The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for collaboration with UNESCO (citing that one third of all education facilities are out of service around the world) and support for e-learning during the lockdown. While online learners typically have access to only limited information sharing, the ability to adapt and learn autonomously is key. This ability to learn at their own pace and to connect to their own subjects at their own time empowers students with greater autonomy in how they access knowledge, learn and complete tasks, allowing them to build a world of their own. This flexibility in learning gives students the opportunity to go back to revisit concepts, and accelerate through subjects without the limitations of a classroom setting or school timetable.

Mobile e-learning also instils adaptability, creativity, and collaboration in learners – much needed attributes in a future workplace that supports economic growth and local entrepreneurship. As we continue to bridge the digital divide, mobile technology is an important part of everyday education support, in or out of the classroom. Providing access to online educational resources should be part of our national education strategy so that learners have the knowledge, skills and confidence to find careers in a technology-dominated world.

To prosper in a digitally enabled future, we need to prepare our youth for the workplace of the future. As a country we need to prepare our youth for the digital world, while increasing access to learning and learning outcomes. For learners, parents and educators, mobile e-learning is important for ensuring the opportunity to immerse themselves in continuous education.

Mobile technology allows access to a vast number of educational resources which can be packaged and aligned with current curricula to support educators and learners both inside and outside of the classroom. This can expand and deepen continuous by facilitating information access wherever a learner or educator is located. The portability and proliferation of mobile devices allows the possibility of anywhere, anytime learning. This ensures that, with the help of digital apps, learners can continue learning at their own pace and connect to their own subjects at their own time.

Building a future-ready workforce is a country priority. While in-school learning has been disrupted by COVID-19, online technology has ensured that education remains continuous by facilitating flexible and engaging learning within an online environment. Mobile technology is key to lessen the divide and increase access to education materials for improving learners’ performance.

With mobile e-learning platforms, there is an opportunity to reap greater benefits by being able to study on a smart device, go back and revisit concepts, and accelerate through education because of the flexibility provided by mobile learning. This flexibility in learning gives students the opportunity to go back to revisit concepts, and accelerate through subjects without the limitations of a classroom setting or school timetable.

At the end of lessons to ensure learners have comprehended each topic, as well as rewards to track learning. Mobile educational platforms offer learners the opportunity to immerse themselves in continuous education.

While e-learning has been on the rise since the pandemic, Vodacom’s e-School has its origins in 2011, when Vodacom launched a mobile learning platform for university students during the pandemic to ensure that data costs are not a barrier to continuous education.

Furthermore, with mobile connectivity, educators can communicate real-time guidance and feedback to motivate and assist learners with their progress. Educators can also use the mobile e-learning platform to communicate with learners, and to provide learners with tailored content.

Additionally, parents can also actively be involved in the learning process – they can download material, track their child’s progress, and invite a mentor to assist.

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While e-learning has been on the rise since the pandemic, Vodacom’s e-School has its origins in 2011, when Vodacom launched a mobile learning platform for university students during the pandemic to ensure that data costs are not a barrier to continuous education. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for mobile e-learning has increased. Vodacom e-School reached over one million registered users during the pandemic last year. Of these users, 63% access e-School via a smartphone.

Unfortunately, in South Africa, not everyone has access to a laptop or PC to use as a remote learning device, but 78% of young people under 25 have the use of a mobile phone. This ubiquity, along with efforts to increase cellular connectivity, is an enabling, empowering and engaging way for learners to learn and to look to the future.