

Abstract

This paper is a desktop research based on the unpublished research report by the author (Gunga, 2006) entitled "Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): Proposing a Course Management System for the University of Nairobi". The paper proposes that preparation by higher education institutions, especially the universities in developing countries to embrace online education, is an inevitable effort that must be learnt to be undertaken early in the 21st Century. The vision 2030 that has just been launched in Kenya, for instance, has implications with regard to increasing access to education by 'going for the learner' instead of the 'learner seeking for institutions'. The basic principle in this regard is to reach for learners wherever they are through either networked e-education efforts or flexible open learning forums. In that regard, this study presents a pedagogic rationale for electronic Course Management Systems (CMS) or Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) for higher education in developing countries. The current technological developments in information and communications technology (ICT) has enabled higher education in both developing and developed countries to embrace e-learning and online education practices to enhance access to educational opportunities. There is a current belief that ICT has a key place in pedagogy especially in the enhancement of learning and improvement of inter-professional collaboration in the teaching profession. This proposition of an elaborate electronic system for managing courses for Kenyan universities in general and University of Nairobi in particular is intended to act as a sensitization forum in the assessment of the comparative benefits of online education viz-a-viz face-to-face instructional practice.