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E-Learning : an emerging trend in teacher education



Poonam Madan

Asst. Prof.
Deptt. B.Ed.
V.S.I.P.S. Kidwai Nagar,
Kanpur

Abstract

Education is knowledge and knowledge is power computer and Internet have invaded our lives. The world is undergoing numerous transformation due to rapid development and diffusion of ICT in all walks of life. Arrival of computer and internet in field of education has changed the procedure and patterns of education. New technological terms replaced old terms such as banking into e-banking, booking into e-booking, money into e-booking, money, commerce into e-commerce, education into e-education and learning into e-learning. The development of computer technology has resulted in e-learning & learning is a new sensation in the field of teacher education. The term 'e-learning', in general, refers to learning facilitated and supported through the use of ICT. It can cover a spectrum of activities from supported learning, to blended learning (the combination of traditional and ICT enhanced practices), to learning that is entirely on-line & learning, therefore, is a approach to facilitate and enhance learning through both computer and communication technology. E-learning may also be referred as e-education, paperless education, on-line education and web based education. E-learning means technology based distance learning programs conducted on-line where in the students can communicate with peers and teachers. According to Rosenberg (2001)- "e-learning refers to the use of internet technologies to deliver a board array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance".

Teacher education is the backbone of a country. In the present changing scenario the 'High-tech' age demands teacher education to be update, dynamic and challenging as the society progresses. All the fields have been influenced by technology. Higher education needs to be computerized not only in official administrator but also in instruction, teaching, evaluation, assessment and grading. The teaching & learning method have become more interesting, more informative & more innovative with the help of communication technology. Teacher education has become more interactive & less didactic. E-learning, E-books, CAI. Programmed instructional books, virtual classrooms, T.V. teaching, learning through internet have been slowly introduced in teacher training colleges, where education becomes pupil-centered. The conventional classroom handled by the teaching using chalk & blackboard has been replaced by more participative vie using multimedia, power-point presentation, telecommunication, e-learning etc.

With the emergence of World Wide Web (WWW), the world of teaching and learning had adopted online learning as one of its main innovation for devising learning material properly in order to engage the learner and to promote learning.

It is interesting to note that different terminologies have been used for online learning. Terms that are commonly used include: e-learning, internet learning, distributed learning, networked learning, tele-learning, virtual learning, computer-assisted learning, web-based learning and distance learning.

Keyword: E- learning, Pupil centered

Introduction

Education through E-learning :

Technology has entered in classroom as a support system in the form of windows (.ppt, word, excel), CAI, demonstration on computers. Development in computer technology result in E-learning. E-learning is used in much broader sense than the computer based training] and CAI. Now it is the time of E-learning in teacher education.

- E-learning is way for teachers to learn new knowledge and skills using computer network technologies that enhance knowledge and performance.

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- If E-learning is the instruction that is delivered electronically, in part or wholly via web browser, through the internet or an intranet, or through multimedia platform such as CDROM or DVD Brandon Hall.

E-learning or electronic learning is the general term used for computer enhanced learning. E-learning has the advantage of learning at the learner's pace and also it is available on demand so the learners can access it at anytime, they want. E-learning is a technology based distance learning program conducted online, where in students can communicate with peers & instructors. Teachers at one place can teach multiple students at different locations and the students can receive immediate feedback.

E-learning involves the creation of virtual classroom i.e. classrooms in the cyberspace. Virtual classrooms means there are no actual classrooms, no teachers or textbooks, but it gives the impression of studying in classroom. In E-learning teaching learning process is possible through electronic components like computers & Internet. Some of the institutions offering online courses, associate degree, bachelor degree, master degree & certificate courses included e-school, world.com, e-learn, uk.com, oxford open learning international material including texts, graphics & animation is provided through the internet after the fees is received by the instruction. After receiving the password, the student can go through the course material, listen to the recorded lecture as well as submit assignments & projects on the internet.

Forms of E-learning :

E-learning today allows students to get fully involved interactive and collaborative learning process through the use of internet may be through asynchronous activities or through the synchronous activities.

Asynchronous E-learning :

It includes learning through asynchronous activities like e-mail, discussion forum, blogs, wikis etc. Much of the E-learning approaches are characterized as asynchronous. In asynchronous E-learning programmes are independent of time. Anyone can access the programme at a time and as many times as desired. Communication between people does not take place in real time. Asynchronous E-learning does not need a facilitator or instructor and is one of the more popular E-learning deployment methods. For e.g. self paced courses taken via internet on CDROM and stored audio/video level representation or seminar.

Synchronous E-Learning :

In includes learning through synchronous activities like chat sessions, video-conferencing etc. with synchronous e-learning and teaching takes place at the same time while the trainer and learner are physically separated from each other synchronous programmes are time dependent. Communication takes place in the real time. If you put live classroom training on the web, it is a synchronous event. It is scheduled and students and teachers must be

present at the time, just like any classroom event. Examples of synchronous learning are internet telephony, web conferencing, online lectures, distance learning via interactive satellite, Audio/Video conferencing etc.

Need of E-learning in teacher education :

The ever increasing number of students necessitates more and more of competent teachers and teacher education institutions. At the same time the poor quality of educational standards cannot be justified by this quantitative expansion hence to maintain quality and efficiency imparting teacher education E-learning is needed.

There is urgent need to incorporate E-learning in teacher education programs :

- The students opting for teaching as profession need to give wide and extensive training of E-learning.
- E-learning enables students to get the practical exposure to school and class environment.
- Students themselves use E-learning in the class room when they learn strategies and processes of E-learning.
- Provides opportunities such as teacher less virtual classroom, E-learning e-teaching, e-evaluation.
- Networking in teacher education-specific teacher education institutions need to be networked so that they function in collaborative manner.

E-learning sources/Tools :

Many internet based tools can serve to facilitate classroom management task or provide support for instruction.

- **World Wide Web** : www is computer based network of information resources that a user can move through by using links from one document to other. By using www the learner can access information through e-books and audio video files. It can be viewed multiple times and downloaded whenever needed.
- **E-mail** : Electronic mail allows teacher to send instructions, announcements and assignments to students. Teacher can ask students to send their views on the problematic situation related to the subject matter. Shy students hesitate to interact in person can share his views through e-mail. Both teacher and student can exchange letters, files data or report using e-mail.
- **Online Publications** : Many educational journals now have an online version. Most of these online publications include innovative articles, techniques, and new trends in education useful for teacher educator.
- **Lesson Plan sites** : Practice teaching is important aspect of teacher education. Lesson plan is a key academic resource to practice teaching. Some lesson plans sites offer subject-specific plans, in addition to sites dedicated to lesson plans, links on many educational sites offer lesson plans related to the content of that site. Lesson plans software programs generate

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lesson plans for you and even relate them to specific standard. e.g. <http://www.ngfl.gov.uk>.

- **Portals** : Websites which includes services such as search engine, news email, conferencing etc. are called portal. Different educational portals are available online which allows teacher educator to use this to update knowledge, skills and exchange the views related to subject. Classroom management tools, live classroom training are also available on these educational portals.

ROLE OF THE TEACHER OR TUTOR IN AN E-LEARNING CONTEXT

For the effective online interaction between the students and the teachers, the teachers uses the theoretical model developed by Garrison, Anderson and Archer and this involves three critical components

1. **Cognitive Presence**
2. **Social Presence**
3. **Teacher Presence**

According to them deep and meaningful learning result when there are sufficient level of these three component "presence".

Cognitive presence is grounded in and defined by the study of a particular content. It works within the epistemological, cultural and social expression of the content in an approach that supports the development of critical thinking skills.

The second, social presence relates to the establishment of a supportive environment created by the teacher such that students feel the necessary degree of comfort and safety to express their innovative ideas in a collaborative context. The absence of social presence leads to an inability to express disagreements, share viewpoints, explore differences and accept support and confirmation from peers and teachers.

In the teaching presence the teacher performs three critical roles in the process of creating an effective teaching presence. First, he design and organize the learning experience that takes place both before the establishment of the learning community and during its operation. Second, in teaching learning process the teacher devise and implement activities to encourage discourse between and among students, between the teacher and the student and between and among students, between the teacher and the student, the between individual students and groups of students experience when he adds subject matter expertise through presence is in not always the sole task of the formal teacher. Many contexts, especially when teaching at university level, teaching presence is delegated to or assumed by students as they contribute their own skills and knowledge to the developing learning world community.

Conclusion :

E-learning is still new in India and needs to pickup if education is to have for reaching implication. In fact, what we need in India is combination of e-learning and classroom teaching techniques. The change must take place gradually. The program has to be well designed and publicized well so that it can take off by word of mouth. The challenge for most educational organization that aspire to prove e-

learning in India is to get a good program that meet the learning needs and then makes the cultural change in the way they learn. We may fix 'distributed learning' a mix of deliberately reduced face to face teaching and online learning as a safe e-learning strategy for secondary and tertiary education (Bates, 2001).

The Pro's and Con's of e-learning vary depending on program, goals, target, audience and organizational infrastructure and culture. But it is unarguable that e-learning is rapidly growing as form of training delivery and most are finding that the clear benefits to e-learning will guarantee it is a role in their overall learning strategy.

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