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Success ratio of e-learning education in Middle East region

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Abstract

E-learning is the new trend of web-based education for individuals with online facilities. The development and upcoming implication of E-learning are concerned with the infrastructures and motivational factors of the users. The E-learning system concerning its innovations in the region of the Middle East can be evaluated through several success factors. There is a common misconception about technological advancement in the Middle East, especially in KSA. The study aims to explore the success ratio of E-learning in the middle east; especially in KSA. The important factors governing the success ratio of E-learning such a perceived ease of use is evaluated with the help of important theoretical frameworks. The approach of the study is to evaluate the qualitative information present on the subject of discussion. The literature for the research is reviewed in terms of relevance and contribution in the field of E-learning and web-based education. The results articulate findings in terms of the factors and elements that determine the progressive growth and also the hindrances in the path of E-learning for countries in the Middle East. Theoretical models such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) utilized by authors to evaluate the critical success factors have also been evaluated in the research. Moreover, human factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are also reviewed in the light of theories and theoretical frameworks. In conclusion, the success ratio of E-learning is discussed and explored in terms of the critical success factors, theoretical evidence, and human factors. The study encompasses the position of web-based education in Middle Eastern countries with a special focus on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Introduction

The subject of E-learning in the region of middle-east is not abundantly discussed due to the lack of its advancement in the region. Countries in the middle -east have unstable yet diverse economic conditions with conservative social implications. The lack of development of E-learning systems in certain regions of the middle east is due to the lack of resources (Bhuasiri et al., 2012) . Certain countries in the region, however, are relatively empowered to incorporate E-learning in their economy in comparison to other developing countries. The unaccepting attitude of the individuals from this region due to the predisposed cultural values is also a hindrance in the developmental process of E-learning and web-based education

(Weber, 2018) . The introduction of technology for learning and education allows exploring the limits implied by their culture. As it is evident that access to online sources of education can expand the vision and knowledge of individuals residing in societies that are governed by conservative cultures.

Moreover, even in such conservative regions, there is a motive to adopt such systems such as the fact that the chance to access education through electronic media is quite appealing for the younger generation. It also raises the aspect of convenience and ease as it does not require paying for extra facilities such as on-campus services which makes it cost-effective for the general public of the middle east The Middle -East made its peak progress in expanding the usage of the internet in a period of 7 years from 2000 to 2007 (Antonio et al., 2012).

Due to the frequently highlighted issue of intense cultural values, there is also a misconception about the limitations of technology in middle eastern countries, however, there is an observable openness towards technology and innovation (Al-Shehri, 2010). The commonly expressed notion about middle eastern countries in terms of inequality in education among genders and conservative approaches towards education often overshadows the true economic opportunities in the country.

Several conferences in KSA have been held for initiating projects and operations for progressing towards a well-developed system of E-learning and technology-based education (Amer & Alnaja, 2017) . The article talks about the success ratio of E-learning in the region along with the misconceived notions towards the cultural limits of the region. At the present, studies show that KSA perceives E-learning as a means of reaching citizens at the maximum. This shows that the current government of KSA is in complete support of the development and prosperity of E-learning projects in the country for two main purposes (Alenezi, 2012). The first is to make education accessible to all individuals regardless of age and gender with life-long availability of educational material.

Research Objective

The study aims to identify and highlight the ratio of success in E-learning among middle eastern countries and emphasizes KSA. The information on the subject is obtained through other academic sources such as previously conducted researches on similar concerns and viewpoints. There are several misperceptions towards E-learning in middle eastern counties which is evaluated in the article by conducting a literature review with a decided inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Literature Review

This part of the literature review concerns the success factors that determine the success rate for E-learning inside of a country. One such factor is recognized as self-efficacy in terms of usage of computers and electronic media. It is also important to note that efficacy depends largely on availability and accessibility (Yuen & Ma, 2008). The effective integration of E-learning in educational institutes depends majorly on the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation of the individuals using the services. Here, the perceived usefulness of the E-learning education system also plays a major part in contributing to the success ratio. The perception of the society about the utilization of such services determines the extrinsic motivation of individuals toward web-based educational content. Most of the time people as a part of the society require a motive and intent to engage in an innovative approach towards something. The motive is usually strengthened if a good fraction of people are witnessed utilizing such facilities (Wang et al., 2013).

Various critical success factors are pivotal in the developed and underdeveloped regions of the Middle East (Lai, 2009). A study conducted by Volery and Lord can be implied for the effectiveness and success of E-learning in KSA. The study suggests that technological factors contribute immensely towards the progressiveness of E-learning at an impactable level. Moreover, similar research suggests that factors such as the competency and efficiency of the users such as the students and the teachers depend on the online delivery of education material and it's usage by the students on the other end. This information can also be implied for the access of online data for students as there are aspects such as the responsible and appropriate use of such material (Alshwaier et al., 2012).

The third important theory for the success factors adding to the success ratio is the infrastructure and obtainability of high-end equipment and software. The courses imparted through online means require good and sustainable infrastructure so the quality, authenticity, and completion of online courses are never compromised. Recent literature conducted by Authors such as Alshwaier puts forward findings related to educational clouds in KSA (Albalawi & Badawi, 2008). The study also focuses on educational clouds being a new trend towards E-learning in KSA. Another research by Albalawi states that IT instructions and Web-based instructions in E-learning are essential to resolve the cultural and web-based issues in the region (Rovai et al., 2007).

For further evaluation of the success factors of KSA, theoretical models concerning the motivation of teachers and students towards e-learning can be evaluated (Law et al., 2010). Here the theory of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation is explored for determining what and how the devotion and dedication towards a system are developed. A study conducted by Law et al looked into the effect of motivation on e-learning. The findings extracted from the research suggest that both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation have positive effects on e-learning in countries that can afford to integrate it (Liu et al., 2009). As shown in figure 1, both factors of technology as well as factors of motivation are pivotal in determining the future and effectivity of E-learning .

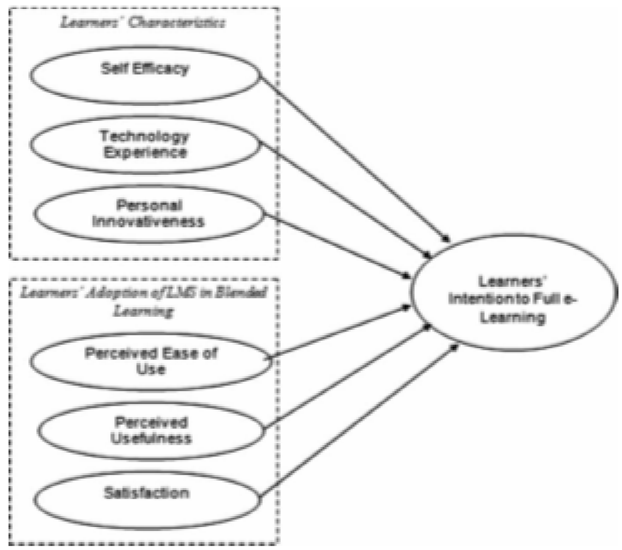

Fig 1. The Model for Learner's Intention towards E-learning

As discussed above, the perceived usefulness of any system is a crucial factor that governs the value and success of E-learning. The perception of people for such systems can be evaluated through theoretical frameworks such as the Technology Acceptance Model that operates on the principle of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and behavioral intention towards the use. Many studies have explored TAM along with the associated concepts (Warkentin et al., 2002). Warkentin, Gefen, Pavlou, and Rose (2002) conducted studies on the use of e-government around the globe by associating TAM with culture and trust (Ilias et al., 1970). Ilias, Razak, and Yasoa (2009) studied TAM in association with perceived credibility and the efficiency of information (Ilias et al., 1970) . Many authors and researches have used TAM in e-learning researches and concluded that both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use have impacted the behavioural intentions of engaging in e-learning.

Methodology

The study prioritizes the ratio of success in e-Learning among middle eastern countries with a special focus on KSA by reviewing the previously conducted studies on the progress and level of implementation of such systems in the middle eastern countries. The research is carried out by following certain steps of careful and critical evaluation of the literature. The information put forward by authors involved in the previous researches on the topic of discussion is prevalent with a wide array of data in terms of the success factors and other investigatory factors. Hence the findings and discussion of such studies are evaluated and reviewed by selecting the most relevant factions of the experiment and studies.

The literature review is conducted also with careful consideration of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the research. A criterion for inclusion and exclusion adds to the authenticity and quality of the findings of the research. The research is conducted through secondary sources of data that have already been analyzed and collected previously by researchers from the field. The quality of the research is further enhanced by organizing all the relevant findings of the research and forming an elaborate discussion.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Since the research is based on the review of literature rather than the primary collection of data with the involvement of participants, the inclusion criteria are based on the specific types and designs of researches that can be used for the research. Whereas, the exclusion criteria is also based around the factors that are to be avoided for conducting authentic and good quality research. The study aims to explore the success rate of E-learning, hence the criteria for exclusion demands avoiding researches that do not discuss the factors that add to the success of E-learning.

Findings and Discussion

The research is based on the success ratio of E-learning in middle eastern regions and discovers the associated factors and aspects that add to it. The evaluation of such factors has been carried out by reviewing the previously conducted researches on E-learning and its different paradigms. The factors of success and progression can be evaluated properly by the implying theoretical frameworks that systematically analyze the operations, procedures, and governing aspects of e-learning.

Elements such as motivation and self-efficacy are considerably important in the discussion of the potential success ratio. The prevalence of efficacy with technological factors in terms of middle eastern countries depends on the availability of these resources. Some of the authors have put forward that there is a new trend of integration of technology in KSA. This information expresses the potentially increasing efficacy of individuals when it comes to the utilization of IT services.

Similarly, as the use of It is expected to expand in the region, the concern regarding the ethical and responsible use of the internet also needs to be highlighted. Several researchers have focused on the web-based instructions and ethical use of the internet to prevent safety-related inconveniences. These instructions are extremely necessary for safe access to data and information on the internet. Studies related to the evolving trend of cloud education in KSA also highlight the substantial need to. have proper guidelines for the usage of the content on the internet.

Furthermore, the literature review presents frameworks for the human factors that play a part in the success ratio of E-learning. These factors involve intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and perception of use. The theory of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation states that the motivation of individuals toward the use of any product depends on how much they enjoy using it and what they get out of using it. One of the selected studies for the literature review emphasized the motivation towards e-learning. The conclusions drawn from the research were such that increasing motivation has positive effects on the progression and success of E-learning.

Lastly, the technology acceptance model proposed by one of the studies proved to be immensely useful in evaluating the perception of users in particular. In brief terms, the model is three dimensional and evaluates the perception and behavioral intention of people when oping for web-based learning.

Limitations

The literature review conducted for the research is not free of limitations for the reason that the information reviewed and utilized for research purposes is from secondary sources and not from direct or primary sources. The data on the success ratio of E-learning among all countries of the middle east is not substantial enough to present holistic research.

Conclusion

The study is focused on the concept of E-learning and explores the different dynamics of E-learning and its success factors. The approach of the study is to conduct a literature review based on the previous evaluation and findings put forward by authors on how E-learning benefits society and what has driven the individuals in the region of the middle east to integrate E-learning in their lives. Along with the incorporation and usage of E-learning, there is a dire need to discuss the safety measures and privacy concerns associated with providing access to material on the internet that has the potential to be misused. The outcomes of the study have been discussed and analyzed in terms of how the critical factors and human motivation factors play a part in the success and advancement of web-based education in the region of the middle east and KSA.

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