



WEB BASED LEARNING AND LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The online education is getting the world wide acceptance to every discipline of study. The technology replaced the traditional mode of regular class room teaching learning process. For the working people and for the drop outs or discontinued their regular study at any circumstances, can be made use of this web based learning technology. Today many universities are conducting online learning and are accepted in the job market also. MOOC is a recent development in the online learning system which is open to all for free. Worlds many reputed universities are providing online education through MOOCs. Library and Information Science is also involving in the e learning. In India, it is still to be developed a lot for LIS.

Key words : Web learning, online learning, MOOC, LIS education, SWAYAM

INTRODUCTION

The growth of Technology is happening within the fraction of a second. Information technology is also developing in a spectacular speed. The influence of technology in every field is increasing day by day. Thus today's education is technology based which impart high result in the teaching learning process. In library and information Science the influence of web based learning touched in each and every area. The information explosion forced the librarians to learn and apply the new technologies and become the technology based librarian known as information scientist. An information scientist should manage the electronic resources and must have the skills for applying the new technology in the services and processing. For this he/she should be updated in the new technological developments in the field. The learning through the World Wide Web is the easy and efficient methods for the working professionals so that they can study at any time without affecting their duties and responsibilities. Web based learning is the need of the day in the present IT society. People are very busy in their life and work. So they urge time and place of learning according to their convenience. The web learning support the learners in selecting the time and place of learning for the learners. Web based learning is considered synonymous to e-learning, online learning, Computer Based Learning(CBL), Online Resource Based Learning(ORBL), Networked Collaborative Learning (NCL), Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL)etc(1).

There are many information sources are available online in the areas of LIS. Today Information Technology plays the major role in the improvement of quality of education. If we integrate the technology with the curriculum, there will be a leap in the learning process.



The LIS teachers should be technology adaptable and in accordance with the technology based teaching. The teachers as well as students must acquire the technological skills in the modern era. The web based technology enables the students to learn themselves, students interaction, open atmosphere and independence in time and place. The Openness, freedom and collective intelligence are the attributes of web 2.0(2) . The web learning is used mainly in open universities, and for the distance education. The web learning or E-learning is an effective tool for the distance education.

Features of Web based learning

There are many features for the web learning. They are:-

1. Involves computer communication Technology
2. Learner supported
3. Learner centered
4. Available 24x7
5. Learning at anywhere, any time
6. There is no time limit for the study/access
7. Resources are available in the electronic format
8. No need of a teacher
9. Can be interacted with others and clarify doubts
10. Self learning is possible

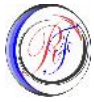
When we are learning through the computer based learning system, involves many advantages and disadvantages. The major advantages are given below,

Advantages of web learning

1. No need to go to the regular class room.
2. Facilitates the non formal mode of education
3. Resources can be downloaded and used later
4. Allow the working professionals to learn without affecting their routine job
5. Improve the efficiency of distance education programme
6. Easiness of updating and revision.

Disadvantages of web learning

1. The infrastructure facilities like Computer with internet connection, multimedia facility, etc are a must.
2. If the network connection is down, learning cannot be possible
3. As there is no time limit to complete the learning, the learning will be extended if it is not a serious learner
4. Lack of online learning skills(3)
5. It may be costly and time consuming
6. Lack of human contacts
7. All courses or teaching cannot be delivered through the web.



Modes of Web based learning

The web based learning can be imparted in various modes. They are:

Self learning: It is informal means of learning. Here there will not be a teacher for the study. The learner himself will collect/ search the required materials and the related resources depending on the interest and area of study. Here the learners can use the resources at anytime, anywhere and any means. There will not be any predefined form of teaching/learning.

Group learning: The group learning comprises of the learning by group. Here the interaction between the learners can be done and for this there will be a prescribed time for the group to gather/ sign in to the web. In the group learning, there may or may not be a teacher through which they can clear their doubts and can providing the group discussion on the topic of interest. This may be formal or informal types of learning. Video conference will be effective for the interaction of the teaching learning process.

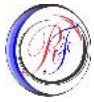
Institutional learning: This is strictly formal learning and there should be teacher and prescribed syllabus for the course. This type of learning ensures a predetermined time and place. The videoconferencing is also used for the study. The students should enroll the course and they will intimate the norms and the details of the study. In this the students have to pay for the learning and the fees will be determined by the Institution for each course. At the end of the study the student will be awarded a degree and the certificate will issued by the institution. This is a type of distance education.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

The MOOCs were started in 2008 and became a popular learning mode in 2012 (4). The main goal of MOOCs is an online course open to the infinite participants through the internet. It is defined as “MOOCs are courses designed for large numbers of participants, that can be accessed by anyone anywhere as long as they have an internet connection, are open to everyone without entry qualifications, and offer a full/complete course experience online for free” (5). MOOCs are mainly meant for nonprofit making and of delivering free of cost. MOOCs help the people who wish to learn a course from any reputed institutes in the world without going there to enroll as a regular student. Thus introduction of MOOCs is a revolutionary change in the field of learning. There are many MOOC providers/platforms. Some of the major MOOCs platforms are given below_;

edX

It is meant for the non-profit making and is launched *Circuits and Electronics* by MIT through the MOOCs to the learners of the world. Then the Harvard University joined to the MIT for improving the course, labs, home work and examinations(6). Now it is providing with partnership of other universities also. It provides courses on various subjects and more than 90 institutions are participated in it(7). Now the use of this platform is all over the world as well as in India.



Udacity

It is started in Stanford University as the 'Introduction to Artificial Intelligence' course for free to anyone by the Sebastian Thrun and Peter Norvig in 2012. Currently about 2 lakhs students are enrolled from more than 190 countries and presently it offers 33 courses from various disciplines(8).

Coursera

It is a profit based learning platform *established by two computer Professors Andrew Ng and Daphene Koller* in 2012. It is a platform for the hosting and the services related to application level. Currently there are 1600 courses, more than 130 specializations, more than 145 partner universities and 22 million learners in this platform(9). It enables mobile learning, provides **academic and technical**. The courses contain Lectures as recorded video, auto graded and peer reviewed assignments and the discussion forums. After completion of the course, the learner will get a sharable electronic course certificate (10).

Types of MOOCs

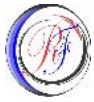
MOOCs are of two types: cMOOCs and xMOOCs. The cMOOCs are based on the connectivist philosophy and are similar to the traditional way of learning and xMOOCs are the more traditional than the cMOOCs. In the xMOOCs, prescribed course structure and syllabus is followed and the videos of lectures and self test problems are included (11).

MOOCs in India.

SWAYAM (STUDY WEBS OF ACTIVE-LEARNING FOR YOUNG ASPIRING MINDS) is the MOOCs initiative by the Ministry of Human Resources Management (MHRD) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Govt. of India. Swayam provides the opportunities for those who intended for lifelong learning. It is designed successfully to bring about the 3 educational policy namely, access, equity and quality. The courses of SWAYAM will be operated in 4 quadrants. They are (12):- (1) video lecture, (2) The materials prepared specially for the course which may be downloaded/printed (3) self-assessment through tests and quizzes and (4) an online discussion forum for clearing the doubts. The 2016 UGC regulations imply the universities for the identification of courses in which the transfer of credits can be possible to the academic record of students who have done the courses through SWAYAM. There are seven National Coordinators for the operation of SWAYAM and they are NPTEL for engineering, UGC for post-graduation education, CEC for under-graduate education, NCERT & NIOS for school education, IGNOU for out of the school students and IIMB for management studies.(13).

Web learning in Library and Information Science

Like any other discipline, the online / web based education is influenced in the LIS education also. Integration of information technology in the LIS education became the



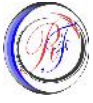
teaching learning process very easy. There are many sources that we can access through the internet related to our LIS field. We can learn the new technology based services, their preparation, use and dissemination to the needed. Today a number of online courses are emerged in various subjects including Library and Information science. The web based learning system improved the continuing education programme in the profession so that they can learn the new technologies and apply it in the profession while working. Many online courses are offered for Library and Information Science all over the world. This may or may not free of cost depending on the course. The reputed Universities like University of Pittsburgh, University of Michigan, The State University of New Jersey, Kent State University, etc. are offering online masters degree in Library and Information Science. University of Arizona giving post graduate certificate courses in library and information science.

CONCLUSION

The role of library professional is changed from the mere issue and return and the care taker of the books in the library. More than that he/she is an information scientist or information professional who procure process and disseminate the information for the users. So a librarian/ library professional should be a lifelong learner and the present day technology helps him/her for updating his /her professional knowledge through the web technology. The online education is the revolutionary change in the educational system which influences in all disciplines including the LIS. In India, online courses in Library and Information Science are still in the infant stage. It will gain its full strength in the near future with the effective utilization of the newly emerging technologies.

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