

OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING: TECHNO-PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVES AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

Today distance education learners are achievement more dependent on technology. It has been playing a vital role in the teaching and learning process of distance learning environment. A remarkable change in technology in the area of distance learning has introduced the variety of new technologies for teacher and learner to enhance their knowledge, application and understanding skills. ICT has empowered the learners like Face book, What's App, e-mail, e-mail groups, social networking technologies like Blogs, Wikis, Media sharing services, online chatting, webinars, web conferences, e-books, and e-journals has done in the learning process are fruitful flexibility where students can learn anywhere and anytime. Learners can now be active participation in the construction of their personal learning experience to technology.

Keywords: Distance Education, Information and Communication Technology.

Introduction

Distance education institution has provided to be a good thing for many aspirants looking for to development their qualification of the educational level for improving

higher education, just for the sake of updating of knowledge, skill, intellectual competency and attitude. It is more beneficiaries are working men and women in all fields and also housewives'. It gives enormous pleasure to learners, because they feel they can study in regular mode. It is supplementary for working people, hence no compromise with their job and family environment. The concept of distance education does not come into institutions, many of students who wished to pursue higher education at their own place in their wishes. This paper is to describe how the technologies penetrate in distance education students can be helpful to enhance interaction between teachers to learners.

Conceptual Framework

Education is a life-long activity since there are continuous changes occurring in a cradle to a graveyard in the life of every individual not only in contents, needs, interests, and development but more in their expectations of life goals. Learning has to be an independent act and therefore the variety and choices in the contents, methods of learning and strategies for study materials design are more important factors for considerations. Distance education learners are living in a remote and rural area, the learners can interact with peer group and teachers through the technologies. Even a foreign learner can also interact with peers and teachers through e-mail, Face book, What's App, and video conference. Study groups can also be made more effective with the use of technology. Use of technology in distance education reduces the gap between rural and urban, privileged and unprivileged, gifted and marginalized students. Students can get the latest updated knowledge and developments at their personal place and convenient time. All the above technologies are fruitful for reaching the unreached people.

Definitions of Distance Education

There are as many definitions of distance education as there are authors writing on this subject (Gandhe, 1995; Keegan, 1986; Smith, 1990) Gandhe (1995) defined distance education "as a system of training by someone who is deprived in space and time from the learners through learning materials that have been thoroughly developed using different types of media". Smith (1990) defined distance "education as a system of teaching and learning which includes "the disconnection of teacher and learner, the contribution of learning society, the use of medium and administration of two-way communication between the teacher and the learner" Keegan (1986) provided a broad, comprehensive and inclusive definition of distance education. In his view, distance education is a form of education characterized by:

"the quasi-permanent separation of the teacher and learner throughout the length of the learning process; the influence of an educational organization both in planning and preparation of learning materials and in the provision of support services; the use

of technical media: print, audio, video, television, computer, etc. to unite the teacher and the learners and carry the content of the course; and the provision of a two-way communication so that the learners may benefit from teacher or even initiate dialogue with him or her”

The common thread running through all the above definitions is that distance education has the following major features:

- A quasi-permanent separation of the teacher and learner.
- The involvement of an educational organization.
- The use of media.
- the provision of a two-way communication between the tutor and student.
- the provision of support services for the learners and
- Use of ICT Gadgets

Comparison of Techno-Pedagogical methods

Table 1 Comparison of Traditional Teaching and Internet based Teaching

Activities	Traditional teaching	Internet-based teaching
Learning Methods	Rote memory Memorization	Relationship between concepts and new discoveries
Concepts of Knowledge	Accumulation of knowledge	Transformation of knowledge
Use of Technology	Exercises and practices	Communication, sharing and access to information
Classroom activities	Teachers-centered	Student-centered
Teachers' role	Dominant in teaching	Guides in teaching and learning
Students' role	Passive learning	Active in learning Make co-operation

Technology in Distance Education

Technology can be effectively involved in all aspects of distance education learners like personal and syllabus. The aim of distance education is to offer education without the walls and boundaries of the institutions. The use of audio media in distance education institutions takes various forms. Mostly, it is used in the form of broadcast television and radio. Other forms are audio-cassettes, audio-vision and telephone teaching. In those days advantages of radio are its almost complete availability and its ability to reach isolated audiences quickly and at relatively low cost.

Federal Student Aid (FSA), (2013) “Distance education refers to education that uses of technologies to distribute tutoring to students those who are separated from the teacher or teaching institution, and to sustain usual and substantive communication between the teachers and the learners. The communication may be one-way

synchronous (student and instructor are in communication at the same time) or asynchronous". The technologies may include

- Radio
- Internet
- Video conferencing

Synchronous and asynchronous transmissions through open transmit, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics cable, satellite television, or wireless connections devices. The content educated through video or audio discuss is also measured a distance education way but only if one of the above technologies scheduled is used to support interaction between the trainer and the trainee.

The present developments in computer technology include personal computers, portable computers, laptops, hand held computers, talking computers, microchip technology, software developments, CD-ROM, CD-W, DVD, machine readable database and android mobile phone.

Communication Technology

Communication Technology is very quickly and more efficiently and accuracy has received to the focused group. In our country education and security of nations are going to depend on the use of latest communication technology. It is main function is transmit word to in the form signals urban area to remote. Telecommunications has achieved impressive advances in recent years. Channel capacities, reliabilities and error rates have improved dramatically. The major developments in this area are audio-visual technology, Tele-text, videotext, fax, online services, Internet, e-mail, satellite technology, networking, teleconference, cellular telephones and voice mail etc.

Teleconferencing

Overcome the lack of experienced and technologically sound knowledge in the field of distance learning. Teleconferencing technology is the alternative for these problems. Santosh Sharma (2000) used "one-way video and two way audio satellite based talk back facility for Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education". Teleconference facilities are low cost compared to videoconference because it is one way audio transmission to the receiver.

Computer Mediated Interaction

Computer Mediated Communication systems such as E-mail and computer conferencing provide interactive environment for students. Where students can interact with teachers and peers about the subject related matters. Students can make entries of their field experiences and reflective through in e-mail, e-journal and e-

zings, which can be used to facilitate a more immediate interaction between students and teachers. This technology is used to many distance education students.

Electronic mail (E-mail)

“Electronic mail is a most widely distributed form of electronic communication via computer networking. It is usually defined as a mechanism for one-to-one correspondence, and sometimes one-to-few. It is much faster than the conventional postal services. Messages can reach target within seconds. The mail is transferred among machines on the internet, which acts as post boxes that store the e-mail, even though computer or mobile switched off. E- mail is usually used to exchange messages and information files like paragraph and moving pictures. Every consumer was assigned an electronic mail box. by means of suitable command, the consumer can examine a list of communication in the mailbox and put on view the contents of a particular message, send a message to another user and so forth”. Nowadays distance education learners are used to technologies for distribution information and official communication (Examination schedule, class time table, electronic content) from the university to learners.

Computer Conferencing

Computer Conferencing is another communication technology, which provides immediately in interaction between students and teachers. It combines word processing and telecommunication via personal computer, telephone lines, and central computer conferencing systems. It is useful for distance education learner for entre course. Because distance education learners are disadvantaged group the above system fulfill the face-to-face teaching.

Mobile Phone Technology

In present day proliferation advancement of information and communication technologies enables to produce more mobile phone technologies. All the distance education students need access to study materials, communications to the university and central circular of the study tools and further learning means not only at home and in their working place. Rostislav Fojtik in his study at the end of 2004 there was performed a research among 63 distance education students of bachelor's degree study program applied computer science. Their objective was mainly getting of information about usage of mobile information and communication Technologies. As it was supposed all of the distance education learners use cellular phone.

Perspectives of E-Learning

A connect of a computer to the internet. It provides any student anywhere with exceptional opportunities to study. If a student in majestic connection wants to master in all the subjects, it's possible only an online. If a growing learner in five points were

wants to study the mastery to the subject. "If a future Stephen Hawking in La Junta wants to learn Gravitational entropy with the man himself, it's possible online. If armed parents want stability in their children's education throughout frequent moves to serve our country, then its possible online" (Rod Paige US Secretary of Education, 2002) "education knowledge to improve through e-learning interactive technologies and information and communication technologies. The technologies have the potential to change the way we learn and teach across the world. It can move up principles, and extend participation in distance learning". Millions and Millions of technologies cannot replace single teacher. Besides present technologies can improve the eminence and accomplish of their education, it can be reduce the time spending. It can smooth the progress of all types of learner to achieve their possible maturity, and help to modified development in educational management.

Benefits of Using Technology in Distance Education

Following are some of the benefits of using Technology in distance education.

- Help the learners to free from attending monotonous classes and contact sessions.
- Communication with many students at one time.
- Flexible and convenient.
- Participants respond quickly.
- Classes are more interesting and interacting.
- Learning from the outside experts in the particular field.
- Classes can be recorded, saved and reformatted for future study purposes.
- All kinds of information resources are easy to get.
- Help to increase efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- Improves the cost effectiveness of distance education.
- Provide remote access to the learners.
- Economic and time saving.

Limitations of Distance Education

Besides its benefits, distance education has also some limitations. Limits of distance education are listed as below (Kaya, 2002; Yurdakul, 2005):

- Lack of individual assistance.
- Blocks socialization of individuals.
- Lack of immediate feedback.
- Lack of communication and interaction.
- Depends on access facilities and communication technologies.
- Not effective for all lessons.
- Face to face communication is best for learning.
- Limitations in communication due to excess number of students.

- Difficulties in the realization of application studies.
- Not useful for students not having independent study habit.
- Cost can be high according to used technology.

Conclusion

All the technologies fulfill the geographical gap between learners and teachers in the same time teaching learning process remained the same like formal teaching. Today's technology developed in the field of distance education programme. The application technologies have been to apply in almost all the fields of distance education such as student enrolment, staffing, instructional delivery, online classes and evaluation and assessment. Virtual Universities began to start in almost all the developed countries. Even in India steps are going on for the establishment of Virtual Universities and virtual learning. Technology provides new and creative modes of interactivity in distance education. At the same time it provides us with the challenges of developing skills and knowledge required for application of these technologies.

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