

Awareness of Online Learning Among Post Graduate Students: A Study

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Abstract In order to capitalize on the potential of digital technology as a learning tool, there is an urgent need of the professional development of teachers. It allows teachers to construct professional knowledge about pedagogy, content and technology as well as strategies for managing the changing classroom environments. Teachers have to develop competence in teaching in the digital world order and redefine their role in technology based learning. The term “information explosion” really means an explosion of knowledge. New frontiers of knowledge are opening day-by-day and the horizon of human knowledge and understanding is expanding very fast. In the present days all above mentioned knowledge information and skill is imparted by the education institutions. Online education originally began through various companies and their training courses. When a new employee was hired online training courses were used to prepare the employee.

Keywords: classroom change, professional knowledge, digital technology, learning technique.

1. INTRODUCTION

Latest development in the learning sciences and technologies provide opportunities to create well-designed, learner-centered, engaging, interactive, affordable, efficient, easily accessible, flexible, and meaningful, distributed and facilitated online-learning environment. Every teacher at present prepares themselves to work in such an environment. A teacher is no longer viewed as the transmitter of knowledge or dimensions of wisdom, but as a diagnostician, guide, assistant, whenever appropriate exchanger, stimulator, promoter and an interactive participant in the education process. Teachers have to develop

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competence in teaching in the digital world order and redefine their role in technology based learning.

1.1 Online Learning: Meaning

“Online learning is the process of education i.e., learning, teaching obtaining knowledge and skill through internet”. The internet is method of communication, interaction, entertainment, health, trade and commerce, students can visit websites not only to download desired information but also to ask questions till out examination forms solving questions papers and learning information from the teacher so through online education student can learn acquire knowledge information and skill of particular work or job without attending any class but sitting in the house or wherever internet is available.

1.2 How Online Education Works?

After researching the best accredited institution are required to apply to one of the college’s degree programs. Once accepted into an online program students are asked to sign up for appropriate courses. After the registration process is complete and students are accepted into the program, the real work begins. Students begin their course studies by logging onto the internet. Once they’re in their appropriate classroom they’ll learn by reading assignments asking questions and receiving instructor feedback. Some courses even offer forums and chat rooms where students can gather with or without the instructor to discuss assignments. Finally students are graded on homework assignments final project and test scores.

1.3 Online Learning and Its Tools

There are many tools of communication on internet. They include E-mail listers, news group, internet conferencing etc.,

- 1. E-mail:** The desire to communicate is the essence of networking. E-mail is the most basic form of communication on the internet and by far the most popular one used in education and research. It facilitates communication from one person to another in the form of non-interactive transmission of text data graphics etc. it is very fast confidential and instills a sense of connectedness. Document can also be attached to e-mail messages.
- 2. Listers:** Listers are also called mailing lists. They provide an opportunity for those in education and research to share ideas on common interests. These are usually used for discussions.

3. **Internet conferencing:** It has great potential for learning in higher education. It facilitates greater opportunity for a dialogue between learners and the instructors as well as amongst the learners. These programmes require that both the users be connected to the internet simultaneously.
4. **E-publishing:** Most of the publishers are choosing web as an access-medium using HTML to mark up the journal contents so that it can be read using a web browser. Most of the reputed publishers learned and commercial societies are hosting their products on the net.
5. **Library services through the internet:** Use of library and the use of internet are positively related to education attainment. Traditional information research tools and sources found in the libraries have been recently supplemented by the information available on the internet. Digital library concept may be elaborated as a process of electronically acquiring, storing and disseminating the data to the users.
6. **E-learning:** E-learning is also called online learning. It refers to learning and other supportive resources that are available through a computer. In an online lesson, the computer display material in response to a learner's request. Here online systems refers to continuous and active interaction between two servers through the internet, E-learning is developed to apply information technology skills to education.

2. NEED FOR THE STUDY

The present study attempts to assess the online learning awareness among the Post Graduate students of Arts and Science colleges in Erode district. It also suggests methods to create sustain and improve the Post Graduate Students awareness of online learning.

2.1 Statement of the Problem

Being future professionals, Post Graduate students should be made aware of the importance of online-learning in the teaching learning process. In this backdrop, the present study attempts to find out the "awareness of online learning among Post Graduate students of Arts and Science Colleges in Erode District". It also suggests methods to improve and sustain the Post Graduate student's awareness of online learning.

2.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

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1. To study the significant difference between male and female Post Graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.
2. To study the significant difference between first year and second year Post Graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.
3. To study the significant difference between science and arts Post Graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.
4. To study the significant difference between Post Graduate students with computer knowledge and without computer knowledge in terms of awareness on online learning.
5. To study the significant difference between (Place of stay) Hosteller and Day scholar of Post Graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.
6. To study the significant difference between the variables of usage of Internet among Post Graduate students' in terms of awareness on online learning.

2.3 Hypotheses of the Study

In the light of the objectives, the following null hypotheses are formulated for testing.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female Post Graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.
2. There is no significant difference between First year and second year Post graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.
3. There is no significant difference between Science and Arts students of Post graduate in terms of awareness on online learning.
4. There is no significant difference between Post Graduate students with computer knowledge and without computer knowledge in terms of awareness on online learning.
5. There is no significant difference between (Place of stay) Hosteller and Day scholar of Post Graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.
6. There is no significant difference between the variables of usage of Internet among Post Graduate students' in terms of awareness on online learning.

2.4 Methodology in Brief

As the present study is descriptive by nature, normative survey method was adopted. As many as 250 Post Graduate students from various departments of

Arts and Science colleges in Erode district were chosen as sample by using a simple random sampling technique.

2.5 Limitations of the Study

Though online-learning is a vast subject the investigator restricted himself only to limited area for this study. The investigation is only on awareness of online-learning among Post Graduate students of Arts and Science colleges in Erode district. The investigator has attempted to collect data from only six departments from Three Arts and science colleges in Erode district due to constrains of time and money.

2.6 Methods and Procedure

The investigator used a standardized form of questionnaire and the items were validated verified with the help of research guide and the subject experts. The tool was administered to the sample selected in Arts and science colleges in Erode District, data were collected from Post graduate students of various Departments.

2.7 Research Method

The investigator used normative survey method in this study to collect data from the Post Graduate students of Arts and Science colleges in Erode district. In this study the investigator used a questionnaire to collect the data from the respondents.

2.8 Construction of Research Tool

The investigator developed and used an online learning awareness questionnaire in order to find out the Post Graduate students' awareness about the online learning. As a first step, 40 items were given under various dimensions, in the form of an online learning awareness scale. The expert opinions were taken into account and on the basis of their remarks, some items were modified and some rewarded. Thus a total 30 statements were given up in the Questionnaire.

2.9 Description of Research Tool and Scoring

The research tool consisted of two parts, the part-A deals with General Information about the respondent and the part - B deals with Awareness on online learning questionnaire. The former part of the research tool was designed to seek information about the personal characteristics of the respondents such as sex, discipline; year of study, computer knowledge, place of stay etc., and

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the later part of this tool was developed in order to study the Post Graduate students' awareness on online learning.

2.10 Validity of the Tool

Only highly discriminating items are included in the questionnaire. The content validity has been established by considering the experts view in the field of Educational Technology and Computer applications.

2.11 Pilot Study

The researcher conducted a pilot study to select and modify the tool. The researcher distributed and collected the tool from 50 Post Graduate students, who were studying various PG courses in Erode district.

3. SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE

Random sampling technique was adopted for the present study. The sample of Post Graduate students was selected in a random manner. The sample

Table 1:

S.No.	Variables	Sub-variables	Sample	Total
1	Gender	Male	170	250
		Female	80	
2	Year of study	I year	119	250
		II year	131	
3	Discipline	Science	157	250
		Arts	93	
4	Computer knowledge	Knowing computer	223	250
		Not knowing computer	27	
5	Place of stay	Hosteller	47	250
		Day scholar	203	
6	Usage of internet	Department	129	250
		Browsing centre	92	
		Home	29	

selected from various Departments of Post Graduate students of Arts and Science colleges in Erode district were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Thus total of 250 students. The break-up of the sample was presented.

3.1 Statistical Techniques Used

Statistical techniques serve the fundamental purpose of the descriptive and inferential analysis.

1. Mean and Standard Deviation
2. 't' test for determining the significance of difference between means of two sub-groups used in the study.

3.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Hypothesis: 1 There is no significant difference between male and female Post Graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.

Critical value at 0.05 level = 1.98 Calculated 't' value = 0.56

The above table shows that "There is no significant difference between male and Female students of Post graduate in terms of awareness of online learning. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis: 2 There is no significant difference between First year and second year Post graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.

Critical value at 0.05 level = 1.98 Calculated 't' value = 0.59

The above table shows that "There is no significant difference between First year and second year Post graduate students in terms of awareness of online learning. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis: 3 There is no significant difference between Science and Arts students of Post graduate in terms of awareness on online learning.

Table 2:

Variable	Sub variables	N	M	S.D	t-value	Significance at 0.05 level
Gender	Male	170	98.51	9.93	0.56	Not significant
	Female	80	99.45	13.23		

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Critical value at 0.01 level = 2.59

Calculated 't' value = 5.12

The above table shows that "There is a significant difference between Science and Arts students of Post graduate in terms of awareness on online learning. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis: 4 There is no significant difference between Post Graduate students with computer knowledge and without computer knowledge in terms of awareness on online learning.

Critical value at 0.01 level = 2.59

Calculated 't' value = 6.8

There is a significant difference between Post Graduate students with computer knowledge and without computer knowledge in terms of awareness on online learning. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis: 5 There is no significant difference between (Place of stay) Hosteller and Day scholar of Post Graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning.

Table 3:

Variable	Sub variables	N	M	S.D	t-value	Significance at 0.05 level
Year of study	I year	119	98.36	10.11	0.59	Not significant
	II year	131	99.19	11.92		

Table 4:

Variable	Sub variables	N	M	S.D	t-value	Significance at 0.01 level
Discipline	Science	157	100.54	12.06	5.12**	Significant
	Arts	93	95.98	8.63		

Table 5:

Variable	Sub variables	N	M	S.D	t-value	Significance at 0.01 level
Computer Knowledge	Knowing computer	223	98.37	12.92	6.8**	Significant
	Not knowing computer	27	89.55	4.96		

Critical value at 0.05 level =1.98

Calculated 't' value =2.39

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is a significant difference between Hosteller and Day scholar of Post graduate students in terms of awareness on online learning. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis: 6 There is no significant difference between the variables of usage of Internet among Post Graduate students' in terms of awareness on online learning.

Critical value at 0.05 level = 1.98 Calculated 't' values = 1.10, 1.39 and 0.73

The calculated t values 1.10, 1.39, and 0.73 are less than the table value 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the difference in the awareness mean scores under considerations is not significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

3.3 Major Findings

1. It is concluded that the male and female post graduate students do not differ significantly and have similar regarding awareness on online learning.

Table 6:

Variable	Sub variables	N	M	S.D	t-value	Significance at 0.05 level
Place of stay	Hosteller	47	103.68	18.77	2.39*	Significant
	Day scholar	203	96.93	9.74		

Table 7:

Variable	Sub variables	N	M	S.D	t-value	Significance at 0.05 level
Usage of Internet	Department	129	99.30	11.87	1.10	Not significant
	Browsing centre	92	97.67	9.55		
	Home	29	101.07	11.53	1.39	Not significant
	Browsing centre	92	97.67	9.55		
	Department	129	99.30	11.87	0.73	Not significant
	Home	29	101.07	11.53		

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2. It is concluded that the first year and second year students do not differ significantly and have similar regarding awareness on online learning.
3. It is concluded that the post graduate students of science and arts differ significantly in respect of their awareness on online learning. Further the science students have more aware of the online learning than their counterpart arts post graduate students.
4. It is concluded that the post graduate students differ significantly regarding awareness on online learning. Further the post graduate students with computer knowledge have more aware of than the post graduate students without computer knowledge in respect of their awareness on online learning.
5. It is concluded that the hosteller and day scholar student differ significantly regarding awareness of online learning. Further the post graduate students of hosteller have more awareness of online learning than the day scholars.
6. It is concluded that the post graduate students who utilized internet at home, at browsing centre and at the department do not differ significantly with respect of their awareness on online learning.

4. DISCUSSIONS

The study reveals that there is no significant difference between male and female in terms of awareness on online learning among Post Graduate students which is supported by [4,5] and [5] also studied on awareness and usage of e-resources is not significantly differ between Previous and final year students. There is a significant between arts and science students and there is no significant difference between male and female students. It is because of the majority of the students belong to rural and there is no proper infrastructure in the college. [6] opined that awareness on online learning is usage of online resources and students could not access online resources. The present study reveals that the students those who are having more knowledge on computer they have more awareness on online learning. It is supported by [2,3,8] also studied due to lack of knowledge the students could not get much awareness on online learning. The students who are staying hostel they have more awareness on online learning. It is due to lack facilities in the house of the students could not aware on line learning which mean lack of awareness. Awareness is paramount for all kinds of learning [1,7] suggested that the poor user skills in navigating e- resources and high cost of internet subscription restricted access to e-resources by post graduate students in Nigeria Universities.

5. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on the above given findings and conclusions, the present study offer the following suggestions and recommendations.

1. It is imperative that steps are taken to create comprehensive awareness of Online learning among the Post Graduate students of Arts and Science colleges in Erode district.
2. Steps must be taken to extent the scope of the ICT in Education cause of the Post Graduate Programme of Arts and Science colleges in Erode district.
3. Post Graduate Students are to be encouraged to visit the Online Learning portals and review them.
4. Steps must be taken to train the Post Graduate students of Arts and Science colleges in Erode district in access of online.

6. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the investigator offers the following suggestions for further research:

1. As the present study has been taken up only with Post Graduate Students of Arts and Science colleges in Erode district as sample, studies with students of other universities as sample may be taken up for the further research.
2. Attempts may be taken to study Online Learning awareness among teachers of private, government and government aided schools teachers educators working in colleges of different types may also be taken as sample for further research.
3. This same study can be replicated with more advanced statistical analysis in terms of gender, locality, computer literacy, marital status, and other relevant variables.
4. Comparative studies can be taken up to compare the online learning awareness of the scholars of this university with the scholars of other universities.

CONCLUSION

The investigator has gain lots of insights in to the e-learning . In this study, the investigator explain the method and procedure followed for the present study under the captions like selection of the tool, sampling techniques and collection of data. In this study various data collected from post graduate students of Arts and Science colleges in Erode district have been analysed and

interpreted. Now with the increasing complexity of modern times, education faces ever-changing new demands, the Post graduate students have to bear the brunt of the changes. Hence, the students need to be sensitive changes and has to be ready for the future changes. They have to possess awareness, knowledge and skills with regard to Online Learning.

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