



ADULT LEARNING IN THE RETAIL SECTOR. (A STUDY ON HOW ADULTS LEARN THROUGH A MICRO LEARNING APP.)

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ABSTRACT

Globalization and high internet penetration has resulted in people being connected to the web all the time. A study by Deloitte says that almost 30% of employees today are on the move and work from a place other than their offices. Also, the study suggests that about 27% of today’s work force are temporary or freelancers. Thus training and engaging such a workforce is indeed a logistic nightmare for businesses. Therefore, a technology solution that can enable training a large, ever changing and mobile workforce is an imperative. While most learning applications are designed for students, organizations have adult learners. Students have learning cut out as their primary activity, adults have many other priorities to deal with in their existing roles in the organization as well as their personal lives, which makes learning a challenge for them. To address these issues, a new technology using the concepts of gamification and micro learning was developed by OUST Labs an innovative technology start-up. The OUST App enables large organizations to reach their frontline with highly effective training content in bite sizes, so it is easy to learn and assimilate. OUST Labs has deployed their Micro Learning App for a large retail chain which has outlets across the country. The sample chosen was deliberately small to ensure detailed study of the user experiences and challenges when using the app. The results of this study would be used by OUST to fine tune their App before they deploy it for larger number of employees. Data was analyzed by using the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) to identify underlying critical factors that lead to positive and negative user adult learner experiences

INTRODUCTION

Globalization is the strategic blend of a firms operations, business, processes and policies with different work cultures,

values, products and ideas. (Rosabeth Moss Kanter :2011) .Since globalization has to incorporate diversity, there is a paradigm shift in the way Human resources are

managed. As a consequence one can see increasing changes in all the functional areas of HR right from acquisition, Talent Management, Compensation and Benefits as well as learning and development. (Pucik, 1996)

Globalization has led to an enhanced emphasis on the development of a competent and trained human resource. It has also resulted in the need for faster, cheaper and effective learning . (Friedman, 2005). Training has to be given to employees who are both physically present and at virtual locations as well. Increasingly technology is being used to enable all HR functions including learning and development. (Pfeffer, 1994; Prahalad, 1983)

Globalization and high internet penetration has resulted in people being connected to the web all the time. A study by Deloitte says that almost 30% of employees today are on the move and work from a place other than their offices. Also, the study suggests that about 27% of today's work force are temporary or freelancers. Add to this the ever increasing churn rate and competition, and we realize that training

and engaging a largely mobile and high churn workforce is indeed a logistic nightmare for businesses. Therefore, a technology solution that can enable training a large, ever changing and mobile workforce is an imperative. In particular, the challenge for the learning and development fraternity in organizations is to ensure that technology solutions designed for addressing the logistics challenges of in person training, result in desired learning outcomes.

While most learning applications are designed for students, organizations have adult learners. Students have learning cut out as their primary activity, adults have many other priorities to deal with in their existing roles in the organization as well as their personal lives, which makes learning a challenge for them. To address these issues, a new technology using the concepts of gamification and micro learning was developed by OUST Labs an innovative technology start-up. The OUST product, or rather, the OUST App enables large organizations to reach their frontline with highly effective training content in bite sizes, so it is easy to learn and assimilate. Short bites can be consumed really quickly

while the employees are on their job and they do not affect their productivity too. In addition, since the content is available to them on their hand held mobile devices all the time, access to content can happen anytime and anywhere and yes, in very short durations. The gamification engine in the App further engages the users to go through the course content entirely because the employee earns points as he/she advances along the multiple steps the App creates, in summary, an innovative micro learning technology is now in place to address the challenges of learning and development in large organizations.

This paper focuses on understanding how adults learn using the micro-learning app. Micro-learning is a method of learning which allows the learning to learn little by little in a very short span of time. The Micro-learning app is a software application designed for learning; it helps the learner to learn in two minutes, it makes learning fun, simple, effective and engaging.

1. RESEARCH DESIGN

This paper is based on the research conducted from the OUST Labs office at the KLS IMER –Sandbox incubation centre. OUST Labs had deployed their Micro Learning App for a large retail chain which has outlets across the country. The sample chosen was deliberately small to ensure detailed study of the user experiences and challenges when using the app. In all, in the 5 interviews conducted, 40 incidents or learning experience points were identified and classified into positive and negative experiences for App based learning and Non App based learning across multiple generic variables

1.1 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH:

The objective of this research is to study how adults learn using the micro-learning app and to understand the effectiveness of the app on the process of adult learning. This research focuses on non-academic learning (including employee training in retail sector).

1.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The first steps involved conducting 5 in depth interviews with learners in Mumbai, an urban setting in a famous retail store. The 5 learners typically fall in the retail operational staff category, who are typically 12th class pass and have gotten into the retail sector for employment. Based on the objective of the study, which intends to understand App based learning, we identified this class of users, because they are involved in sales operations in the front and need to be trained on the product they sell and it is not generally easy logistically for the organization to arrange frequent trainings to get the users up to speed. In addition, this is a class of workers which also sees a very high attrition rate, which further makes it necessary for the retailer to explore options of training that can go beyond regular in class training. The sample chosen was deliberately small to ensure detailed study of the user experiences and challenges when using the app. The results of this study would be used by OUST to fine tune their App before to deploy it for larger number of employees.

2. ADULT LEARNING

Learning is an important variable which has an impact on human behaviour, and the term learning has been used differently in different contexts. In HRM, it is used to indicate a change in human behaviour as a consequence of knowing or experiencing something – an idea, a person, a skill or some technology.

Learning has been defined as, “A change in human disposition or capability that persists over a period of time and is not simply ascribable to processes of growth.”(Gagne: 1969). In their work titled , ‘The new social learning’, Tony Bingham and Marcia Conner have defined learning as “ a transformative process of taking in information that—when internalized and mixed with what we have experienced—changes what we know and builds on what we do. It’s based on input, process, and reflection. It is what changes us.” E. R .Hilgard defines learning as “a permanent change in behaviour that occurs as a result of prior experience” In a study on European Terminology in Adult Learning (July 2010), ‘the entire range of formal, non-formal and informal learning activities

which are undertaken by adults after a break since leaving initial education and training, and which results in the acquisition of new knowledge and skills' has been referred to as adult learning.

3. MICRO LEARNING

In various contexts (Hug:2005, Patil:1999) have defined micro learning as a fast paced, informal, self-directed learning experience customized for an individual in not more than a 2 Minute Learning Format. The learning outcomes are tailored to individual and delivered one at a time, at regular intervals – driving engagement, retention and most importantly the desired behaviour. Users can interact with the content using multiple senses - watch/view images and video, listen to pre-recorded audio fragments or text to speech, use their fingers to move and manipulate content and provide feedback by answering simple questions along the way. Lessons can be tailored and delivered in several languages, delivering high impact, interactive learning platform accessible on mobile devices, web and tablets. Micro-learning is the fastest, most effective ways to learn. Small interactive lessons grab the

attention of the learner, since they are less time consuming, and can be accessed while at work. Micro learning incorporates small modules which are easy to access and cheaper to create. This results in a micro learning program which can be updated as frequently as required. The moment a new product is being planned, new micro learning programs can be developed alongside in no time. Micro-learning is **300%** faster to produce, **50%** less expensive, and **58%** more engaging than traditional training. (Israel: 2018, Pandey : 2017)

“Micro learning is learning in micro bites. It is a short learning nugget that a learner would usually complete between 2 to 5 minutes to achieve a specific learning objective.” (Pandey: 2017) “Micro learning is the process of delivering bite-sized content to learners that they can consume all at once and apply the knowledge immediately. It’s quickly become an eLearning industry trend because it caters to better retention rates, short attention spans and other aspects of quality learning.”

4. BENEFITS OF MICRO LEARNING FOR THE ORGANIZATION:

There are several advantages which organizations can reap through micro learning. It helps in enhancing employee engagement as well as the performance of the individual. Other than that the major benefits are:

- It is flexible, can be deployed and developed fast and can be updated on a daily basis.
- Micro learning is suitable for both informal and formal learning.
- It motivates the employee to complete the learning process.
- The transfer of learning to the workplace is assured since the learning is on the job and directly relevant to the employees' current assignment. Is ideal for the millennial workforce

Most organizations developing Micro Learning content feel that micro learning can be enhanced by using it along with the any of the three approaches viz. Gamification, social learning and personalized learning. Gamification refers to the act of creating a game-like atmosphere for otherwise routine activities

like employee training, induction, so that employees participate actively in the learning process instead of being passive participants, detached from the learning process. Social Learning approach is a belief that people learn from one another, via observation, imitation, and modelling. (Bandura:1963) .Personalized Learning or personalization of Learning is the process of customizing the learning so that it meets the specific needs of learners.

5. TYPES OF MICRO LEARNING

Israel (2018) and Pandey (2017) have classified the types of Micro learning into the various types.

5.1. VIDEOS

Videos are very popular forms of micro learning because most learners love to learn by observation/demonstration. They find it most interesting since they can be viewed on various devices like mobile phones, computers or tablets. When viewers watch a video the learning is longer lasting than just an audio clip, the retention is more long lasting. These features help learners to absorb and retain the concepts, which last

for long. Videos are an important form of micro learning because of these advantages it has over conventional learning:

- The learner can watch the video at his pace and his convenience, even outside the classroom. With widespread technology diffusion, the learner can watch it at his home, while traveling.
- Since videos are audio visual, learning becomes easier and more interesting. The learner can recall whatever he seen because visual cues enhance retention.
- The other advantage is that when in doubt, the learner can watch, rewind, store and watch which ever part he needs more clarification about.
- Videos can be interactive, can indicate a DIY list, link to other external sources and can contain assessments too.

5.2 BLOGS

Blogs, (short form of weblog) are regularly updated informational websites, written almost like a personal diary. The author or the organisations reaches out to readers on

diverse topics. As a tool of micro learning, blogs provide not just reading material but are one of the most accessible tools to enable learning. Blogs are interactive, are crisp and generally to the point. As tools of micro learning, blogs have distinct features that make them popular and effective.

- The author can post new updated content as and when required. A trainer can supplement his capsule with providing links and more information on blogs.
- People from all over the world can post and facilitate discussions.
- Blogs focus only on those topics/content related to a specific domain , for e.g. a blog related to cooking would encourage discussions and posts only related to cooking, They can get more specific and only posts related to Italian cooking. So the learner gets to choose only

5.3 PODCASTS

A Podcast refers to a recorded piece of music or news or speech or any audio file that can be downloaded to a phone or any other portable media player. POD is a

truncated version of the term “Portable on Demand”. These versatile audio files enable learners to retain the training content for recall at a later stage. The features of podcasts which make them ideal for micro learning are:

- Speakers from diverse fields, experts from specific domains can be featured on Podcasts. The learner can choose the speaker he wants to listen to.
- They can be easily shared, stored and downloaded and this make them the perfect tool for Micro learning.
- The can be downloaded on any portable/handheld device which allows MP3 files.

5.4 JOB AIDS

A Job aid is a tool which provides the required guidance at the right time in a simple manner. It is something like an instruction manual, broken up into small bits of information, step by step indication of what has to be done. “A job aid is a repository for information, processes, or perspectives that is external to the individual and that supports work and

activity by directing, guiding, and enlightening performance.”(Rossett and Gautier-Downes). The main role of a job aid is to help the employee know the right way to do a task. They come in multiple formats – instruction cards, charts, posters, worksheets.

- Job Aids help in reducing training time, reduction of waste, increasing efficiency and also enhancing the competency of the individual.
- Job Aids are more useful when the task is repetitive, or if the task requires step by step instruction.
- When there is a change in the process and the employees have to be updated on an urgent basis, Job Aids are the perfect learning tool.
- They are particularly useful when the task is long and complex, they break the process into smaller sub processes, allowing the employee to focus on the task which is required at that time.

5.5 SOCIAL MEDIA

One of the main reasons for the popularity of social media is that people want small

bits of information, easily available and less sifting. This is what micro learning aims to do and thus social media like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn become the ideal media to present micro content. Pinterest, Instagram also allow trainers to share content in chronological sequences.

- Social Media allows learners to access the information they want and also motivates them to interact with domain experts of their chosen field.
- Information given in daily “bytes” keep them engaged.
- Short relevant discussions, which can be retrieved later for recall can be accessed anywhere at any time by a mass audience.

5.6 INTERACTIVITIES

Interactivity refers to “thought process interchange” between learners and eLearning tools through which engagement and active learning takes place. (Laskaris: 2015). Interactivity in eLearning courses are available in various forms like MCQs, simulations, animation videos etc. They allow the learner not just to understand concepts through quiz formats but also

develop their decision making, analytical and critical thinking skills through simulations. No doubt one of the major challenge for this form of micro learning is developing the right content. Once the right content is developed, it can lead to the creation of a fun and interactive learning environment where the learner plays a game which helps him to develop intellectually and emotionally.

- Interactive videos to grab maximum attention of learners with the on-screen elements.
- Branching scenarios require learners to choose an action that helps to make decisions.
- Hands-on elements help learners to do things and develop better understanding of content. For instance: Click, drag, drop, and hover tasks to reveal information and fillable components such as feedback forms, assessments, and others.

6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Adult education refers to a practice where adults involve themselves “in systematic and sustained self-educating activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge,

skills, attitudes, or values.” (Merriam, Sharan, B. & Brockett, Ralph, G., 2007,) The Canadian Encyclopaedia (2014) indicates that adult learning and teaching is based on the assumption “that adults can and want to learn, that they are able and willing to take responsibility for that learning, and that the learning itself should respond to their needs.” Further what drives adults to learn, what he has to or wants to learn, what options are available, and how he learns are influenced by demographics, globalization and technology. (Caffarella et.al, 2007,)

There is a definite agreement that learning involves a change in behaviour. (Gagne; 1969, De Houwer: 2013, Skinner: 1950, Chance: 1979, Hall: 2003). However there is no indication that this change is permanent, or leads to an improvement or betterment over the earlier behaviour or skill. (Pierce and Cheney: 2008, Papaj & Prokopy,:1989) Therefore learning is a continuous process which occurs throughout an individual’s life and has to be repetitive/reinforced in order to bring about a change in an individual’s life.

As a child, an individual is expected to learn what the teacher teaches him/her. He/she is taught, learning at this stage is teacher-centric. This refers to pedagogy, referring to a focus on the method and practice of teaching. Adults learn differently, they have a different approach to learning. Adults learn what they need to learn and what is beneficial for them. The difference lies in the fact that “adults learn best when learning is focused on adult students, not on the teacher.” This is called andragogy, the process of helping adults learn. Though originally coined by Kapp in 1833, the term became more popular when Knowles used it to describe the way adults learn. He emphasized that that andragogy (Greek: "man-leading") is different from the more commonly used term pedagogy (Greek: "child-leading") and that adults “learn through a process of self-directed enquiry”. (Knowles: 1967).

Malcolm Knowles, in his work “The modern practice of adult education: Androgogy versus pedagogy”, explained that adults learn better when 1. They know why they have to know something, 2. When they are given the autonomy to learn at their pace and manner, 3. When they are allowed

to learn experientially 4. When they are motivated to learn.

Further research (Rogers 1969, Knowles: 1970, O'Brien: 2004, Lieb: 1991) has indicated that the underlying principles of adult learning are the following.

- Motivation
- Experience
- Level Of engagement
- Applying the learning

Since Micro learning is an emerging field there has not been much research done to analyse the role of micro learning in adult learning. Most of the information regarding this topic has to be availed from blogs and websites developed and maintained by organisations who are into the development of technology and content for micro learning.

7. WHY MICRO LEARNING CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE ADULT LEARNING TOOL IN THE RETAIL SECTOR?

Usually employees are motivated to learn when they feel that by learning they can earn more financially or obtain a better position.

The chance that their social status would increase because of promotion in the job and enhanced career opportunities are also extrinsic motivational factors which drive them to learn. Developing a new skill for the present job or the future , improving existing skills , learning something because of which the current job becomes easier are also factors which motivates adults to learn. Other than these extrinsic factors which motivate an adult to learn there are some important intrinsic factors which motivate them. The intrinsic factors include removal of fears of becoming obsolete, developing confidence because of the new skill/knowledge. However the employee of today is not interested in learning for information sake. They want to be able to apply their learning in the real world and in their jobs. They look for learning which helps them improve their skills especially in the job that they are currently occupied with. They want real time solutions to enhance their professional capabilities. Most importantly they are looking for learning methods which are experiential, engaging and interesting. If interesting learning formats are not used, the complete attention of the learner cannot be obtained and therefore learning is rendered ineffective.

Learning and Development has to be designed to meet the needs of the Industry. Traditionally Learning has been Instructor oriented, more focus has been given on the pedagogy. Today the entire focus in Learning and Development / Training in the Corporates have to focus on andragogy. The content, the medium/methodology have to be relooked keeping in mind the variables of time, cost and readiness of the employee to learn. One of the best ways is to create small learning modules and develop a Learning Management System which allows flexible, cost effective and interesting learning. Mobile phones are replacing almost every other gadget we use for communication and transactions. They are slowly replacing computers. In such a scenario, it makes sense to move from E Learning and M Learning .This is where Micro learning can be the right approach to learning.

CEO of Newstead Technologies Tan expressed that “We can’t just do one training session and call it a day. Our staff was at different branches, worked different time shifts, and the stores had to operate normally.” This is the need that Micro Learning can fulfill. Training across time, distance and at the pace suitable for the

employee. Time is a major constraint in the retail sector, so the time required by the employee to learn is crucial. Regardless of whether the organisation chooses class room training, e learning or even a blended learning approach, the employees need and comfort have to be taken into consideration. Keeping in mind the minute attention spans that employees of today have, it is better to give them small nuggets to chew and ingest rather than a platter full which doesn’t reach the desired objective.

Given below are the features of micro learning which make them the ideal adult learning tool, for the retail sector:-

- It motivates learners to complete educational goals. Since micro learning doesn’t throw big chunks of information at the learners but focuses on allowing learners to set goals for themselves and direct their behaviour accordingly. Because of this technique, they are able to break down macro skills into respective pocket sized content on a platform they most relate to and understand.

This makes mastering skills or information an easier process.

- It increases persistence in activities. As mentioned earlier, there is a higher control in defining a personalized and flexible learning path for each learner.

The information nuggets are made available to the learners at the time of the need or as and when demanded. The varied formats used to create these nuggets are more likely to match individual learning styles – which makes the entire learning process more fun and interactive. In other words, learners will begin and complete a learning assignment they actually want to do. They will not stop until they have finished it properly, even if the learning is halted for a while. The entire process is not as frustrating anymore for them because there is a sense of familiarity in terms of content and the learning format.

- It affects cognitive processes. Multiple studies (Eccles & Wigfield, 1985; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Pugh & Bergin, 2006) suggest motivation is the real factor behind what learners ultimately pay attention to and how they process it and to what effectiveness. It is believed that learners who are motivated make a synergetic and an interactive effort to understand the study materials – irrespective of surroundings or format of study – to acquire every bit of information properly and to find ways to apply it.
- It touches an emotional chord in the learner. Micro learning games provide a good way to expose learners to things they don't know about. Showcasing video content that delivers messages that sticks in the mind of the learner is also an option through which micro learning

makes an emotional connection with the learner.

- It instills a sense of winning: Rewarding is one of the main aspects of the concept of “gamification”. Mini quizzes, simulations or games allow the learners to earn points or earn badges by competing with fellow learners as and when they complete the different modules of micro learning that make the entire programme.

7.1 CURRENT TRAINING STRATEGIES IN THE RETAIL SECTOR.

Srinivasan et al. explained in their CRISIL report that organized retail is among the two most conducive sectors for the growth of skill development and is characterized by high demand outlook. According to NSDC most of the labour requirement is at the basic skill level and it is an attractive sector for private players to establish themselves in the training space. Since employees in the retail sector are in primary contact with the customer continuously, there is immense

attention paid to the development of soft skills, especially communication skills. Sometimes the focus on soft skills is so high that the HR manager often tends to ignore the fact that it is the right product knowledge that enable an employee to be motivated and serve the customer better

In the organized retail sector, the employee training begins right he is recruited. The first form of training he is exposed to is the induction. The induction lasts typically from 3 days to a week. Training focuses on two aspects – product training and customer service. Product Training is generally conducted by the company based on the product the store is dealing with. In depth product knowledge is delivered to the employee so that he understands aspects like variety, quality, content, usage, precautions, etc. Customer Service: - The employee is trained on how to behave with customers, etiquette, (manner/dressing), on how to handle queries, how to handle an irate customer, etc. Focus is paid on enhancing the communication skills of the employee. Other staff like housekeepers and security staff are given extra training related to safety, usage of cleaning and security equipment

Increasingly retail organisations are letting go of outdated HR systems and are adopting technology as the enabler to develop robust HR systems so that HR managers can concentrate on strategic goals rather than got stuck in routine tasks which take up a large chunk of their time.

8. OUST LABS

OUST was founded in January 2015. Developed initially by volunteers with a passion for education, OUST became a pioneer in introducing micro-learning to the masses. OUST specializes in building micro-learning applications that help corporate and educational institutions to effectively deliver learning outcomes in 2 minute intervals. End users love OUST App as the learning process keeps happening seamlessly and subconsciously. OUST has 15 employees and has offices at Bangalore, Belagavi, Pune and Curpentino, USA

Vision: Imagine a world where you can learn anything in just a moment. At OUST, we want to make the learning process simple, effective, and engaging.

Mission: To make every idle moment, a fun learning moment.

OUST develops content for various companies for various purposes , for training employees about products , sales training , customer support training , hiring and onboarding. Some of the key customers of OUST are Airtel, Future Group, KLS IMER and Train. They develop sized modules which can also be complemented with freely available sites like YouTube (movie clip, dialogue, sports clips) to inspire your teams to learn best practices. The learning outcomes are tailored to individual and delivered one at a time, at regular intervals – driving engagement, retention and most importantly the desired behavior behaviour. Users of the OUST APP can interact with the content using multiple senses -watch/view images and video, listen to prerecorded audio fragments or text to speech, use their fingers to move and manipulate content and provide feedback by answering simple questions along the way. All the lessons are tailored and delivered in 35 languages, delivering the most impact at scale, across all mobile devices, web and tablets.

This gamified platform of OUST labs uses machine learning, artificial intelligence and pedagogy based on using sports, movies and music to drive critical learning outcomes - be it behavioural change or learn/reinforce a new concept. They help corporations hire, on board and train skilled and semi-skilled workers. They also work with educational institutions to assess and reinforce the students in understanding the core concepts that are critical for their success - whether it is passing an exam or finding a job. OUST labs have developed a mobile-first **Gamified** Micro-learning platform which helps not only in learning but also in assessing, training, and developing the employee's skills. They make learning fast, fun, and exciting by using sports, movies, and local languages to engage the company's distributed workforce and increase productivity and customer success.

Given below is a step by step description of how OUST app works: _

- The new user needs to login using the email/phone number and a password.

- The user is then able to access a particular course according to the process mentioned above.
- Oust allows the users to play a specific number of challenges at each module.
- The difficulty level increases as the user proceeds with the course, with assessments in between.
- The user needs to exhibit certain proficiency to advance to higher levels.
- The admin can configure specific learning path and questions for each module.
- The users can play short challenges on specific topics and find out where they stand and learn along the way.
- The numbers 1 to 5 are just indicative of the various levels.
- The user gets reward points. It's up to the company to convert points into currency/gifts. At present converts points into rewards for the user.

9. DATA ANALYSIS:

Using the variables found in literature as a starting point, five in -depth interviews were conducted over a span of 1 week. The process involved conducting structured

interviews and then the data so collected was transcribed and analyzed. The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) has then been used as a method for identifying underlying critical factors that lead to positive and negative user adult learner experiences (Flanagan, 1954) based on using App based and Non App based learning methods. The CIT is a method that systematizes the responses of the user so that events or behaviours that lead to certain outcomes can be identified and measured to a degree that can help us draw insights into specific outcomes. Some of the events or behaviours that can be identified are success or failure on a specific task (Serenko & Turel 2010), satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a service (Tsai & Su 2009; Bitner, Booms, & Mohr, 1994). In this study, the events under consideration are positive and negative experiences of the learner. In particular, the CIT is effective when the responses by users are reported frequently and the users show sufficient levels of involvement with the experience and therefore are able to make keen observations and are able to evaluate the same (Childers, Carr, Peck, & Carson, 2001).

In extant literature, the CIT method has

been deployed in two ways: a) CIT has been used to identify distinct ‘critical incidents,’ where each respondent’s experience is treated as a critical incident (Flanagan, 1954) in which case it is obvious that the responses of the observer are from within a manageable finite set of expected responses; and b) CIT has been used to identify distinct ‘critical factors,’ such that the respondent’s experience is considered as an accumulation of a variety of critical factors (Arnold, Reynolds, Ponder, & Leug, 2005). Since the latter gives more freedom for data collection as well as for the responder to narrate the positives as well as the negatives in his/her experience, the latter method is used in the current study. This study identifies the critical factors that shape learning related favourable and unfavourable user experiences while engaging in learning using micro-learning technology for the purpose of learning. The following are the results of the CIT adopted on the interviews conducted.

In all, in the 5 interviews conducted, 40 incidents or learning experience points were identified and classified into positive and negative experiences for App based learning and Non App based learning across

multiple generic variables that have been identified. (Ref Table- 1)

The major variables identified in this study are –

- Learning Outcomes
- Usefulness
- Convenience
- Ease of Use
- Consistency
- Fun
- Advocacy
- Interactivity

The table below shows the details of the same.

It is evident that the positives for App based learning are overwhelmingly high as compared to Non-App based or traditional learning methods across identified variables.

10. IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The implications of this project for the organizations were multifold. The training given to frontline sales people in a retail environment helped their employees deal in a better way with their customers. The

employees got a chance of getting trained in a unique way, because the app provides a better knowledge of the products because the employees get to know of the product without any interpretation by middle management thereby ensuring authentic content is available, Since the content delivery was gamified, it further drove engagement and hence the drive amongst the employees to learn more. Moreover, since the employees had the content with them readily available, they further expressed that it would help them to be more confident while dealing with the customers. Micro learning seemed to be the faster, cheaper and more effective way to train employees.

The implications of this project for OUST labs was that, it helped them in understanding the effectiveness of their app. It helped them in understanding how to train the retail sector employees using the app, and also helped them in incorporating new features in the app to train the employees more innovatively.

a. How The Micro Learning App Supported Adult Learning Principles?

10.1.1 Relevance: - It made employees understand the relevance of what they were learning. Once they understood the relevance it was not difficult to convince them to use the app and learn.

10.1.2 Learning at their own pace: - The app gave them the freedom to learn at their own pace, the bite sized nuggets gave them the flexibility to choose the time and what content they wanted to focus on more.

10.1.3 Bridged the Gap: - Most adults shy away from learning when they have to learn something totally new. The app built on something they already knew and yet instilled an interest in learning something new. They themselves could identify what they knew and what they needed to know.

10.1.4 Real time solutions: - the employee of today is not interested in learning for information sake. They want to be able to apply their learning in the real world and in their jobs. They look for learning which helps them improve their skills especially in the job that they are currently

occupied with. They want real time solutions to enhance their professional capabilities.

10.1.5 Motivation to learn: - Usually employees are motivated to learn when they feel that by learning they can earn more financially or obtain a better position. The chance that their social status would increase because of promotion in the job and enhanced career opportunities are also extrinsic motivational factors which drive them to learn. Developing a new skill for the present job or the future, improving existing skills, learning something because of which the current job becomes easier are also factors which motivates adults to learn. Other than these extrinsic factors which motivate an adult to learn there are some important intrinsic factors which motivate them. The intrinsic factors include removal of fears of becoming obsolete, developing confidence because of the new skill/knowledge

11. SUGGESTIONS:-

EVALUATE IF THE APP WAS EFFECTIVE AS A TRAINING TOOL.

“Any learning strategy that can impact Recall, Retention, and Application will be able to demonstrate a positive impact on the ROI.” (Pandey: 2017). OUST can use the Kirkpatrick Model to evaluate if their training has been effective. To understand if there was a positive impact on the ROI, the organization can utilize the Kirkpatrick model of Evaluation where they could check and analyse the respective changes at the following levels:- (Ref Figure- 1)

Level 1 – The reaction of the learner based on the relevance and utility of the course

Level 2 – The learning outcome perceived by the learner – if the course led to enhancement of skill/knowledge.

Level 3- The change in behaviour of the learner – was there a change in behaviour or an improvement of performance based on the learning.

Level 4:- The impact on business – has there been a visible or tangible improvement after the training.

12. CONCLUSION:-

More retailers are hiring based primarily on soft skills, and opting to train the employee for more foundational retail skills. In order to make the employee familiar with products, organisations are exploring more creative and flexible learning methods. This is where micro learning fits in.

Micro learning is growing and is becoming sought after in adult learning because of the many advantages it has. In Pandey’s words “Micro learning is not just breaking down a 10-hour training into small pieces. It’s an action-oriented approach of offering bite-sized learning that gets learners to learn, act, and practice.” Thus the best way to designing micro learning modules would be to understand the learning objective from a wholesome perspective and then make “bite sized” portions easy for the employees to consume and digest. However the exact impact of using app based micro learning on the performance of the employee has not yet been measured or assessed. But as a tool for employees to learn in bite sized formats, micro learning seems to have attracted the attention of growing organizations who want to stay ahead of the race in the global world. It effectively incorporates the basic

purpose of any instruction which is learning.

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LIST OF TABLE:-

Table- 1 - The table below shows the details of the same.

	App Based		Non App Based	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Learning Outcomes	6		3	
Usefulness	6	1	3	
Convenience	3			4
Ease of Use	3			
Consistency	2			
Fun	5			
Advocacy	2			
Interactivity		2	2	
Total	27	3	8	4

LIST OF FIGURE

Figure- 1

