E-Learning Impact during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The objective of the current study is to understand the impact of e-learning process during the current pandemic of COVID-19. Lock-down and social distancing were enforced by the government in order to present the spread of the virus within individuals as a preventive measure which completely stopped the movement of individuals as well as goods. Hence, the growth of economy had been affected badly. Also, the education sector had been affected very badly. Students are not able to attend physical classes which may affect their learning based on getting the several concepts of various subjects. But online classes, meetings, conferences have increased in this pandemic which helps to cope up in the learning process. It is also realized that we all are highly dependent on IT during the current circumstances. Hence, the current study showcases various advantages of e-learning and its process. There are many newspaper articles and blogs on e-learning. Hence, the present study helps in identification of several components of e-learning tools and future of education utilizing these advanced IT.

Keywords: COVID-19; Education; IT; Online Class; e-learning.

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1. Introduction

Technology has played an important role during these current pandemic circumstances. Development in technology has changed the lives of individuals and also it has brought changes in various fields. (Nadikattu, 2020). E-learning has played an important role for students in the learning process in COVID-19 (COV-19) circumstances. It has helped people to open doors for important medium of learning world-wide at a reasonable cost (Noor-Ul-amin, 2013). E-learning has become an important element in the education sector. Modern learner's need is very different and it has been found that e-learning is beneficial for learners. As a result this medium and AI is gaining popularity throughout the world (Misko et al. 2004; Soni, 2020). It provides solution to the learners who at present cannot access traditional education means.

The current study will going to benefit by providing aspects and impacts of different e-learning platforms which the education institutes follow world-wide during the current pandemic of COV-19.

2. Literature Review

2.1 E-learning benefits in COVID-19

A development of a nation is possible only with the help of education (Baiyere et al., 2016). COV-19 outbreak has caused closing of schools, universities, colleges, private coaching, etc. As a result the teachers started to use the online platform to educate the students. E-learning is a system which helps to educate the students via electronic mode. In the year 1999, it was first time used at a CBT system seminar. This mode of education is also called virtual or online learning. This mode helps to share reading materials using internet through documents, PPTs, emails, etc. IT has become an important component in modern education and huge involvement of ICT is there at present in the learning and teaching process (Anderson, 2005). Instructors

who are taking online lectures and share lectures notes, study materials, by uploading them on their university websites or email to the students. Even recording of lectures can be shared to students so that they can listen to them whenever they need. There are various applications like Zoom, Google meet, black board, MS-teams, etc. which helps to get connected to the students and faculties for teaching purposes. It offers teachers to change their pedagogical options. It also enhances learning and teaching procedures (Thamarana, 2016). As teachers and students can come to universities they meet virtually during the classes and teachers can motivate them to study for building their future. This E-leaning has brought a revolution and change in the teaching and learning processes. An increased number of students have been found to utilize these online learning applications due to the current pandemic circumstances (Naik, et al., 2017).

2.2 Transformation from traditional education system and online education

Due to the present pandemic circumstances the learning system has transformed from traditional system to online learning system. It has shifted from the traditional system to e-learning means (Mnyanyi & Mbwette 2009). In order to run the education process smoothly many universities have adopted e-learning techniques for educational purposes. This also helped in utilizing the current time and studying from home (Li, et al. 2013). Study materials were provided in the form of PDF, PPT, audio, videos, etc. on online platform. Zoom, google meet, etc. Except the lab subjects everything can run smoothly with the online learning platforms. Hence, these online platforms are required to fulfil the academic needs.

The virtual teaching has also been supported by the government. In Africa, Association of African Universities had developed a resource page online to aid educational institutions in proper planning of class lessons and to easily shift to online learning methods. In this current circumstances there is a requirement of efficient online learning. Also, virtual academic conferences, meetings, FDPs are being conducted for increasing the efficiency of academicians and students in these COV-19 circumstances.

3. Research Methodology

Due to the lack of research articles in the current circumstances, newspaper articles has also been referred. For developing this article Proquest, SCOPUS, EBSCO, etc. database had been referred. This article will provide a base for future research. Also various students and academicians had been interviewed to understand the mental health and various other challenges faced by them in the current pandemic circumstances.

4. Advantages and challenges of e-learnings

4.1 E-learning advantages

When an individual learning online then they have the flexibility i.e. their own comfort. They can avail at any time for learners' own convenience and purchasing the subscription of various online courses and platforms (Colchester et al., 2017). They can avail the materials shared in the form of PPTs, PDF, e-books, etc. Also, during webinars the students can directly chat with the instructors during the classes. There certain e-books which are available free of cost and the learners can easily avail those. Self-study and learning is till date the most suitable way to learn and grasp things. After the classes' student are required to go through various books and study materials in order to have a good concept of various topics (Bajaj and Sharma, 2018).

Vedanta, Byju's and Unacademy are providing free courses online. Coursera also given free access to many universities from May 2020 to September 2020 which helped the students to update and develop skills.

4.2 E-learning challenges

Due to the current pandemic there has been a huge transformation in the learning and teaching method. In order to deliver online education detail lesson plan is required to develop good quality study materials. There are few challenges like the instructor should be well versed with these advanced technologies, preparation of online lesson plans as it is very time consuming, internet speed, participation of

audiences, etc. The students attending online classes should have a learning attitude otherwise it is very difficult to concentrate during the occurrence of the classes, also lack of interpreting online study materials, incapability of self-discipline, improper home environment during isolation also is a big challenge.

5. Problems faced by faculties and students

In the education segments the learners as well as the instructors are facing huge mental stress during the current pandemic circumstances. This online teaching has become a great challenge for the maximum educators due to the lack of resources and skills. Technical issues and unhealthy environment are the main hurdles for disrupted learning and teaching process. Lack of proper medium for online learning is also a major problem in developing countries like India. Also most of us are habituated in traditional way of learning as a result it becomes quite difficult to transform suddenly. Major students face issues related to internet connectivity. Due to mental pressure and environmental circumstances e-learning is not providing expected success in the education sector globally (Jimoyiannis and Gravani, 2011; Khalid et al., 2016).

6. Bridging the gap of educators and learners

Countries need to allocate a fund for training the educators so that they can deliver in an efficient way. One needs to understand the learners' need in these pandemic circumstances. Materials of education along with the pedagogical provisions should be greatly introduced in the entire emergency curriculum which will definite help in keeping the mental health of both educators and learners stable in the current pandemic circumstances (Pragholapati, 2020). Ministry should allocate enough funds for needy children and also pay attention on the educational needs of marginalized learners. The higher authorities should various measures to convey the significance of well-being of both teachers and students.

7. Conclusion

Several online applications have been introduced in this pandemic circumstance to carry forward system of education. Online libraries, virtualized resources, lecture

videos, etc. has been introduced at most corners of the world. But still there is a need to improve the quality of e-learning in order to continue the process of education in these pandemic circumstances. During current circumstances UNESCO portal has facilitated most of the nation world-wide in order to facilitate continuous learning and minimize education disruption (Under National Learning Platforms and tools by UNESCO 2020). Despite of few challenges in online learning, it has at present emerged as an advantage to educators and learners world-wide. In today's modern world importance of e-learning is very important because without this technology the education system would have been disrupted because of current pandemic circumstances.

8. Recommendations

Integration of Google classroom platform can be done with Google meet for creating a better environment in laboratory practices (Google 2020). There should be proper training sessions in order to become efficient users of zoom, Google meet, Google classrooms, MS-teams, etc. for both instructors as well as students. The current pandemic circumstances demands skills and tech-savvy. There is a need for the educators to enhance knowledge and develop skills which is required for usage of technology, various e-learning tools, applications for education and other mode of online platform like Google meet, Zoom, etc. Students must be motivated to use the online applications and easy available for the same is very important so that they can have an access. Hence, promotion of online apps is very important for increasing awareness among various students.

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