



Available online at www.behaviorsciences.com

Reef Resources Assessment and Management Technical Paper

ISSN: 1607-7393

RRAMT 2014- Vol. 40, 2014, 1



Establishing E-learning Platform designed to change staffs' behavior and improve their performance

Ali Kaboudcheshm ^{a*}, Mohammad Beyrami ^b, Hassan Safari ^c, Mohammadkazem Seyedi ^d

^aGraduate of Master's Degree in Educational Technology (Tehran South Branch of Islamic Azad University)

^bPh.D. Student Curriculum Development (Young Researchers And Elite Club, Marand Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marand, Iran)

^cGraduate of Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology (Islamic Azad University of Ardabil)

^dGraduate of Master's Degree in Educational Technology (Tehran South Branch of Islamic Azad University)

Abstract

Traditionally, education is a sure way to cover disability, needs and skill and expertise of those who have been indoctrinated. Education can be accurately planned and we can expect changes in learners' behavior and performance and the desired position can be programmed to change the situation. Today, ignorance, being unskilled and incapability of staffs and managers in organizations and institutions are considered as problem. Doing time is prolonged due to the inability of staffs skills. More time to do affairs, more costs and so productivity will come down. At the management level, clumsy, hasty and non-strategic decision in the affairs is another consequence of unskilled staffs. What should we do to speed things done and update the human resources and consider the current problem in companies and institutions (unskilled staffs)? The research studies and evaluates the context of Iranian National Distribution Company including personnel interests and capabilities and the company facilities toward E-learning. The surveying descriptive research method is a feasibility study and considered as applied one. This research was done in the actual environment of Iranian National Distribution Company. All managers of the company's branches, sale supervisors, and sellers of 34 active branches of the company in the country are included in the research statistical community. Total 256 persons were selected as the statistical sample out of a total 565 of statistical communities. It is worth mentioning that the sampling was done as per Morgan Charter. The data of this research was collected in two methods: A. Data collection by studying books and documents in library; B. Data collection through questionnaire and research results showed that the facilities of the company are enough, the capability of personnel to use computer is in the middle level and the majority of the staffs are interested in E-learning.

© 2014 Published by RRAMT France Ltd.

Keywords: Feasibility, Education, E-learning, Remote Distance Learning, Staff Education;

1. Introduction

Traditionally, the change is the characteristics of the organizations that are calling attendance in competition with his fellow organizations. According to Johnson, anyone who opposes the change, is bound to collapse. One the surest ways to change thoughts, behaviors and skills, is education. Updating thoughts, information and abilities of staffs and managers is one reason for the survival and progress. In the new era, with the arrival of computer, the business sector as a whole has been changed. Characterized by the information explosion is the today age that has been occurred by the rapid growth of technology. The fast development of information technology has created an environment that all

organizations must be prepared to deal with it to remain open to the path of growth and development. With the arrival of computers to the life of humans alongside the expansion of Internet, many definitions and social services have been changed or moving to the fundamental change, and every day, the effects of these changes are more pronounced in our daily lives. In this virtual world that is the phenomenon of the third millennium civilization, at its beginning, has brought a unique achievement for modern society. Huge Network Information Center, shops and major financial firms, powerful search engine information, virtual enterprises and associations... the overarching theme of today's computer technology and the use of existing Internet-based platform that is based on providing electronic service, the alignment with the global development and keeping pace with the technology according to the current standards of technology is essential and inevitable.

Toffler, the contemporary thinker says: The 21st century's illiterate will not be the man who can't read; he will be the man who has not learned how to learn."

Delors, the President of UNESCO of the International Commission on Education, says: Although education is not considered as miracle cure with a magic formula for opening the door to the realization of ideals, but, in a way that is in keeping with the principles set by the field of human development to provide a deeper and more harmonious[1].

2. The paper and Problem Statement

From the ancient times, education is a sure way to cover disability, needs, skills and expertise of someone who has been trained. Education can be accurately planned and we can expect changes in learners' behavior and performance and the desired position can be programmed to change the situation. Today, ignorance, being unskilled and incapability of staffs and managers in organizations and institutions are considered as problem. Doing time is prolonged due to the inability of staffs skills. More time to do affairs, more costs and so productivity will come down. At the management level, clumsy, hasty and non-strategic decision in the affairs is another consequence of unskilled staffs. What should we do to speed things done and update the human resources and consider the current problem in companies and institutions (unskilled staffs)? Iranian National Distribution Company (the company surveyed), like other companies, is not an exception and has a problem with this diseases (lack of skilled manpower) and the company for survival must changed its staffs behavior and equip them with modern sciences and technology and keep pace them with updated information technology. No doubt, this responsibility is on account of education, but the Iranian National Distribution Company and other similar organizations, due to heavy educational costs, time and location and welfare facilities for the training classes are faced with numerous problems. What can be done to eliminate this problem?

E-learning, due to the extensive branch organizations and companies around the country and perhaps the world, is one of the useful methods of training. For the Iranian National Distribution Company, with scattered branches (over 34 branches throughout the country) and a workforce of over 2,000 people, in terms of cost savings and easy access and cover all the manpower at any time and place, e-learning is proposed.

Barley says: Success in the future depends on the knowledge, science, technology, and information management and providing better services. Retention of future loans brain to the muscles (muscle force) [2].

Is the E-learning the answer to the manpower needs of the Iranian National Distribution Company? Is it possible to deploy E-learning in the Company? In order to deploy E-learning, what components should be measured?

2.1. Theoretical Fundamentals and Research Background

Feasibility is a preliminary study to determine the likelihood of success, before begins in the real world. As its name implies, feasibility is considered as analysis on the possibility, sustainability, viability, or the ability to survive as an idea. These studies may help to answer the key questions, ideas or proposals should be continued or not? And all activities during these studies to answer this important question are accomplished, that is, understanding strengths and

weaknesses and awareness of the opportunities and threats and their analysis, help managers to step into the competition world with more open view and more determined to make their own decisions .

According to the documentation of ardictionary, feasibility is defined as follows:

Analysis and evaluation of the proposed project and to determine whether 1) is technically feasible, 2) it is possible to estimate the costs and 3) will be profitable. In the feasibility studies done, there are always the factors. Feasibility is also called cost and benefits analysis (<http://ardictionary.com>).

Education is a key and helpful investment in the development, if properly and eligibility planned and executed, can be a considerable economic return.

The purpose of E-learning in general is taking advantage of electronic systems such as computers, Internet, multimedia discs, electronic magazine, newsletter, virtual and so which aims to reduce exchanges, save time and money and also learn better and easier [3].

With the development of e-learning electronic communication, a new position has been emerged and became an educational approach to educate employees and those who can not attend for learning in schools and universities has become. In response to these demands, distance learning organizations are trying to provide complete a complete educational system from the registration process up to examination to compete with another schools and universities around the world in quality, quantity and in the position of education presentation for learners [4].

Hassanzadeh has done a study titled "E-learning feasibility via Internet, librarianship and information in Iran".

Feasibility was performed in terms of three components: groups' facilities and equipment, experience and skills of teachers and future programs.

The results showed that more than 50 percent of the groups of Library and Information Science have basic conditions to hold such courses. In contrast, more than 50 percent of teachers had been paid attention to the issue and have no experience to hold such courses and finally, more than 91 percent of the library groups have no plan for the future in the field of librarianship and distance information education [5].

Davoud and Mamaghani investigate the components of virtual education and feasibility of implementing the education in the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology of Alzahra University. We concluded that about 79.4 percent of faculty members, administrators and students declared that it is possible to implement the virtual education at the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology and such an implementation, the facilities like software, hardware, virtual library, network and etc... should be provided [6].

Nasiri has done the feasibility of establishing virtual educational system of the Ministry of Education in-service training. This research, generally, using one-sample T-TEST, determined from the Viewpoint of the experts of the in-service training of the Ministry of Education that it is possible to establish virtual educational system of Ministry of Education in-service training [7].

Feasibility of distance learning was done via internet in librarianship and information of Islamic Azad University by Seyfi. This study showed that 70 percent of librarianship and information groups have facilities and equipment to hold such a course. In contrast, only 40 percent of faculty members have the skills required to hold the courses [8].

Sadri Tabatabaei did a research titled "Feasibility of application of distance learning or Managers of Artistic and Cultural Centers of Mosques". The main purpose of this study was to investigate the feasibility of using distance learning methods for managers of artistic-cultural centers of mosques. The results showed that the majority of the managers prefer correspondence education. In this study, video tapes, text books, audio tapes, computer software and fixes for education classes were considered. Results indicate that the administration of E-learning system for managers of artistic-cultural centers of mosques is possible [9].

Chegini did a research titled "Study of scientific strategies for using distance learning for adult novice literates in final course of the city of Tehran". This research was done for studying the possibility to change distance learning and establishing participation of learners and using individual educational methods to distance learning system

experimental education and comparison with traditional system. The results showed that there are differences between the rate of learning in distance education group (experimental group) compared with the control group, there are differences. Learning in distance learning group is significantly better than the group that had used the conventional method of learning and the difference between the two groups was significant. Attitude of the experimental groups to self educational process was more positive than the control group and the content provided for groups of distance learning group were evaluated more relevant than content of textbooks [10].

Farahani did a study titled "Comparison of educational performance of students in Physical Education of non-correspondence with distance learning and presenting distance physical education planning pattern. This paper compared the students' learning in physical education in non-correspondence and distance education system in Iran. The results showed that the level of distance education students learning is much lower than the students attending courses was on a=5% level in the humanities and a=5% level in the theoretical courses with basic science nature at a = 5%. The results also indicate that levels of students learning in different lessons are effective [11].

Martins did a research titled "Feasibility of using distance communication courses in Latin American universities. This research did the feasibility on this action to assess the view of Latin American universities for offering distance courses and study of economic feasibility of performing such courses. His research population consisted of graduate and doctoral students, administrators, faculty members and administrators of distance education programs. Results have shown that, within Latin American universities on the distance education courses, there is a positive attitude and the managers considered economically feasible holding distance education courses in the organization [12].

Sharaf did a research titled "Assessment of distance education for education in universities of Saudi Arabic". This research gathered the required data to assess the perception and view of persons affected by establishment of distance education centers using radio and TV for university courses to rural communities in Saudi Arabia. The results, according to respondents, showed that if the establishment of such centers, students, in general, and students in distant regions, in particular, will benefit.

Other findings show that problems will appear in the beginning of the establishment of these centers that most of them have a technical nature and will be resolved by allocating sufficient resources and training of administrators before establishment [13].

Sharma has done a research titled "Feasibility of distance learning in the Philippines". In the paper presented in an educational workshop seminar about distance learning in Manila, and after preliminary discussions and effective factors analysis, he concluded that, on other hand, the widespread use of distance education in the Philippines is possible, because there are enough resources for skilled workers and the patterns that could not be chose among them. On the other hand, enough market for distance education in the country is available [16].

2.1.1. Necessity and Importance of creating E-learning

The necessity of such a commitment is important that human societies are taking steps from traditional to industrialization and from industrialization to post-industrial and science and Technology are developing and progressing. Parallel to these changes, the importance and necessity of education has become more and more tangible, to the extent that some experts say in the importance of education: in fact, education is management, which means that no training of staff, also shaken the foundations of management and are threatened. Staff training is a vital and inevitable that we must continually manage the whole process to other management activities can be considered and fruitful. In fact, education is one of the logical ways to guide the employees' efforts in the organization and it makes to use talented persons, imagination and intellectual flexibility required in staffs. Education, with all of its importance and necessity, when it can be useful and effective that is in harmony with busines, spiritual, physical and emotional needs of the present and future of employees. Given the above, the increasing development of communities and abundant needs of human resources for education, lack of access to the educational centers, economic limitations, lack of qualified teachers, and high costs spent on non-correspondence education, further reveal the missing link of

education within the organizations and institutions. With the help of information technologies, each day new methods of teaching are developed that are also affordable and quality and the throngs of learners could be simultaneously trained. All organs without substantial investment in training and thinking of its staff are subject to time. E-learning is the missing link of organizations and institutions that could be a way to survive, prosper and progress in marathon time. With the development of information technology and penetration of distance communication devices, educational tools and techniques have also undergone change. E-learning and virtual learning has spread widely in the community and educational classes are held electronically and as non-correspondence classes.

Organizations can save much more at paying legal costs and using employees especially in the areas of expertise by improving and performing education programs to introduce e-learning for the staffs. With an e-learning programs not only the quality of supervision and enforcement does not reduce, but due to the vast capabilities of these systems, we could take the actions from educational needs assessment and planning to execution, supervision and evaluation stages and finally issuing the relevant certificates that will make an annual savings compared with traditional educational costs.

2.1.1.1. Aim and Research Questions

In this study, we measure the component and the substrate in Iranian National Distribution Company in order to participate in e-learning for occupations. Based on the questionnaire, we seek to answer the question. (Is it possible to create an e-learning unit in Iranian National Distribution Company?). Next to the main research question, there are some small questions primarily for researchers seeking answers to them: 1. Is the ability of Iranian National Distribution Company's staff appropriate in order to create an e-learning unit? 2. How is the interest of the staff in Iranian National Distribution Company in order to create an e-learning unit? 3. How much is the equipment of Iranian National Distribution Company in order to make e-learning unit? Feasibility studies which essentially are preliminary studies, are important for companies and organizations. Feasibility is a study for the future. Companies and organizations are struggling about the results of a specific project that they are carrying out. How costs will be funded? What are the effective factors in the project? In practice, what action should the company take? And they are doing the part of its analysis on financial issues that will the money return to the company? If the result of this study is positive, the project manager hopes to do it, otherwise, the project is abandoned.

2.1.1.2. Study Methods

Research is a description of the type of feasibility studies is considered as applied because the researcher attempts to review and revise job descriptions of staff, investigating the perspectives of managers, officials, employees and staff of the company and primarily, determine their employment needs and then assess the possibility of e-learning and set up an educational unit. It is worth mentioning that the type of research was survey research and was conducted in the real environment of the Company. Overall, this study is composed of two stages: The first stage: support and cooperation of senior executives of the organization. One of the problems found in the initial investigation to the final decision is financial and intellectual support of senior executives of the company. During negotiations with the managers of the company at the beginning of the project to support economically, intellectually and ideologically, They should be explained about the importance of feasibility and thus reach agreement about the various aspects of their research. The second stage: Compilation of feasibility questionnaires developed for the implementation of e-learning and its execution. Feasibility questionnaires are planned to measure and evaluate knowledge and abilities of staffs, learners' interests in all kinds of educations (such as non-corresponded and corresponded educations, e-learning and consolidated education) and the current facilities for implementation of e-learning and administration of an educational course in the company in the current situation. Facts and information obtained from the questionnaires of feasibility determines whether the e-learning courses in Iranian National Distribution Company could be launched or not?

2.1.1.3. Methods of Data Collection

In this study, data have collected in two ways: A) Data collection through library research and documentation: In the present study, the contents were got from several sources including text books, articles, theses, and the Internet. After collecting and studying, the intended indicators in the second season have been presented, that is, literature and research history. B) Data collection through questionnaires: for collection and review of statistical population community comments as the main part of this research. According to statistical population size concluded 14 career fields, for example, only 3 main career fields have been selected for Iranian National Distribution Company. In order to study, two feasibility questionnaires, one for gathering information about the features, requirements, and equipment, and other for gathering information about abilities and information of staffs were designed. In addition, a questionnaire to collect information from respondents such as age, education, gender, work experience and field of study were designed.

2.1.1.4. Methods of Data Analysis

To analyze the data collected by questionnaires, at the first place, we described the demographic characteristics of employees and managers (age, sex, education, field of study, organizational position and work experience) in three career of salespersons, sales supervisors and branch managers action and frequency tables and percentages were drawn. Finally the tables of descriptive statistics in order to describe and define technical competencies in the field of knowledge, attitude and skills were used and the mean, standard deviation and variance as the main indicators are calculated. In order to analyze data and answer the research questions, the inferential statistics models including single-group test in order to study the current situation from the point of view of the staffs were used.

Table 1: The ability to use ICDL software

Standard error of thee mean	Standard deviation	Average	Frequency	
0.72	1.048	2.43	210	2 questions

Given the above data, the average of 210 people is equal 2.43 that it can be concluded that the ability to use ICDL is in the medium.

Table 2: The ability of the Internet communication

Standard error of thee mean	Standard deviation	Average	Frequency	
.068	1.016	2.24	225	3 questions

Given the above data, the average of 225 people is equal 2.24 that it can be concluded that the ability of the Internet communication.

Table 3: The ability to use Jam software

Standard error of thee mean	Standard deviation	Average	Frequency	
.148	1.115	1.84	57	5 questions

Given the above data, the average of 57 people is equal 1.84 that it can be concluded that the ability to use Jam software is in moderately to downward.

Table 4: The interest in E-learning

Standard error of thee mean	Standard deviation	Average	Frequency	
.050	.743	2.74	224	8 questions

Given the above data, the average of 224 people is equal 2.74 that it can be concluded that the interest in e-learning is in moderate.

Table 5: Evaluation of facilities and equipment for sale supervisors

Access to 24-hour high speed internet	Access to system	Total sale supervisors in community
98%	98%	45

According to the data of the above table, 98 percent from the sale supervisors in statistical population, have access to a computer system and high speed Internet for 24 hours. It can be concluded that the sale supervisors have the facilities to use e-learning.

Table 6: Evaluation of facilities and equipment for branches managers

Access to 24-hour high speed internet	Access to system	Total branches managers in community
100%	100%	36

According to the data of the above table, 100 percent from the branches managers in statistical population, have access to a computer system and high speed Internet for 24 hours. It can be concluded that the branches managers have the facilities to use e-learning.

Table 7: Evaluation of facilities and equipment for sellers

Access to 24-hour high speed internet	Access to system	Total branches managers in community
0	0	420

According to the data of the above table, none of the sellers in statistical population, have not access to a computer system and high speed Internet for 24 hours. It can be concluded that the sellers have not the facilities to use e-learning.

3. Discussion and Results

1. The abilities of staff: According to the research statistics and information, all population is in moderate in the ability to use computer, introduction to ICDL software and ability of the Internet communication. The staff should meet the requirements as stated on the first three questions for execution of e-learning in the organization. But the staff did not met the in the ability to use Jam educational software, as expected before data collection.
2. The interest of the staff: According to the statistics obtained from the feasibility questionnaires, staff is interested in e-learning and to train and update their information and abilities through an e-learning. Compared to other educational methods, due to scattering branches and far away from head office, plurality of learners and two important characterizations of e-learning that is breaking the boundaries of time and place in education methods and covering a large number of learners, this type of learning is better and more useful than other educational methods.
3. Facilities and Equipment: According to the data of the above table, 100 percent from the branches managers and 98 percent of sale supervisors in statistical population, have access to a computer system and high speed Internet for 24 hours. But a large part of the population (sellers), despite having the ability to use the Internet and ICDL (considered as e-learning in this research), have not access to a computer and the Internet. Finally, with regard to the ability of the staff in the field of e-learning and their interest in this educational method, and also isolation of branches from each other and privileges and distinctions of e-learning than other methods, based on the statistics, we can conclude that it is possible to implement and maintain this type of training.

Suggestions and Research

- 1) The majority of staff is not familiar with Jam educational software. It is recommended preparing and educational booklet and video of the software instructions for the learners.
- 2) To solve the problem of shortage of computer systems and lack of access of sellers to high speed Internet, it is recommended: (A) A three or four systems web site in each of the branches with high speed internet for 24 hours should be established to allow sellers to use e-learning, or (B) With increasing advances in technology, all sellers should be equipped to efficient mobile phone or tablet to learn online.

References

- [1] (Ebadi, 2004, E-learning and Education, Tehran, Aftab e mehr)
- [2] (Ebadi, 2004, E-learning and Education, Tehran, Aftab e mehr)
- [3] (ahadiyan, 2007, Preliminary of Instructional Technology, tehran, Bashari Publishable)
- [4] (Educational Innovations Quarterly, Volume 11, the 4th Year, Spring 2005)
- [5] (Hassanzadeh, 2002, a study titled "E-learning feasibility via Internet, librarianship and information in Iran")
- [6] (Davoud and Mamaghani, 2006, investigating the components of virtual education and feasibility of implementing the education in the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology of Alzahra University)
- [7] (Nasiri, 2003, The feasibility of establishing virtual educational system of the Ministry of Education in-service training)
- [8] (Seyfi, 2006, The feasibility of distance learning via internet in librarianship and information of Islamic Azad University)
- [9] (Sadri Tabatabaei, 2001, "Feasibility of application of distance learning or Managers of Artistic and Cultural Centers of Mosques")
- [10] (Chegini, 1999, research titled "Study of scientific strategies for using distance learning for adult novice literates in final course of the city of Tehran")
- [11] (Farahani, 2001, study titled "Comparison of educational performance of students in Physical Education of non-correspondence with distance learning and presenting distance physical education planning pattern)
- [12] (Martins, 1997, research titled "Feasibility of using distance communication courses in Latin American universities)
- [13] (Sharaf, 1991, research titled "Assessment of distance education for education in universities of Saudi Arabic")