

APPLICATION OF E-LEARNING TOOLS IN LIS EDUCATION

ALEXPANDI A

Librarian, Hosur Institute of Technology and Science, Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

The ICTs are becoming popular in library and information Science Education in the present knowledge based society for learning and teaching in academic and R&D carrier development. Recently there has been a rapid growth in internet in the use of on-line education, which means of becoming literate with new mechanism such as computer networks, content portals, e-libraries, distance learning and web enabled class rooms. The present paper covers what is e-learning, need for e-learning, implication of e-learning on Library and information Science education.

KEYWORDS: E-learning, Information Communication Technologies, New dimension, LIS Education

INTRODUCTION

E-learning now a days has become essential and it is implemented in every field from Space to Government. There is need for capacity building, which can help the users in utilizing e-resources. The librarians have the ability and skills to act as an information intermediaries as they are trained specially to know the resources available offline and online and how to make efficient use of them [1].

Why E-learning?

- Geographical barriers are eliminated, opening up broader education options
- Learning is self paced and gives students a chance to speed up to slow down necessary
- Learning is self-directed, allowing students to choose content and appropriate to their differing interests, need and skills levels
- Accommodates multiple learning styles using as verity of delivery methods geared to different learners, more effective for entrain learners
- Accessibility makes scheduling easy and allows a greater number of people to attend classes on demand access means learning can happen precisely when needed travel-time is reduced or eliminated
- Has the attention of every major university in the work, most with their own online degrees, certificate and individual course

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are focused on the following issues:

- To know the concept, forms of e-learning and facilities offered by e-learning in LIS education and services
- To know the distance learning education system and existing LIS education system

- To identify the problems of e-learning in LIS education and make a proposal for the introducing e-learning LIS education system
- To recommend a number of activities to implement the proposal plan and future development of e-learning education

Implications of e-learning in Library and Information Science Education

In the present age of information highway, e-learning opens a new hope and aspiration in LIS education, services and professions. Library and information services are currently involved in rapid changes as a result of:

- Opportunities offered by e-learning
- Demand for new services
- Pressure for increased productivity and accountability
- Increased demand for 24 hour/seven-days-a-week services
- Changing Learning Trends
- Job-Specific Needs
- More Content and Short Duration

New Opportunities

E-learning offers new opportunities for library and information professionals to develop their knowledge and skills in a wide range of areas.

Acquiring Information Skills

Sometimes e-learning activities involve traditional information knowledge and skills, and to get involved in working in a new ways with new groups of people. E-learning makes the information workers more confident and competent in the use of ICT.

Roles and Responsibilities

Information professionals are developing new roles and responsibilities within library and information unit through e-learning. In addition, many library and information workers have moved out of the information unit and are now managing learning centers, educational development centers or learning materials units.

Time Reduction

The nature of e-learning with its visual and auditory reinforcement of information and individualized feedback systems, the time taken to learn the information is significantly reduced. E-learning also can be delivered as ‘just in time’ training, reducing the period between the learning and application of the knowledge which enhances the learning process[8].

Anywhere Learning

E learning provides remote access to learning facilities through the Information communication Technologies. The e-learner can learn from the place of his convenience, even from home, office, while traveling, or literally from anywhere. In the globalize world the work style is changing. People are expected to work from anywhere and anytime.

E - Learning Education towards Professional Skill Development

Library and Information Science (LIS), a skill-oriented professional discipline require adequate skill development amongst the learners, which changes over time depending upon the development of methods and techniques of the concerned professional discipline and requirement of professional competency in the market place [9]. The impact of information in all spheres of society coupled with the utilization of IT development for access and utilization of information are dramatically changing the face of the libraries and information institutions. In this changing scenario, the custodian roles of library and information professionals are changing to the role of facilitators and distributors.

The development of ICT and its application has changed its traditional methods acquisition, organization and access of information. The purpose of LIS education is to provide skills for developing professionals who link the people and information. Basic skills required are the intellectual organization of information and processing, management, retrieval and provision of information to its users [10]. All the skills are centered on users of information.

Major Challenges

The rapid growth of e-learning courses at academic institutions has brought about a big change for students and tutors with various levels of academic experience [11]. Instructors and students must possess specific skills to successfully use various e-learning tools. Students may demonstrate their learning efforts via different types of technology such as text, video or audio devices. Instructors often need to restructure their courses to be successfully incorporate learning [12]. These activities represent challenges that all groups must overcome to succeed in e-learning.

The increasing demand of LIS education with the changing global scenario of job market requires to face the challenges with regard to survive in the competitive climate and to provide quality of LIS educational programmed is important. Limited Internet connectivity, inadequate computer and communication infrastructure make it difficult for universities and institutions to access and download full text databases and other key resources. The major challenges and issues of introducing e-learning LIS education are discussed below.

Lack of Finance

The major challenge in improving e-learning LIS education is the lack of finance. It is not possible to make any resource available without appropriate financial support.

Lack of Knowledge and Training

One of the main constraints of e-learning systems is that students do not know how to use the particular information technology. Much more attention will be required in the future web based training that will be delivered over the internet using the non propriety www server and client technology.

Insufficient Contact Classes

Being a practical oriented course, LIS education required computer training and practical classes for classification and cataloguing with personal contact between teacher and student, but the number of days for contact classes are very limited.

Lack of IT Proficiency

In a developing country like India, library and information science professionals are facing severe shortage of ICT facilities and mentor for LIS education. There are certain specific problems that act as deterrents to the library education to adopting modernization i.e., low computer literacy among students of LIS; lack of basic knowledge of hardware and software among working professionals; and inadequate funds for purchase, installation and working with computers in school, college, public libraries and universities.

Insufficient Contact Classes

Being a practical oriented course, library and information science education required computer based training and practical classes for classification and cataloguing with personal contact between teacher and student, but the number of days for contact classes is very limited.

Lack of Evaluation

There is no mechanism of assessing teaching effectiveness and quality of study materials of distance learning program courses. Students' evaluations of teaching will help to provide instructors and course designers with feedback about the quality of their efforts.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR FORMATION OF E-LEARNING IN LIS EDUCATION

As in the perspective phase of e-learning system is not possible to introduce all LIS education institutions, therefore it will be wise to introduce LIS education through distance learning method in less ICT facilitated institutions in different phases [13]. There are some elementary differences between online courses with that of distance learning courses.

Extensive preplanning of an online course is essential. Knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of the e-learning system is an important prerequisite to design an online course. Faculty members should have a solid understanding of the major principles of online course design before they attempt to put a course together.

Mobile based learning should be encouraged in LIS education. The success of the mobile phone and subsequently short message service in remote areas has demonstrated the functionality of portable communication devices with the access to internet resources using LAN or long range wireless communication services.

CONCLUSIONS

E-learning is not merely a new concept but also has grown as the world wide web has developed in each and every country and spreading its roots for Indian environment as well. In library and information Science students can stay at home and get educated through distance education across the world via Internet. This is the time to think intensely about the new syllabus for Library and information science. Simultaneously, e-learning is now the global scenario and it should not avoid. As a developing country like India, it is hard to design a new courses and new e-learning LIS education system but not impossible. Lot of issues and challenges are involved with this task but as soon as it put forward, it will overcome all those problems. Hope the proposed plan among LIS education institutions will make a new opportunity and make the LIS education competent for the world. In 21st century, learning mode is increasingly relying on various forms of electronic delivery and communications.

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