Academic Libraries in e-Teaching and e-Learning

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Abstract

This paper is set in the context of Academic Libraries and their rapidly developing use of information and communication technology [ICT]. Its key focus and emphasis is on how the academic libraries influence the changes to teaching and learning that will result from an e-education environment. Understanding the impact of e-teaching, e-learning and e-education is seen as fundamental to moving us forward so that we can make greater use of the opportunities provided by the Internet. E-teachers are considered central to the move toward e-education and the way in which ICT is integrated in the academics. To implement an ICT e-strategy without e-teachers will now be like piloting a boat without a navigator. This paper points how the modern academic libraries provide technology based information anywhere, anytime besides providing resources for innovative and lifelong learning. It also discusses the way the modern academic libraries are related to e-learning.

Keywords: *Academic libraries, e-education, e-learning, e-teaching, ICT, digital libraries.*

Introduction

The noted psychologist B.F. Skinner, referring to the first days of his 'teaching machines' in the late 1950s and early 1960s, wrote, "I was soon saying that, with the help of teaching machines and programmed instruction, students could learn twice as much in the same time and with the same effort as in a standard classroom." Academic libraries are the forefront of knowledge when it comes to systems and services that suit the needs of the information seekers. It remains for them to act at the institutional, national and international level to ensure that this knowledge is brought to bear in e-learning to the benefit of teachers and learners directly.

With the advent of computers, the nature of libraries has changed dramatically. Computers are being used in libraries to process, store, retrieve and disseminate information. As a result, the traditional concept of library is being redefined from a place to access books to one which houses the most advanced media including CD-ROM, Internet, and remote access to a wide range of resources. Libraries have now metamorphosed into digital institutions. Gone are the days when a library was judged by its quantitative resources. Today, libraries are surrounded by networked data that is connected to the vast ocean of Internet-based services. Moreover, electronic resources relevant to the professions are developing at an unprecedented pace.

Academic libraries are considered to be the nerve centres of academic institutions which support teaching, research, and other academic programmes in various ways. Demographic changes, technological advances and globalization have totally changes the concept of education. The teaching-learning is a delicate process which needs to be standardized throughout the world.

The important question today is no longer whether to implement e-teaching and e-learning in academics but how to run it well and how to get the best out of it.

e-Teaching and e-Learning

The prefix "e" has become increasingly evident on the lives of people in ways many could not have imagined less than ten years ago. With relative ease, the "e" is used with activities like real estate, retailing, banking, entertainment and now education. The "e" stands for electronic and it relates to the use of the Internet to undertake the wide range of activities. As we become more familiar with the language of the Internet we find just how much it pervades our daily lives in the dot.com age. We readily recognize http: //www......... as an Internet web site and see it plastered on vehicles, billboards, hot air balloons, merchandise and in the electronic and print media. Educators are now

beginning to hear terms like e-teaching, e-learning and e-education as these subtly become part of our regular vocabulary.

Academic libraries serve the educators, including the new generation of teachers who will work in an Internet environment in both regular and virtual classroom situations. They will come to terms with new concepts of working in temporal and spatial settings.. E-teachers collaborate, build and discover new learning communities and explore newer resources in their interaction with information, materials and ideas with their students and colleagues. The e-education involves e-teaching and e-learning along with the various other administrative and strategic measures needed to support teaching and learning in an online environment. It will incorporate a local, regional, national and international vision of education. An Academic Library must have an effective e-learning strategy must be a good combination of the technology and the content it carries. It must also focus on critical success factors that include building a learning culture, marshalling true leadership support, deploying a nurturing business model, and sustaining the change throughout the organization. Again, e-learning encompasses both the acquisition as well as use of knowledge distributed and facilitated by electronic means.

"E-Learning is Internet-enabled learning. E-Learning provides faster learning at reduced costs, increased access to learning, and clear accountability for all participants in the learning process. In today's fast-paced culture, organizations that implement e-Learning provide their work force with the ability to turn change into an advantage.

Academic Libraries and E-learning
Academic librarians generally serve the subject academicians to provide information regarding teaching, learning and research.

Though not everywhere, yet e-learning has been integrated in the curriculum of most of the university by different faculties. From the library side it has been a great opportunity to integrate the library resources and services in support of learning, research and outreach. In recent years several bold steps have been taken to integrate e-learning with the academic work.

Most of the modern academic libraries are digital and e-learning can effectively take place in a digital environment. Academic libraries apply appropriate communication technologies in support of e-learning and e-research by providing seamless access to electronic resources and services. Electronic resources include online catalogues, databases, multimedia, online journals, digital repositories, electronic books, electronic archives and online / electronic services. The utilization of cutting edge technologies by academic libraries to provide access to resources and services in support of learning,

teaching and research has benefited both on-campus, part time as well as distance learners. Both students and lecturers can undertake learning and research without being in the library. An academic library, faculty and academic development department managing e-learning may use appropriate technologies to facilitate learning and access to resources and services. It is quite understandable that an e-learning environment can provide both students and faculty with a sustainable infrastructure and seamless access to knowledge, course content, information resources and services, all from integrated service point.

The initiative which should be taken by The academic libraries should take an initiative towards establishment of an e-learning support centre which would undertake training of the academic staff in integrating the educational technology into the curriculum to provide access to the content. As a part of this initiatives an Educational Technology unit will develop e-learning smart classrooms, along with video conferencing and assignment tools enabling flexible learning and teaching with the students studying at their own place. The academic library must have a holistic approach in e-learning whereby different traditional and digital methods and media are integrated in learning and teaching. As faculty and instructors have began to adopt e-learning strategies as a part of their teaching repertoire, libraries played a key role, helping to find and organize resources to complement programmes and courses making use of e-learning in order to provide support to students working through their assignments.

OCLC have suggested that resources must be integrated for academic libraries at the point of need to make these more effective. The role of the academic library for e-teaching and e-learning process can be carried out if the library has two types of **requirements** filled up:

i)   Technical and Functional requirements

ii) Technical and Cultural requirements

Technical and Functional Requirements
a)   display and integrate a variety of information windows as part of a learning activity

b)   aggregate access (discovery and exchange) to content in any given learning context

c)   provide bibliographical tools that permits easy searching and reference completions

d   provide access to tools that render and present content in user customized formats

e)   integrate plagiarism software into course management systems to encourage good practice and to assess reliability of content.

Technical and Cultural Requirements
a)   embed library resources in course management systems

b) integrate third party commercial information services

c) customize portal facilities for storing personal preferences

d) provide easy access to virtual reference services at the point of need.

e) embed training modules to assist in information seeking.

As a part of e-learning an academic library must provide the **services** to its students and staff from remote access which include:

i) New acquisitions to indicate newly acquired materials for each department.

ii) View your patron record to see materials borrowed by an individual customer with an option to renew the borrowed materials without visiting the library.

iii) Request for materials that are borrowed by another user. Upon return of the material, communication is sent to the user who made the request to come and borrow the material.

iv) Users can suggest additional items that the library should acquire based on their need. The request can be made online.

iv) Materials placed on reserve by lecturers for specific courses.

v   E-mail communication is provided through the system to enable a two way communication between the user and the library.

vi) Online charges and fines are made available to users.

vii) Searching for past examination papers by faculty, department and course numbers providing access to full text.

Role of Academic Librarians In e-Teaching and Learning

Nowadays academic librarians are a part of e-learning process and are actively participating by providing online and in person modules, guides, subject and class based lists, as well as reference (synchronous and e-mail).

The librarians offer classes and courses on research strategies, help students in determining useful scholarly resources, work with the faculty in planning and developing distance education courses (in particular online courses) to integrate concepts of information literacy throughout the curriculum. Faculty need support in these activities because the ability to articulate information needs, find appropriate information resources and critically assess the results of an online search are key to success in e-learning and this leaves the faculty to focus on course content.

In the case of libraries what is good for the online student is also useful for the campus based student.

By a study it was seen that the librarian facilitating the e-learning are establishing a positive relationship between the academic achievement and use of open shelf library books.

The librarians should play a dedicated role in supporting instructors and administrators to realize the potential of e-learning through the provision of service models unique to libraries. Librarians somewhere have found to develop web based modules to support course integrated instruction session, encourage students to actively follow the librarians' presentation using their own topics for selected searches. Students receive immediate feedbacks on search strategies during the session and can return at any time to refresh their skills for subsequent assignments. Reference staff use the material to guide students in using information resources specific to their assignments at the reference desk. This blended approach to information literacy offers students and instructors with an ability to address diverse learning styles and encourage active participation along the presentation to a 24/7 access that may foster increased student contact with the librarians.

Many librarians specially university librarians are working with online course developers as well as instructors in traditional courses to provide online guides and help for library research, these include modules that introduce students not only to specific resources but to critical evaluation of resources, specific about thesis preparation and the like. As with face to face library connection, these modules are very effective when integrated into course and research material provided by the instructor.

The requirements on the part of the Librarian to be a part of e-learning are:

i) Must be proactive in questioning the selection of learning management systems and complementary e-learning tools by faculty and departments.

ii) Actively seek representation through appointments to committees that deal with selection, management and governance of online instructions systems on their campus.

Conclusion

Sustainable e-learning growth and development is reliant on the capabilities of e-teachers to see the promise offered by the online opportunities and to understand the ambience of the new environment. A strategy that helps e-teachers to define the landscape will offer them support and encouragement as they move forward. Nothing takes the place of good planning in the creation of e-education initiatives. An academic would be wise to undertake an assessment of the learning and programmatic outcomes it hopes to achieve through e-education (Palloff & Pratt, 2000). Including e-teachers in this process will ensure that the pedagogi, staff development and budgetary concerns are viewed with due consideration. It will

incorporate a local, regional, national and international view of education.

With the emergence of improved information technologies, libraries have also been early adopters of new information systems and services and have institutional access points for digital knowledge resources such as online journals and special media collections. Not surprisingly ever since faculty and instructors have begun to adapt e-learning strategies as a part of their teaching repertoire libraries are playing a key role by way of helping to find and organize resources to complement programmes and courses making use of e-learning and to provide support as students work their way through their assignments.

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E-learning is becoming more common in academic institutions and its significance is growing as a delivery mechanism for electronic contents. The key advantages of e-learning are flexibility; the ability to work at any place where an internet connection is available; and being able to work at one's own pace. Technological advances are turning the traditional libraries into digital and/or hybrid libraries to enable them to support virtual users. In support of e-learning, library resources and services are crucial to research and teaching of higher learning institutions. Libraries have a great po Today, libraries still play the primary function of academic life by imparting education through learning, teaching and research (Rao, 2011). The role of libraries in both past and resent times makes them the backbone of educational institutions. In the public and private sector of developing countries, academic institutions are now using libraries as the most suitable institutions that can make a powerful change in society (Vilgi et al., 2017; Shafique et al., 2011). In this situation, academic libraries have to focus their services on university teaching, learning, and research environments. This study conducted before the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic aimed at identifying academic libraries' contribution in e-learning. Discover the world's research. 20+ million members. 135+ million publications. 700k+ research projects. Join for free. Public Full-text 1. Digitized learning approaches comprise both blended learning and pure e-learning. Blended learning is an educational approach that combines traditional classroom methods with different online digital media applications. It provides physical presence and face-to-face interaction between teachers and students where class practices combine with various computer-mediated activities accessible online to offer flexibility in terms of time, place, and pace of learning. Academic staff questionnaire should include questions on teaching and learning methods, use of the e-platform and student involvement in the training process. It is advisable to carry out such survey at the end of the course. Academic libraries cater specifically to the educational needs of a school, college or university where it is located, for the convenience of the students and teachers. However, in the case of a university, they will have more focus also on information related to research and projects. The Academic library's trump card is that, notwithstanding the situation, it supports a powerful educational system, and this facet of its identity is often relegated to the realms of the ignored or the forgotten. E-learning or electronic learning is a computer based learning that uses a digital environment to teach and learn. The concept of libraries has undergone a revolution with the advent of the Information and Communication Technology.