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Contact: 91-231-2535706/07 Fax: 91-231-2535708 Website: www.siberindia.co.in

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Challenges for Teachers in E-education Transformation at Yangon University of Education

NAY MAR SOE

Professor & HOD Department of Chemistry,
Yangon University of Education, Myanmar

Abstract : The use of digital technology and skills is an essential factor in changing the teaching and learning styles of the 21st century. Teacher education needs to emphasize ongoing implementation and evaluation procedures related to students' computer literacy. The paper aims to upgrade E-education and develop teachers' digital competency at the Yangon University of Education(YUOE). This study explores why teachers are weak in the use of digital technology and the barriers to using digital technology in the classroom at YUOE. According to this observation, the main challenges for teachers are a lack of ICT knowledge, not wanting to change the teaching style, and a lack of knowledge in using digital technology; computers and accessories are insufficient. There are also discussions about how to deal with these difficulties. This article has examined the key factors to consider in the implementation of digital technology.

Keywords; Challenges, E-education, YUOE

1. Introduction

E-learning or electronic learning is used for online learning. E-learning supports or replaces other learning and teaching approaches. The roles of e-Teachers are to enhance learners' cognitive engagement and interaction. (Soonhwa,2008)Online education can provide a flexible learning environment to a student from anywhere, as long as an Internet connection is provided.

Nowadays, e-learning is a new paradigm shift in higher education from teacher-centered to learner-centered and enhances the quality of teaching and learning by integrating ICT and internet technologies. Furthermore, it can compensate for the weakness of traditional education methods and enables the instructors to transfer their knowledge to a relatively large number of students without space and time limitations(Aung&Khaing, 2016).Myanmar realizes that conventional education alone cannot cope with all the demands of higher education, and ICT-based education will play an important role in Myanmar's higher education reform. (Tint, 2012) So, Myanmar universities need to reinvent learning environments to expand and complement digitalization transformation. (Mary&Ni,2021)

1.1 E-learning awareness in Myanmar

As the way of teaching and learning in today's world has changed, digital technology has become an essential technical resource for each learner. In Myanmar, a few educational institutions were implementing online or blended learning methods before COVID-19. At that time, schools, universities, and ministries of education have begun enforcing them, but at a very slow implementation. Only early adopters, enthusiasts, and visionaries were willing to try. Teachers and professors at the university level of the higher education sector are weak in teaching using digital technology, so the need to use it more now is a major challenge in my country. However, there is growing interest in technology use beyond covid crisis.

In the past, the internet connection was not good, and the cost was also very high in Myanmar. Therefore, E-education was weak in the teaching/learning system. Most Myanmar universities have weaknesses such as a lack of evaluation of ICT activities, a lack of a specific plan, a lack of understanding of technology, and a lack of ICT training for teachers. When the pandemic hit,

everyone had to switch from offline to online classes. At this time, even the pragmatists and conservatives decided to switch to online learning methods because they could not offer on-site lessons. That's why we should accelerate the digitization of the Education sector.

Now, Myanmar has access to stable electricity and the internet except in a few places. At the moment, E-education awareness and implementation should be an important agenda for Myanmar education. However, teachers face many challenges and barriers in E-education transformation. Until now, teachers need to motivate themselves and also attend interactive training and workshops about interactive online teaching. In addition, the teaching style needs to change in Myanmar's education system based on digital.

1.2 Implementation of E-education at Yangon University of Education

Yangon University of Education (YUOE) is the leading university of teacher education, producing high school teachers and educationists. The Yangon University of Education is located at 317, Pyay Road, Kamayut township, Yangon region in Myanmar. In the 21st century, digital literacy is essential for active participation in work and society. One of the purposes of Yangon University of Education is to nurture students to become well-qualified teachers and educationists for the national and global community. Therefore, awareness and implementation of E-learning for teachers is an important factor in YUOE.

The ICT team was composed of representative teachers from various departments interested in ICT at the Yangon University of Education. The specific objectives of the YUOE-ICT team are to promote the ICT awareness of the university staff and to conduct effective ICT training at YUOE. Currently, the ICT team members are involved in ICT awareness programs and the preparation of online learning materials for E-learning.

The university provides bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in education to the country's prospective school teachers. Now, the university offers educational course training and post-graduate diploma courses using online and offline methods. YUOE offers training in educational courses for teachers of educational colleges throughout Myanmar. Moreover, a Post Graduate Diploma in Multimedia and Art (Education) opens and train young teachers annually. Therefore, updating teachers' capacity for E-education is the main factor in YUOE. So, we should know what barriers to E-education implementation are. If we understand these challenges, we can solve this problem. That's why this paper studied the main point of this problem.



Figure: Yangon University of Education

1.3 The purpose of the study

The purpose of this paper is to promote the role of E-education at the Yangon University of Education and improve the knowledge of technology integration for teachers.

2. Methodology

As a fundamental process, university teachers required a readiness assessment before e-learning implementation. (Mon & Tsuyoshi, 2018) This research focused on three aspects of the main challenges of E-learning at YUOE. These are

- Basic ICT knowledge of teachers
- Barriers to using digital technology in the classroom
- Weakness and strengths of teachers in E-learning

The data is used based on peer observations, questionnaires, and individual interviews. It also reviews the references related to this study. The representatives from different departments answered and discussed the challenges faced by the focus area. This study is conducted based on feedback from teachers at YUOE. The reference was the published papers and Internet articles related to this study.

3. Findings & Discussion

This section includes the findings of three main areas and discusses observations based on them.

3.1 Basic ICT knowledge of teachers

Today, the use of computers in our daily was constantly increasing for communications and work. The knowledge of computer systems, word processing, data management, and spreadsheet and data analysis program has become an essential requirement for many positions. (Concordia University, 2011) So, the basic ICT knowledge for teachers is an essential factor in E-education. Teachers' computer knowledge had evaluated using a three-point Likert scale (fundamental, intermediate, proficient). Approximately half of the teachers participated in the survey. According to this finding, 15% have proficient, 67% have an intermediate level and 18% have poor computer skills. In general, older teachers are poorer in information technology than younger teachers.

Therefore, ICT awareness training should hold more than before. In particular, older teachers should enhance their computer literacy. And, they should attend special training to become skillful in using computers. In addition, Rectors, Pro-rectors, Administrators, and professors are necessary to encourage teachers to use digitalization.

3.2 Barriers to using digital technology in the classroom

In this section, the discussion is based on data from individual interviews with teachers from YUOE. Half of the interviewees may not be willing to immediately adopt E-learning. On the teachers' side, there are many challenges in the change of E-learning. They will require more time to prepare appropriate quizzes and other out-of-class activities. (Howitt & Pegrum, 2015) Furthermore, technology accessibility and technology competency can also cause problems due to the lack of technology use among many teachers. They complained about spending more money on electronic devices and phone bills. They also say that electricity and Internet access are sometimes weak.

Another point is depending on the nature of different subjects. Although digital technology used was commonly found in science and related subjects. But some social science subjects were weak in the use of technology. From the observations, most science teachers are more interested in digitalization than others.

According to the data, the main challenges causing are individual's morale, self-confidence, interest, satisfaction with digital technology, and the specialized subject nature. However, there are many advantages of E-learning. So, teachers need to understand this. Therefore, the benefits of E-learning should share more than ever for teachers. The university should provide infrastructure and ICT upgrading training for teachers and staff. Only then will teachers be interested in E-education and overcome barriers to using digital technology in the classroom. Moreover, significant public investment in Internet technologies for teaching and research is critical. (Martin,2013)

3.3 Weakness and Strengths of Teachers in E-learning

Teachers should create engaging and motivational lesson plans that integrate technology into E-education. Therefore, it was necessary to consider the weaknesses and strengths of teachers in E-learning. This section is based on peer observation and in-person interviews.

According to interviews with some older teachers, they complain that they disagree with the transformation of E-education for various reasons. Among the reasons, it was observed self-confidence and worry about technology. From these findings, they need to learn more about technology. They should study how to use electronics. Enough time should be necessary to prepare for teaching.

Younger teachers say they use technology in the classroom for many benefits. They also said that they use digital tools to expand the learning opportunities for students. Moreover, they can do to increase support and engagement for students. They remark that teachers can use technology to transform a motivating classroom and bring back joy in learning and teaching.

According to the observations, the effort and motivation of individual teachers is the main factor. So, the attitude of teachers needs to change. They must be able to upgrade traditional teaching methods and adapt to new teaching methods.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the main challenges for teachers in E-education transformation are weak ICT knowledge and a lack of self-confidence in the digital technology used. Also, computers and accessories were insufficient at this time.

Each teacher can face these challenges if they can improve their skills. Altitude, technical knowledge, trust in technology, and collaboration are needed more than other qualities. Moreover, they also require time management, training, technology approach, experience, and teaching style regarding digital technology. As a results, it is necessary to hold ICT training programs and workshops to overcome the challenges of digitization. Teachers should be involved in these programs as well.

In addition, new research must conduct on the needs encountered in the practical implementation of digital technology. In further research, age differences, gender differences, specialized subject differences, may have differences in opinion for digitalization. Therefore, the new research would have to be done on the basis of those variants.

The university should support infrastructure, computers, and accessories more than before. Furthermore, the university should implement specific plans and educational strategies for E-

education to increase the use of digital technology. Only then will E-education gradually develop in the future.

Suggestion

The main reasons why university teachers are unwilling to use digital technology are lack of technical knowledge, pedagogy and lack of support for computing infrastructure and accessories. In addition, there is a lack of a specific plan for digital teaching-learning at the university level and a lack of practical implementation in Myanmar.

Therefore, specific projects should be established and encouraged to implement digital technology in universities effectively to develop. Only then digital teaching -learning will be developed in higher university education. Furthermore, the policymakers should formulate a specific plan, and E-education will be higher to enforce the implementation. The above suggestions aim at developing the E-education system in Myanmar.

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