



Global exploration into any branch of knowledge through technology enabled learning

Dimpal Saraswat

Guest Faculty, Management Programme, Department of Commerce and Business Administration, Lalit Narayan Mithila University, Darbhanga, Bihar, India

Abstract

Technology plays a large role in many aspects of day-to-day life, and education is no exception. Technology is rapidly changing the way students learn and how instructors teach. Computers have replaced chalkboards in classrooms today. And it is not just happening in higher education, technology is part of education for children of all ages. It's also a part of their daily lives. The combination of education and technology has been considered as the main key to human progress. Education feeds technology, which in turn, forms the basis for education. Education has changed to enhance its message, increase its reach, and improve its communication. Today's education happens by standing on the shoulders of technological innovation.

Keywords: globalisation, E-learning, E-learning modules, information technology, modernisation of education

Introduction

Technology has revolutionized the field of education. The importance of technology in schools cannot be ignored. In fact, with the onset of computers in education, it has become easier for teachers to impart knowledge and for students to acquire it. The use of technology has made the process of teaching and learning enjoyable. Technology influences education by enabling the educators to provide multiple ways to communicate to students near and far. These methods of communication can be controlled by the educator or the student allowing for more understandable communication. Technology's benefit of providing alternative methods of communication will assist the students in learning more. It has been shown time and again that students see the same information in different formats learn much better and retain longer. By providing a graph, then a video, then a textbook with highlighted words and the ability to get immediate definitions of individual words means that technology enables the educators to be better at what they do. After all, technology can present multimedia, text, pictures and graphs much better than a chalkboard.

But, technological advances do more than change how students see; with technology, students do not have to be in the same room as the educators. The educators can be in a classroom, while students are in an apartment halfway around the world. To reach those at-risk kids who are not able to receive education cost-effectively means that we can bring education to kids who otherwise never would have had the opportunity. Finally, technology enables the students not only to attend from far, but information can be communicated real time or recorded. By allowing videos and other multimedia presentations linked to texts, students can learn at their own pace, be tested at their own pace and advance at their own pace-which for some would be much faster than others while for others it will give them the time they need to absorb the information.

Impact of Technology on Education is being seen as

- Easy access to information,
- Greater interest in learning,
- Increased retention of information,

- Robust information storage,
- Better presentation of information,
- Teaching made interactive,
- Knowledge sharing made easy etc.

The use of computer technology and the growing access to educational resources through the Internet are requiring educators to rethink how they teach and to help students to prepare for life and to work in the coming decades.

The age of information technology

As technology continues to evolve, it brings with it new opportunities and challenges for educators and students. Social networking is a great example of technology that can help or hinder education, depending on how it is used and integrated into teaching plans. Privacy and security are two concerns that can come with using social networking in the classroom. It can also become a distraction to students, or even a tool used for bullying. However, using social networking as part of the learning process can also have benefits. Students who are more introverted may open up and connect more with faculty and other students when they are communicating through social networking. It also affords students the opportunity in the present business environment in which most of the corporations are trying to survive by relying on a 'machine like metaphor' of a firm and efficiency-oriented policies i.e., by laying off personnel in large numbers to reduce costs. They routinely deal with other companies in the global marketplace as customers, suppliers, partners or competitors.

Competent management is one source of sustainable competitive advantage in contemporary and rapidly changing organizations. The new business environment has been given different names by different scholars such as the new economy, the connected economy, the internet economy, the information age etc. As the names themselves suggest, the new economy is characterized by a different set of rules which have been elaborated upon by many studies and which have an impact on leadership.

Globalisation has altered all aspect of business and different set of competencies is needed to compete successfully in

this environment. The traditional sources of competitive advantage are shifting and knowledge is emerging as the leading source of competitive advantage. In the 21st century, leadership is being impacted by three major forces of change, namely globalization, liberalization and technology. The technological changes of the past decade, particularly the adoption of information and business alike and have forced organizations to rethink shape with the end of the millennium and there is consensus among scholars that the changes that have occurred in the business environment in the last decade or so have transformed the way businesses are run. The forces that are driving the transformation of organizations from the traditional old economy to new economy organizations have also generated the need for new leadership. There is an increasing acknowledgement by scholars that the traditional views on leadership will have to change and the competencies that the leaders require to be effective will be altogether different from what they are today.

E-learning: A wholesale learning experience

E-learning is a broad term that generally refers to any kind of learning done with a computer and Internet connection or CD-ROM. It is used by individual, educational institutions and businesses. As with any type of learning, it works better for some than others. The quality of e-learning has improved in recent years, as teachers and students have become more comfortable with the technology.

E-learning is beneficial due to Integration

All institutions, research institutions, regulatory bodies, professionals, academician and students can be integrated on regional, state, national and international level. Sharing of knowledge, experience, infrastructure and technology will enhance the effective and efficient utilization of available resources. Students can have access to unlimited storehouse of information at any hour and from any place.

Access to best faculty and quality study material

Since e-Learning has ability to cover distances, a few good teachers can be scaled-up. Faculty availability is not restricted by geography or even time because of recorded classrooms. The expert teachers also will be identified and honoured by the demand for them from learners.

Human bias

E-Learning helps remove the bias of sex, religion, colour, caste etc.

Dust free environment

Unlike in chalk-and-talk method, learning atmosphere becomes dust free.

Individualized instruction

E-Learning also offers individualized instruction, which print media cannot provide. It makes learning exciting, engaging and compelling. Blended programmes can integrate e-Learning with face-to-face workshops, coaching, action learning and a huge range of other learning methods to cover a range of needs, styles and approaches. Private messaging readily supports these exchanges while protecting the participants' privacy. Based on the individual and/or group needs, interest, career objectives and job profiles, lesson modules can be chosen.

Objective of e-learning modules include

1. The instructional materials should be suited for the selected age group.
2. The instructional materials must be structured in hierarchy.
3. The instructional materials should have an instructional objective.
4. Every objective must have a formative evaluation.
5. The material must suit both the fast and slow learners.
6. The presentations must contain various techniques to create interest among pupils.

E-learning modules must have Well defined scope and objectives

Every E-Learning course must have a main objective that explains the need for this course and helps in developing the course outline. Defining the scope and objectives for any E-Learning course will not only guide the development of the course but will also help any reader figure out whether the content is relevant and decide on the logical follow of the content.

Comprehensive yet relevant content

Instructional Designer should understand the context in which the course is going to be taken by the learner- the what, why, and how of it. It is very essential for the Designer to decide on the content based solely on the course objectives rather than thinking about what the client wants.

Easy graphic user interface

Good visual design does contribute in creating an effective learning environment for the learner. It helps the learner to understand what he sees on the screen, understand the purpose of the elements and thereby, learn about the content by focusing on it. The benchmark of a good training module is not just the content but also the interface and the look and feel of it.

High Interactivity

People prefer learning by doing to learning by reading and answering questions at end. The most common way to make a course interactive is by the use of simulations. Simulations model give a scope to make mistakes, yet not get penalized and learn at the same time.

Well-designed assignment

It is imperative for any E-Learning course to have assessment provided at the end of the course. The assessment should map to the objectives and reinforce learning. Ideally, the assessment should help the learner clear all his doubts based on the course and at the same time, learn a little bit more about the same.

The keys to successful e-learning modules

- Varying the types of content –images, sounds and text work together to build memory in the brain and result in better retention of the material.
- Creating interaction that engages the attention-Games, quizzes and even manipulation of something on the screen creates more interest, which in turn builds better retention.
- Providing immediate feedback- E-learning courses can build in immediate feedback to correct misunderstood material. The more immediate the feedback the better,

because each step of learning builds upon the previous step. If no feedback is given, then the next step may be building upon an incorrect interpretation.

- Encouraging interaction with other e-learning and an e-instructor – Chat rooms, discussion boards, instant messaging and e-mail all offer effective interacting for e-learners and do a good job of replacing classroom discussions. Building an online community significantly influences the success of online programs.

E-learning Modules have been widely accepted as

- It's less expensive to produce,
- It's self-paced,
- It moves faster,
- It provides a consistent message,
- It can work from any location and any time,
- It can be updated easily and quickly,
- It can lead to increased retention and a stronger grasp on the subject,
- It can be easily managed for large groups of students and
- Using simulation-based learning contents.

Conclusion

Modernization of education in colleges and universities is a necessary attempt. The syllabi, subjects and courses have to be planned in such a way that it satisfies the top international standards. To attract affordable international students, who are interested in comparatively quality education, e-Learning has to be promoted. Infrastructures also have to be standardized so that it satisfies the basic needs of every student. On the technology support side we need adventurous faculty collaborators willing to share both their content-expertise, and their experience as effective teachers and communicators.

The knowledge resource from the best brains of various institutes, colleges and universities has to be used for bringing about a better society. More inter-country exchange programs will help achieve the target. Global exploration into any branch of knowledge is possible only through technology-enabled-learning.

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