



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

AN INNOVATIVE PRACTICE: E-TEACHER EDUCATION

KEY WORDS: e-education, role of e-teacher education, e-education technologies, E-teacher educator

Dr. Anjusha Gawande

Assistant Professor, MIT School of Education & Research, Kothrud, Pune

ABSTRACT

Today, the role of e-learning and e-teaching is gaining importance gradually in educational technology applied in different educational contexts. It is recognized that e-education technologies create interest towards learning among the student-teachers. The author has reviewed the concept of e-teacher education and the role of e-teacher educator in enhancing the standards of education. It also highlights the challenges in implementing of e-teacher education. This paper provides comprehensive status of today's e-teacher education, which would helpful in chalking future strategies in this direction.

No doubt, the teaching and learning process has been transformed. Teaching process plays many new roles derived from the concept of knowledge at all educational levels. The present development of learning technology provides opportunities for cooperative and collaborative learning, reflecting, and access to information, interaction with content and individual empowerment.

Along with changes in communication technologies, teaching has shifted from traditional classroom activities to online classrooms, or implementation of online activities in the classrooms.

'E-Teaching' is an innovative and developing concept. It involves the structured way in using information and communication technologies to boost the process of teaching. E-teaching is a computer based system where teacher can teach from anywhere and anytime without geographical boundaries. Today, technology has advanced to the level that teacher can teach almost all concepts leveraging different technological tools like video conferencing, Webinars, audio conferencing, MS-power point presentations, E-mails, Chats etc.

E-teaching can be basically structured as a group activity like traditional teaching, where the group may be the size of a normal class and larger. E-teaching differs from the conventional approach of incorporating ICTs in teaching process, where normally the activities are aimed at the individual or small group. Wherein, e-teaching techniques are effective and efficient means to reach of information from individuals to larger groups without geographic limitations.

E-TEACHER EDUCATION: The Concept

In today's technomagic era, most of the educational systems in world insist on inclusion of information and communication technologies (ICT) in benefit of students, in gaining and enhancing knowledge and different skills. E-teacher education is one of the prominent education system in the world which would develop a positive attitude towards the usage of technological material in their classrooms. E-teacher education is the instructional system of processes and activities which can be nicely designed according to the ICT development, characteristics and models of e-learning, principles of communication, and principles of competence based education system.

It also adopts the constructivist principles in the designing of learning experiences which enhances student centered learning.

Technology based Classroom Environment

A technology based Classroom has multiple advantages over traditional one. Many institutes have already inclined towards it by adapting those.

- Technology enhances the learning environment
- Provides effective and best resources available
- Facilitates visualization of the learner
- Supports learners in constructing foundation of knowledge

- Develops access to information, networks and innovative ideas
- Offers new structures for reflecting, communicating, and acting
- Increases the flexibility of time and places for learning
- Thus, Technology fetches the world of knowledge to the learners, rather than necessitating learners to go in search of the learning aspects and materials.

E-learning technologies

Teacher educator designs the result-oriented modules for e-learning of his subjects. In achieving this, teacher educator plans effectively by keeping in mind various parameters like time schedule, syllabus, classroom activities, planning and nature of teaching process, availability of ICT infrastructure.

Following Technological programmes for teaching-learning process are being popular and prolific.

- E-mail
- Use of Search engines
- Online discussion
- Video conferencing
- Skype
- Messaging
- Web based technologies
- Webinar
- Blogs
- Audio conference

All the above technologies are very supportive for discussions and participation in E-learning activities. For an instance, student-teachers can deliver seminar presentation using MS-power point. Similarly, Leveraging Microsoft Office Programs, Teacher Educators and Student Teachers attain objectives of teaching-learning in effective ways.

Presently, e-teaching approach is gaining acceptance and being implemented widely within the curriculum as it facilitates two or more geographic locations to communicate by simultaneous two-way audio-visual transmissions.

E-teacher educator -

An e-teacher educator is expected to work with students and classes to teach using technological material like computers and the Internet. E-teacher educator may work as part of a formal institution, like a university, college, or high school, or may work on a more informal basis; however explicitly uses electronics media and creates technological environment in the classroom acting as content facilitator and process facilitator. Conversely; e-teacher educators has many responsibilities like preparing, distributing and grading online assignments; corresponding online with individual students and discussion groups; creating, reviewing and modifying curricula; coordinating with other educators and other duties as required.

E-teacher educators should possess skills those are mainly expertise in using e-teaching programs & tools, and has to be updated on technologies in addition to recent developments in

education. Ultimately, communicating online and use of internet-based tools in an education environment is essential in succeeding as an e-teacher educator.

Issues in e-teacher Education

(K. Ezhilrajan, July 2013)

1. **Learner interest** Its not necessary that all learners will be comfortable and successful with e-learning. For some student-teacher it may completely new, some may lack in computer literacy.
2. **Content Quality:** Much is available online; however, not all that is online is of the same quality. Course content and program design vary significantly from product to product.
3. **Content Flexibility:** E-learning provides the flexibility to design or select the specific content learners need at the moment. Content flexibility allows learners to decide areas in which they want to spend additional time, seek alternative resources, and choose to deepen their own learning in areas of interest or need.
4. **Flexible Time:** Traditional teaching learning happens when it is scheduled. However, technology makes it possible to extend the opportunity for learning beyond scheduled time. Therefore with e-learning, educators are no longer restricted to scheduled time.
5. **Use of Technology:** Technology can be either slick or substantive. E-learning for educators depends on appropriate use of the available technologies to enhance and facilitate learning rather than making it convoluted and complex. In some ways the technology should be as invisible in the learning process as possible to allow the content and the process of learning to remain in the forefront.
6. **Technical Support:** When problems occur with connectivity, the program, hardware, or learners' capabilities, the more immediate the support, the more likely the learner will be to continue participation. Frequent problems can lead to increased dropouts among e-learners.
7. **Interactivity:** A leading cause of dropping out in e-learning is isolation among learners and a lack of direction and motivation.
8. **Places for Learning** Educators need a suitable learning environment that provides easy access to e-learning programs and services; accommodates individual and small group work comfortably with the technology; meets ergonomic standards; and integrates various technologies
9. **Follow-up Support:** Technology facilitates the ways educators can extend their own learning, seek help from others, solve problems associated with implementation, and receive feedback and support from both experts and colleagues Designing e-learning that incorporates follow-up support will make the difference.
10. **Cost:** Those considering the purchase of online products and services for learning analyze the related costs – not only of purchasing the products, but also of providing the infrastructure necessary to realize their full potential

In spite of many challenges, e-learning is considered a powerful tool which can achieve some remarkable results all together. E-learning keeps individuals globally updated. E-learning leverages technologies in new and powerful ways to develop enthusiastic, skilled learners. Certainly, an implementation of the E-Teacher Education would serve a lot for the student teacher in teaching learning process.

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