M – LEARNING: A NEW PARADIGM IN EDUCATION

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Abstract
   M- Learning involves learning anywhere with no need to physically connect to an out let. There is also a focus with the latest technology of a e- learning being delivered with ''just in time'', ''just enough'' and '' just for me'' concepts. This article attempts to illustrate the characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of mobile learning.

Introduction

It is evident that information and communication technologies(ICT) have transferred our lives and reshaped the nature of everyday activities and contemporary times are called the 'information age, and 'knowledge society'; in today's day and age, education play a big role in which we are and that we achieve in our life time. In present scenario, arrival of computer and internet in the field of education has changed the procedures and patterns of learning. Today's learning patterns knocks at the door of student or learner. Today anyone learns anywhere, any time. Latest information and content is available at low cost. New technological terms replaced old terms such as e – learning in to M-learning (Mobile learning). M – learning is the new sensation in the field of education.

Meaning of M- Learning

M – Learning is the idea that a student can learn from any time using portable learning devices. M – learning or ' mobile learning, is any sort of learning that takes

advantages of learning opportunities offered by mobile technologies. In other words, mobile learning decreases limitation of learning location through the mobility of portable device. M- Learning is convenient in the sense that it is accessible from virtually anywhere, which provides access to all the different learning materials available. It is also collaborative, sharing is almost instantaneous among everyone using the same content, which leads to the reception of instant feedback and tips. M-learning also brings strong portability by replacing books and notes with portable devices filled with portable devices filled with tailored learning content. While they are some great advantages afforded by mobile learning, there are can be problems when m- learning is not designed well. As mobile devices become more and more powerful it will become easier to design effective mobile learning. Thus the m- learning can be summarized in a single statement - "deliverance of education or any learning via any portable devices".

Characteristics of M- learning

- **Accessibility** – The information is always available whenever the learners need to use it.
- **Immediacy** – The information can be retrieved immediately by the learners.
- **Interactivity** – The learners can interact with peers, teachers and experts efficiently and effectively through different media.
- **Context** – awareness – The environment can adapt to the learners real situation to provide adequate information for the learners.
- **Permanency** – The information remains unless the learns purposely remove it.
- Flexible learning. Large mass covered Reduces student's indiscipline and unrest problem.
- It can be used everywhere at every time.
- Most of mobile devices have lower prices than desktop PCs.
- Similar size and light weight than desktop PCs.
- Ensure bigger students engage as m- learning is based on modern technologies which students use in everyday life.
- Using GPS technology the m – learning can provide location depend educator.

Advantages of M- learning

M- Learning has some great advantages.

One can access lessons, video clips and audio libraries from anywhere, including public places and moving buses and trains.

- Interaction with fellow students and instructor will be great help. It is an accepted fact that learning is made easier when information is shared and question answered through a sort of combined study. This help several students to work

together to work together an assignments even while remaining at far-flung location.

- Portability is very big Plus, as PDA is compact and very light weight and enable a student to take notes or enter all type of data directly in to the device.
- There is a psychological factor, owning handheld devices increases student motivation and deepens the commitment to using the learning with them. Further the present generation of students has fascination with handhelds like PDAs, mobile phones and similar carry around device.
- The learning material is mostly colorfull and inviting which may prompt students to go back and forth and practice more.
- It is fact that handheld devices are more affordable in prices than larges system and already a major percentage of the population own them.
- Flexible hours of learning are indeed a great boon as students can access the system any time and from any location. What is more, teacher support can now be expected even outside classrooms and other learning environment.
- Each student can learn at his or her own pace some students may be slower learners. The students who pick up things fast need not waste time going repeated through basic lessons.
- Yet another blessing is a huge saving in the cost of learning materials and also community expenses.

Disadvantages of M – Learning

- There is no denying that the storage capacities of PDA are limited.
- Anyone who has a mobile gadget knows that the short battery life and frequent changes of batteries is a great nuisance.
- Devices may become outdated quickly and students have to keep comparing obsolescence.
- In the M – learning venue, students are incapable of printing, simply because it required a network connection. This is obvious not feasible in a number of real- life situation.
- The buttons on the keypad or styles pens are small and can be trickily for some people to manipulate. There are attachable keyboards available for some devices but these are also small, can be different to use to cost money.

It is fair to say that M – learning today may appear as a challenging proposition, but most of perceived disadvantages of m – learning gradually as technology improves.

Future of M – Learning

Despite some disadvantages, it will be more useful in collaborative projects and field work, in a classroom as alternative to books or computers, where learners are widely dispersed, engage with learner who in the past have field excluded. It will allow

the collaboration to happen regardless of physical location, in real time and to include text and rich media as well voice. When the existing course material; converted in to new ones for delivering on mobile technology for learning efficiency will be high. (Rekkedal 2002)

The characteristic of mobile device like ubiquity, interactivity richness, efficiency, flexibility, security, reliability, interactivity have be improved to rich the high efficiency of mobile learning for the future generations(Wagner 2005). Thus the M- learning facilities become on unavoidable source in to the process of learning without which future of learning may not be possible. Let us move towards mobile learning for mobilizing more learners and more learning. (Parthibam & Raja, 2009)

Conclusion

Regardless of existing till now disadvantages the m – learning will became more and more popular with the progress of information and communication technologies. Its common use with the traditional education will correspond to the need of education quality improve. The educational process will become more flexible and will fulfill to the needs of lifelong learning. M- Learning also can assure good educational opportunities for disabled people.

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