

“Journey from Reality to Virtuality”: the Impact of Ict in Education

Manjusha C B¹ Dr.V.Vijayalakshmi² Mohankumar S³

¹Research Associate, Division of English, SAS-SSL, VIT University, Chennai

²Assistant Professor, Division of English, SAS-SSL, VIT University, Chennai

³Research Associate, Division of English, SAS-SSL, VIT University, Chennai

*Corresponding author Email: manjushacb@gmail.com

Abstract

World around is moving towards the technologically ruled phase where every sector has got the impact of the ICT. In such a scenario, educational system is also taking up a different sphere where technology is used in the process of teaching and learning. From turn the pages of the book, the milieu has become swipe the screen. Myriads of evolution are happening in the field of education making it reachable at all nook and corners. The objective of this research article is to torch out how ICT is used to enhance the process of learning in the most comfortable manner. From those alphabets to inculcating the human values, ICT serves as a platform to make learning easier. The inclusion of ICT in curriculum will serves the purpose of learning and it also helps those underprivileged to acquire knowledge through the developments in the educational schemes. To nail it down, this research critique is an attempt to elucidate how the virtual learning milieu triggers the process of learning making it productive and enjoyable.

Keywords: Computer technology; Cultural barriers; Education; ICT; Learner oriented; Virtual learning

1. Inroduction

In the recent past, there has been multitude of news articles crashing around stating the problems of unemployability and school drop outs, it could be found that the numbers of school drop outs are increasing and the engineering graduates are doing menial jobs to earn for their livelihood. The reason for the both may be many but the common reason is the traditional method of education where importance is given to theoretical aspects than the practical. Though the engineering graduates come out with high scores, they are not able to crack out in the interviews because of their low proficiency in language ability. From various researches made, it is stated that a change in the process of teaching and learning will enhance the language ability of the learners. Integrating ICT in an innovative way will change the current fading education.

Ms. Louis Ross has rightly stated-"Online you get to know your students' minds not just their faces." ICT helps the students to learn and unlearn things at their pace without any interferences. This kind of convenient method of learning helps the students to learn, understand and experiment the theories confidently as they are not thrown in a situation to face the negative comments.

2. Virtual Learning Software

There are plethoras of virtual learning software's that are available and one such is the Liqvid e-learning. From an article titled "Liqvid e-Learning Services: Vivek Agarwal's Rs 15 crore firms cashes in on demand for English" by Samarpan Dutta, it is found that in his formative years, Vivek Agarwal ,the founder of Liqvid e-leaning services which is an educational software company is

assisting people to master the preferred language even sitting at home. Liqvid's products are available at over 1,000 locations across 300 cities, including schools, premier institutions and corporate. From this, the revolution of e-learning and the importance given to the world of virtual learning could be seen. The reason for the education forum to accept such kinds of technology is mainly due to the global village or the clouds. Global village or clouds connects the people from any part of the world under one roof through internet as its medium. There is plethora of fruition that is happening in the world of education. Among the various changes, teaching and learning through e-learning is a kind.

From the back ground study made, it is understood that the process of learning and teaching through ICT has brought in a positive change. As of a study titled "Use of Technology in English Language Teaching and Learning" by Solanki D. Shyamlee, it is stated that "preferably, the function of both the traditional and CALL assisted classroom is to offer a liberty in which the process of learning, and education itself, happens" (Shi, 2008: 76).

Virtual learning not only ensures learn at ease facility but also an innovative method of learning. The world is taking up a form filled with technology and education is a platform which should be reshaped with technology. When printed books are replaced with e books and when boards are swapped with smart boards, even when the traditional method is redesigned with ICT, the process of education itself will be looked upon in a different perspective. There are ample of applications which are used like learn English by listening, voice tubes etc which has made the teaching learning milieu an interesting one. Even facebook, Google Drive are the part and parcel of virtual learning. When the technology is used effectively, the outcome will also be positive.

3. Virtual Learning Platforms

There is multitude of virtual learning platforms which makes learning easier at even second of life. A few such commonly used sources are NPTEL, Coursera, IITBombayX, HarvardX, MOOCs, Khan Academy and so on which offers classes, notes, video lectures and certificates of course completion at the end of the course on completion of exams. Such web mediators of education help the students to get connected to the world outside which paves way for them to get enhanced. All these platforms are of great use in gaining knowledge as well as in enhancing the acquired knowledge. The world outside the traditional classrooms is much tougher and challenging which extracts the practical usage of knowledge than just the theoretical concepts. It is such development in technology which assists the students to face the competitive world with high challenging profiles with all needed eligibilities.

4. Research Methodology

Methodology espoused for this research is simple random sampling adhering to the convenience sampling principle. The respondents chosen for this study are 60 students pursuing final year in varied streams encompassing Engineering, Arts and Science. In order to understand the interests shown by the students towards virtual learning and using ICT in classrooms, a survey was done through which the various opinions and views of the students were collected.

5. Research Tools

The researcher made use of the survey questionnaires, informal interviews and discussions to pursue the research thereby to achieve the objectives of the research study.

5.1 Research Profile

The objectives of this research study are

- To understand the interests of the learners towards Virtual learning
- To understand the ways of how ICT enhances the process of learning
- To comprehend the different ICT platforms used by the students in the process of learning
- To analyze the psychological state of the students who prefers ICT and CALL classrooms over traditional classroom
- To expound the need of using ICT in Humanities classes to inculcate moral and human values through technology

5.2 Data Analysis

The chosen respondents have stated you tube and multimedia packages are preferred by them to enhance their knowledge and language ability. It is also understood that the presentation of topics through ICT is different from the way how it is in the print form.

(Table 1: Represents the different sources chosen by the percentage of respondents)

Sources	Percentage
You tube	75%
Multimedia packages	60%
Ted talks	55%
Books	28%

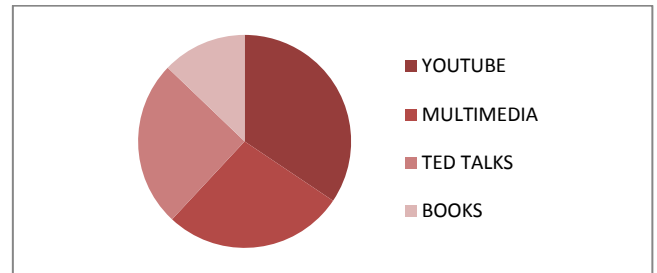


Chart 1: Represents the different sources chosen by the percentage of respondents

Similarly, 82.5% of the respondents have mentioned that using ICT in the classrooms helps in the process of learning by making the entire process easier as they have sufficient time to understand the concepts and listening to the lecture any number of times. 78% of the respondents have stated that CALL oriented classrooms assists them in understanding things better and are equipped to do their projects effortlessly. Than the theoretical textual concepts, present generation students prefer ICT classrooms with Project Based Learning approaches as they can explore the concepts and visualise it through the projected videos. 90% of the respondents responded that books are useful in preparing for competitive exams where importance is given for the theoretical knowledge.

Almost 85% of the respondents are much aware about the need for enhancing their practical knowledge to meet the demands of the industry. For this, they say than the traditional learning, when technology is used in the process of teaching and learning, concepts could be understood better as it can be visualised through the videos, images and the graphics.

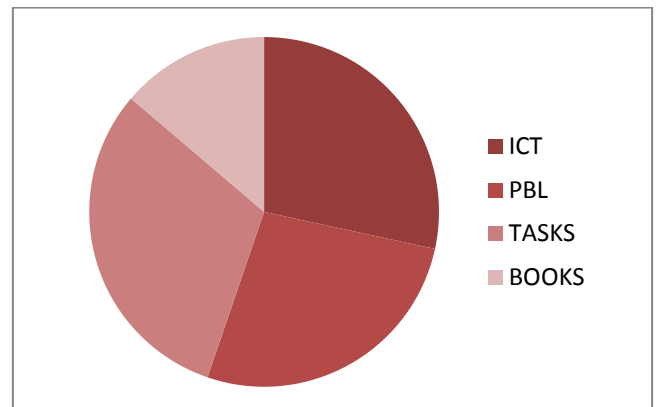


Chart 2: Represents the different sources chosen by the percentage of respondents

6. Socio Cultural and Psychological Barriers and Virtual Learning

This study has helped the researcher to understand the socio cultural and psychological barriers overcome by the students in virtual learning milieu. In a traditional classroom, there are many chances for the students to face insults and mockeries, especially a first generation learner will not be in a situation to view out their opinion because of various socio cultural and psychological issues. Where as in a virtual learning environment, the learners are neither distinguished nor differentiated. There is uniformity and the students do not hesitate or fear the ridicule or mockery.

Experiences gained by the students in the world of virtuality learning are better than the traditional classroom system. Even in the process of grading and evaluating the test papers and assignments, it is advisable to use technological assistance so that the myth or truth of partiality is avoided. Journey from reality to virtuality in the process of learning is a fruitful experience where students explore, experience and enhance their knowledge beyond

socio cultural differences with a positive psychological state of learning.

7. Ict in Education – Need of the Epoch

From the study made, it is understood that ICT in education is much need of the epoch. Amalgamating ICT with the traditional methods of educational system will add on to better results as things are simplified. Virtual learning atmosphere gifts learners with visual surprises which triggers the interests of the learning community. Gone are the days when many efforts had to be taken to understand the concepts of engineering, medicine and language. With the evolution of information and technology, magic could be done in the educational sector provided the facilitator and the learner have the interest in acquiring knowledge. When humanoids are replacing the manual works, changes in educational practices is to be made to secure the future of the upcoming generation.

If the article titled “70% Engineering Graduates Unemployed in State” by S Mannar is to be changed and if the status of the current education scenario is to be turned up, the effective use of ICT is in demand. From the primary level of learning till the collegiate level, the importance of English language is to be implemented to enhance the learners. This could be achieved only through effective use of ICT which has so far made the biggest difference in almost all the arenas. It is clearly an indicator of Milton’s lines “to make heaven out of hell and hell out of heaven”. Creative eyes of the educational system are to be opened to embrace the technological developments.

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