

Factors affecting the effective implementation of e-learning in educational institutions

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Abstract: E-learning is an essential trend in education for the 21st century. In fact, students need the ability to use knowledge to communicate, collaborate, analyze, create, innovate, and solve problems in order to be successful in a global economy. The implementation of electronic learning (e-learning) systems impact on the educational environments and offer learners great flexibility, encourage risk taking, help students to be active learners and enhance their higher order thinking. This paper reviews the literature as it pertains to factors affecting effective implementation of e-learning for instructors and students in educational institutions. It is concluded that e-learning practice needs a good ICT infrastructure and active and collaborative involvement of a number of other people. Access to the technologies and pedagogical issues and institutional support services are important in the successful e-learning practice.

Key words: E-learning, educational institutions, students, lecturers, administrators

Introduction

The Internet is considered as a pivotal tool in world communications. According to Kozma (2005), Internet and other Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accelerate the emergence of an information society and knowledge economy. "The rates of proliferation of network, access to the system, and advances in Internet/Web technology have increased the rapid growth of the e-learning approach" (Karaali, Gumussoy, & Calisir, 2011, p.343). Using a web-based learning system (online learning) has significant impact on the educational environments. E-learning provides students with an anytime/any place independent learning environment. Resources which are found at home, libraries, and universities are woven together to connect learners in distinctive and new ways to form a community of learners. In addition, online learning offers new possibilities to integrate various types of learning content according to the learners' need and is additionally compatible with the learners' preferred learning styles (Little, 2001).

The use of Internet or ICT has revolutionized higher educational organizations and has affected teaching and learning contexts in universities and educational institutions all over the world (Salmon & Jones, 2004). Broadbent (2003) pointed out that e-learning changes the way learner learn, lecturers teach, designers develop, and administrators manage. Adams and Seagren (2004) also stated that e-learning can increase institutional reputations, enhance teaching and learning quality, and offer more flexibility in student learning. In fact, cultivating student's creativity and critical thinking abilities is a major goal of most of the educational systems (Roth, 2010). These skills are critical for students while engaged in academic learning because they help students "to generate novel and useful ideas, evaluate the arguments of others and their own, resolve conflicts, and come to well-reasoned resolutions to complex problems" (Behar-Horenstein & Niu, 2011, p.25). Effective use of online learning can help