

## E-Learning, M-Learning & Information Literacy : Role of Academic Library

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### ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of ICT & rising computer knowledge / skills of the students have laid very strong foundation for the appearance of new & more sophisticated educational from such as E-Learning, M-Learning. Today information is an important resource for organizations, business & every walk of our life. To identify, retrieve, analyse & effective use of information is required skill set for employees or users, which is know as Information literacy skills. This paper digs in evaluate the concepts of E-Learning , M-Learning & Information Literacy.

**Keywords :** E-Learning, M-Learning, Information Literacy

### I. INTRODUCTION

Information technology can play importance role in the effective learning process of students engaged in higher studies today a lot of information generated through print & mass media. E-Learning has arisen from the information and communication technological revaluation & like others forms of technology. It is undoubtedly facilitating change across the educational sector. Libraries have always been an integral part of learning, helping learner find, evaluate & exploit resources. There for it is unsurprising that change in education is being felt in the library profession.

All types of information available on internet in public domain as well as through different subscription based databases provided by various hosts & aggregators is bound to play a very importance role in teaching, learning & research. Information is available from many sources & many formats such as printed text, television, videos, library databases, websites & more. It is also increasingly importance in the contemporary environment of rapid technological change & proliferating information resources that the users are equipped with basic / advanced skills of information gathering.

Many countries Colleges & Universities have developed information literacy policies & programs based on information literacy competency standards for education that focus on teaching students critical skills to become lifelong learners, including the abilities to-

- Determine the extent of information needed
- Evaluate information & its sources critically.
- Access the needed information effectively & efficiently.
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

## II. E-LEARNING

E-Learning is the learning enabled by the electronic media. It is a sophisticated approach to facilitate & enhance learning through computers, tablets, smart phones, digital TVs & PDAs with the help of telecommunication, networks & secondary storage devices etc. E-learning is defined as instruction delivered on a computer via internet or CD-ROM. It can be self-paced or instructor-led & includes media in the form of text, streaming video, & audio and builds user knowledge to improve organizational functioning. E-learning commonly refers to training delivered electronically in an organizational setting while online learning is used to differentiate courses delivered via the internet in educational setting.

According to CISCO's quoted by Jeevan, E-learning is the overreaching umbrella that encompasses education, information, communication & training. It is the web-enabled system that makes information & knowledge accessible to those who need it, when they need it – anytime , anywhere. In the present context it is a web-based learning. In e-learning computer acts as a teacher & the students can gain knowledge & skills from this electronic teacher at convenient timings.

### Advantages of E-Learning:

With the e-learning in higher education & the popularization & application of enterprise training, the e-learning is considered to be a computer, multimedia & network-based, teacher-led and student-centered teaching mode of the new & also in practical applications, e-learning also refers to the information technology environment in the teaching & learning behavior. The advantages of E-learning are as under

- **Remote Learner-Teacher:** In the e-learning environment, the learner & the teacher need not to travel to a common physical location for the purpose of education. They can be away from each other, yet achieving the goal of education through technological means.
- **Learner Centered:** E-learning can be personalized to the learner, or as it is called customized to the need of the learner. Unlike the classroom-based learning the e-learner can choose his/ her learning module.
- **Anywhere Learning:** E-learning provides remote access to learning facilities through the ICT. As such the e-learner can learn from the place of his convenience, even from home, office, while travelling or literally from anywhere. In the globalized world the work style is changing. People are expected to work from anywhere & anytime. The e-learning suits to this philosophy.
- **Anytime Learning:** The time is not a constraint to the e-learner, one can learn anytime that suits his schedule. It is truly 24x7 learning system.
- **Just-in-Time:** The c-learning (classroom learning) adopts the philosophy of just-in-case. So what is taught & studied in c-learning is on the thinking that such & such knowledge, skill may be needed in future. On the contrary the e-learning is arranged to develop skills, which are needed at the particular time.
- **Multiple Collaborations:** In e-learning there emerge multiple collaboration, i.e. teacher-student, student-student, as well as teacher-teacher. Multiple collaborations also include collaboration between the content development experts & the technology people.
- **Facilitates Lifelong Learning:** Being self-paced, e-learning can develop skills in the e-learner which can be useful to him for lifelong learning.
- Reducing the administrative load by making routine information available online. This will release more time for other activities.

- Making communication easier with individual students & groups of students.
- Making it possible to use a wider range of resources that may otherwise be too difficult or expensive to use.
- Motivating & supporting students to take responsibility of their own learning.
- Supporting & increasingly large and diverse student population with little increase in teaching time.
- Making it easier to amend & update materials.
- Contributing to quality assurance agency institutional audits.
- Instructors of the highest caliber can share their knowledge across borders, allowing students to attend courses across physical, political & economic boundaries. Recognized experts have the opportunity of making information available internationally, to any one interested at minimum costs.

### **Disadvantages of E-Learning:**

In spite of above advantages, E-learning has the following disadvantages.

- No direct interaction leading to confusion in the minds of the students.
- No immediate feedback.
- Requirements of latest gadgets & infrastructure. It is a big challenge especially in the under development or developing countries.
- More maturity & discipline is a mandatory condition for students.
- Due to lack of interaction, all the aspects of a subject may not be covered.
- Personal development of students is not possible.
- Regular updation remains an indispensable requirement.
- Technical support should be made available round the clock for monitoring & maintenance to the servers, busy signals or to handle the break downs.

### **III. M-LEARNING : THE FUTURE OF E-LEARNING**

The rapid growth of information technologies & rising computer skills of the students have made it possible to develop & implement more and more sophisticated educational forms such as E-learning. Nowadays, the concept of e-learning has ushered in a new phase of development i.e. M-Learning. M-Learning (Mobile Learning) is another form of Distance Learning like E-learning.

M-Learning provides an added advantage over E-learning in the way that M-learning offers the users opportunity to learn anywhere at any time without permanent physical connection to cable networks. This can be achieved by the use of portable devices such as portable computers & Tablet PCs, smart phones, cell phones or PDAs. They must have the ability to connect to other computer devices, to present educational information & to realize bilateral information exchange between the student & the teacher. Today there are several communication technologies which are used in mobile devices, such as GSM, WAP, GPRS, Blue-tooth, Wi-Fi & Infrared Data Association (IrDA) etc.

### **Advantages of M-Learning:**

The M-Learning advantages comparing to e-learning are as under.

- It can be used everywhere at every time.
- Most of mobile devices have lower prices than desktop PCs.
- Smaller size and light weight than desktop PCs.

- Ensures bigger students engage as m-learning is based on modern technologies, which students use in everyday life.
- Using GPS technology the m-learning can provide location dependent education.

#### **Limitations on M-Learning:**

- Most of the applications do not support the mobile devices.
- Small display limits the use of the mobile devices.
- Frequent need to recharge the battery.
- Higher maintenance costs.
- Lower memory / storage capacities of the mobile devices.
- Most of the times it not possible to do job on graphics.
- The bandwidth degrades rapidly with the increased number of users.

### **IV. INFORMATION LITERACY**

Information literacy is a set of qualities required to recognize when information is needed & have the capacity to find, assess & use effectively the information needed to take better decisions.

#### **Definition of Information literacy:**

The American Librarian Association's (1989) Presidential Committee on information Literacy, final report defines Information Literacy as "A set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed & have the ability to locate & use effectively the needed information." In other words, information literacy is a set of skills, which enables the individuals to recognize his / her information need. In addition, it also enables to locate, evaluate & use the needed information effectively.

Barefoots defined that "One should be information literate to solve problems related to information & to become information literate one should learn technology skills set which includes how to find & use the information for their problems and efficient & effective decision making."

According to Bruce & Candy "Information literacy is the ability to locate, evaluate, manage & use information from a range of sources for problem-solving, decision-making & research" According to Association of College & research libraries "Information literacy is the basis for lifelong learning. For all disciplines common, to all learning environments, & to all level of education. It makes user or learners to master content, & extent their investigations become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning."

One will neither become information literate or information communication technology, literate overnight. Just as with writing & speaking skills, your skills will improve over time as you gain proficiency in the topics you choose to study. This method will give you practice in searching for , choosing & accessing the information you come across & will allow you to create new thoughts, which you communicate to other using a range of technological tools. As defined by Chartered Institute of Library & Information Professionals "Information Literacy is knowing when & why you need information, where to find it, & how to evaluate, use & communicate it in an ethical manner."

### **V. LIBRARY & INFORMATION LITERACY**

21<sup>st</sup> Century is known as information age because of information uncontrolled explosion of information sources & outputs. Which make it very difficult to students, to learner everything they need to know. Here Information Literacy plays a big role in teaching critical skills to become experts or lifelong learners.

In 1989 American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy says: Ultimately, information literate people are those who have learned how to learn. They know how to learn because they know how knowledge is organized, how to find information & how to use information in such way that others can learn from them. They people prepared for lifelong learning, because they can always find the information needed for any task or decision at hand”.

Information literacy gives platform for lifelong learning which is common in all disciplines, all level of education & all learning environments which improve searching skills of users and make them lifelong learners. Since long back librarians are involved in Library orientation. Effectively training users on library use, resources & services. Different terminologies like library instruction, library orientation, bibliographic instructions & user education have been used at different time to define the process of helping students or users how to use the library & resources effectively. Today information literacy is replaced all these terms.

Librarians what started as library orientation will grownup to be library instruction, Bibliographical instruction & now become Information Literacy.

In this information age students are facing it very difficult to know everything what is available in the library in print or digital format. Academic libraries are having their own experts for training or teaching both students & faculty colleagues on how to find evaluate & use information effectively. Now day's librarians specially trained / qualified to teach & handle information literacy programs. Information Literacy made users lifelong learners. It is fundamental principal of higher education.

#### **Need of Information Literacy:**

Today librarians are providing information in traditional as well as electronic & digital forms. Information literacy is required because of proliferating information access resources. In this digital age users need to more information literate them over before while internet, E-mail, www can contain valid & and accurate information. It is very nature encourages quick & easy self-publication.

Today the information universe has become more complex than over before due to the rapid technological advancement & information explosion in network-based resources. The students are drowning in Information Ocean. This emphasized the need for IL skill to exploit the new technology to use information effectively. The internet with a wealth to open access resources viz, subject, gateways, portals, e-books, e-journals, institutional repositories with play crucial role in learning, teaching research activities of higher education in the country.

#### **Role of Library and Librarians in effective Information Literacy Program:**

- Understanding the need of users, customers, learners.
- Understand user learning ability & how information & information resources contribute the process of learning.
- Libraries should not be served as store house of information & quite place but should not be dynamic gateway for disseminating information.
- As ALA defined “In this information age information literacy is survival skill of life line.” Libraries & library professional should take a lead role in developing & delivering effective information literacy

programs so that students or faculties to effectively retrieve, explore & investigation the information whenever & wherever it found in digital or print.

- Librarians should collaborate with faculties & other specialist for delivering effective information literacy program.
- Effectively design syllabus for information literacy program keeping in mind user needs.
- Teaching users how to access, evaluated & use the information.
- Developing & executing information policy.
- Archival of required information in all formats.
- Become a leader in introducing information technologies & ensuring their effective use.
- One should be expert in technology, subject knowledge & available resources.
- Smart enough to evaluate the information organize & store for future use.
- Should have the ability to add value to information.
- Fair knowledge of effective delivery mechanism & dissemination of information. Should understand legal & economical aspects of information.
- Required good marketing & communicational skills.
- Should be practical and creative thinker.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In e-learning & m-learning process the future libraries will emerge as active bridge between the information. The librarians can help in creating & developing repositories and content management. However e-learning & m-learning is only the tool & its effectiveness will depend on the quality of the content including the learning resources & the use made of the communication tools.

To conclude, in this information age Library & Library professionals play very importance role in executing information literacy in their organization. Need for the library professionals to acquire required skills & ICT knowledge to train their users on how to make use of available resources effectively for their information need. Now it is high time for library professional to handle information literacy program effectively otherwise IT professional or faculties will take over our profession.

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