

Prospective Teachers' Attitude towards e-learning: A Case of Pakistan

Dr. Tariq Hussain

Assistant Professor

Dr. Aroona Hashmi

Assistant Professor

Nisar Abid

PhD Scholar

Faryal Zahid

M.T.E. Student

Institute of Education and Research

University of Punjab, Lahore

Abstract

E-learning is a form of education which implies involvement, motivation and efficiency in communication. E-learning deals with the ability to share material via different electronic media. Therefore the recognition of the pedagogical and technological dimensions of e-learning is important as it concerns the development and application of technology enhanced courses. This study was conducted to explore the attitude of prospective teachers towards e-learning. This is quantitative exploratory study based on a cross-sectional survey. The sample consisted of 360 prospective teachers from the Institute of Education and Research. On-proportional stratified random sampling technique was used. A questionnaire consisting of 30 items on five-point Likert-Type scale was developed, the reliability coefficient was $\alpha = 0.78$. The data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Results of the study indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in attitudes toward e-learning by gender. It is suggested that educational planners should consider the prospective teachers attitude towards e-learning while developing e-curriculum.

Keywords: Attitude, E-learning, Prospective teachers.

Introduction

It is generally believed that e-learning creates the flexible, collaborative and learner centered environment which is only possible through the advancements in technology and new developments in educational process (khan, 2005).E-learning can incorporate an extensive variety of online activities. It is a wide approach to consider e-learning as the utilization of electronic media (PCs, tablets, and telephones and so forth.) to instruct or prepare prospective teachers. E-learning empowered or upheld learning by the utilization of computerized devices and substance. The fast advancement and broad use of email; chat rooms; informal organizations; intelligent interactive media applications; web gatherings; and web advances modified the traditional approach of teaching to the modern methods (Yamamoto, Demiray, Kesim, Yuzer, Demirci & Eby, 2011; Yapici & Akbayin, 2012). Different specialists believed that e-learning brought the innovation in instructional methods and virtual learning (Manjulika& Reddy, 2000; Connolly, Stansfield & Hainey, 2007).

It is widely accepted that attitude is the positive or negative feelings of a person about performing the target behavior (Ajzen&Fishbein,1980).Attitude deals with the possibility to perform and accept certain behavior (Breckler& Wiggins, 1992; Davis, 1989; Hao, 2004; Harris, 1999).Prospective teachers' positive or negative attitude towards e-learning will contribute to their activities regarding online learning which effect their behavior to use advance technological methods to study(Venkatech, 2000; Zanna & Rempel, 1988). There is diversity in learners' visions on computer-based learning. Therefore, the exploration of prospective teachers' attitudes towards e-learning can assist to define the degree of the utilization of e-learning system (Ong& Lai, 2006). Martinze (2004) indicated that the measurement of attitude towards e-learning may be helpful for the teachers to better prepare future teachers in the light of e-learning.

Numerous investigations were made to determine the impact of demographics on prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning. Similarly, previous researches report that there are some socio-demographical elements such as gender, financial like month to month pay, level of education, or another intellectual components which have generously contributing in the establishment of the computer, internet and e-learning attitudes in educational setting (Nassoura, 2012). As indicated by Ndume, Tilya and Twaakyondo (2008), negative attitude towards e-learning might be due to absence of understanding, absence of correspondence, and absence of trust or clashing agendas in suitable use of technology. Some objective instructing and awareness trainings are most likely needed to develop the positive attitude among the prospective teachers and strengthen people's view regarding the e-learning

Several studies have prominent the learners' and lecturers' attitudes toward e-learning (Robertson, Calder, Fung, Jones & O'Shea, 1995; Todman & File, 1990; Kirkman, 1993; Gattiker & Hlavka, 1992). However, Learners and lecturers in developing countries have varying but normally positive attitudes towards e-learning (El-Gamal & El-Aziz, 2011). Nassoura, (2012) highlighted that positive attitudes of many learners and lecturers towards e-learning which can positively affect their impulse and self-esteem. We can say that e-learning has brought the innovation in the field of education and converted traditional teaching methods to modern pedagogical approach.

The increased availability and usage of computer networks and the internet are generating a changing climate in education. Prospective teachers benefit endlessly from e-learning as they must manage their busy life whereby they are required to do their practical work at the school, college or university etc. The goal of this study was to explore the prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning.

Objective of the Study

This study was aimed to explore the prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning.

Research Questions

- What is the difference between male and female prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning?
- Is there any significant difference between prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning in terms of sessions?
- Is there any significant difference between prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning with respect to regular and self supporting programs?

Research Methodology

The quantitative approach was adopted to investigate prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning. The research design was descriptive in nature; a cross-sectional survey method was used to collect the data. The population of the study was consisted of all the prospective teachers enrolled in master degree program at Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore. The total number of prospective teachers at Institute of Education and Research (IER) was approximately 2500. A sample of 360 prospective teachers including male and female; morning and self-supporting program of sessions (2015-2017) and (2016-2018) were selected by using non-proportional stratified random sampling technique. Self-developed questionnaire was used as an instrument of the study by the researchers. It was consisted of 30 items. Responses to item statements were made on a five point Likert scale from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. The validity of instrument was censured by supervisor and two educational experts. The reliability coefficient of the scale was $\alpha = .91$ which was excellent. Researchers personally visited the classes and collected the data with the kind permission of the class teachers. It was clearly expressed to the prospective teachers that this data will be used and taken only for the research purpose. The data were analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Mean scores and standard deviation (SD) was computed. T-test was applied to find out the difference in the prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning in terms of gender, program and session.

Results of the Study

RQ1. What is the difference between male and female prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning?

Table 1 Comparison of prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning on the basis of gender.

<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>p</i>
Male	115	1.19	16.63	-.65	244	.09
Female	245	1.19	14.62			

Table 1 represents that the mean score of male respondents ($M=1.19$, $SD=16.63$) and female respondents ($M=1.19$, $SD=14.63$). No difference was found between the attitude of male and female prospective teachers towards e-learning [$t(244) = -.65$, $p = .09$].

RQ2. Is there any significant difference in prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning in terms of sessions?

Table 2 Comparison of prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning on the basis of sessions.

<i>Session</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>P</i>
2015-2017	180	1.63	16.28	1.01	174	.49
2016-2018	180	1.63	14.20			

Table 2 indicates there were no significant differences in mean scores of session 2015-2017 ($M=1.63$, $SD=16.28$) and session 2016-2018 ($M=1.63$, $SD=14.20$); [$t(174) = 1.01$, $p = .49$]. Hence, it is concluded that prospective teachers attitudes towards enrolled in session 2015-2017 and 2016-2018 were essentially the same.

RQ3. Is there any significant difference between prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning with respect to regular and self supporting programs?

Table 3 Comparison of prospective teachers' attitude towards e-learning on the basis of programs.

<i>Program</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
Morning	180	2.71	14.88	-1.68	174	.31
Self-supporting	180	2.71	15.59			

Table depicts that the mean score of morning program ($M=2.71$, $SD=14.88$) and self- supporting program ($M=2.71$, $SD=15.59$) No statistically significant differences were found between the attitudes of prospective teachers in the two programs. [$t(174) = -1.68$, $p = .31$].

Conclusion

There were no statistically significant differences by gender, session or program type regarding attitudes towards e-learning in this study. Other independent variables in other populations may yield significant differences. No significant difference observed between the attitude of male and female prospective teachers towards e-learning.

Discussion

It is widely considered that e-learning empowered or upheld learning by the utilization of computerized devices and substance as well as it also facilitates the prospective teachers to improve the quality of education/ learning (Yamamoto, Demiray, Kesim, Yuzer, Demirci & Eby, 2011; Yapici & Akbayin, 2012). It is revealed by the findings of the current study that male and female prospective teachers of IER have the same level of attitude towards e-learning; however another study conducted by Akimanimpaye (2012) found the opposite result that male and female nursing students of Western Cape University had different attitudes towards e-learning at the undergraduate level. Non-significant mean difference was also found in attitude of prospective teachers towards e-learning in terms of sessions and programs.

Recommendations

- Educational planners should consider the prospective teachers attitude towards e-learning while developing e-curriculum.
- Information and Technology Resource Centers (ITRC) should be established in educational institutes to overcome the problems while using the tools related to e-learning.
- Teachers should teach prospective teachers how to use different technology related to e-learning.

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