

Review Paper

E-Learning and Its Impact on Library & Information Services

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E-Learning is a continuous process when the learner is unable to attend the traditional methods of learning; E-Learning had implemented is an area in progress that continues to evolve with time and further research. Researchers in the field argue that e-Learning is still in its infancy, resulting into numerous implementation strategies across a wide e-Learning spectrum. E-Learning had revolutionized and democratized the delivery and accessibility of education and has also changed how critical support services such as library and information services are provided. In this paper, it covers meaning of E-Learning, objectives of E-Learning, Advantages of E-Learning, and some of the reasons that institutions and enterprises are turning to e-Learning to help engage learners with ideas and information in revolutionary ways. Finally, it offers practical suggestions for creating digital learning experiences that engage learners by building interest and motivation and providing opportunities for active participation.

Keywords: e-Learning; Virtual Classroom, Mobile Learning, Learning Technology, Information Science.

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INTRODUCTION

E-learning is a term generally used for computer enhanced learning. It is often extended to include the use of mobile technologies such as PDAs and MP3 players. E-learning includes the use of web-based teaching materials (hypermedia in general), multimedia CD-ROMs, websites, discussion boards, collaborative software, e-mail, blogs, wikis, text chat, computer-aided assessment, educational animation, simulations, games, learning management software, electronic voting systems, etc. with possibly a combination of different methods being used (Wikipedia, 2008).^{2,4} Today, most of the e-learning activities are delivered using Internet. Some of the present applications of e-learning are online training, distance learning, learning with threaded discussions or

interactive bulletin boards, website-based curriculum, courses that post assignments online, correspondence course-style read-and-test programs, etc.¹ The worldwide scenario in the higher education sector reveals the dominant force of e-learning which could be the only solution to satisfy the diversified needs of the learner community increasing by leaps and bounds. The institutions of higher learning are opting for this new media of education to reach their patrons in the nooks and corners of the world, however without much thought on the supporting academic facilities. Amongst these neglected academic support services, library tops the list and needs a serious rethinking for the very sustenance of the e-learning model.¹

Need for e-Learning

E-Learning is a continuous process when the learner is unable to attend the traditional methods of learning; the distance mode of learning was introduced. The student need to learn and syllabus with nearby libraries or materials sent by the course organiser. Modern Medias such as radio and television were also used in the distance mode of learning process. These Medias benefit a lot the learner, but they have their own limitations. The distance mode of learning process is further strengthened by video conference mode.⁴ The nodal centre will have studio where the experts assemble and deliver the lecture. This will reach audience through different Medias. This technique will create the environment of the classroom and enables direct interaction between the teacher and learner.

Now internet has shown new paths to learning. The educational resources are accessible to students. Learner needs are increasingly seen to be continuous throughout the working life. Education is a means of empower their lives and future within workplace, at least in the advanced market led societies. The person who acquire and apply the knowledge and skills will be sustained in the future. One should require learning for updating their knowledge, skills and competencies.

E-Learning and Libraries

E-Learning has revolutionized and democratized the delivery and accessibility of education and has also changed how critical support services such as library and information services are provided. Libraries and librarians are very important to e-Learning. They are face to face to education. Library professionals need to understand the mechanics and concepts of e-Learning to provide effective distance library services. In distance education the learning takes place at the location of student and not at the institution of instruction. Today's learners are located any where, of any age and any gender.

Advantages of E-Learning:

- Time and location flexible
- Cost effective
- Large knowledge domain to choose
- Life time learning options
- More streamlined and focused
- Diversified field to select from
- Sharing of knowledge is easier
- Systematic.

Disadvantages of E-Learning:

E- Services The libraries are also forced to adopt new technologies in the library to provide e-services to satisfy the information requirements of the users.

They are such as;

- Access to information sources;
- Lack of awareness about the use of electronic equipment.
- Methods of using information;
- Lack of organization of information on Internet
- Convenient access
- Information providers are more interested in services quality.
- Quality of information and knowledge
- Speed in access
- All sites are not updated regularly

Impact of E-learning on LIC Services

- In the every walk of our day-to-day life we are finding the use of technologies and libraries are not exception for that. The single force that has brought revolutionary changes in functioning of libraries is IT. The introduction and application of these modern means have evaluated and modern day library to a very high pedestal, improving and altering its image, functions and services to revolutionary extant and with great efficiency and effectiveness.
- IT had virtually immense potential for a variety of applications in libraries. IT helps libraries in creating databases of their collections and making them available for easy access to users inside as well as outside through networks. IT enables libraries to provide most efficient and specialized information services. It has fairly established that efficient information support and effective communication in an organization are closely associated with high performance, productivity and innovation.
- Computers can be used in performing most of the repetitive works of library in a desired number of times speedily and economically without fatigue and vantage of time.
- Most of the operations with library are inter-related, inter dependent and mutually supportive for the overall mission of library. Use of IT applications to interface and integrate each function with the other saves lot of staff time as the same data used not to be entered at every stage.^{1,4}

E-learning and changes in Library Activities and Services.

There are four broader areas of which E-learning has brought many changes;

- Library Automation
- Information Storage and Retrieval (IRS)
- Office Automation
- Resources sharing network.

Library Automation: Library automation, stated in single term, is the application of computers and utilization of computer based product and services in the performance of different library operations and functions in provision of various services and production of output products.

Information Storage and Retrieval (IRS):An information storage and retrieval system (ISRS) is a network with a built-in user interface that facilitates the creation, searching, and modification of stored data. An ISRS is typically a peer-to-peer ([P2P](#)) network operated and maintained by private individuals or independent organizations, but accessible to the general public. Some, but not all, ISRSs can be accessed from the Internet. The largest ISRS in the world is the Internet itself.^{4,5}

Office Automation: Office automation refers to the integration of office functions usually related to managing information. There are many tools used to automate office functions and the spread of electronic processors inside computers as well as inside copiers and printers is at the centre of most recent advances in office automation. Raw data storage, electronic data transfer, and the management of electronic business information comprise the basic activities of an office automation system.

Resources sharing network:Resource sharing is not a new concept in the field of libraries. The concept that goes by the term 'library co-operation' has been in use all along among those who had been working in libraries or had anything to do with the development of libraries. The term however has been replaced by a new coinage — 'Resource Sharing'— which sounds more attractive and makes better sense in this age of inflation and budgetary reduction. Thus resource sharing in libraries has become a necessity, and has gained worldwide acceptance.

IMPACT OF WEB-BASED E-LEARNING SYSTEMS

- Changes from passive user to active user in the e-literacy environment
- Concept of web-based networked environment

- Disseminating information on demand to proactive digital information services
- Providing information service to facilitating access to e-information service
- Transition of developing the normal collection to e-resources (e-books and e-journals)
- Individual works to team works.

Role of Librarians in E-Learning

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- Librarians are the information intermediaries who can help the users in making use of e-resources. *f*
- The librarians need to be made aware of the internet and the resources available therein and how to make efficient use of them. *f*
- The idea behind e-learning module is to train both the librarians as well as the users regarding the efficient use of e-resources. *f*
- The emphasis is on the resources related to librarianship in addition to general topics of interest.

CONCLUSION

In e-Learning process the future libraries will emerge as active bridge between the learners and information. E-Learning supported by digital library is very much significant and critical in higher education and research. The Librarian can help in creating and developing repositories and content management. E-Learning helps learner to acquire education quickly and economically. The emergence of Information Communication Technology enables the delivery of library services more efficient and effective. Based on the increased improvement in the technology driven library services future of e-Learning is quite optimistic. It is anticipated that e-Learning as a learning environment will be well received. However, eLearning is only the tool and its effectiveness will depend on the quality of the content including the learning resources and the use made of the communication tools. Universities, including the staff, have to change if they are to survive. All aspects of developing an online environment need to be carefully monitored and evaluated to ensure that the student learning experience and the change in current education practice is enhanced and that the University and its staff are sustainable in the 21st century.

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