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Educational Benefits and Applications of E-learning

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Abstract

E-learning is a computer based educational tool or system that enables you to learn anywhere and at any time. Today E-learning content is mostly delivered though the internet. Technology has advanced so much that the geographical gap is bridged with the use of tools that make you feel well equipped in the classroom. E-learning offers the ability to share material in all kinds of formats. E-learning provides the learners with the ability to fit learning around their lifestyles, effectively and helps even the busiest person to further his career and gain new qualifications. Conducting webinars (live online classes) and communicating with professors via chat and message forums is also an option available to users. E-learning is a strategy that assists educators to make ICT integral to learning. It is about engaging the digital generation, improving individualized learning opportunities, sparking innovation in learning & enhancing teachers' digital pedagogy. It is a transformative strategy to transition from traditional ways of working to a digital way of meaningful working, engaging and connected. Overall, traditional learning is expensive, takes a long time and the results can vary. E-learning offers a faster and cheaper alternative and potentially better. E-learning means teaching and learning with and through ICT, rather to using technology doing old things in new ways, and use technology to enable and transform teaching, learning and the curriculum. Traditional learning is expensive, takes a long time and the results can vary. E-learning offers an alternative that is faster, cheaper and potentially better. This paper discusses what is E-learning? What are its benefit over traditional learning? How the quality of Education can be enhanced through E-learning?

Key Words: E-learning, Education, Quality, Teacher, Learner

Introduction

E-learning is a computer based educational tool or system that enables you to learn anywhere and at any time. Today e-learning is mostly delivered though the internet, although in the past it

was delivered using a blend of computer-based methods like CD-ROM. Technology has advanced so much that the geographical gap is bridged with the use of tools that make you feel as if you are inside the classroom. E-learning offers the ability to share material in all kinds of formats such as word documents, pdf's, videos, and slideshows. Conducting webinars (live online classes) and communicating with professors via chat and message forums is also an option available to users. E-learning is a strategy that assists educators to make ICT integral to learning. It is about engaging the digital generation, improving individualized learning opportunities, sparking innovation in learning & enhancing teachers' digital pedagogy. It is a transformative strategy to transition from traditional ways of working to a digital way of working that is meaningful, engaging and connected. E-learning means teaching and learning with and through ICT. This means rather than using technology to do old things in new ways, we want to do new things in new ways and use technology to enable and transform teaching, learning and the curriculum.

There is a plethora of different e-learning systems and methods, which allow for courses to be delivered. With the right tool various processes can be automated such as the marking of tests or the creation of engaging content. E-learning provides the learners with the ability to fit learning around their lifestyles, effectively allowing even the busiest person to further a career and gain new qualifications.

Some of the most important developments in education have happened since the launch of the internet. These days' learners are well versed in the use of smart phones, text messaging and using the internet so participating in and running an online course has become a simple affair. Message boards, social media and various other means of online communication allow learners to keep in touch and discuss course related matters, whilst providing for a sense of community.

In the fast-paced world of e-learning the available technologies to make a course exciting are always changing, and course content can and should be updated quickly to give students the very latest information. This is especially important if the e-learning training is being given to employees in a sector where keeping up-to-date on industry developments is of the utmost importance. This is one of the reasons why many businesses are now offering training via e-learning - other reasons includes low costs and the ability for employees to study in their own time and place. Overall, traditional learning is expensive, takes a long time and the results can vary. E-learning offers an alternative that is faster, cheaper and potentially better.

Benefits of E-Learning

Whether you're a high-school teacher looking to engage your students in a more interactive way, or a corporate trainer hired by a large company to design training curricula, e-learning packs a punch when it comes to benefits that make the creation and delivery processes easier and hassle-free. Important benefits are outlined below:

No Boundaries, No Restrictions

Along with locational restrictions, time is one of the issues that learners and teachers both have to face in learning. In the case of face-to-face learning, the location limits attendance to a group of learners who have the ability to participate in the area, and in the case of time, it limits the crowd to those who can attend at a specific time. E-learning, on the other hand, facilitates learning without having to organize when and where everyone who is interested in a course can be present.

More Fun

Designing a course in a way that makes it interactive and fun through the use of multimedia or the more recently developed methods of gamification enhances not only your engagement factor, but also the relative lifetime of the course material in question.

Cost Effective

This is directed to both learners and teachers, but there is a good chance that whatever your role you had to pay exorbitant amounts of money at some point to acquire updated versions of textbooks for school or college. While textbooks often become obsolete after a certain period of time, the need to constantly acquire new editions is not present in e-learning.

It Just Fits!

As companies and organizations adopt technologies to improve the efficiency of day-to-day operations, the use of the internet becomes a necessity. As multinational corporations expand across the globe, the chances of working with people from other countries increases, and training all those parties together is an issue that e-learning successfully addresses.

Application of E-learning in Real-life Scenario

In an effort to enhance the credibility of course material, oftentimes a professor will summon a field specialist to give a lecture relevant to the topic at hand. In the traditional model of education, the professor would have to extend an invitation to said expert, and incur the costs of his flight, stay and training.

With e-learning the professor has the ability to host a guest lecture without having to spend much money. It can be done virtually, with cameras for both the lecturer and the students, and with the use of microphones to facilitate the same level of interaction that would be possible if the lecturer were physically present in the room. The added benefit comes in when we are able to replay the lecture and gain even more out of it. Students that missed out can view the recording, or students that attended can watch it again to further their understanding For E-learning to produce qualitative and effective results characteristics of effective digital learners, effective E-Learning teachers and effective E-Learning schools are as follows:

Effective Digital Learners:

- demonstrate creativity and intellectual curiosity resulting in enjoyment, fun and resilience exhibit a sense of self, confidence and enjoyment
- are self-directed and can work independently, collaboratively and cooperatively to learn and to develop products of use with themselves and others
- display innovation and entrepreneurship
- continually develop communication and collaboration skills
- communicate globally through eLearning spaces
- are able to research effectively and have information fluency
- have developed digital literacy and understand technology operations and concepts
- have developed digital proficiency to work effectively in 21st Century environments
- understand digital citizenship and work on issues and challenges that are real and relevant, that make a difference to them and to others
- demonstrate accountability and adaptability
- have developed skills to design, create, share and publish
- build critical and systems thinking enabling problem identification, formulation
- and solution, and decision making
- use ICT purposefully to engage in real research
- explore new ideas and tools in authentic contexts
- exhibit and exercise the attributes of a lifelong learner: they are a knowledgeable person with deep understanding, a complex thinker, a creative person, an active investigator, an effective communicator, a participant in an interdependent world and a reflective and self-directed learner

Effective E-Learning Teachers:

- demonstrates an ongoing commitment to professional knowledge, professional practice, professional relationships and professional values.
- provides an understanding of the transformative role of ICT for 21st Century curriculum design/interpretation, pedagogy and student learning.
- make conscious decisions about student learning based on an understanding of digital learners
- are lifelong learners who are willing to take risks, fail and explore areas outside his or her expertise
- employ a variety of methodologies, current learning theories and practices
- constantly collaborate with colleagues and practicing professionals in order to consolidate understanding and to share and reflect on their learning, wonderings and discoveries.

Effective E-Learning Schools Feature:

Leadership and Vision, Including Supportive Policy

- shared vision for learning and systematic whole school plans for how to get there
- enabling policies and adequate resourcing
- classrooms fostering peer and tutor support that equip students as active citizens of a global village.

Workforce capability, including digital pedagogy, digital literacy, culture of learning and innovation

- commitment to ongoing learning with staff develop digital literacy and digital pedagogy
- supportive culture for innovation is developed.

Learning spaces, including physical spaces, virtual spaces and enabling infrastructure

- learning not restricted by barriers of time or place
- seamless access for students across school, personal, family and real world domains
- classrooms where technologies are used to empower and engage learners to participate in student-centered, project-based learning
- enabling eLearning environments that provide safe and secure access and flexibility
- communities of practice (including local community supportive of students use of technology for learning)
- enterprise architecture – supported and maintained including technical support.

E-Learning curriculum, including digital content

- connectedness to global issues and authentic contexts
- curriculum, instruction and assessment are clearly aligned and exist to improve student learning opportunities
- assessment, reporting and evaluation are key components of curriculum design and delivery and are understood by all
- accessible digital content developed/created by teachers and students for learning and sharing
- e-Curriculum that is built upon enacted curriculum and a clear and supported model of instruction
- learning integrated as multidisciplinary and accessible for all learners.

Conclusion

E-learning undoubtedly enhances the quality of education. It is a computer based educational tool or system that enables you to learn anywhere and at any time. E-learning is a strategy that assists educators to make ICT integral to learning. It is about engaging the digital generation, improving individualized learning opportunities, sparking innovation in learning & enhancing

teachers' digital pedagogy. It is a transformative strategy to transition from traditional ways of working to a digital way of working that is meaningful, engaging and connected. It has many benefits over traditional methods of learning. It can enable faster delivery of education, enable wider access to the same and is cost effective also. E-learning benefits both the teacher and the learner. The adoption and use of E-learning in education have a positive impact on teaching, and learning

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