

India's Corporate E-learning Challenges: A Critical Appraisal

Sohail Verma^{a,*}, 

^a Research Scholar, Ph.D. Management, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India.

KEYWORDS

Corporate learning, Online learning challenges, E-learning

ABSTRACT

In a company, a type of training known as "e-learning" is delivered via a computer and satisfies both organisational and individual learning objectives. Achieving the strategic goals of the organisation through solid learning is essential for the success of e-learning. Companies must provide top-notch training programmes that may be able to provide positive returns for businesses as part of their existing training strategies in order to achieve this. Corporate E-learning programmes frequently fail since training is essential for the effective operation of personnel. The difficulties that employees and businesses encounter while using an e-learning approach to training and development are covered in this essay. It also analyses the factors preventing the expansion of e programmes in businesses. An online survey on India's power sector was conducted to support the conclusions.

INTRODUCTION

Before about 20 years ago, learning took place in a classroom with a qualified instructor rather than in front of a computer. Organizations began using computer-based training as a result of technical improvement, and the topic of online learning began to take form. Many businesses offered their staff videotape-based training towards the beginning of the 1990s.

The decision to give training via video wasn't the best course of action, therefore CBT, or computer-based training, as a new type of training, emerged. Although CBT was more successful, it was difficult to upgrade and was unable to track employee performance in a centralised database. E-learning then became a thing. (Clark, 2002)

In 1999, the phrase "E-learning" was first used at a seminar on CBT systems, giving rise to the term. In quest of a more precise definition, other terms like "online learning" and "virtual learning" have started to gain popularity. In the 2000s, companies started embracing e-learning to train their employees. Both new hires and seasoned workers had the chance to increase their skill sets and their depth of industry knowledge. It made it possible for people to access programmes from the comfort of their own homes, allowing them to complete coursework online and advance their expertise.

All aspects of employee training, such as career development training, orientation for new hires, information on new services or products, or just exchanging and developing professional knowledge, competencies, and abilities, can benefit from e-learning (Harun 2002). The finest and most practical option for organisations to quickly react to constantly changing learning needs is now e-learning. The demand for enterprise-

wide E-learning solutions has increased as a result of technological advancement and the skills required to adequately utilise and manage it. The majority of organisational training demands can be satisfied by a range of E-learning products and services.

RATIONALE FOR E-LEARNING

In their classical senses, teaching and training are methods of imparting knowledge; they work similarly to the metaphorical one-way street. E-learning makes improved interaction and direct involvement possible, providing opportunities to boost learner morale and information standards.

The following are some reasons why e-learning should be adopted:

- There is no need to train all staff at once.
- The learning is self-paced, there are no time restrictions, and they may pick the time and location that work best for them. If necessary, the content is recorded and made available as and when needed by the employee.
- Depending on the demands of the learner rather than the trainer's comfort, it might be supplied in bits or all at once.
- A small group of knowledgeable training administrators are capable of leading and managing a variety of courses through appropriate LMS (Learning Management Systems). For each learner, the LMS can also keep track of their involvement in various courses, test results, time spent studying, and other information that might provide insightful data to improve their skills.
- The ability to assess each participant's performance using several tools, such as score tracking, progress monitoring, and time

* Corresponding author


E-mail: sohailverma99@gmail.com (Sohail Verma).

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53724/inspiration/v8n1.03>

Received 10th Nov. 2022; Accepted 20th Dec. 2022

Available online 30th Dec. 2022

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 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2271-0455>



tracking, makes it possible to assess learning. This wasn't always attainable in the past with conventional training methods.

E-LEARNING ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Contrary to predictions, e-learning cannot replace conventional training and education. Many senior executives are reluctant to train their workers online. Some of the things inhibiting its widespread usage are its novelty, lack of comprehension, insufficient finance, a lack of IT infrastructure, and employee opposition to the idea. (Ettinger et al.2006a).

E-learning requires time for both assignment completion and session participation, just like any other traditional learning course. Businesses that wish to construct a successful e-learning programme must know of its limitations and come up with a well-thought-out plan for doing so. In addition to a lack of understanding, financial limitations, outdated technology, and employee responses, e-learning standards are causing problems. One of these standards' limitations that may be problematic is the movement of material from the one system to another.

E-learning is viewed by organisations as a novel training alternative and as an opportunity to save time and money. However, it is typical to observe subpar learning opportunities and a high failure rate.

- Lack of motivation among students. It is one of the most typical obstacles that experts in e-learning must face. Because they think they can be more productive in a familiar environment, learners frequently hold the fixed notion that traditional training programmes are more effective.
- A packed learning schedule. Many employees are unwilling to enrol in an online course because they feel they won't be able to go at their own speed or that it would take up a lot of their time. The hardest hurdle to overcome can also be trying to monitor learners' development.
- The idea that the atmosphere of online learning provides no assistance. A common misperception and disadvantage is that online courses are isolating and provide little support for their students. Additionally, the virtual environment is insufficient to keep learners interested.

Challenges with T&D via e-learning

In an online poll on Indian power and energy firms, participants were asked to rate the challenges their employers were facing in implementing E-learning practises. A statistically significant difference was found between the average ranks of challenges experienced in respect to T&D through workplace e-learning. It was revealed that employee opposition to e-learning was assigned the highest priority while unsuitable learning culture received the lowest priority.

FINDINGS

Despite being approachable, employers and employees are hesitant to accept this training strategy due to concerns about cost, expertise, and dependability. When deploying an e-learning solution, organisations frequently encounter the following difficulties and challenges:

Budget

Due to the costs associated with developing the content and

programmes, an E-learning solution requires a bigger initial commitment. The negotiation of budgets and cash flows is necessary.

Issues with technology and security

Whether the training objectives can be met with the present hardware and software configuration or whether additional technical expenditures are required, as well as whether all software and hardware settings are compatible, are all technology-related challenges.

Restricted in range

Incorrect E-learning content may be a problem in the eyes of some specialists; however there aren't many of them.

Company's culture

Because of organisational culture, learners' psychographic and demographic characteristics may make them less likely to use computers in e-learning programmes.

People's opposition

Naturally resistive to change are employees. Convincing management to invest and employees to sign up for an e-learning programme may be challenging. Employees may discover that they are lagging behind or progressing more slowly in the enrolled programmes.

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Decisions about employee training investments and human resource management are impacted by these research findings. It is impossible to overstate the value of online learning. Before spending money on the method of delivering training that would be most advantageous for their company, HR managers and employers should use prudence because at least 84% of survey respondents use e-learning at work. The strategic goals of the organisation must be reflected in the e-learning curriculum.

CONCLUSION

The information allows one to reach the conclusion that e-learning may provide employees with flexible learning alternatives and help them up-skill more rapidly. E-learning at workplace can cut the costs related to training a staff by minimising travel and reducing employee time away from the company. A geographically scattered workforce can benefit greatly from e-learning since it can provide a consistent training environment. E-learning offers standardised training, greater learner comfort and control, improved employer monitoring capabilities, and cost savings by lowering travel expenses and staff absenteeism. Although it has some limitations, they can be effectively managed to produce better outcomes. In addition to how the business urges its staff to incorporate E-learning into their daily routines, employee motivation and technological proficiency are essential elements in determining participation in E-learning. Some workers additionally thought that eLearning was a useful tool for training and development and that their company's executives continued to invest in it. Employees still encounter issues when using e-learning, though. An individual's attitude has a huge impact on how well he performs. The ability to give the needed services may therefore be found lacking in persons even when the best knowledge and skills are available if they lack the proper attitudes. The only problem here is to maintain a culture of learning among the staff members so that they desire to put in the time and effort.

At the same time, it is challenging to adopt a corporate E-learning plan without support from high management. Job satisfaction and organisational commitment have a substantial and favourable link (Top & Gider, 2013). Therefore, careful consideration of these two aspects by management is necessary to fully reap the rewards of e-learning.

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