



112. Inevitability of E-Learning: A study with special reference to English Language Teaching

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Introduction:

“All persons should be educated, so we could have peace in the world.” – John Amos Comenius, father of modern education. Having an educated population is very important when it comes to the overall well being of a nation. **Right to Education Act (RTE)** is an Act of Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009, which describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. There is a straight impact on students’ learning if state faces problems related to education system. Learning should not stop at the end of a class. Classroom prolongs to serve a critical function in any learning strategy. ICT integrated classroom provides a place where students, teachers can interact, experiment, collaborate and create. Today’s education has not remained only on the blackboard and in the textbooks but it has removed all the boundaries of the classroom teaching-learning and with the help of technology one can teach and learn efficiently and perhaps more effectively. ICT provides broader lens of considering possible use of technology in education. This can be achieved effectively with the integration of E-learning concept. Now, E-learning must have a part of all academics and corporate training and seeking for answers of how to manage, integrate and improve. E-learning imparted in higher education is immensely successful in well developed countries. With all the challenges that India is facing in academics and corporate training, E-learning has answers and needs to be

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addressed seriously by the educational department. Technology is not a key item in India; how to use technology, is the biggest challenges. In response to this challenge, the government has partnered with private organization. Through E-learning, people can access large information and get awareness which raises educational level. This revolutionary idea can change and growing towards better India. Government of India has taken several measures to improve the literacy rate in districts and villages where people are poor. There has been a good improvement in literacy rate of India in last 10 years but there is still a long way to go. This is especially true for countries where technical education is expensive, opportunities are limited and economic inequalities exist. The latest inclination to capatilise and to make better India is to establish 'virtual universities'. The University of Madars opened a 'Virtual University' in partnership with University of Mumbai and Calcutta. Educational courses were commenced for graduate, post-graduates and Ph.D. programmes. Everything is available on one touch and it is highly effective and easy to get a solution. E-learning can raise the level of education, literacy and economic development in underdeveloped countries.

Definition of E-learning:

The purpose of this section is not to mention a complex list of definitions and terms connected to E-learning. Instead it wants to present an insight into basic terms and principles connected to E-learning to support reader's orientation. E-learning is just one of the many terms which are used in literature and business. E-learning is defined by many people, in many ways, and as it is most important to gain a clear understanding of what E-learning is.

E-learning is commonly referred to the intentional use of networked information and communications technology in teaching and learning.

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The term E-learning comprises a lot more than online learning, virtual learning, distributed learning, networked or web-based learning. As the letter 'E' in E-learning stands for the word 'electronic', E-learning would incorporate all educational activities that are carried out by individuals or groups working online or offline and synchronously or asynchronously via networked or standalone computers and other electronic devices.

E-learning is constructed in a variety of contexts such as distance learning, online learning and networked learning (Wilson 2001).

E-learning covers a wide set of applications and processes such as web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms and digital collaboration. It includes the delivery of content via the Internet, interactive TV, CD-ROM and other interactive multimedia format.

From above definitions, above shared opinion is, E-learning is learning that is facilitated and supported through the use of information and communications technology. It presents the potential to provide the right information to the right people, times, places and medium. E-learning is now facilitating a more flexible learning approach. E-learning methods will greatly change future higher educational systems. Educational institutions maximise the potential of E-learning as a means of delivering higher education and must be completely conscious of the essential success factors concerned with introducing online models of education.

It is required to learn what the term 'E-learning' represents along with its pros and cons before analyzing about E-learning tools.

The growth of E-learning is directly related to the increasing access to information and communication technology. It supports multimedia resource-based learning-teaching and it is also relevant to the growing

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interest in E-learning. Modern teachers are increasingly using ICT to support their teaching. The students are often called 'Net Generation' who have grown up using ICT and also expect to make use of ICT in educational area.

Advantages of E-learning:

- The biggest advantage of E-learning course flexibility and accessibility. Students can access E-learning anywhere like on campus, home and other community learning resource centres. Users can access an E-learning course anytime, anywhere and learn only as much as they need.
- E-learning can be easily accessed by web browsing software on any platform. Browser software and internet are widely available. Most computers have access to a browser which are connects to the institutional intranet or the internet connection.
- It is very easy to change or modify information. The importance of immediate innovation can follow any changes of educational filed and, moreover immediately reflect learners' specific needs. If changes need to be made to a program or courseware after the first implementation, these changes are made on the servers storing the program or courseware. Users can instantly access the update of information.
- By implementing E-learning course, we can save time and travelling cost. There are no transportation expenses for bringing remote students to a centralized institution.
- Learners can access the courseware content from any computer with Internet connection and are not limited by time. It enhances the use of multiple senses in the process of learning. Interactive courseware with implementation of multimedia can have effectiveness in learning process and information remembering.



- E-learning course is based on asynchronous communication. Learner has individuality and has own speed of learning and selection of topics which can change through the time.
- It is very suitable for all kinds of learners. It provides a single experience that accommodates the three distinct learning styles of auditory learners, visual learners and kinaesthetic learners.
- Iowa State University states that through E-learning course learner improves his/her ICT skills which are demanded in modern world.

Disadvantages of E-learning:

- The fundamental obstacle to the growth of E-learning is lack of access to the necessary technology infrastructure, for without it there can be no E-learning.
- Insufficient ICT infrastructure can lead to unsavoury experiences that can cause more damage than good to teachers, students and the learning experience.
- While the costs of the hardware and software are falling, often there are other costs that have often not been factored into the deployment of E-learning ventures.
- The most important of these include the costs of infrastructure support and its maintenance and appropriate training of staff to enable them to make the most of the technology (Naidu 2003)
- Overuse of using multimedia materials in learning content may result in learners' concentration on the multimedia effect rather than on the educational content itself.
- To design course one requires expertise skills in ICT thus it is mandatory to give training for the course creator. It also demands of time, finance and methodology.
- To establish E-learning environment, basic need is to have well-established and organized structured.



- Effective learning happens in a group while in E-learning learner may face risk of isolation. Learners may feel socially isolated without a physical presence of the teacher and classmates. Such a situation may consequently cause the learner's loss of motivation to study through the course.
- E-learning is proved to be very effective for autonomous learners. Students who are likely to follow traditional learning methods, wrong learning habits and low motivation will not get benefits of E-learning. To get desired result learners work regularly and participate actively in the course tasks.

Learning Management Systems plays a central role in the Web-based education system. It connects learning contents and learners together and manages users, learning materials and learning events. It manages and administers administrative tasks. LMS is a software system designed to facilitate administrative tasks as well as student participation in E-learning materials. The basic LMS is a web application where the learner logs on and accesses the learning materials allocated to her/him. While the learner is going through the learning materials repository, the LMS stores information about the learners' interactions, such as scores and answers to the questions. LMS use this information to analyze how well the learner is performing, and is able to provide reports to the administrators and tutors, identifying how well individuals or groups are performing in learning materials or curricula.

Implementation of E-learning course in an institution is very beneficial to all, to achieve success, teachers' support is extremely necessary. Teacher is a key player for making an E-learning project successful. The major idea for implementing E-learning course is taken from Brandon Hall's *Six Steps Guide to Implementing E-learning*. Here a brief description of an implementation approach is presented.

After developing a clear vision of what and how E-learning and the institution's concepts are related, a preparation phase may start. During this preparation phase, it is important to discover E-learning. This pilot



project reveals probably the do's and don'ts for the institution. Next a full implementation phase may take place, during which E-learning will be deployed throughout the institution. Finally, the initiative must be supported throughout the institution, by delivering and updating content and giving support to the users.

Holley (2000) states that E-learning is difficult to implement without the full cooperation and support of lecturers as the degree of interaction between lecturers and students, is still predominant in E-learning environments (Volery 2000).

Many researchers are interested in using computers and Internet as a medium for teaching and learning. Therefore many studies were conducted on using CALL technology and E-learning tools for teaching English. To the researcher's best knowledge, a few studies were conducted on designing and evaluating E-learning course as a supportive tool for teaching communication skills.

The findings presented here are derived from a systematic search or previous research studies of the effectiveness of E-learning.

- How does the effectiveness of E-learning compare with that of face-to-face instruction?
- Does supplementing face-to-face instruction with online instruction enhance learning?
- What practices are associated with and conditions influence the effectiveness of E-learning?

The main challenge of E-learning systems is to provide different courses to different students with different learning abilities. Such systems must also be efficient and adaptive. However, adaptivity can be accomplished by improving the ability to select an appropriate learning object for a specific student. This is what makes E-learning different from traditional classroom teaching. E-learning has become an inevitable part of the higher education system as computer and Internet become integral part of education. It offers



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various opportunities for different ways of learning and it enables a connected environment that supports learning. The chief objective of research is to build a comprehensive framework for best practice-in-context in the use and successful implementation of E-learning tools, technology and systems in higher education. It is essential to investigate the best practice of E-learning implementation and develop a framework that serves as a process model which will facilitate the complete process of implementation E-learning tools, technologies and systems.

In conclusion, the above previous studies have been reviewed, and found that many researchers state the significance of E-learning course. It is clear from the studies that using E-learning course as a supportive tool is more beneficial and helpful than using the traditional methods.

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