A Future Scenario of e-Learning for Primary Colleges of Education in Zambia

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Presentation Outline

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- Outcomes of scenario-based learning
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- Purpose of the study
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Introduction

I am Lweende, a distance student and use the blog to...

You don't know what you don't know!

Fictional stories created by lecturers
Profiles of students

Background of e-learning in Zambia

- MoE and partners investing in e-learning to increase access to teacher training and quality education.
- Strategic plan for e-learning development near completion.
- Country to host 2010 Africa e-learning conference
Background

- CLCE, rural Zambia, taken first step among colleges to integrate interactive methods in enhancing access and quality in teacher training.

Purpose of study

- Discover how quality and accessibility to teacher education can be enhanced in Zambian colleges of education
- Contribute to MDG and EFA targets by educating masses of qualified teachers
- CLCE hopes to educate more teachers and bring them to higher levels through e-learning.
- College is representative of all colleges of education in the country.
- Lessons learnt/challenges from scenarios at CLCE adapted to other colleges.
Methodology

Structure of introducing e-learning to CLCE phased as:

- Presentation on ‘what is e-learning?’
- Establish participants needs on what to learn about e-learning.
- Hands-on Training: ‘Introduction to e-learning’.
- Developing scenarios of the future of e-learning for students in 2012.

Essential questions on characteristics and perceptions

- Why would you like to introduce e-learning at the college?
- Which aspects of e-learning are you familiar with?
- What would you like to see enhanced in Colleges of Education in Zambia? How?
Overview of questions

Needs expressed by CLCE lecturers:

□ To understand what e-learning could look like in future in the context of a Zambian college of education.

□ To get hands-on experience on how to use e-learning tools and methods.

Training set up for lecturers to experience e-learning hands-on through a scenario-based approach.
Methodology cont’d …

- To use scenario-based learning (SBL): learning embedded in context, within which learners live and work.
- SBL concept of situated cognition- knowledge cannot be developed and fully understood independent of its context (Kindley, 2002).
- CLCE, consideration of challenges of accessibility to computer hardware and internet facilities; looking ahead in near future-ready for it.

Methodology cont’d …

- Scenario-based learning takes the form of storyline in which learners required to assume a key role (Schank & Cleary, 1995).
- Provided different student profiles of students.
- Hands-on activities, reader and practical examples of various Web2.0 tools and e-learning platforms given through guided discovery.
Blended methods and tools explored by participants

Practice and experience e-learning

Choose profile of a student from 8 profiles provided.
Shared and improved on stories through ‘world cafe’ method.
Philosophy of e-learning

- E-learning is an open system
- Goal of quality e-learning is to blend diversity and cohesiveness into dynamic and intellectually challenging ‘learning ecology’.
- Realized worldwide that electronic communications technologies have capacity to extend interaction over time and distance.
- ICTs advanced more than our understanding of how to use technology in educational setting.
- Internet at core of e-learning transformation (Garrison & Anderson, 2003).

Philosophy of e-learning

- Institutions in Africa cannot afford to lag behind.
- Zambia is a large country with widely spread communities.
- In-service students (novice teachers) often work in rural areas.
- Be able to study any time or any place and communicate over distances to learn from other professionals.
- E-learning very new concept in Zambian education.
Philosophy of e-learning

- E-learning to generate ‘easy money’.
- Emerging reality: addressing deficiencies in teacher education related to over-reliance on lectures and information dissemination in current system.
- Introduction of e-learning Zambian institutions should be on quality of learning experiences.

CLCE vision on e-learning focuses on achieving high quality e-learning:
- By 2012, train a student teacher using technology-mediated learning within resources in a flexible manner through a personal route, which enhances constructivism within classroom and social setting.
- Produce teachers who are competent, committed and confident in studying independently with use of ICT and other means of modern technology.
Vision of CLCE on e-learning

- Flexible learning through personal route
- Content same (or richer) as for full-time students - difference in mode of delivery.
- Acquire skills in independent learning, learners empowered to study independently.
- Full participation of students through interactive materials to be prepared.
- Format will be module type with period for face to face contact with lecturers.

Outcomes of scenario-based training

Example of one story

Analysis of scenarios revealed:

- Easy communication with tutor and with other students
- Studying can be done any time and any place
- Opportunities for reflection through blogs and discussion forums
- Easier and closer access to resources for lesson planning
- Content can be created by students themselves
- Online learning can be done in combination with regular classes.
Outcomes of Scenario-based training

- Characteristics can be used to strengthen the quality of ODeL materials by CLCE and other colleges of education to embed in new ODeL teacher education programmes.

Some impressions
Training for lecturers when starting e-learning

- Difficult to create the stories because it was not clear from start for which ODeL programme e-learning would be developed.
- Most lecturers learned quickly how to use blogs, wikis, forums, and Moodle.
- Some lecturers used e-learning tools in innovative way; others used tools in more traditional way. E.g., use of the wiki mainly for rote learning than promotion of critical thinking.

Training for lecturers when starting e-learning

- Work to be done to change attitudes from depending on teacher as a source of knowledge towards being responsible for own learning.
Training for lecturers when starting e-learning

Evaluation rounds revealed: perseverance; creativity and willingness to be innovative;

e.g. in world café, it was easier to come up with future scenarios;

different interests from different lecturers; such as ‘skype fans’, others loved the ‘blog’, or put lessons and activities in Moodle.

Strategy for implementation of e-learning

- Initial proposal: distance education committee
- Participants motivated – opportunity to all to experiment
Conclusions

- CLCE has initiated new movement in Zambian education
- Scenario-based approach gave lecturers clear perspective on what e-learning could look like in future and how to use different e-learning tools.
- Willingness to embrace e-learning tools and change to innovative methods.
Lessons learned

- Lecturers’ competencies needed: innovativeness, critical thinking, a problem-solving, be persistent and creative.
- Stories give good idea of added value of e-learning according to lecturers
- Different levels of using the tools. College should decide suitable approach so that NOLB
- Methods of training: hands-on
- If scenario-based approach is used in future, important to have a clear perspective on curriculum in which it is to be implemented.

Way forward:

- More practice
- Material production in e-learning format
- embedding e-learning in college-based Continuous Professional Development, for everyone to learn how to use and implement e-learning.
- College needs recognition, guidelines and support from MoE, UNZA and cooperating partners
Way forward cont’d …

- CLCE needs to promote model they are starting and lobby for support from different stakeholders.
- Other colleges of education in Zambia can learn from and work together with CLCE.
- Lessons learnt e.g. training lecturers to learn about e-learning, should be an integral part of implementation strategy of each college.

FIRST STEP: ATTENDING DETA GHANA WITH LECTURERS OF ZAMBIAN CE’S STARTING ODEL

References


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