

ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN TODAY'S E-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

The e-learning means electronic and it is basically the online delivery of information communication, training and learning. The present knowledge society in distance education has increased through internet and computer network. The present paper discussed the issue of e-learning, learning technologies, and its impact on library and the role of libraries to take advantages of the opportunities to provide quality service to information seekers.

Keywords:- E-learning, Library, ICT, Web-based Training, Internet & E-communication

1. INTRODUCTION

The developments in information and communication technology (ICT) have brought changes in the field of economic and social life of human being. The present emerged ICT has its own very special impact on education. This impact of ICT is noticeable in formal and informal education, traditional and professional education as well as at all levels of education. The most recent influence of the ICT in the field of education is recognized as as e-learning.

E-learning is a learning process, in through modern techniques, such as Internet, mobile phones, computer added instruments and multimedia. E-learning is the convergence of learning and internet and it has brought about propound changes world over in the way people learn and train, allowing then to do it anywhere any time. It is an

integrated and continuous approach to built knowledge skill through web and electronic technologies.

2.E-LEARNING

The term e-learning was coined in the late 90s to describe the use of technology to deliver learning and training programmes online learning, web- based learning, real time sharing and shared learning in the technology driven instructional programmes. Sometimes CBT (Computer-Based Training), IBT (Internet-Based Training) or WBT (Web-Based Training) have been used as synonyms to e-learning. E learning means instruction delivered via electronic media including internet intranet, extranet satellite, broadcast, audio/ video instruction, TV, and CDROM. The learning experience can be delivered to the learner in the absence of a typical classroom environment .the use of learning courseware is through network technology from different locations. It includes independent, facilitated or collaborative approaches to learning. Independent learning refers to each individual learner doing his/her course or completing the modules by him/her in his/her own chosen workplace or environment.

According to CISCO's definition e-learning is the over reaching umbrella that encompasses education, information, communication, and training. It is the web-enabled system that makes information and knowledge accessible to those who need it, when they need it—anytime, anywhere. E-learning comprises all forms of electronically supported learning and teaching, which are procedural in character and aim to effect the construction of knowledge with reference to individual experience, practice and knowledge of the learner. Information and communication systems, whether networked or not, serve as specific media to implement the learning process (Tavangarian,2004).

2.1Characteristics

Following characteristics gives overview of e-learning

- **Remote Learner-Teacher:** In the e-learning environment the learner and teacher can meet at virtual classroom.
- **Learner Centered.**
- **Course Material used in electronic and/ or multimedia format**
- **E-communication:** All notices, announcements regarding admission, submission, examination, results, etc. are sent through Internet are made available on websites.

- **Based on Internet**
- **Anywhere and anytime learning** E-learning provides remote access to learning facilities through the ICT. A learner can learn from the place of his convenience, even from home, office, while travelling, or literally from anywhere at any time.
- **Multiple Collaborations:** In e-learning there emerge multiple collaboration, i.e., teacher-student; student-student, as well as teacher-teacher. Multiple collaborations also include collaboration between the content development experts and the technology people.
- **Learner's Active Participation:** E-learning is impossible without active participation from the learner. If the learner does not respond to the initiatives of the teacher the learning purpose remains unattained.

E learning may be through synchronous or through asynchronous means. In a synchronous atmosphere, learners are expected to be present at a given time in a virtual classroom or in a cyber classroom. Their learning may be networked, moderated and it is designed to be done under guidance. It evokes more liveliness and motivation through regular interaction.

Asynchronous learning is devoid of classroom interaction but the learner has a flexibility of choice of his/her own time frame. The learner can take lessons from three different locations:

- From a library or information center or any other learning center in the presence of other learners with access to a wide range of resources. However, distraction from other learners, fixed time frame and traveling cannot be avoided.
- From the workplace – where the environment and ICT systems are familiar to the learner but distractions, interruptions, and lack of specialist support may impose some limitations on learning.
- From home – this can offer privacy, time flexibility and familiarity with ICT environment, but distractions, interruptions, lack of specialist support and clash with family needs may cause disturbance.

2.2E-learning technologies

There are several technologies used to support different educational configurations in terms of place and time. The following used in e learning

Different Place

- **Synchronous interaction**
 - Group interactive video
 - Desktop interactive video
 - Chat sessions
 - Webcams
 - Audio conferencing
 - Collaborative groupware
 - Whiteboards

- **Asynchronous interaction**

- Online discussion forums
- E-mail
- Voice mail
- Video mail
- Video on demand
- Web casting
- Collaborative document editing

Same Place

- **Classroom –based instruction**

- Black boards
- Teaching theater
- Self-paced programmes in Central
- Presentation tools

- **Shared use**

- Laboratory assignments
- In-class labs and groupware facility

3. COMPONENTS OF E LEARNING

E-learning is comprised of the following elements

- **Content delivery methods:** e learning allows content to be adjusted and supplied according to the level of progress of the individual learner.

- **Live broadcasting:** e learning can be a two-way system that allows participants to take-tests, ask questions, or respond to questionnaires.
- **Video-on Demand:** This technology is available via cable television (CATV) systems. Here large number of learners can access vide content whenever they like.
- **Interactive Communications:** There are two approaches, distance education and community approach. In the distance education approach, the instructor can interact with the learners through text messaging systems, or via audio video communications. On the other hand, in the community approach, the instructor becomes the focal point of a virtual class and it is also possible to hold discussions with experts or specific themes.

4.TOOLS FOR E-LEARNING

E-learning includes the web based teaching materials, multimedia, CD-ROM, websites, blogs, digital library, virtual library, VRML, HTTP, CGI, VSAT, ISDN, LAN, MAN, WAN, e-mails, wikis, text chat, games, educational animation, simulations & HTML etc.



Figure No. 5.1 Various Tools of E-learning

5.IMPLICATIONS OF E LEARNING TO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION PROFESSION

At the professional level, e learning is becoming an integral part of both the traditional teaching programmes as well as distance learning programmes. There is an increasing demand for 24x7 services with electronic delivery of information. There is vast scope for libraries to expand the range and variety of information service by developing short-term e-earning programmes. It can be done at different levels of strategies planning and bringing in changes in the organizational structure. The library

should also contribute to the e learning by enhancing and increasing value of learning process created by combining delivery content with learning support and services. The growth of e learning has made tremendous digital information over the internet. The library has to give as the same services to distance learner in e learning environment. The induction of digital library it one of important aspect that enhance e learning method.

In e-learning environment digital library considered as federation of library services and collection that function together to create digital community. The range of supportive material and services is changed. It includes curricula and courseware material, lectures lessen plan, computer programs, access to scholarly journal scientific research reports, and multimedia images along with raw data sets of students exercise.

6. ROLE OF LIBRARIES

Library and information professionals should take advantages of the various useful aspects of e learning mentioned above so as to enhance their own knowledge base of the fundamentals and practice of e learning. They will also be able to provide effective support to the e learning. They will also be able to provide effective support to the e-learning programmes in the organizations they serve. To begin with they have to learn the dynamism of e- learning and the pedagogical issues involved. At an operational level, they will have to manage and administer the virtual learning environment. The essential building blocks for this purpose can be developed on the following lines.

- Study, review and organize e-learning products with a clear understanding of the organizational needs even as may change over time.
- Learn and experience through different modalities;
- Develop suitable infrastructure to support and appropriate environment for e-learning
- Prepare a list web enabled resources available in the library;
- Prepare path finder's for searching information using important Reference Sources, Encyclopedias, world of Learning, Handbooks, Industrial Guides, Government Publication, Gazetteers, list of awardees, institutional granting scholarships, day to day news analysis, research reports, etc. in such ay that they form a ready reckoner for learners. Some of these resources may be available on the web;

- Prepare a list of FAQs with answers, for new members;
- Provide links through library's homepage to relevant e-resources, institutions, research centers, universities, full text and/or free text services;
- Manage the contents through metadata schema and federated searching services;
- Monitor the delivery of contents through free/fee-based access and networked system; and
- Prepare expert systems adequate for individual library needs.

6.1 Opportunity and challenges in LIS

E-learning offers opportunities and Challenges for information workers in the following areas

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- Offer new learning opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in a wide range of areas.
 - Growth in employment opportunities associated with e learning.
 - It offers new opportunities to take part in collaborative development.
 - Developed new roles and responsibilities within the libraries and information units.
 - It offers opportunities to work from home.
 - It offers opportunities and challenges to maintain a healthy life/work balance.
 - Virtual communication tools helped in information exchange, sharing of ideas and support with in the library and Information community.
 - E-learning offers the opportunity for information workers across different countries to work together and construct their own professional knowledge

6.2 Benefits of e-learning in LIS environment

- ❖ It saves the time & manpower.
- ❖ E-learning can empower learner as well as instructors. It makes the information workers more competent & confident in the use of IT.
- ❖ It provides the self learning environments to the learner. The students can go through the lesson at his / her own pace.
- ❖ Digital media provides a variety of contents & delivery vehicles for diverse nature of learners to meet the requirement.

- ❖ E-learning will enhance student learning opportunities by enabling them to take part in a global level & to access huge digital information resource through appropriate World Wide Web [WWW] technology.
- ❖ E-learning offers us less expensive, more convenient & richer ways of becoming educated. Through e-learning trainee can acquire multiple skills.

7. Conclusion

E-learning involves wide range application of and processes and emerged in ICT Environment. Rapid growth of online courses and increasing number are dispersed around the globe, often parts of world where physical access to collection of large academic and research libraries is limited. Technology provides quick and easy access to information resources on the internet/Web. Students can access a world of knowledge from factual information to descriptive information in every discipline. E-learning has created an independent, new course of action in education. The power of e-learning lies in its potential in mining the vast amount of resources available in the libraries, both in print and non-print formats. It is the challenge and opportunity to library professional for in new millennium. Libraries and library professionals must evolve to fit into this new paradigm shift in the educational systems.

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