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IMPACT OF E-LEARNING ON LIS PROFESSIONALS

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Abstract:

In the IT era Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals are provides valuable electronic services to the users. E-learning is to explore and to accumulate useful knowledge over and above faster copying, searching and to distributing.

KEY WORDS:

E-Learning , LIS Professionals , Library and Information Science , electronic services .

INTRODUCTION

Libraries have changed from mere static storehouse of knowledge to dynamic service centers. The internet is blurring the traditional roles of creators, suppliers and distributors of scientific information and injecting a long overdue element of competition. The concept of information is ageless information Technology is the savoir of mankind. The method of classroom learning is changed to e-learning. It has played a major role on library and information science professionals.

MEANING

The term e-learning is used in a variety of ways such as online learning, computer based Learning (CBL) web based Training (WBT), online Resource-based Learning (ORBL) Networked Collaborative Learning (NCL), computer Supported collaborative Learning (CSCL).

E-learning is nothing but the extension of classroom learning, here the emphasis is on making available the study material at the convenience of the user.

E-learning is thus the high-tech, net-enabled subset of the larger universe of distance education of distributed learning.

ROLE OF LIBRARIANS IN E-LEARNING

The following are the role of the Librarians in E-learning-

E-learning nowadays becomes the order of the day and it is being used to impart distance education. Librarians are the information intermediaries who can help the users in making use of e-resources. The librarians need to be made aware of the internet and the resources available therein and how to make efficient use of them.

NEED OF E-LEARNING

Effective usage of the information resources, particularly those in electronic media such as e-journals and

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databases, require continuous training to user.

The need was to develop e-learning to provide for both self-education and trainer assisted education.

FORMS OF E-LEARNING

Robin Manson describes three forms of e-learning web-based training, supported online learning and informal e-learning.

The following table summarizes the key characteristics of these approaches

Web-based Training	Supported Online Learning	informal E-learning
Content – Focused	Learner Focused	Group –Focused'
Deliver-driven	Activity drives	practice-driven
Individual Learning	Small group learning	Organization learning
Minimal interaction with	Significant interaction	Participants act as learners
	With tutor	and tutors
No collaboration with	considerable interaction	Multiway interactions
Other learners	with other learners	among participants

E-learning Technologies

E-learning technologies used to support different educational configurations in terms of place and time. Video conferencing for example, is a same times, different place technology, whereas e-mail can support different time, different place.

The following figure shows technologies used in e-learning and their advantage.

Different Place	Synchronous interaction	Asynchronous interaction	
	Group interactive video	Online discussion forums	
	Desktop interactive video	E-mail	
	Chat Sessions	Voice mail	
	Webcams	Video mail	
	Audio conferencing	Video on demand	
	Collaborative groupware	Web casting	
	Whiteboards	Collaborative document editing	
	Same Place	Classroom-based instruction	Shared use
		Black boards	Laboratory assignments
Teaching theater		Self-paced programmes	
In-class labs and groupware		in Central facility	
Presentation tools			

In a synchronous mode, classes are real time, which is instructional and the students are connected through a chat room.

On the other hand asynchronous e-learning is that where as student can have an access to pre-packaged training, based on his requirement and convenience.

COMPONENTS OF E-LEARNING

E-learning is comprised of the following elements.

Content delivery methods e-learning allows content to be adjusted and supplied according to the level of progress of the individual learner.

Live broadcasting e-learning can be a two-way system that allows participants to take-tests, ask questions, or respond to questionnaires.

Video-on Demand This technology is available via cable television (CATV) systems. Here large number of learners can access vide content whenever they like.

Interactive Communications There are two approaches, distance education and community approach.

In the distance education approach, the instructor can interact with the learners through text messaging systems, or via audio video communication. On the other hand, in the community approach, the

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instructor becomes the focal point of a virtual class and it is also possible to hold discussions with experts or specific themes.

VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION TOOLS

The following tools are covered they are

E-mails E-mail is used by information workers, librarians and others for formal and informal learning and teaching activities.

Mailing Lists it is possible to send e-mails to groups using mailing lists. The process is managed by a hosting service that maintain a list of all the different discussion lists and the people who subscribe to them. It is run by a mail server.

News Groups the user can read and post message in a single environment rather than a series of e-mails arriving at different times. Here an individual will send a message to a central source, which then copies it to individuals and other news groups.

Bulletin Boards Bulletin boards provide a facility for discussion under various topic headings and not in real time. Many library and information services provide bulletin boards within their website as a means of enabling their customers to discuss ideas and share information.

Web forms web forms are often used as a means for providing a reference service within a library or information unit. They are commonly based in-

Reference service

Administration of servicing such as mentoring programmes.
As a tool for obtaining information from participants on e-learning programme.

Polling Polling enables us to setup a survey/questionnaire and obtain feedback for a wide range of people.

Instant messaging it enables us to send and display a message on someone's screen in a matter of seconds. It means the staff who is working on a busy reference or help point may message a colleague with a question and obtain response.

Chat or conferencing this enables users to hold a live discussion by sending each other short written messages.

Internet Telephony in this tool a user can make calls by using the internet. An individual can make distance phone calls through the computer and the internet without paying long-distance phone charges.

Video conferencing it requires specialists and very expensive machines are used in video conferencing.

Virtual worlds used for e-learning within universities, it is possible to access through dimensional virtual world.

Impact of e-learning on library and information science professionals

In order to promote e-learning, it is very important to develop library and information science professionals, competencies in use of web-technologies.
e-learning offers opportunities and challenges for information workers in the following areas.

Offer new learning opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in a wide range of areas.

Growth in employment opportunities associated with e-learning.

It offers new opportunities to take part in collaborative development.

Developed new roles and responsibilities within the libraries and information units.

It offers opportunities to work from home.

It offers opportunities and challenges to maintain a healthy life/work balance.

Virtual communication tools helped in information exchange, sharing of ideas and support within the library and information community.

E-learning offers the opportunity for information workers across different countries to work together and construct their own professional knowledge.

ADVANTAGES

The following are the advantages of e-learning –

Lower costs

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Time savings
Flexibility
Faster response
Greater effectiveness
Better competitiveness
E-learning complements the process and can help reach out the masses.
E-learning lies in its ability to cover distances.
The consistency that e-learning provides, e-learning is self-paced, and learning is one at the learners.
Learning resources can be pace easily developed using a variety of standard packages.
One can make use of, and link into other resources available on the internet.
Online delivery cheap as there are no printings or distribution costs.
It is easy to track learner activity and progress.
Electronic learning where the student can access the study modules through web, irrespective of the location, time etc.
It is interactive and can serve as a substitute for a classroom teaching environment.

DISADVANTAGES

The following are the disadvantages of e-learning –
Many people find it daunting, especially at first.
The student and tutor need reliable access to a computer and internet.
The student and tutor need basic information technology skills.
Training is required for both tutor and student.
The development of high-quality learning materials is time-consuming and expensive.
Online tutoring can be more time-consuming than face to face tutoring.
Learning is a social process and many people enjoy face-to-face interactions.
The use of the large virtual learning environments is expensive and may demand additional equipment and specialized staff.
Some learning environments require state of the art computers and the most up to date browser.
Blended solutions can be expensive as they may involve the development of expensive online learning resources and providing technology based support as well as face-to-face support.

CONCLUSION

Information technology is developing at a rapid change in the structure and dynamics of the information society. Library professionals cannot run away from this change, they have to accept the challenge they face in the new millennium. E-learning is the distinct area of study and part of the wider mosaic to learning, knowledge management and information exchange within an electronic environment.

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