Opportunities and Challenges of E-Learningat Professional Degree Course

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ABSTRACT *E-learning is a new trend adopted byeducational organizations at primary and higher level. It is playing a major role for providing educational facilities at the remote places of the country. E-learning standardsencompass the use of distinct tools and techniques of computer and information technology i.e. internet, networking, web based learning, mobile based learning,multimedia, animation, video conferencing, online learning, etc. These protocols help to deliver the content in effective manner to the participants. Not only the experts from industries and universities can share the knowledge but the student community can also share their intelligence over a wide area network. The present paper studies the E-learning concepts and investigates scope and challenges at MCA institutes.The sample units are MCA institutes from Maharashtra State.*

Introduction:

The term E-learning is related for providing learning facility through computer system. Education system plays vital role in imparting the knowledge of a particular subject to the students at school and higher education level. The teaching and learning activities are closely associated to each other. The traditional education system includes class room method along with chock and talk system for teaching learning process. The introduction of ICT (Information Communication Technology) has given different dimensions for providing educational services.

The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology Government of India has defined the vision for E-Development of India as "The engine for transition into a developed nation and an empowered society" [5]

The mission is defined as "To promote e-Governance for empowering citizens, promoting the inclusive and sustainable growth of the Electronics, IT & ITES industries, enhancing India's role in Internet Governance, adopting a multipronged approach that includes development of human resources, promoting R&D and innovation, enhancing efficiency through digital services and ensuring a secure cyber space." [5]

Marc Rosenberg (2001) defines elearning as "The use of internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance. It is based upon three fundamental criteria i.e. 1) networked 2) delivered to the end-user via a computer using standard internet technology 3) focuses on the broadest view of learning". [6]

E-learning includes numerous types of media that deliver text, audio, images, animation, and streaming video, satellite TV, CD-ROM, and computer-based learning, local intranet/extranet and web-based learning. E-learning can occur in or out of the classroom with asynchronous, synchronous and blended learning mode. E-learning is self paced suitable for distance learning and flexible learning.

Objectives:

1) To understand the scope of E-learning in higher education.
2) To explore various facilities provided by institutes for E-learning.
3) To find out the key challenges facing by the institutes for implementing E-learning.

Hypotheses of the Research

[1]H_0 : E-learning supports in understanding complex phenomena in simple way.

[2]H_0 : There is growing use of E-learning tools for pursuing of MCA degree course by the respondents.

Research Methodology

The research study is confined to MCA institutes of Maharashtra state. The primary data has been collected by using questionnaire technique. The population is 126 units out of 30 i.e. 24% has been selected by using simple random sampling technique. The respondents have been picked from MCA institutes which are affiliated to respective university of Maharashtra state. The respondents have given their opinion as per the composed questions according to the research objectives. After receiving the primary data, it has been analyzed and interpreted by using quantitative analysis technique.

Table 1: List of Units

Sno.	University	Total Institutes	Selected sample
1.	SNDT University	02	1
2.	Mumbai University	20	2
3.	Pune University	47	7
4.	North Maharashtra University	05	3
5.	Dr. B. A. Marathwada University	10	5
6.	S. R. T. Marathwada University	05	3
7.	Shivaji University	06	2

8.	Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University	07	2
9.	Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University	20	3
10.	Solapur University	04	2
	Total :	126	30

Data Analysis and Interpretations:

The data analysis and interpretations are based on the responses given by the respondents i.e. MCA students from Maharashtra state.

Table No. 2: Opinion for using E-learning Tools related to MCA Subjects

Sno	Opinion	Total	Percentage
1	Very frequently	124	41%
2	On regular basis	103	34%
3	Sometimes	73	24%
4	Never	0	0%
Total :		300	100%

The above displayed table no. 5 explores the opinion of the issue of using E-learning tools related to MCA subjects. Out of 300 respondent 124 i.e. 41% opined as very frequently basis, 103 i.e. 34% opined as regular basis and remaining 73 i.e. 24% opined as sometimes.

Table No. 3: Support of E-learning in Understanding Complex phenomena in Simple Way

Sno	Opinion	No.	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	198	66%
2	Agree	102	34%
3	Cannot say	0	0
4	Disagree	0	0
5 Strongly Disagree		0	0
Total :		300	100%

The table no. 6 describes the responses on support of E-learning which helps to understand complex phenomena in simple way. In this context the maximum respondents 198 i.e. 66% strongly agreed. Another group of respondents 102 i.e. 34% agreed on the same issue. No one is found as disagreed with above given statement.

Table No. 4 : Facilities provided by the Institutes

Sno	Opinion	Total	Percentage
1	Social Networking	25	8%
2	Email	81	27%
3	Chat room	36	12%
4	Video Conferencing	14	5%
5	Visual classroom	11	4%
6 Discussion board		12	4%
7	Bulletin Board	8	3%
8	SCORM	12	4%
9	Online Examination	65	22%
10	Web portal	36	12%
Total :		300	100%

The table no. 7 illustrates the facilities provided by the institutes for E-learning purpose. In this regard out of 300 respondents 81 i.e. 27% have agreed to get the facility of email services which is followed by online examination facility opined by 65 i.e. 22% respondents. About 36 i.e. 12% respondents opined for web portal and chat room services. Out of remaining respondents 25 i.e. 8% opined for social networking, 14 i.e. 5% clicked for video conferencing, 11 i.e. 4% opined for visual classroom and discussion board, SCORM and 8 i.e. 3% agreed to receive the facility of bulleting board.

Table No. 5: Opinion on Key Challenge Facing by Institutes

Sno	Type of Opinion	Total	%	Sno	Type of Opinion	Total	%
1	Responding to increasing technical support demands from students	35	12%	6	Providing 24 x 7 support	31	10%
2	Responding to increasing pedagogical support from students	32	11%	7	Upgrading of IT tools and techniques required for course	17	6%
3	Responding to seminar and workshop organized by other institutes or universities	30	10%	9	Students lack of knowledge	13	4%
4	Maintaining current technical infrastructure	33	11%	10	Lack of adequate e-learning tools	25	8%
5	Securing adequate funding to handle demands	36	12%	12	Lack of on-line training	12	4%
6	Maintaining a standard network or platform	16	5%	Total		300	100%

On the analysis of the table no. 8 it is noted that there are different challenged faced by the institutes relating to E-learning. Out of 300 respondent 35 i.e. 12% pointed the key problem i.e. problem of responding to increasing technical support demands from students. 32 i.e. 11% respondent pointed out the problem i.e. securing adequate funding to handle demands and maintaining current technical infrastructure. 30 i.e. 10% respondent endorsed the problem of responding to seminar and workshop organized by other institutes or universities and lack of providing 24 x 7 support by the institute. Out of remaining respondent 25 i.e. 8% focused the problem i.e. lack of adequate e-learning tools, problem of upgrading class room to enable technology. At the last 17 i.e. 6% pointed out the problem of upgrading of IT tools and techniques required for course and remaining 4% have opined that student's lack of knowledge and lack of online training as key challenges.

Conclusion:

1) Out of 300 respondent the majority of the respondents 187 i.e. 62% are male and 113 i.e. 38% are female.

2) The maximum respondent are graduated in BCA 137

i.e. 46% which is followed by BCS degree holders 43 i.e. 14%. It is found that about 43 i.e. 14% respondents are BSC degree completed and only 5 i.e. 2% have completed their graduation in another faculty.

3) The $^1H_0$ is tested by using Chi-Square Test. After performing the test for $^1H_0$ for one degree of freedom at 5% level of significance is 3.841.The calculated value of Chi Square test is 0.34 which is less than the table value of 3.841. Hence, null hypothesis is accepted. It means that -learning supports in understanding complex phenomena in simple way.

4) The $^2H_0$ is tested by using Chi-Square Test in the present study. After performing the test for $^1H_0$ for one degree of freedom at 5% level of significance is 3.841. The calculated value of Chi Square test is 0.24 which is less than the table value of 3.841. Hence, null hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is a major use of E-learning tools in pursuing MCA degree course

5) The respondents have pointed out different types of challenges about E-learning implementation. The largest group of respondents i.e. 35 i.e. 12% opined the problem of responding to increasing technical support demands from the students.

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