



The E-Learning Landscape In Punjab: Insights From Public And Private University Students

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ABSTRACT

E-learning is considered as the latest form of learning that makes the use of Internet in order to deliver interactive learning materials among a diverse group of students. In India, e-learning is widely being adopted by firms for enhancing their operations and by government for providing mass education. This study used descriptive research design where, primary data is collected from the students who are enrolled in the top three public and three private universities of Punjab. The primary data was collected from 400 respondents by stratified sampling method through questionnaires. This study inferred that respondents found to have positive perceptions towards e-learning as e-learning supports teaching-learning process. it allows to use smart gadgets for writing an online assignment, article, blog etc; and it was found to be beneficial for both students and educational institutions.

Keywords: E-learning, perception

A. Introduction

E-learning which generates significant performance gains for students is being introduced in the curricula of many universities in India. E-learning educates students using learning material that is fully enriched with multi-media content (Archana, *et al.*, 2013). Educators are able to communicate the teaching material to wide-spread audience from across the globe using this technology. The online self-learning support provides students with online lectures, e-text, e-exercises, e-quizzes and so on, thereby delivering higher quality in learning. However, the success of the e-learning program depends on the rate of adoption of technology by students. Understanding the student preferences, intentions and purpose for using e-learning would be help in designing and implementing better e-learning programs, thereby increasing the student acceptance for these courses. Educational institutions in India are leveraging technology to reach a large number of students with quality education at low cost. Many universities In India have integrated in their curriculum with e-learning, which is one of the many tools that have emerged from information technology. E-learning is a self-directed learning that is based on technology, especially web-based technology with an emphasis on collaborative learning (Bleimann, 2004). The growth of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and internet facilities increases the overall e-learning market size in India. As a result, the virtual classroom facilities, K-12 and vocational training are introduced. The popularity of e-learning is on a rise in India as it is bringing a paradigm shift in the lives of the students. It hones the skills of the students while providing the comfort of anytime, anywhere learning! It has unlocked new career avenues for students who are driven to explore and learn– at their own pace and time. There is an increasing affinity of students for new technologies and products, as there is a huge potential for technology to be integrated into education industry. Students are embracing 'self-learning' through e-learning teaching models, which act as a significant communication bridge between students and teachers. Nowadays, teachers do not give only lectures; rather, they are facilitating an e-learning environment through embracing new age digital media technologies serving the education industry.

The main aim of e-learning is to convert a teacher-centered learning approach to student-centric. The main intention of e-learning is to improve learning skills, problem-solving capacity, and collaborative nature. It can be achieved through a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) set-up. Thus, many universities enabled VLE to provide e-learning services in India (Laaziz & Elkhoulzai, 2018).

B. Review of Literature

Sharma, et al., (2024) aimed to examine factors influencing the e-learning adoption among Indian youth. The authors developed the conceptual model using Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in which a couple of new variables such as social influence and perceived enjoyment were included in the traditional model. With the help of a new model, the study determined intention to adopt e-learning among Indian youth. This investigation advocated the use of e-learning in which students may shift from traditional classroom setting to the virtual classroom. In this study, Primary data was collected from PG students of an educational institution which were selected using snowball sampling. Two major statistical software such as AMOS and SPSS were used for running tests like Structural Equation Modelling, cross-tabulation and pearson correlation etc. It was found that intention to adopt e-learning among Indian youth was determined by perceived usefulness, ease of use, and social influence.

Safiaah, et al., (2024) argued that COVID-19 caused closure of educational institutions that adversely affected the constructive learning process for a longer time period. The study aimed to examine the attitudes, and barriers to e-learning among medical students at a University in Syria. The study used a cross-sectional survey in which questionnaire was developed as a data collection tool that was used to collect data from 519 students of the selected university. The respondents were selected using convenience sampling and survey was undertaken in 2021-2022. Findings suggested that majority of the students had a negative attitude towards e-learning, however, they were found engaged in various e-learning activities like downloading the learning content from the internet. The study found that weak internet connection was one of the major barriers to the access to e-learning. In addition, lack of technical skills, poor communication with educators, limited access to devices, and limited space conducive for studying were also identified as barriers to e-learning.

Abdullah & Kauser (2023) investigated students' perspective on online learning during pandemic in higher education in the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. It was a quantitative research using cross sectional research method and online survey was distributed using Google forms where $n < 400$. Chi square and regression analysis results revealed that students performance in education sector was not up to the mark and encouraging where the obstacles identified were absence of appropriate technology and learning skill, discontinuous supply of internet, newly adopted marking in grading system, and the mental hindrances of the student itself. It was observed that students particularly in Azad Jammu and Kashmir were not finding any benefit out of the online learning methods during Covid-19 pandemic and were seriously lacking and lagging behind in their education.

Beik & Cho (2023) conducted a meta-analysis of differences in Korea and US on effects of goal orientation on online learning. It was a secondary study that was conducted on 27 papers from present century. Outcomes from the study exhibited goal orientation having a high average effect size with learning immersion, learning participation, and intention to continue learning. Study concluded that state was not found to play any moderating role between goal orientation and academic achievement however moderating effect was observed depending on the type of goal orientation. Korea had a collectivist culture while US enjoys an individualistic culture and in this study difference between goal orientation and academic achievement did not exhibited any statistical significance in connection to both of the studied countries which indicates that culture might not influence online learning.

C. Objective of the study

1. To measure perceptions of Students towards e-learning in Public and Private Universities of Punjab.

D. Research Methodology

The present study has used descriptive research design in which data is collected from the students who were enrolled in the selected public and private universities of Punjab. According to National Institutional Ranking Framework, 2022, the present study selected respondents from top 3 public and 3 private universities of Punjab.

Source: <https://www.nirfindia.org/Rankings/2022/UniversityRanking.html>

It was found that the above mentioned universities have been offering e-courses in various disciplines such as engineering, management, liberal arts, sciences and humanities etc. at both under-graduate and post-graduate level. The present study used stratified sampling for the selection of respondents from each selected university of the state. Therefore, the present study selects sample size of 400 which is calculated based on Slovin's formula (Hariyani *et al.*, 2021).

The present study developed 15 statements for measuring student's perceptions towards e-learning. The selected respondents were requested to rate these statements on a five-point Likert scale in which "1 represented strongly disagree and '5' represented strongly agree". These statements were developed by reviewing the existing literature relating to student's perceptions towards e-learning. (AlHamad, 2020).

E. Analysis

Student's perceptions of e-learning

Before, analyzing mean score of the statements under student's perceptions of e-learning, it is advisable to check data reliability that would guide on the further application of statistical tools. Findings on data reliability are mentioned as below:

Table 4.17: Reliability of the statements on student's perceptions of e-learning		
Statements	No. of items	Cronbach alpha
Statements on Student's perceptions of e-learning	15	.946

The above table revealed the findings on reliability of the statements on student's perceptions of e-learning and it was found that the statements were reliable as cronbach alpha was greater than the recommended value. Data collected on these variables were analyzed using mean score and findings are given below.

Table 4.18: Student's perceptions of e-learning			
Statements		Mean score	Std. Deviation
S1	E-learning allows anytime-anywhere learning	3.93	.712
S2	E-learning helps to simplify resource sharing	3.84	.804
S3	E-learning enables better communication and collaboration between faculty, staff and students	3.84	.854
S4	E-learning courses are compatible with existing teaching-learning methodology	3.98	1.029
S5	E-learning allows to learn in various formats like videos, presentations, online lectures etc.	3.94	.985
S6	E-learning allows flexibility and scalability of resources	3.97	1.078
S7	E-learning supports teaching-learning process	3.92	.982
S8	E-learning allows to use smart gadgets for writing an online assignment, article, blog etc.	4.13	.837
S9	E-learning is beneficial for both students and educational institutions	4.03	.943
S10	The educational institutions offer requisite support to adopt e-learning system	4.15	.878
S11	E-learning reduces the physical learning cost	4.00	1.014
S12	There is a strong need to adopt e-learning technologies to meet high education standards	3.98	1.072
S13	E-learning helps to use innovative learning methods	4.27	.873
S14	E-learning provides relevant and high quality course contents	4.31	.807
S15	E-learning involves low cost	4.33	.790
Source: Primary data			

F. Findings

Findings showed that e-learning allows anytime-anywhere learning; E-learning helps to simplify resource sharing; and e-learning enables better communication and collaboration between faculty, staff and students. Respondents believed that e-learning courses are compatible with existing teaching-learning methodology; it allows learning in various formats like videos, presentations, online lectures etc.; and it also allows flexibility and scalability of resources. Respondents were found to have positive perceptions towards e-learning as e-learning supports teaching-learning process; it allows to use smart gadgets for writing an online assignment, article, blog etc; and it was found to be beneficial for both students and educational institutions. Further,

students reported that the educational institutions offer requisite support to adopt e-learning system; e-learning reduces the physical learning cost; and there is a strong need to adopt e-learning technologies to meet high education standards. Respondents believed that e-learning helps to use innovative learning methods; e-learning provides relevant and high quality course contents; and e-learning involves low cost.

G. Conclusion

The present study revealed that e-learning courses enable users to accomplish tasks more quickly and use of e-learning helps to learn and communicate faster; such students were more likely to adopt e-learning systems. It was noted that students having the knowledge and resources to use e-learning platforms are more likely to adopt e-learning courses.

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