

Quality in e-learning is bound up to our value

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Since higher education is booming in developing countries, so is e-learning. A new doctoral thesis from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, shows how culture can shape quality in higher education in general and in e-learning in particular.

E-learning - primarily education delivered via the Internet - implies that the teaching is not limited to one (beyond the time, space and process dimensions). In fact, teachers and students do not meet in any physical location at all.

Higher education institutions in general and virtual institutions in particular are experiencing pressure to become more competitive all over the world. Such striving for excellence can be associated with and seen as a consequence of [globalization](#) that is propelling the reshaping of higher education. Further, a number of failed e-learning projects along with the accountability movement in [higher education](#) have significantly amplified concerns about quality in e-learning. Accordingly, there are worldwide calls for enhancing and assuring quality in e-learning specifically in the context of the developing countries.

Quality in e-learning, however, is bound up our values, expectations and underlain premises. Similarly, quality in e-learning as a multifaceted construct can be judged and defined differently. Quality in e-learning is a "relative concept" that depends on or is constrained by the circumstances of use. says author of the thesis Davoud Masoumi.

By taking into account the pros and cons of the previous models,

frameworks and studies of quality in e-learning, the author developed an e-quality framework in order to enhance and assure quality in e-learning in [developing countries](#). The framework developed was validated in the Iranian virtual institutions as an instance of a developing country context.

The e-quality framework needs to be viewed as a cultural artefact, and thus be adopted in circumstances that will be implemented. To build in and integrate the cultural and cultural-pedagogical issues when developing and then implementing an e-quality framework, a culture - sensitive model is proposed. This is done with the aim of giving the specific culture a "voice" in the development its own e-quality models/framework, not just adapting to "outside" norms and values in a one-way globalization process. says Masoumi.

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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