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MOBILE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN EDUCATION

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Abstract

21st century is the mobile century. The revolution took place in the field of educational technology. Mobile technology emerged as a tool of learning. The concept emphasized on anytime, anywhere and self-paces learning in the education though we create environment for m-learning. Teachers and learners both are using this technology for better teaching and learning process. M-Learning has its own characteristics to enhance this technology in the field of education. Now the time has come to expand the ICT in various ways like e-learning, online-learning, self-pace learning and obviously M-Leaning. We must use M-Learning tool in our teaching-learning process in the field of education.

Keywords: *ICT, E-Learning, M-Learning Technology*

Introduction:

'Mobile learning' is certainly not merely the conjunction of 'mobile' and 'learning'; it has always implicitly meant 'mobile E-Learning' and its history and development have to be understood as both a continuation of 'conventional' E-Learning and a reaction to this 'conventional' E-Learning and to its perceived inadequacies and limitations. It is the 'mobile' aspect of mobile learning that makes it stand apart from other types of learning, specifically designing learning experiences that exploit the opportunities that 'mobility' can offer us. M-Learning focuses on the mobility of the learner, interacting with portable technologies, and learning that reflects a focus on how society and its institutions can accommodate and support an increasingly mobile population. This is because mobile devices have features and functionality for supporting learners. For example, podcasts of lectures can be made available for downloading. Learners are to expect to engage with these learning resources whilst away from the traditional learning spaces.

ICT in Teacher Education

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) which include radio and television, as well as newer digital technologies such as computers, internet and mobile- have been touted as potentially powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform. When used appropriately, different ICT's are said to help expand access to education, strengthen the relevance of education to the increasingly digital workplace, and raise educational quality by among others, helping make teaching and learning into an engaging, active process connected to real life. However, the experience of introducing different ICTs in the classroom and other educational settings all over the world over the past several decades suggests that the full realization of the potential educational benefits of ICTs is not automatic. The effective integration of ICTs into the educational system is a complex, multifaceted process that involves not just technology- indeed, given enough initial capital, getting the technology is the easiest part!- but also curriculum and pedagogy, institutional readiness, teacher competencies, and long-term financing, among others.

With the emerging new technologies, the teaching profession is evolving from an emphasis on teacher-centered, lecture-based instruction to student-centered, interactive learning environments. For India to reap the full benefits of ICT in learning and to employ it as a prime tool to become a knowledge economy, It is considered essential that both pre-and in-service teachers are able to effectively use these new tools for learning. So teacher education institutions and programmes have the critical role to provide the necessary leadership in adapting pre-service and in-service teacher education to deal with the current demand of society and economy. They need to model the new pedagogies and tools for learning with the aim of enhancing the teaching-learning process. Moreover, teacher education institutions and programmes must also give guidance in determining how the new technologies can best be used in the context of the culture, needs and economic conditions of their country. One of the main ICT's components is Mobile Learning. Mobile Learning is going to emerge in the field of education speedily.

Definitions

According to Quinn, 'Mobile learning is learning through mobile computational devices.'
Shepherd Says 'M- learning is not just electronic, it's mobile.'
Kynaslahti identifies three different elements for mobility and all of these are valuable to teachers and students while they are teaching and learning –

- Convenience
- Expediency
- Immediacy

Teachers are able to work anywhere even if that requires access to the internet or a connection to others kind of electronic environment but the definition of mobile learning the focus should be on mobility. M learning should be restricted to learning on devices which a lady can carry in her handbag or a gentleman can carry in his pocket. There fore define mobile learning as the provision of education and training on PDA's/ palmtops/smart phone and mobile phone.

A mobile learning framework

Research on the introduction of ICT in education has shown that it is effective only when developers understand the strengths and weaknesses of the technology and integrate technology into appropriate pedagogical practices in education. To address these concerns, an

application framework is proposed for m-learning. This framework consists of two levels of research and analysis. First, is the mobile connectivity which focuses on the applications and technology used by commercial establishments to extend electronic commerce and second is the e-learning, which focuses on the use of Internet and other ICT in education.

Mobile connectivity

The immobile nature of PC and Internet has restricted the anytime-anyplace potential of e-learning to those moments when a learner is at home or at work in front of their PC nor complete their course work. A wireless device overcomes these limitations by allowing learners to disseminate information and complete other course work even when they are away from their hard-wired Internet connections. This enhances the anyplace potential of wired Internet to the next level, namely, anywhere. A wireless device has the potential to give instant gratification to students by allowing them to interact with the instructors, other students in the course, and access course materials from wherever (or anywhere) they have wireless connectivity.

- ***Identifies several benefits for mobile connectivity***

Mobile applications generally allow the user to control or filter the information flow and communication through the wireless device; namely, these devices are usually personalized or individualized. Second, mobile connectivity improves collaboration via real-time or instant interactivity, regardless of time and location, leading to better decision making. Finally, mobile connectivity enhances customer orientation as users have better access to their service providers and do a better job in balancing their work life through a productive use of time. These benefits can prove equally useful for improving the learning environment.

E-Learning has come to define any dissemination of educational knowledge over the Internet. This makes E-Learning a subset of technology-based training. It also incorporates a number of learning activities conducted on the Internet, of which mobile learning is one part. Many authors view Mobile Learning simply as the natural evolution of E-Learning, which completes a missing component such as the wireless feature, or as a new stage of distance and E-Learning. M-Learning is often described as occupying a sub-space within the E-Learning space, which is in turn a sub-part of digital learning.

Benefits of M-Learning:

- Relatively inexpensive opportunities, as the cost of mobile devices are significantly less than PCs and laptops
- Multimedia content delivery and creation options
- Continuous and situated learning support
- Decrease in training costs
- Potentially a more rewarding learning experience
- Improving levels of literacy, numeracy and participation in education amongst young adults.
- Using the communication features of a mobile phone as part of a larger learning activity, e.g.: sending media or texts into a central portfolio, or exporting audio files from a learning platform to phone.

Conclusion

Mobile technologies are an attractive and easy means to maintain literacy skills and gain constant access to information. They are affordable, can be easily distributed and thus hold great potential for reaching marginalized groups and providing them with access to further learning and development. Mobile technologies facilitate distance learning in situations where access to education is difficult or interrupted because of geographical location or due to post-conflict or post-disaster situations. Mobile Learning Environment is going to emerge in the field of education rapidly because of its affordability and accessibility.

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