

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ICT-BASED E-LEARNING IN EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC¹

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Abstract:

This paper explains the ICT-based E-Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic with reference to European Union countries. It follows the E-Learning priorities agreed upon by the European Union institutions and Countries during the Covid-19 Pandemic. This study basically identifies the challenges posed by the need for quality and efficiency. There is a broad impression that ICT-based E-Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic Largely helps the learning process and produces better results. Higher education is also reaping major benefits from ICT-based E-Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic. Large companies and public administration report good results from E-learning in the workplace in the era of the Covid-19 Pandemic. But, ICT-based it has had little effect on small and medium-sized enterprises. The digital divide, with its increased risk of social exclusion, is a growing concern, despite the potential of ICT-based E-Learning for disadvantaged learners during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The presented experience indicates a need for policies to focus on ICT-based E-Learning tools in education systems for teaching and learning, management, and administration.

Keywords:

ICT, E-Learning, Covid-19 Pandemic, European Union, Lisbon treaty, National Policy, Technological innovation, Digital divide.

Introduction:

The E-Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic focused approach to the use of new multimedia technologies and the Internet to improve the quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services. A decade of experience in the European Union has proven its value as an innovative tool for education and training. This reflects the growing complexity of E-learning and its role as a basic tool for education and training. The European Union's Lisbon Council identified ICT as a core component of the knowledge society and it also argues as a necessary instrument for adapting education and training systems to it. As a result, the E-learning Initiative and Programme were adopted in most of the European Union countries with specific funding and the strong support of stakeholders. During Covid-19 Pandemic, ICT-based E-Learning use in education and training has been mainstreamed and is an important step towards its integration into lifelong learning policies.

Objectives Of The Study:

In the light of above, the proposed research aims to understand the following:

To understand and analyze the ICT-based E-Learning process in European Union countries.

To understand the reasons and motives of the ICT-based E-Learning process in European Union countries during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Internal debate in EU countries regarding ICT-based E-Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic.

Impact of Lisbon treaty on ICT-based E-Learning process in European Union countries during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Methodology:

This work on "An analysis of the ICT-based E-Learning in European Union countries during the Covid-19 Pandemic" is basically an analytical work. The proposed study will to a large extent rely on primary sources including official, Government documents and publications. The study will also critically examine the secondary sources available on the subject matter such as books, journals, periodicals magazines, and tertiary sources such as newspapers.

Literature Review:

A review of the literature gives an understanding of the subject matter there exist a sufficient number of studies that usefully serve as background reference material and which facilitate better understanding. In this background, there exist several works pertaining to the subject matter of the research that could be usefully employed in the research to mention a few-

Johannes Konig, Daniela J. Jager-Biela, and Nina Glutsch, (2020), in their work, *Adapting to online teaching during Covid-19 school closure: teacher education and teacher competence effects among early career teacher in Germany*, European Journal of Teacher Education, analyzed the information and communication technologies, (ICT) tools, and particularly digital teacher competence and teacher education opportunities to learn digital competence in the era of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Fernando Ferri, Patrizia Grifoni, and Tiziana Guzzo, (2020), in their work, *online Learning and Emergency Remote Teaching: Opportunities and Challenges in Emergency situations*, Institute for Research on Population and Social Policies, National Research Council, 00185 Rome, Italy, analyzed the opportunities and challenges of emergency remote teaching-based experiences of during COVID-19 Pandemic era.

The Ict-Based E-Learning In European Union Countries During Covid-19 Pandemic:

There has been strong and sustained growth in the installation and use of ICT-based E-Learning and internet equipment during the Covid-19 Pandemic. This was seen from a number of studies and surveys carried out by the European Commission and the European Union Countries. Most of these studies are linked to traditional domains of education and training, the recent move towards post-initial, informal, and non-formal learning paved the way for learning towards interactive learning, creative content, and personalized and self-directed learning. In other words, the context, community, collaboration, competencies, pedagogy, and motivation of learners play an increasingly important role during the Covid-19 Pandemic era.

Analysis And Findings: School Education:

The use of ICT-based E-Learning in schools across most of the European Union member countries has increased dramatically since 2000. The European Commission in its survey covers teachers and head teachers and it confirms that the Lisbon treaty targets equipping and connecting all schools.

1. Higher Education:

ICT-based E-Learning use is most widespread in higher education. This has been reflected in a steady growth of satisfaction among students. In the Covid-19 Pandemic era, a wide range of ICT-based E-Learning programs are offered by universities across most of the European Union countries, and the programs cooperation projects to design and promote innovative e-learning programs increasing. ICT is fostering the growing internationalization of higher education.

2. Adult Learning:

During Covid-19 Pandemic Era, the growing use of the internet and ICT-based tools opens up new learning opportunities for adults. In particular, it can help support informal learning which is so important to them.

3. Learning At Workplace:

During Covid-19 Pandemic Era, many large companies have invested heavily in e-learning and content management systems, reporting high levels of satisfaction and significant cost reductions. Many large public sector organizations have also followed this path. Most of these large systems are run as web-based resource centers, which employees can access from work or from home. Home access to ICT opens the way to use them as learning resources, technical support, and personal guidance.

4. Informal And Self-Directed Learning:

During Covid-19 Pandemic Era, one of ICT-based E-Learning's main strengths is its capacity to support informal learning. Self-learning and informal peer learning are the two most important mechanisms for obtaining skills and competencies. Electronic networks of interests or professions provide important platforms to access and share information and to use and collectively develop skills and competencies.

5. The Digital Divide:

The strong growth in the use of ICT-based E-Learning by enterprises and households is far from being evenly distributed. The result is that while empowering some citizens, the inability of others to use ICT effectively creates a division in society, the so-called digital divide. That is why the Riga Ministerial Declaration drew attention to the broad importance of E-Inclusion. E-Inclusion would increase equity,

create new opportunities for work and entrepreneurship, strengthen culture and encourage civic participation.

6. Ict For Innovation:

In the Covid-19 Pandemic Era, ICT has transformed society and the economy. The challenge is now to achieve an equally innovative transformation of the provision of education and training. ICT-based E-Learning has a key role to play in achieving this result.

7. Pedagogical Innovation:

In the Covid-19 Pandemic Era, the ICT for learning is not only improving learning but has the potential to transform the learning and teaching processes and offer as such other and novel ways of education and training next and together with more traditional schooling. The impact of ICT use on learners is closely related to its potential to innovate teaching and learning approaches.

8. Technological Innovation:

Technological innovation implies a need for new models of production, distribution, and access to digital resources, both in the public and private sectors. In the Covid-19 Pandemic Era, the European Commission under the Research and Technological Development programs has supported research on the educational use of digitate in projects that bring together the technological, pedagogical, and organizational dimensions of the use of ICT.

9. Organizational Innovation:

During Covid-19 Pandemic Era, organizational change will increase the impact of ICT-based E-Learning in education and training, as schools evolve towards open learning centers, universities towards teaching service providers, companies towards learning organizations, and cities and regions towards learning support environments. Changes in pedagogy and organization will come from programs' e-maturity. This will require innovative use of ICT-based E-Learning, supporting new collaborative approaches.

Conclusion:

Overall, ICT-based E-Learning in Covid-19 Pandemic Era is pervasive in shaping all parts of our society, economy, and culture. Since 2000, most of the European Union member countries have stepped up their activities to improve E-learning and the development of digital competencies through education. This has continued under the Renewed Lisbon Agenda and the July 2008 Communication on the Renewed Social Agenda for Europe which have highlighted ICT-based E-Learning as a key mechanism to create more social and economic opportunities for EU citizens and improve their access to quality services. In the Covid-19 Pandemic Era, the hope is to bring ICT-based E-Learning more closely to the task of creating a European Lifelong Learning Area. In the last decade, the EU had made considerable success in introducing ICT-based E-Learning to education and training. Today, in the Covid-19 Pandemic Era, pedagogical, technological, and organizational innovations demand a renewed and more comprehensive approach toward the role of ICT in education and training. The first priority is to exploit infrastructure investments fully. Innovation is today seen as one of the main engines of long-term economic growth and social development. ICT, a key driver for change in many fields, must also lever change in education and training. Intelligent use of ICT-based E-Learning can scale up the core functions of education and build active learning communities in a networked society.

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