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RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERSPECTIVES OF ONLINE EDUCATION (E-LEARNING)

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ABSTRACT

With the aid of the Information Technology (IT), a gigantic step in the evolution of distance education has been given, creating a new concept: e-learning, online education or distributed education. The inclusion of IT in education has allowed the opportunity of having alternative methods of formation for increasing the access to knowledge and learning to millions of children, young people and adults around the world. Talking about IT in education is also thinking of the diverse tools that are used daily, such as: the Internet, educational platforms, mobile devices and more. Nowadays substantial activities (research and investigation, teaching and extension among others) are not understood without the use of Internet as a mandatory source for students and mainly for professors. The pinnacle and evolution of online education is due to the applied development of IT, as a result of this relation, it is not strange its efficiency to integrate the most recent technological innovations to its list of options and extend the possibilities of application. These days, anyone who can connect to the Internet anywhere in the world, has access to an unlimited variety of resources, courses, graduate and postgraduate studies, at a very low cost or some of them totally free.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, most of the world universities, with the progress of technologies are being transformed to adapt to this new reality, making use of recent digital tools to increase and vary the academic offer. The current trends in which the world is projected in all aspects, are forcing to change the regular patterns of time and activities. Because of this, Higher Education Institutions are evaluating and making decisions to implement information and communication technologies in education, since society demands the necessary competencies to perform different tasks and roles for which they must be prepared. In Latin America, education is seen as a social asset. Considered the strongest aid to achieve individual and collective well-being. Higher education has an essential role beyond the integral formation of students, since it is the maker of new a citizenship that aspires to the construction of a more equitable world. In Mexico, online education has caused a significant growth around Higher Education, a process that is ongoing and that invites reflection and analysis. Online education today, has become a valuable tool since it has allowed changes in traditional models, particularly in terms of coverage, and institutional practices and actions, with the intention of improving the learning of students.

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Development

Online education is a form of distance education, which uses the Internet with all its technological tools to carry out the teaching-learning process. The influence of the use of information and communication technologies in education breaks down the barriers of distance and time; now called online teaching. Where interaction becomes the driving element of the quality of learning, favoring self-instruction on the part of students and cooperative work among them. Below there is a table with the characteristics of the evolution of online education The model of distance education has broken the traditional education schemes, bringing knowledge to all people eager for preparation. The prototype of online education is increasingly accepted around the world, which is why the enrollment of students in this modality on the five continents it is expected to increase.

In 1921 appeared the beginnings of online education in Mexico, where the Ministry of Public Education begins to grow in rural areas, offering programs aimed to teachers, true, that in the beginning there wasn't a structured program. In 1939, with education based on open systems, a law appeared in public education that was called Cultural Missions, through which teachers were trained using postal correspondence where lessons and workbooks were sent to teachers and the final evaluation would be through a questionnaire on the last sheet of the booklet.

Table 1. Evolution of online education. (Source: Gabit, 2017)

Year	Characteristics
1924	First device related to education, the Pressey teaching machine, called "Pressey Testing Machine".
1954	Burrhus Frederic Skinner, created the first machine to teach, which consisted of a box in which the teacher introduced a sheet with all the concepts that the student had to learn and another sheet where you could hide part of the text.
1960	The first LMS (Learning Management System) emerges, before the Internet, including innovative elements such as chats, forums and e-mail.
1965	- The University of Wisconsin initiates courses based on telephone communication. - The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was the pioneer in demonstrating the use of the first electronic mail system, known as MAILBOX. This system sent messages to different users on the same computer, because at that time there were no computer networks.
1968	Stanford University creates the Stanford educational television network.
1969	ARPANET (beginnings of the internet) is created by the United States Department of Defense, using it as a means of communication among diverse academic and state institutions.
1971	The concept of e-book is consolidated through the Gutenberg project.
1976	The University of Phoenix, the first university in the United States offering online courses.
1980	The concept of virtual campus is born.
1989	The CD-Rom is used as media for instruction.
1990	The WWW appears, the distribution system of documents and web pages arrives.
1994	First Blog. Among the first web pages, blogs start to work as personal diaries or online journals.
1995	- Internet pinnacle. Moment of maximum explosion and reach of the Internet so far surpassing all expectations. - First social network. Randy Conrads creates the classmates.com website to facilitate communication between classmates.
1996	The concept of E-learning is born.
1997	California Virtual University creates a consortium of California universities offering more than 1,000 online courses.
2000	The concept of B-learning is born.
2001	- The Wikipedia project starts, the open encyclopedia that is published collaboratively around the world and in any language. - Moment in which the use of blogs is generalized, reaching one of its greatest growth to date.
2002	- The SCORM format is defined, the first version of this standard to define structured pedagogical objects that allow sharing of content among different educational platforms and tools. - Moodle appears, the first version of the most widely used LMS around the world and continues to expand.
2004	The concept of Web 2.0 is born. Users become active in content, adding a more social and participatory role to the web.
2005	- The concept of mobile-learning appears. With the use of mobile devices, phones, PDAs, tablets that allow to develop learning from anywhere. - Youtube is born, there are video services with streaming capability that conveniently allows to host and view videos to any user.
2006	The social network Twitter appears, which is based on micro-publications or comments limited to 140 characters and that is gradually providing with different educational uses.
2007	Facebook is born, the social network with more users at the moment and that in a similar way to Twitter is integrating little by little in the educational model with diverse pedagogical applications.
2008	Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) appear. They represent an industrialization of learning, in a decentralized model where all learning falls to the student.
2012	96% of traditional universities offer online courses, 76% of educators consider that networks are pedagogical methods.
2013	Apps pinnacle. Apps or applications that in the form of programs allows us to turn the devices into authentic pocket computers.
2014	Innovative technologies come to education, including augmented reality.

In 1969 the Open University is founded in England (British Open University), pioneer of what we now know as distance higher education, it had influence in Mexico. Three years later, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) created the Open University System (SUA). UNAM (1995) created the High Technology Center for Distance Education, which objective was to create a platform in which distance learning could be taught and it could be able to grow in the following years. (Zubieta Garcia and Rama Vitale, 2015).

In the University of Guadalajara (UdeG), with the institutional reform of 1989, a structure is created in charge of distance education, linked with the concept of Open University and Continuing Education. This structure is transformed changing its name to Virtual University System and growing in its institutional importance from 1990 to 1999. Thus, with the support of FOMES (Modernization Fund for Higher Education), the first online courses are being developed using Commercial platforms such as WebCT, Black Board and the production of educational material using media such as video, multimedia and Internet.

Over the last two decades, online education has seen a big increase thanks to the Internet, so it is absolutely normal to have friends, acquaintances, relatives or even ourselves, taking classes at universities, schools or institutions from other countries. To reach the advances with which online education is now available, it was inevitable to experiment, to err and to experience different stages in general.

Proposal

In Mexico, around 1990 the first virtual universities were opened. Currently, there are institutions that provide education at the baccalaureate, bachelor and postgraduate level. Online education is generating the possibility that anyone with Internet access can complete a career, study a diploma or complete their education easily and sometimes free of charge, which includes the same learning and teaching as face-to-face studies. In addition, in recent years a more informal alternative has emerged through the Massive Online Open Courses (MOOC). Online education eliminates the need for physical interaction, creating virtual learning environments through video tutorials, social networks, chats, virtual forums among

others, to interact with teachers and fellow students. It also allows students to progress at their own pace, learning becomes more personalized according to the aptitudes, preferences and availability of each. It is expected that by 2025 there will be 160 million people performing higher education studies, and 40 million people will be linked to online education at some point in their lives. (LópezCastañares, 2006)

Conclusion

The use of IT has undoubtedly benefited education. Online education is something new that has come to revolutionize the way of teaching-learning of students and teachers, in addition, it encourages the exploration, it increases the experience and digital ability. It requires more commitment, has greater flexibility, there are contemporary topics and especially the personalization is encouraged. Online education in Mexico represents a great opportunity to specialize, as it is not yet fully developed. There are universities that offer courses, diplomas, degrees and postgraduate, totally online and sometimes free. With online education, student enrollment is increased, education lags are avoided, dropout rates are reduced, teachers are constantly updated, and collaborative work is encouraged. All this can be possible as long as there is technological equipment to access virtual education. Without a doubt, technology has allowed students and the general population to have other options for formation; as they can receive education from anywhere in the world and take courses from other countries.

Online education is not a fashion, it is a current study technique, which seeks solutions to improve day by day the teaching-learning process.

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