

The Impact of new technologies on distance learning students

IE-06/O/F/RF-81300

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/project/view.htm?prj=4002>

Project Information

Title: The Impact of new technologies on distance learning students

Project Number: IE-06/O/F/RF-81300

Year: 2008

Project Type: Thematic Action (2000-2006)

Status: completed

Country: IE-Ireland

Marketing Text: The concrete outcomes and results of the project were a series of answers to the problem that the 27 Ministries of Education in the EU spend millions of euros annually on the provision of educational technology for their schools, colleges and universities but that the research on the beneficial impact of this technology on learning was too fragile. Moreover, much of this research focused on the impact of computers on American schoolchildren and there was little on adult learning, lifelong learning and distance education. The project had a special focus on distance learning because in distance education the use of technology is obligatory and the technology is a substitute for the teacher and not a supplement to the teacher as in conventional education. The outcomes of the project will make an important impact on the literature of the field and provide justification for the substantial expenditure of the EU governments on educational technology.

Comprehensive dissemination activities have been undertaken, anchored in a portal website which carries all the products of the project unpassworded and available for free download by practitioners and scholars from the EU and around the world. There is a Special Interest Group (SIG) and a Blog for feedback from the public, the Book of the Project has been published as an e-book, an international conference has been held with the proceedings of the project website, and papers and articles have been published.

The project has impacted on the three specific target groups: (i) teachers for whom guidelines on the use of technology in teaching have been provided, (ii) the Ministries of Education and Higher Education in the 27 EU states for whom justification on the impact of technology has been provided and (iii) the education research community for whom findings have been provided on this difficult and controversial issue.

Summary: The impact of the project is considerable. It proves conclusively the two hypotheses 'Technology has, in fact, an impact on learning' and 'The impact of technology on learning is, in fact, beneficial'. This challenges the authoritative World Bank (2005) claim that 'the positive impact of ICT use in education has not been proven'.

A further impact gives a new focus to the field by focusing on adult learning, lifelong learning and distance learning and not on K-12 primary and secondary school children as in other studies.

A further impact gives a new focus on a range of technologies (distance education, e-learning, synchronous e-learning, use of the WWW on-campus, mobile telephony) and not just on the impact of computers in primary and secondary schools as heretofore.

The impact of the project on existing employment highlights the importance of competence in technology for all teachers. This is explained in the Guidelines for the use of technology in teaching which is a part of this report.

Another impact is to support the creation of new employment opportunities for teachers in educational technology and for trainers of teachers in the competent use of new technologies.

The findings of the project on the impact of technology on learning by younger learners highlights the employment needs of teachers to be able to deal with the

Project Information

learning style of the 'technology-savvy' Net Generation.

A major impact of the project is to give new justification to EU Ministries of Education for their costly annual investment in educational technology for their schools, colleges and universities. The project gives a new dimension for Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems and strategies by emphasising the importance of technology for adult education, lifelong learning and distance education.

The target countries of the project are Ireland, Italy, Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria. The activities that were carried out to transfer the project results and products to them were the project website, the Special Interest Group, the educational blog, the Book of the Project, the International Conference and the publication of articles and papers.

The target groups and sectors of the project are (i) teachers who use technology in schools, (ii) the EU Ministries of Education and Higher Education who purchase educational technologies annually with taxpayers' monies and (iii) the educational research community for whom the impact of technology on learning has been a difficult, hard-to-measure task.

For the teachers in EU schools and colleges the project has produced a series of guidelines on the use of technology in education which is linked to their employment and continued employment.

For the EU Educational Ministries and Administrators the project has produced extensive justification for their expenditure on educational technology.

For the educational research community the project has produced new findings to challenge the pessimism of the World Bank in this field, a new focus on adult and distance learning and a new range of technologies to broaden the focus of the study.

The partnership intends to keep available quasi-permanently the project website, the project Special Interest Group, the project blog, the Book of the Project, the Proceedings of the International Conference and the published papers and articles.

The partnership intends to keep access to the project data open quasi-permanently. The project has amassed a considerable amount of valid and competently researched data including 21.000 responses to questionnaires on the impact of technology on learning and about 2450 pages of statistical analyses. All this is to be kept available for revisiting and reworking by other practitioners and researchers.

Although the project is now finished, the partnership intends to send out a further communication to the SIG on the conclusion of the project, the products of the project and the availability of the products and results of the project. This SIG is built around the European Consortium for the Learning Association (ECLA) which has at its disposal a variety of distribution lists available to be used in the dissemination of the project results and activities. It has a contact list in excess of 1500 named individuals in the domains of learning, VET, management, personal development and knowledge management.

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Project Information

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Project Information

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- Themes:
- * Lifelong learning
 - * Higher education
 - * Open and distance learning
 - * Access for disadvantaged
 - * Continuous training
 - * Initial training

Sectors:

Product Types: open and distance learning
others
material for open learning

Product information: The Impact of new technologies on distance learning students

Projecthomepage: http://www.ericsson.com/ericsson/corpinfo/programs/the_impact_of_new_technologies_on_distance_learning_students/

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Country: BG-Bulgaria
Organization Type: National Agency
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Partner 3

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Country/Region: Közép-Magyarország
Country: HU-Hungary
Organization Type: National Agency
Homepage:

Partner 4

Name: Roma University
City: rome
Country/Region: Lazio
Country: IT-Italy
Organization Type: National Agency
Homepage:

Partner

Partner 5

Name: Distance education Ireland
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Country/Region: Dublin
Country: IE-Ireland
Organization Type: National Agency
Homepage:

Project Files

IMPACT Final Report

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/4002/prj/IMPACT%20Final%20Report>

Final report from project