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Investigation of e-learning implementation in HE institutions in Libya

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Diagram for ICT penetration in Libya and other countries:
Basic education in Libya is well developed and literacy levels are among the highest in the Arab region. However, current education does not provide a “job-ready” work force because the education system is disconnected from the demands of the job market. Previous education policy decisions are having a negative effect in important areas for business such as IT and foreign languages. Also continuous professional development is almost non-existent (i.e. during its isolation Libya’s doctors could not update themselves on developments in international healthcare on an ongoing basis (Kenan, 2009)).

Barriers of successful e-learning implementation in HE in Libya:
E-learning is still in its early years in Libya, at the stage of attempting to implement E-learning case studies. Although initial introduction of the E-learning opportunities in HEIs seems to be successful, there are still many challenges that might prevent the general adoption of E-learning. Al-badree (2007) divides them in three categories: Technological barriers; Cultural barriers and other issues.
In 2009, there is a questionnaire is established about these barriers and the results have been as below: the respondents were asked what they considered was the major barrier to the implementation of E-learning in Libya. In order of frequency the respondents saw the barriers to the implementation of E-learning in Libya as, technological, mismanagement, cultural and “others”.

Recommendations for improving the e-learning implementation in Libyan HE institutions:
Firstly: Recommendations for factors that affect learner (students’ and instructors’) proficiencies
- Assess learners’ computer skills before they enrol for an E-learning course; course content should be designed to suit learning styles.
- E-learning course content should meet the requirement of National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and Libyan Qualifications Authorities (LQA) and should be continually revised and updated.
- HE Institutions should hire an adequate number of support staff to be responsible for administrative duties and take this heavy burden away from academic staff.
- Instructors should let learners know their availability schedule so that learners can know when to expect a response from an instructor. Additional staff members should be provided for support.
- Course content should be made available in different languages that will make learning easier for learners. In Libya, there is two official languages (Arabic and English).

History of e-learning:
The aim of TELDAP is to make e-learning and digital archives available and accessible to the general public, moving towards the establishment of a knowledge society, with the ultimate goal of strengthening national competitiveness. The main objectives are to promote the application of technologies and digital contents in cultural, academic, socioeconomic and educational development; improve the use of e-learning in formal education and lifelong learning and promote international cooperation network for e-learning.

Evaluation of ICT gap in Libya:
The Libyan business executive survey/global competitiveness report (LBES/GCR) ranks Libya 97th out of 111 countries in university/industry research collaboration (Porter & Yergin, 2006). However, there is agreement among a number of Libyan educators that students on postgraduate programmes in Libyan universities encountered the following difficulties: Absence of a plan for building the human cadre needed by society; Absence of effective administration; Lack of staff development Libyan HE. It is only recently that structured staff development has become available to academic staff; Shortage of research activities in science and engineering in Libyan HEIs due the lack of necessary facilities.

Figure(1): Comparison of ICT penetration in Libya with neighboring countries (Porter and Yergin, 2006)

Figure(2): showing the development stages of Taiwan E-learning and Digital Archives Program

Figure(3): Barriers to E-learning in Libya(Kenan,2009)

Figure (1): Higher education institutions in Libya (Rhema & Miliszewska, 2010).