

ADVANCEMENT IN E-LEARNING

AKRAM M. ZEKI
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ETHICAL ISSUES IN E-LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

E-learning is becoming a fast growing sector of higher education. Although there are many advantages of e-learning, yet there are some ethical issues related to e-learning. This paper provides a general overview of such ethical issues. It also provides some strategies to overcome them.

Keywords: E-Learning, Ethics, Ethical Issues

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the Internet in the 1990s allowed a dramatic change in almost all fields. Among those fields is the education in which the electronic learning (e-learning) has appeared. For instance, it is the fastest growing sector of the higher education industry in the United States (Brown 2008).

e-Learning is an educational process that leverages on the opportunities of digital technologies for delivering contents, assessing students' competencies as well as for enhancing interaction among users and between educators/instructors and students (Isa *et al* 2008). Similar to the traditional learning, for the e-learning process to take place, there must be learners, teachers, material, and medium.

In the past, children initially learn ethics at home which will then be reinforced in the school. Unfortunately, in the globalization era –in which the Internet is one of its major means– this is becoming more difficult. In general, all services provided on the Internet suffer from almost the same ethical issues. Kracher and Corritore (2004) identified six critical electronic commerce ethics issues: access, intellectual property, privacy and informed consent, protection of children, security of information, and trust. E-learning is not an exception and it actually suffers from almost the same six problems with perhaps different levels.