

MOBILE LEARNING: AN EFFECTIVE LEARNING APPROACH FOR DISTANCE LEARNER

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Abstract

This conceptual paper attempts to provide an understanding of the effectiveness of mobile learning. Approach in distance education of mobile learning can enhance students' interest and motivation. It also helps the adult part time students to communicate with the instructor quickly. The implementation of the mobile learning allows students to access educational information at anytime and anywhere.

Keywords *mobile learning, interest, motivation, distance education*

INTRODUCTION

The speed of technological development today contributed to the development of education in this country. This development had provided an excellent opportunity for people in the country to gain knowledge without the limits for a lifetime. Therefore, in line with the objectives of the Third Outline Perspective Plan 2001-2010 (Nik Azis, 2008), the government will encourage the community to engage in life-long learning. Thus, a variety of facilities are available to those who wish to continue their studies through distance learning (DL) program. The program is implemented to those who have completed their studies at the secondary school level (National Higher Education Strategic Plan, 2012). In addition, the national leadership also aims to produce world-class human capital community to ensure a high degree of competitiveness in the era of globalization par with other developed countries (Zahiah& Abdul Razaq, 2010).

Among the programs that provide life-long learning in Malaysia is distance learning program. The program was created in line with national goals of becoming a developed nation by the year 2020 (Hee & Siti Liyana, 2011). The concept of this study is very simple, where the students and the instructor do not have to be together in the classroom when teaching and learning activities implemented (Moore & Kearsley, 2012). The situation is clearly that the concept of distance learning is a form of separation between students and instructors physically (Yahya, 2003). This case reduces the problem to the students who wish to continue their studies due to time constraints and travel apart to get the universities (Dugi, 2008). The implementation of this concept in distance learning can be more efficient when combined with the creation of technological tool in today's mobile devices (Siow, Abu Talib, Lee, Sandiyao & Adelina, 2005). Among of existing technologies that have been provided to students that pursuing a distance learning program in learning activities is through video conference (Tapscott, 2007). These learning activities carried out in education centers that have been set by the university. In addition, learning activities through the portal (LvP) were also provided to facilitate the process of interaction with peers and lecturers.

The existence of this distance learning program will benefit to the people who have worked, without having to leave their careers (Hee & Nurazwin, 2011). Otherwise, they can continue their careers as usual. The implementation of distance education program is expected to be more efficient when the equipment of mobile technology was invented in the present can be leveraged in the implementation of teaching and learning activities (Hasuria & Rokiah, 2009). The mobile device has been created in line with developments in technologies such as, personal digital assistants (PDAs), tablet computer, iPad, cell phones, smart phones and so on (Basoglu & Akdemir, 2010). The creation of mobile devices has been able to make a significant contribution to the field of education. It can be proved by a study in southern Taiwan that found mobile learning method can improve the quality of education and to improve students' attitudes toward learning, while able to improve their academic performance (Hwang & Chang, 2011).

According to Park (2011), mobile learning refers to the use of wireless mobile devices as a medium in the implementation of the mobile learning. The implementation of the ML method will encourage students to learn and access educational information at anytime and anywhere (Ahmed, 2012). This mobile learning approach is seen as an informal and personal learning activity (Traxler, 2009). Hence, the learning methods support by technology of mobile device directly drives the student motivation to learn (Kukulaska-Hulme, 2010). Thus, this situation can encourage learning institutions to provide a better support learning, for instance through the use of mobile devices (Chan & Ford, 2007) as a medium to enhance student learning. Mobile learning method are becoming a global phenomenon that led to reform in this education system (Snell-Siddle, 2012). An increase of the effectiveness of educational technology are provided more learning environment (Rafiza, 2013). The implementation of the mobile learning is also the development of electronic learning approach carried out through the portal and is used in most educational systems (Salmon & Edirisingha, 2008). The use of mobile technology applications can also bridge the digital divide in addition to being able to improve ICT skills. Furthermore, it can encourage independent learning. This application also allows students to receive

the feedback more quickly when submitting a question related to topics that are poorly understood (Dewitt, 2012). Thus, students can track their weaknesses early and could directly induce them to work harder to improve the deficiencies.

In summary, the development of mobile devices has led to the existence of new channels of communication, among students and instructors. It encourages internal motivation of students to be involved in mobile learning activities (Chaiprasurt & Esichaikul, 2013). Based on the theory of Andragogy put forward by Knowles (1978), adult learners' motivation is driven by internal motivations. These developments have a positive impact, particularly in the form of distance education system, which can bridge the communication gap between students and instructors (Amin, 2008) and to promote active learning activities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Use of Mobile Technology Applications in Education

A development in technology today is very encouraging. Based on the report made by the World in 2010, issued by the International Telecommunication Union found that approximately 90% of the world population can access information through mobile networks respectively. (Quinn, 2012). Mobile learning (ML) has been keeping pace with the developments in mobile technology. These developments have had a positive impact in many fields, including education. Today's society is also conscious of all the developments taking place in the education system and many of them were unanimous support of changes to these changes positively.

According to Attewell and Savil-Smith (2005), ML refers to the delivery of teaching with the help of cell phone use. This learning method also makes mobile technology as a new medium of teaching is expected to drive the effectiveness of the learning system either in school or the centers of higher education. However, Quinn (2012) argued that the implementation of the ML also has a positive effect on the increase of knowledge workers. He added that the implementation of the ML also enables the management to control and evaluation system in-service training through mobile devices that are said to be more secure. Swan, et al. (2005) found that the both teachers and the students are responding positively to the use of mobile devices that could directly improve students' motivation to communicate when learning activities undertaken.

Merger of mobile technology in education will also allow users to access learning management systems that rely on a computer terminal to interact with learning materials. Between mobile devices that are used as learning tools such as iPods, smart phones, palmtops and personal digital assistants (Mellow, 2005). Traxler (2010) has been diversifying the meaning of mobile to other devices such as digital cameras, game consoles, netbooks, laptops, media players and others. Furthermore, the use of technological tools have been well received by the community in addition to an affordable price. For example, about 82% of the first-year students at the Auckland University of Technology reported that already have and using mobile phones since 2005 (Mellow, 2005).

Interest and Mobile Learning

Hairunnaja (2011) pointed out that the interest in learning is a significant factor in ensuring the success of students in their respective fields. Based on a study conducted by Hwang and Chang (2011), the successful implementation of the ML method available to attract students to learn compared to the traditional teaching method. In fact, Rismark, et al. (2007) stated many students were so eager to learn with mobile phones; they can watch videos related to the topic of learning prior to attending college. Ease of accessing information through mobile technology will help improve the ability of students and lecturers. It also provided an opportunity to get a variety of information related to the implementation of the ML method in institutions of higher learning (Isham Shah, *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, this condition is also able to increase student focus.

Motivation and Mobile Learning (ML)

Learning methods supported by mobile technologies indeed can give an injection of motivation for students to learn without having to be forced. This statement is supported by Kolb (2008) and Saran, Cagility and Seferoglu (2008) states that the facility of smart phones encourage students to engage in learning activities. In addition, these learning activities that can be done at anytime and anywhere could increase the tendency for students to learn more efficiently (Jane & Mike, 2006). However, Ozan (2013) also noted that mobile devices are used as a medium of learning has been successful in increasing satisfaction and motivation toward learning. This statement is also supported by Ardi and Zaidatun (2008) through his research that found that students' motivation to learn increases after ML methods implemented. Mockus, *et al.* (2011) found that students access the site courses (syllabus, course schedules, course announcements, blog aggregator), student card scanning and portable audio podcasts using mobile devices has shown a positive reaction and high motivation to engage in learning activities. In fact, a study (Olasina, 2012), found that the use of online learning tools such as online libraries, Yahoo groups, the tools of Web 2.0, wikis and hypermedia, had a positive effect on students' motivation.

CONCLUSION

As conclusion, learning through mobile devices not only can improve the effectiveness of learning but also increased opportunities for distance learners pursue learning activities more efficiently. In addition, the quality of education in Malaysia will also become more competitive and have a high quality.

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