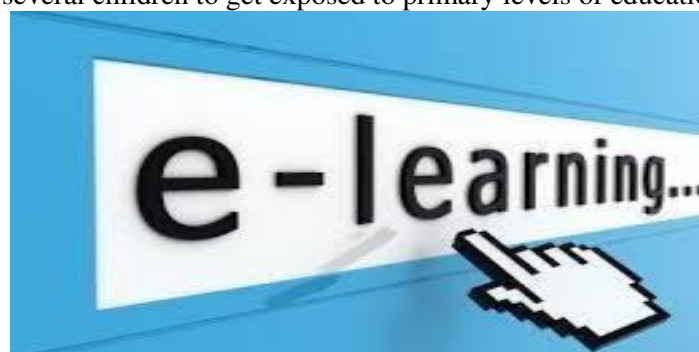
- To explore the scope for E-learning in Indian higher education scenario
- To study about the importance, advantages and disadvantages of e-learning

4.1. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

This study is highly significant in establishing the importance of E-learning in higher education. This information will help to avoid the barriers that are likely to hinder the development and expansion of E-learning in higher educational institutions. E-learning can also be seen as a promising way for improving the quality of higher education and effectiveness of learning. It can give increased flexibility of learning experience to student, enhances access to information resources for more students. E-learning could also lead to the enhancement of quality in higher education by leading to innovative pedagogical methods, new ways of learning and interacting by the easy sharing of the new practices among learners and teacher s communities, as well as by more transparency and easier comparison and cross fertilization of materials and methods. The e-learning system not only provides learning objectives but also evaluates the progress of the student and credit can be earned towards higher learning institutions.

5. SCOPE OF E-LEARNING IN INDIA

There is a huge scope of E-learning in India, especially for the Indian youths. E-learning has opened new avenues to education in India and has changed the dynamics of educational content. What seemed like a distant dream a few years back is India's future today. E-learning has surpassed challenges of reaching out to a varied audience, overcome the non-availability of adequately qualified teachers in rural India & making rich content available to an audience that was unreachable earlier. Today, with changing times, basic education is taught with a single computer in rural villages and has helped several children to get exposed to primary levels of education.



Many of the universities and colleges are conducting their course online and also certificated will be provided online. The e-learning scenario in India is still growing and at an experimental stage. India's education policy has largely neglected the opportunity of benefiting from this technological revolution in education. E-learning is not only inexpensive, but also convenient. Yet there are huge digital divides which need to be bridged on an urgent basis. Indians however are more inclined to conventional methods of classroom training thus accepting e-learning is a major hindrance. E-learning is the use of internet technologies to enhance knowledge and performance of the students. It presents an entirely new learning environment for students, thus requiring a different skill set to be successful. Critical thinking, research and evaluation skills are growing in importance as students have increasing volumes of information from a variety of sources. E-learning presents numerous research opportunities for faculty also. E-learning refers to the use of internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance. E-learning is also called Web-based learning, online learning, distributed learning, computer-assisted instruction and internet-based learning. E-learning has become popular because of its potential for providing more flexible access to content and instruction at any time and from any place.

5.1. IMPORTANCE OF E-LEARNING:

E-learning is important for education because it can improve the quality of the learning experience, and extend the reach of every lecturer and tutor. It can help remove barriers to achievement, by providing new and creative ways of motivating and engaging pupils and learners of all abilities, enabling and inspiring everyone to attain their educational potential.

E-learning can support learning by offering differentiated learning, particularly for those who need support in literacy, numeracy and ICT. It offers a wide range of tools to enable teachers and learners to be innovative, creative and resourceful in all learning activities. Teachers and learners can easily customize digital learning resources to suit pace and level, appropriate to any learning style and ability.

E-learning creates on-line communities of practice. The internet can bring learners, teachers, specialist communities, experts, practitioners and interest groups together to share ideas and good practice. It can provide an individualized learning experience for all learners, including those who are disadvantaged, disabled, exceptionally gifted, have special curriculum or learning needs or who are remote or away from their usual place of learning

E-learning can facilitate wider participation and fairer access to further and higher education by creating the opportunity to start learning and to choose courses and support according to the learners' needs. It

provides personalized learning support through information, advice, and guidance services. It can help learners find the course they need, with a seamless transition to the next stage of their learning, including online application or enrolment and an electronic portfolio of their learning to take with them.

E-learning provides virtual learning worlds where learners can take part in active and creative learning with others through simulations, role-play, remote control of real-world tools and devices, online master classes, or collaboration with other education providers.



5.3. BENEFITS OR ADVANTAGES OF E-LEARNING

The adoption of E-learning in education, several studies and authors have provided benefits and advantages derived from e-learning technologies into higher educational institutions and is considered among the best methods of education.

The most evident advantage of E-learning is that, it allows flexibility and open learning for the students hence, giving them the time to attend to other things such as working and so forth. In addition, the increased demand for off-campus or distance learning is likely to create a larger geographical market especially for small institutions through online education systems

Implementing the E-learning system in universities, the Indian IT market is expected to grow by more than 10 percent while the online education market is expected to increase at a compound growth rate of around 32 percent. The e-learning programs are easier to monitor than traditional class-based courses. In addition, e-learners are given the opportunity to interact with faculty members, instructors and other peers via electronic mail

E-learning is also cheaper for the students as it saves both time and money thus making higher education more available than before. It provide more instructor-student and student-student interaction than the traditional systems. Slow learners are particularly advantages by online programs since they get to spend as much time as they wish reading and participating online than they would in a class-based program. It also offers many advantages in terms of student's flexibility and larger online market for the institutions.

5.4. BARRIERS OR DISADVANTAGES OF E-LEARNING

E-learning, in spite of the advantages that it has when adopted in education, also has some disadvantages. Most of the online students may not be in a position to determine their academic needs, attributes and weak points precisely since other is no direct interaction with the instruction or other students. E-learning programs require a lot of faculty involvement, which encourages online peer support among the students. High dropout rates experienced in E-learning systems as compared to traditional education systems. The e-learning educational system may not provide an adequate balance between intellectual learning skills and team building community skills.

E-learning programs are not suitable for everyone, because most of those students who perform well in the traditional system of education which encourages face to face instructor-student interaction are likely to experience some serious difficulties with online based learning. Adopting of e-learning and its technology requires large investments in faculty, time, money and space that need to be justified to administrators and leadership.

5.5. HOW TO MAKE E-LEARNING MORE EFFECTIVE:

The following actions will improve E-learning more effectively in higher educational institutions- (1)Availability of hardware (particularly computers) (2) Faster Internet connectivity/improved bandwidth (3) Improved software (4) Appropriate policies favoring e-learning (5) Provision of technical support for e-learning at a range of scales (6) Lower prices for connectivity (7) Appropriate content in appropriate languages (8) Awareness raising about the value of e-learning (9) Improved training for teachers in e-learning at all levels.

6. CONCLUSION:

In underdeveloped and developing countries, e-learning raises the level of education, literacy and economic development. This is especially true for countries where technical education is expensive, opportunities are limited and economic disparities exist. E-learning can be highly beneficial to both students and institutions if properly

implemented. The impact of e-learning and internet technology on the quality of education in the institutions of higher education has predominantly influence the current studies.

E-learning is a large and growing market with great potential in higher education and the students using e-learning performed better than students who did not use e-learning. In order to maximize this potential, e-learning implementations should endeavor to satisfy the needs and concerns of all stakeholder groups as much as possible

7. FUTURE RESEARCH:

Recent studies have expressed diverse views on the advantages and disadvantages, benefits and barriers of E-learning. However, one thing which is evident is that, e-learning if properly implemented has the potential of making higher education available to millions of people both locally and internationally by facilitating faster and cheaper sharing of knowledge, resources and information via internet and other digital technologies. Moreover, although many studies have already been carried out on the topic of e-learning, very few of the reviewed studies have surveyed e-learners in their research-sampling frame. For this reason, more research needs to be done focusing on the views of e-learners to determine the actual impact of E-learning on the students in terms of the quality of such education.

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