

EFFECTS OF MOBILE LEARNING ON EDUCATION

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Abstract

Mobile Learning is the new trend all over the globe. It means accessing learning materials available in the internet using mobile phone. It is becoming more popular with each advancing day. Today the younger people are very smart in using mobiles and they use it for almost all types of their daily business including education. The mobile has made the world of knowledge accessible to everyone, irrespective of age and profession. Using mobile, students can get access to a wide varieties of educational contents that are available on-line and in general, to the world of knowledge. The YouTube, for instance, has innumerable videos on almost any topic on education. Thus mobile is very fast becoming a teacher to all knowledge seekers. M-learning has been embraced by all, the students, teachers, and the common people of all ages and all professions. This is because it offers advantages never experienced before. It offers access to knowledge wherever, whenever and on whatever topic one wants. The whole world of knowledge comes, as it were, within one's grip. Also, it is very cost and time effective. M-Learning provides the students the opportunity to enrol themselves in various types of courses / programs that offer live classes, video lectures, assignments / tutorials for working out, and give on-line tests of pre-fixed duration from their mobiles to complete the course. M-Learning boosts active engagement of the students and helps to increase their critical thinking power. Learners can stay connected with their peers and teachers for discussions and for seeking assistance whenever required. This creates a more effective learning environment that ensures better learning outcome and retention. However, M learning has a few disadvantages too. First, all in our country cannot afford a mobile phone with internet connectivity. Secondly, the internet connectivity is not there or very weak in underdeveloped areas. The other issues are distraction and misuse. The internet offers enticing opportunities for playing games, engaging in chats, watching cinemas, varieties of sports, etc. Time spent on these activities should be minimised for more productive use of time. Also, there are mobile up-gradation and software compatibility issues that one faces with advancing technology. These disadvantages are not insurmountable and in any case the advantages by far outweigh the disadvantages and M learning is certainly going to stay as the one of the main avenues of learning.

Keywords: Internet connectivity, Educational Videos, Learning Outcome

1. Introduction

The rapid growth of mobile technology has significantly influenced various sectors, particularly education. Mobile Learning, commonly referred to as M-Learning, involves the use of smartphones and other portable digital devices to access educational materials via the internet. The increasing penetration of mobile devices has made learning more flexible and learner-centered.

In recent years, mobile phones have evolved beyond communication tools into powerful educational instruments. Students now utilize mobile applications, online courses, video lectures, and digital libraries to supplement traditional classroom learning. This shift reflects a broader transition toward digital and blended learning environments.

2. Concept and Evolution of Mobile Learning

Mobile Learning is an extension of e-learning that emphasizes mobility and flexibility. While e-learning primarily relies on desktop or laptop computers, M-Learning allows learners to access content anytime and anywhere.

The development of high-speed internet, affordable smartphones, and educational platforms such as video-sharing and online course platforms has accelerated the growth of M-Learning. The portability and multifunctionality of mobile devices have made them indispensable tools in modern education systems.

3. Advantages of Mobile Learning

3.1 Accessibility and Flexibility

One of the most significant benefits of M-Learning is its accessibility. Learners can access educational resources irrespective of location, time, age, or profession. This flexibility enables continuous learning beyond the physical classroom.

3.2 Cost and Time Efficiency

Mobile learning reduces costs related to travel, printed materials, and infrastructure. Students can enroll in online courses, attend live classes, submit assignments, and take assessments directly from their mobile devices, saving both time and resources.

3.3 Wide Range of Educational Content

The internet hosts a vast repository of educational materials, including video lectures, tutorials, research articles, and digital textbooks. Educational video platforms provide extensive subject coverage, enhancing students' understanding of complex topics.

3.4 Enhanced Student Engagement

M-Learning promotes interactive learning through multimedia content, quizzes, assignments, and real-time discussions. It fosters active participation and strengthens critical thinking skills.

3.5 Collaborative Learning Environment

Mobile platforms enable communication between students and teachers through messaging applications, discussion forums, and virtual classrooms. This continuous interaction enhances peer collaboration and academic support.

4. Disadvantages and Challenges of Mobile Learning

4.1 Digital Divide

Not all individuals can afford smartphones with reliable internet connectivity. Economic disparities limit equal access to digital education, particularly in developing regions.

4.2 Internet Connectivity Issues

In rural and underdeveloped areas, poor network infrastructure restricts smooth access to online educational resources.

4.3 Distraction and Misuse

Mobile devices provide access to entertainment platforms, games, and social media, which can distract learners from academic activities. Effective self-regulation and monitoring are essential to ensure productive usage.

4.4 Technological and Compatibility Issues

Frequent software updates, device compatibility problems, and storage limitations may hinder seamless learning experiences. Continuous technological upgrades may also impose financial burdens on users.

5. Impact of Mobile Learning on Learning Outcomes

Research indicates that M-Learning enhances student motivation, engagement, and retention of knowledge. Interactive multimedia tools facilitate deeper understanding and improve learning outcomes. The flexibility offered by mobile platforms encourages lifelong learning habits and self-directed study.

Furthermore, the ability to revisit recorded lectures and access diverse resources supports individualized learning paces and styles.

6. Future Prospects of Mobile Learning

The future of M-Learning appears promising with advancements in 5G technology, artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and adaptive learning systems. These innovations are expected to further personalize education and enhance accessibility.

Government initiatives and institutional support can help bridge the digital divide by improving infrastructure and affordability. Proper digital literacy training will also minimize misuse and distractions.

7. Conclusion

Mobile Learning has become a significant avenue of modern education, offering unparalleled flexibility, accessibility, and cost-effectiveness. It empowers learners by bringing the world of knowledge within their reach. Although challenges such as digital inequality, connectivity issues, and distractions persist, they are manageable through policy interventions, technological improvements, and responsible usage.

Overall, the advantages of M-Learning substantially outweigh its limitations, and it is poised to remain a central component of contemporary and future educational systems.

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