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Effective E-Learning Integration with Traditional Learning in a Blended Learning Environment[1]

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ABSTRACT

In higher education and the workplace, e-learning is a new tool that leverages cutting-edge technology to give training and development. The Internet and the enormous prospects in global education have helped it grow quickly. This study's objective is to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of e-learning when combined with conventional instruction in a blended learning setting.

The study will compare a blended learning environment against a strictly electronic learning environment. The report will also offer guidelines for a mixed learning environment that all three of the primary stakeholders—students, teachers, and institutions—can use to decide strategically on learning and teaching activities.

The paper comes to the conclusion that approaches to blended learning provide the most adaptable and scalable path to e-learning.

INTRODUCTION

When taking an online course, students want to be confident they are getting the best instruction possible from highly trained professors, many of whom they will never encounter in person. In order to validate their perception of quality and efficacy in a virtual learning environment, students must heavily rely on other psychological and sociological stimuli (such as diplomas, instructors, industry, background, instructors, research, publication, school accreditation, certification, etc). (Malala, 2004).

This raises the question of whether students would be adequately prepared to enter the workforce after completing their education solely through an E-Learning mode, as well as how successful and efficient E-Learning is. The quality of the education and training they receive is a major concern for students, who have very high expectations for their education.

They want to learn new things, expand their knowledge, sharpen their skills, and get value for their money. Does e-learning offer all of these, and if not, do we have an other approach that might offer all of them and meet students' expectations? When implementing e-learning, it is crucial to identify the variables that influence students' perceptions of the value of the education. Before implementing any virtual learning environment, the two stakeholder groups—academic institutions and tutors—must resolve these concerns to the satisfaction of the students. Whatever the best technology used to build the E-Learning environment, if students are not satisfied, it is of little use.

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It is essential for educational institutions, universities, and businesses to take advantage of this rapid development in information and communication technologies in order to improve learning environments and meet the constantly rising demand for education and training. The technological revolution in information technology has led to rapid growth in all fields of knowledge.

In this regard, educational institutions and private businesses have rushed to offer distant education programmes, as noted by Malalla (2004) and Sonwalkar (2002). There are three ways to look at the advantages of this form of education. Distance learning offers greater access to options for postsecondary education while allowing students to be liberated from geographical, temporal, and age-based restrictions. While from the viewpoint of the business, distance learning should entail giving employees the chance to receive training, enhance their professional skills, and be able to pick up new talents for relatively little money without having to put their careers on hold for an extended length of time.

From a state's point of view, distance education should entail expanding enrollment and offering possibilities for learning to those who live distant from educational institutions while incurring the fewest expenditures possible, i.e., without the need to hire additional local instructors or develop new facilities. The literature contains the terminologies and definitions for this kind of schooling. However, as it encompasses additional forms including open education, home study, and independent study, the term distance education is the most applicable. It also demonstrates its fundamental trait, which distinguishes it from conventional education and is the physical distance between the teacher and the student (Keegan, 1990). Another way to phrase it is that distance learning can be seen of as "an umbrella term encompassing correspondence courses, televised teaching, radio-broadcast, open learning, computer-assisted instruction, personalised learning, and self-learning" (Sauve, 1993, 102). When a teacher and student(s) are physically apart and technology (such as voice, video, and print) is used to close the instructional gap, Willis (1993, 4) argued that distant education is taking place. "A structured teaching/learning experience that incorporates a wide spectrum of technologies to reach learners at a distance and is meant to foster student involvement and certification of learning," according to Greenberg (1998, 36), is what distant education is. With the recent advancements in technology and the widespread use of computers and the internet, it has become simple to deliver distance education via the internet, and ideas like e-learning have emerged as a result (Akkoyunlus & Soylu, 2006).

The Current Role and State of E-Learning

The possibility for a new medium to give courses to those who live far from the institution in the form of text, audio, and video has captivated academic institutions throughout the world. This is because it eliminates the need to develop new facilities or hire additional faculty members (Malalla 2004). The majority of academic institutions readily adopted e-learning as a substitute for traditional classroom instruction. The adoption rate was extremely quick, quick, and ubiquitous (Malalla 2004). The teachers and professors who had a growing interest in the technology and Computers showed great interest in online teaching and learning. They showed determination to invest time and resources to discover the complexities of E-Learning to make it a universally accepted theory. In every university, almost every teacher is making effective use of technology and transforming some or all of the existing course material into the E-Learning environment. There is a growing number of online courses around the world. Not just the universities but many private companies are making use of E-Learning to provide training courses. Malalla (2004) argues that with the increase in course offerings, there is an increase in research interest and other scholarly pursuits from both the corporate perspective and the academic standpoint. Almost every field of interest is making use of E-Learning in one way or another.

According to Abbad et al (2009), E-learning refers to the use of information and communication technologies to enable the access to online learning/teaching resources. In its broadest sense, defined E-learning to mean any learning that is enabled electronically.

However, they honed in on the meaning of this phrase, defining it as learning that is supported by the use of digital technology.

The word "e-learning" is used in a variety of contexts, including dispersed learning, online-distance learning, and hybrid learning, according to Maltz et al. (2005). According to OECD (2005), e-learning is the use of information and communication technology in a variety of educational processes to support and enhance learning in institutions of higher education. This includes using the technology to supplement traditional classroom instruction, engage in online learning, or combine the two. According to Wentling et al (2000), the term e-learning refers to the attainment and use of knowledge that are predominantly facilitated and distributed by electronic means.

Most colleges and corporate training centres now provide some or all of their courses online, according to Sonwalkar (2002). These days, universities all over the world offer a wide variety of online courses in subjects including IT, business, medicine, and sports. The literature on this subject shows that E-Learning is being quickly implemented in every discipline by both industry and academic organisations. Nowadays, virtually any university in the UK does not provide some type of online education, known as E-Learning. There are some universities which are offering postgraduate degrees to students from all over the world via E-Learning. Some of the universities have a complete department dedicated to E-Learning research and development.

BACKGROUND OF E-LEARNING HUMAN COMPUTER INTERFACES ARE OF COURSE AN INTEGRAL ISSUE IN DESIGNING E-LEARNING PACKAGES

Much research has explored the design of advanced interactive systems to provide for a high quality user experience. For E-Learning it is important to develop advanced interactive spaces that enable the users to evolve their own conceptualisations of the learning material and follow individualised pathways through interactive constructivist-constructionist learning with maximum learning autonomy unhampered by hard-wired learning styles and pathways.

The broad adoption of E-Learning to increase student access to higher education and employee training in the workplace is driven by advancements in electronic communications, the Web, the Internet, and related technologies (Hameed, et al, 2007). These days, it's routine practise to save and manipulate data on computers in order to evaluate student performance. The majority of computer-aided based courses can be taught using the same software and technology. The educational material in an E-Learning system has to be very carefully structured so that the student can follow a logical path through the lesson. E-Learning systems have evolved into complex systems; so that it can often be difficult for a teacher/ developer to know the best regime to follow when starting to develop an E-Learning system (Hameed, et al, 2007).

The beginning of electronic communications, the Web and the Internet and associated technologies have produced a change in which E-Learning is seen as a means towards improving access for learners to higher education and improving employee training in the workplace. There are two interpretations of E-Learning implicit within the work in this paper. One definition is that of E-Learning designated as predominantly or almost entirely enabled by online access to virtual learning experiences but without multi-modal, multi-media and/or social network support. This designation is used for the purpose of comparing and contrasting such a purist E-Learning approach with the more advanced and modern characterisation of E-Learning which is distinguished in this thesis as blended learning with social network support such as may be facilitated by Web 2.0 technology-enabled spaces e.g. IM, U-Tube, web logs, wikis etc. E-Learning is revolutionary and it is a time for a new and fresh approach. The main advantage of E-Learning is that it focuses on the individual learner. The new approach of thinking of the learner as a customer has changed the whole process of learning. In the past training and learning was organised for the convenience and need of only two stake holders mainly instructors, institutions and ignoring the third and in some respect the most important one, a learner or student (Cross, 2003).

Advantages and Benefits of E-Learning

E-flexibility learning's and accessibility, both in terms of time and place and in terms of being accessible to a larger population, are its key advantages. A student can now learn whenever and wherever there is a computer, according to their schedule. E-Learners have access to the E-Learning resources at any time of day from their homes, places of employment, or other preferred locations. Additionally, individuals have control over how quickly they read through the material. Students can create learning spaces in their own homes.

This was preferred, according to TKlein and Ware (2003), to any "official" area given to the E-learner by the hiring organisation. Students can earn internationally recognised degrees from reputable UK colleges while continuing to reside and work in their native countries. No matter which university created the course, e-learning enables students to select one that is acknowledged as the best in the subject. E-learning eliminates geographical barriers and difficulties that older students may have historically had, such as having to move homes or locate new schools for their kids. If they prefer to study part-time, they can also continue to work (Walmsley 2003).

E-learning is affordable and available from a corporate perspective. In 2002, Rockwell Collins needed to train its 2,500 employees on a crucial course, and traditional learning would have only allowed for 200 employees to be educated annually. However, the corporation was able to teach 800 of its employees using e-learning in the first two months (Jones 2002). Instead of organising a training course, it enables workers to learn in real time and gives them access to the material, whenever they need it.

The ability to refer back to any section of the material that the employee does not feel completely comfortable with is another benefit. According to statistics, e-learning can deliver 30% more training information in 40% less time and for 33% less money than more conventional methods (Beckett 2004). The ability to work with something that they can alter and control to a far higher level than traditional residential courses is another benefit for businesses. As a result, they are able to design training programmes that meet their specific corporate requirements. Due to the potential student base's global reach, E-Learning's ability to bring together students from different cultural backgrounds encourages interactions that might not otherwise occur.

E-learners have shown E-Learning to be effective and to improve learning outcome and speed. This is explained by the fact that the average E-student will be mature in employment that this will lead to more employees learning on-line while at work, the importance of this is that there is a growing realisation by students, employers and universities that, by combining work and study, learning takes place at a deeper level of understanding and students are able to apply their knowledge more effectively (Donoghue, et al 2002).

Disadvantages of E-Learning

The most notable disadvantage of E-Learning is its lack of social interaction. Many students need social interaction in order to perform academically well and thus find distance learning difficult. A student studying a subject in isolation will require a great deal of motivation, time management and a focused approach. A traditional bricks and mortar environment provides the chance for a relationship to develop between students and tutorials facilitating the exchange of ideas (Hasebrook, et al 2003).

In order to address this, Bourner and Flowers (1997) propose adding a "human touch", and Daniels (1996) proposes that the academic community shift its focus away from the campus as a unifying centre. He contends that colleges should foster a sense of "institutional belonging" among faculty, staff, and students. With pupils never really meeting their tutor or fellow students, it is challenging to understand how this system might function. Additionally, it should be mentioned that the online student needs to have strong computer and Internet proficiency in order to register, communicate, download, see, and take tests (Dellanna, et al 2000). This must be taken into account when deciding what type of course content to offer and what skills the student needs to register for the class. This places an obstacle to those who do not have these skills, often these people are fearful of new technology, and predominately are mature students. From this view point it is difficult to see how E-Learning will support integration into the learning system (Hameed, e al 2007).

The term "soft skills" refers to a class of training that simply cannot be taught by e-learning. Interpersonal, verbal, communication, leadership, and initiative abilities are some of these. While online education programmes have numerous benefits over traditional brick-and-mortar ones, there are concerns that they may not adequately teach those soft skills (Walmsley 2003). These soft skills are frequently crucial life skills that improve employability. This issue brings up the age-old conundrum of the student who performs exceptionally well in the classroom but struggles to share his knowledge with others due to poor communication skills. It is asserted that developing relationships between students and their instructors as well as among themselves is essential to a good educational experience. Carole Fungaroli, Professor of Literature at Georgetown University, makes this point: ìTeaching isn’t just about

disseminating. A lot of what I do involves assessing how much you understand or my students understand, questioning them. We do a lot of discussions (Kling 2003).

As Blass & Davis (2003) point out, feedback in an online learning environment may be delayed, text-mediated, or simply too context-dependent to be able to be recreated through a phone call or email two days later. E-Learning does not provide the student with the same opportunities for explanation and clarification that occur in face-to-face interaction. The nuances of speech and interaction that are present in face-to-face conversation are generally lost in electronically mediated communication, they add. It is very often easier to explain something to someone who is sitting in front of you then it is to explain the same thing to them in writing, especially when it can be considered that a great deal of human communication is non-verbal. Another disadvantage of E-Learning is that it can be difficult to engage some students in meaningful and productive work in an E-Learning environment (Jones, et al 2000) and some authors even advocate that virtual learning environments make no contribution to learning. Others consider that the medium is impersonal (McConnell, et al 2002).

BL, on the other hand, is a contemporary instructional method that gradually superseded e-learning in most educational institutions, according to Salma (2005). It has greater returns, is less expensive, combines more complex forms of learning, and is a rational and scientifically valid alternative to e-learning. Similar to this, Garrison and Kanuka (2004) asserted that BL is a word that describes the numerous efforts made by educators to incorporate technology into the traditional classroom setting due to the effectiveness this setup delivers. The goal of blended learning is interactive learning, which combines or mixes a teacher's role in a regular classroom with that in a virtual one. The technology applied in BL is often intended to generate optimal performances by students. According to Graham (2006), BL systems are intended to promote learning by facilitating the integration of visual cues and educational concepts. The use of virtual environments acts to capture the attention of the audience involved while augmenting interactions between subject parties.

Blended Learning

A new strategy called "blended learning" has been created in response to the drawbacks of e-learning. The fundamental idea behind this is that interactive multimedia tools will be used in private study in addition to traditional classroom instruction. There is proof that this method of instruction is effective. According to a two-year cross-industry study by Thomson Learning, a blended curriculum is significantly more effective in increasing employee productivity than traditional classroom instruction (Walmsley 2003).

Blended learning has gone through an evolution process of many years and different institution has given a different description of it. According to Mayadas and Picciano (2007), the main purpose of blended learning for higher education establishments is to achieve a great sense of localness. Mayadas and Picciano (2007) define blended learning as a combination of face-to-face and online learning. In simple terms it is the combination of instructor led traditional learning and computer aided learning (E-Learning) environments. Blended learning comes in many shapes and types.

As described by Picciano (2006), blended learning may be used to enhance the traditional lecture with additional readings, electronic instructor notes and images of charts, graphs, or other handouts in one course. In another course, online learning may be combined with face-to-face instruction so that rather than meeting in a classroom three hours a week, a course meets two hours per week with the third hour consisting of an online threaded discussion.

There are two core elements of blended learning (online and face-to-face instruction) and both are very critical in defining blended learning (Picciano 2006). According to E-Learning India (2007) blended learning model comprise of the following elements which are mixed in varied proportions to meet different organisation ís requirements.

- Learning through information
- Learning through interaction
- Learning through collaboration
- Learning through classroom

This means that blended learning involves the appropriate blend of different components which includes courses, contents, feedback, and many other things. This means that the blended learning can solve the ubiquitous problems associated with most E-Learning models such as speed, scale and impact (E-Learning India 2007). According to Picciano (2006), blended learning in the broadest sense can be defined or conceptualized as a wide variety of technology/media integrated with conventional, face-to-face classroom activities. But to be specific blended learning is a blend of fully online and face-to-face instruction.

Of course, there are a number of technical restrictions on how courses can be delivered, most notably the need for broadband Internet connectivity and a relatively powerful personal computer, according to Klein (2003). The creation of E-Learning programmes that are viable commercial goods is another restriction. The development of courses that use interactive case-based learning and are aimed at specialised audiences is frequently expensive (Klein, et al 2003).

The lack of skilled web authors is one of the most significant technological constraints for e-learning. It is obviously difficult to find authors who have this combination of talent and skill, as opposed to an ordinary author, who only needs to have the skills to write a successful web-based training course. He also needs to be familiar with new learning technologies and learn how to make his course lively and engaging (Klein, et al 2003). Companies and individuals both vehemently disagree with e-learning. Individual resistance can be fairly common in the older generation, often the main target of E-Learning initiatives. It is thought that is partly because E-Learning is so similar to the normal working environment and it does not provide the necessary level of stimulation for learning to take place. Thus in blended learning, technology is seen as being possibly useful in supporting face-to-face teaching, enabling students to interact with learning material in their own time and place, i.e. asynchronous to the constructivist tutorassisted teaching sessions.

The use of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) to mediate blended learning fits well within the existing e-learning content interoperability framework as PCK deployment is based on open content. SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model). IMS Global Learning Consortium (2003) describes a specific way to deliver e-learning content such that it is re-useable, shareable, durable and accessible (Badii & Mothersol 2007). There is evidence which indicates that in certain circumstances E-Learning may enable students to work at their own pace and personalise the direction of their learning. Potentially, the Internet is a resource which enables students to communicate and access data in different media forms. Optimistically, web-based technology may provide a learning infrastructure, with features considered vital within the constructivist theory of learning: namely, students belonging to a community of learners, co-constructing knowledge using societal artefacts and tools .

PREVIOUS STUDIES

A number of studies have examined how utilising computers in the classroom affects numerous factors, with achievement being the most crucial. Nuno [16] developed and evaluated a software application that included 42 English audio clips to teach English phonetics to 60 kindergarten students in order to address the question "Is computer-aided teaching an effective instrument in the teaching of reading and writing in the classroom?" The study's findings confirmed the importance and efficacy of computer-assisted instruction in contemporary classrooms.

Pajtek (2002) examined the effects of internal motivation in a computer programme that used graphic forms and other programmes that did not use these forms on the achievement, trends, and deep participation of 65 underachieving students. She compared computer-aided teaching with paper-based instruction in terms of efficiency and motivation. The study was conducted at the site of a normal school over the course of one semester. Data related to three groups were collected: the control group (33 students); the alternative treatment group in which the students received computer-aided teaching without graphics formats; and the experimental group where the students received computer-aided instruction with a graphic shapes extension for 20 minutes three times a week. The results did not show any statistically significant difference in academic achievement, trends, or attendance among the three groups. However, the increase in academic achievement reached the level of statistical significance.

The goal of Khalafullah's (2010) study was to determine how well e-learning and BL developed the abilities necessary to create instructional models. Students studying educational technology at Al-Azhar University's Faculty of Education made up the study sample. To develop the skills required to create instructional models, the researcher randomly picked 35 students and gave the two groups each an accomplishment exam and note card. The findings of

the researcher's application of the two educational systems he had created revealed the value of e-learning in direct lectures for raising students' cognitive achievement. This method was also effective in developing practical performance of skills. The results also revealed the effectiveness of integrated learning in increasing the achievement of students' skills and developing the practical performance of skills. The study also showed the superiority of the integrated teaching group over the e-learning group in terms of achievement of skills and of the e-learning group in terms of performing production skills of models.

Klimova (2010) analyzed and evaluated the BL approach and its learning materials in a course of Business English and discuss its efficacy as far as the learning outcomes are concerned within a wider international setting. The results of the study revealed that the use of BL approach in teaching Business English did not show much effectiveness; nevertheless, the students were satisfied with the BL strategy and prefer it to the traditional based learning.

Lal and Jundi's study (2011) aimed at detecting the trend toward e-learning among 462 male and female secondary school teachers in Jeddah, focusing on gender, specialization, and work experience, among others. The results showed a trend where teachers of scientific specialization with less than five years of work experience who had attended educational seminars in the field of e-learning were more engaging.

Kinsara's (2009) study aimed at investigating the impact of a computer-based education strategy on the direct and deferred achievement of students on a Teaching Techniques course, compared with individual and traditional methods. This study was implemented on a sample of 90 students from the Teachers College at Umm Al-Qura, who were distributed into three study groups according to the treatment type. To achieve the study objectives, the researcher used a number of tools, such as a computer education program, testing the previous requirements that had been built to measure the students' basic experiences in the course and classifying the students into three levels: low, medium, and high pre- and post-achievement test. The teaching strategy, the level of student achievement, or the interplay between these two were all considered to be factors in the lack of statistically significant variations in the direct achievement of Educational Techniques course students. Comparing the cooperative computer group to both the individual and conventional computer groups, the results similarly revealed statistically significant differences in the cooperative computer group's favour. On the direct and postponed examinations, the average student performance in the individual computer group was statistically different from the average student performance in the cooperative computer group, which did not show a statistically significant difference.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The experiment was conducted with a class of 100 students at Imam Al-Kadhum University College who were taking the Methods of Teaching course in the English Department. The course was broken up into two sections, with half of the material delivered online and the other half in-person with online support. To conduct the experiment, a multi-method strategy combining closed-ended and open-ended questions was used. The questionnaire was delivered in the class and was also available online.

Five point Likert-type scale was used for closed ended questions to measure the degree of learning where 1 was strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. The open ended part of the questionnaire asked questions about the reasons for high or low learning achievements.

Assessment Framework

It's critical to be able to evaluate changes in teaching and learning effectiveness in terms of quantifiable results.

Thus, it is suggested that the following dimensions of comparative and contrastive analysis be used to evaluate the influences of the various teaching and learning approaches:

1. Process Improvement in terms of the effectiveness of the instruction and learning, as determined by the proper tests and assessments

2. The stakeholders' level of experience, particularly that of instructors and students

3. The degree of stakeholder involvement in both physical and virtual venues as additional support for points 1 and 2 above.

RESULTS

The most important factor for learning is considered to be the teaching method design and its effectiveness. Teaching method ineffectiveness can lead to poor performance from the students. Students in blended learning mode expressed an experience of more learning in classroom discussion, assignments and personal interaction with tutors than the students in E-Learning who solely relied on online contents. It was found from the gathered data and analysis of the data that there were no significant differences between both the groups in E-Learning and Blended learning mode in terms of the learning achievement. From this it can assume that delivery mode may not affect students learning to a significant degree.

According to a study by Lim et al. (2007), students using e-learning reported a greater burden than those using mixed learning. This was also demonstrated in the experiment since the students were unmotivated due to the large amount of work they had to complete in a short amount of time without receiving any feedback. Students who only use online resources receive less help than those who use mixed learning, who also have the chance to interact with their tutors in person (Lim et al 2007). The results indicate that teamwork is crucial in both learning styles to increase students' engagement with their peers.This experiment also suggests various recommendations for the two stake holders, academic institution and instructors to provide best learning environment to the third stake holder students.

The recommendations also confirm the strategies of Lim et al (2007). The recommendations are

- Instant and Fast Response
- Fast technical support
- Providing students with the progress report on their achievement
- Making environment more dynamic and robust

When it comes to teaching and supporting learners, blended learning appears to be superior to e-learning (Lim et al, 2007). Students who use e-learning encounter more difficulties, obstacles, and issues than those who use mixed learning (Lim et al, 2007).

One of the causes of this is that the instructor is completely unavailable in the E-Learning mode to give prompt feedback or responses to any pressing questions. Students who use e-learning also stated that they learned less than students who use blended learning since they did not comprehend the technology and subject matter. Additionally, according to the findings, blended learning mode is more transparent and learner-focused than E-Learning mode. Lim (2004) also emphasised on the clarity of instructional resources in E-Learning. Different teaching and learning methods such as group discussion, group assignments, class assignments, class discussions are considered the most effective learning activities for learners and all these are best practice in a blended learning environment than just in E-Learning. It is clear that blended learning is more important and is here to stay.

ICT-enhanced learning should sustainably and kindly support teachers and students with improved Quality of Learning and Teaching Experience in order to continue to achieve their teaching and learning goals, i.e., gaining and improving their knowledge more quickly, gaining experiential insight about the subject matter, and correcting teaching and leaning practises. This is an underlying confirmatory observation supported by empirical observations. Essentially by reference to the evaluation framework set out in the methodology section to be deployed for comparative and contrastive analysis of the efficacy of various (e)-learning modalities, through invoking a relevant set of criteria such as process improvement, quality of experience and physical and/or virtual participation evidence, we can see that Blended Learning as augmented with Social Networking, Co-learning and Knowledge Co-Creation Support shows the highest potential for adding value to the learning experience and learning efficiency gains as confirmed by this and other empirical research.

Finally it is important to ensure that the learning is supported by some novel, fun-oriented and certainly invitational, if not provocative, tools and spaces that can intrigue and retain the attention of the learner and sustain a motivated interest to learn both alone and socially as and when appropriate. This is to support learnerís self-perpetuating follow-through with learning and thus the establishment of self-fulfilling habits for life-long learning that, at their best, will almost always involve a personalisedbalance, to suit individual learning styles, along the various dimensions such as solo versus group, instructor-led versus autonomous learning. From an infrastructural standpoint there has to be an assumption of readily available and share-able multimedia learning resources and tools for selecting, accessing, enhancing and customising such resources as bundled learning objects or composites. These must be ubiquitously available to all teachers and learners through dedicated interfaces and spaces for selecting, sharing and choreography authoring of learning objects and their presentation flow management. The fact that the take-up with collaborative tools such as seminars and discussion boards is not as high as it could be expected as observed in this and other research studies; confirms that there is still some work to be done to characterise e-learning as social blended learning as distinct from the traditional image of it as essentially there to serve solo distance learning - found to be dominant in the mindset of many students few of whom used the chat-and-share facilities for e-learning whilst downloading notes was the dominant form of support that they routinely expected to receive from e-learning environments.

CONCLUSION

In a virtual learning environment that is supplemented inside a mixed learning environment framework, this study has documented the value of technology and in-person tutoring. However, when given the chance to do so on a wide scale, students and instructors will base their final conclusions on the efficacy of both blended learning and e-learning. In order to avoid setting students' expectations too high, academic institutions must be very transparent and realistic about what they are providing to the students. The actual success of universities resides in the happiness and success of the students, not in the recruitment of a huge number of students based on an effective marketing plan. At the same time, universities should provide necessary training to the tutors with all the latest technology and E-learning packages which are essential for teaching and tutors must also show enthusiasm to learn about new technology and use them in the teaching process. Academic institutions should also invest into research in the area of E-Learning and blended learning. It is learning for all the three stake holders and no one should take it for granted.

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