



ISSN: 0975-833X

Available online at <http://www.journalcra.com>

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF CURRENT RESEARCH**

International Journal of Current Research
Vol. 14, Issue, 02, pp.23776-23779, February, 2022

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24941/ijcr.6479.02.2022>

RESEARCH ARTICLE

AN OVERVIEW: MOBILE LEARNING PROCESS

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 27th November, 2021
Received in revised form
19th December, 2021
Accepted 24th January, 2022
Published online 25th February, 2022

Keywords:

Mobile Learning, Teaching Learning Process, Educational Technology, Educational Management, E-learning

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ABSTRACT

Mobile learning (m-learning) has emerged as a significant extension of e-learning, enabling education to move beyond traditional classrooms and desktop computers to portable devices such as smart phones, tablets, and handheld computers. Defined as learning across multiple contexts through social and content interactions using personal electronic devices, m-learning emphasizes flexibility, accessibility, and learner mobility. Research highlights its potential to improve academic performance, reduce dropout rates, and foster collaboration and engagement. The document explores the background of mobile learning, its applications in classroom management, podcasting, workplace training, lifelong learning, and language acquisition. Benefits include portability, cost-effectiveness, multimedia integration, and continuous learning opportunities, while challenges involve connectivity, device limitations, digital divide, and content security. Growth areas such as mobile gaming, social-networked learning, and location-based education demonstrate its expanding role in modern pedagogy. In conclusion, mobile learning represents a transformative approach to education, offering convenience, inclusivity, and innovation. It bridges formal and informal learning, supports diverse learners—including those with special needs and opens new opportunities for lifelong learning in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

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Citation: Dr. Eswari, N. 2022 "An overview:mobile learning process", 2022. *International Journal of Current Research*, 14, (02), 23716-23779.

INTRODUCTION

Mobile learning has received a lot of attention in recent years as a growing segment of the educational and instructional technology field. But what is *mobile learning* educes provides one broad definition to get us started: "Mobile learning, or m-learning, can be any educational interaction delivered through mobile technology and accessed at a student's convenience from any location." You may have heard of projects at your institution related to making course content, textbooks, and resource materials available to you via your phone or tablet computer. These initiatives seek to extend the reach of your online programs beyond your home computer. Mobile learning initiatives also seek to leverage the devices you are already carrying with you and using to access other web-based information away from home. A key part of the EDUACUSE definition of mobile learning is that it does not specifically mention iPhones or iPads. The kinds of devices used to access mobile learning platforms and materials include iPhones and iPads as well as a wide variety of mobile phones, tablets, netbooks, and e-readers. The Pew Research Center is studying

how we use this mobile technology. A 2011 report revealed that 85% of adults in the United States own cell phones. A recent study by the Student Monitor reported that 54% of higher education students own a smartphone. The numbers continue to increase as we own multiple mobile devices and use them to carry out a more diverse list of work, personal, and educational tasks as we go through the day.

Mobile learning

M-learning or mobile learning is defined as "learning across multiple contexts, through social and content interactions, using personal electronic devices A form of distance education, m-learners use mobile device educational technology at their time convenience. M-learning technologies include handheld computers, MP3 players, notebooks, mobile phones and tablets. M-learning focuses on the mobility of the learner, interacting with portable technologies. Using mobile tools for creating learning aids and materials becomes an important part of informal learning M-learning is convenient in that it is accessible from virtually anywhere. Sharing is almost instantaneous among everyone using the same content, which leads to the reception of instant feedback and tips. This

highly active process has proven to increase exam scores from the fiftieth to the seventieth percentile, and cut the dropout rate in technical fields by 22 percent. M-learning also brings strong portability by replacing books and notes with small devices, filled with tailored learning contents.

Background of Mobile learning

Mobile learning is the delivery of learning, education or learning support on mobile phones, PDAs or tablets. E-learning has provided the ability for traditional learning to break out of the classroom setting and for students to learn at home. Mobile learning has enhanced upon e-learning by taking it a step further and allowing students to learn virtually anywhere a mobile signal is available.

New mobile technology, such as hand-held based devices, is playing a large role in redefining how people receive information. The recent advances in mobile technology are changing the primary purpose of mobile devices from making or receiving calls to retrieving the latest information on any subject.

Class management

Mobile devices in the classroom can be used to enhance student-centered learning, group collaboration among students through communication applications, interactive displays, and video features.

- Existing mobile technology can replace cumbersome resources such as textbooks, visual aids, and presentation technology
- Interactive and multi-mode technology allows students to engage and manipulate information.
- Mobile Device features with WIFI capabilities allow for on-demand access to information
- Access to classroom activities and information on mobile devices provides a continuum for learning inside and outside the classroom. In a literature review conducted by FutureLab, researchers found that increased communication, collaboration, and understanding of concepts was a result of mobile technology applications.

Class management: Mobile devices can be used in brick-and-mortar or online settings to enhance learning experiences.

- The mobile phone (through text SMS notices) can be used especially for distance education or with students whose courses require them to be highly mobile and in particular to communicate information regarding availability of assignment results, venue changes and cancellations, etc. It can also be of value to business people, e.g. sales representatives who do not wish to waste time away from their busy schedules to attend formal training events.
- Mobile devices facilitate online interaction between instructor and student, and student to student.

Podcasting: Podcasting consists of listening to audio recordings of lectures. It can be used to review live lectures (Clark & Westcott 2007) and to provide opportunities for students to rehearse oral presentations. Podcasts may also

provide supplemental information to enhance traditional lectures (McGarr 2009) (Steven & Teasley 2009).

Psychological research suggests that university students who download podcast lectures achieve substantially higher exam results than those who attend the lecture in person (only in cases in which students take notes)

Work: M-learning in the context of work can embrace a variety of different forms of learning. It has been defined as the "processes of coming to know, and of being able to operate successfully in, and across, new and ever changing contexts, including learning for, at and through work, by means of mobile devices M-learning for work

- M-learning at and through work
- Cross-contextual m-learning

Learning for work: which could be also described as 'just-in-case' learning, involves classic and formal education activities, such as training courses, that prepare learners for future work-related tasks. A typical, corporate application is the delivery of mobile compliance training, which can be seen as a viable means to reach geographically mobile employees, such as consultants or staff in logistic and transport systems. Another application is mobile simulations that prepare learners for future situations, for example real-time SMS-based simulations for disaster response training.

Learning at and through work: Which could be labelled as "just-in-time" mobile learning, occurs in informal education settings at the workplace. Employees can use the mobile phone to solve problems via handheld devices in situ, for example by accessing informational resources (such as checklists and reference guides) prior to customer visits or mobile decision support systems. The latter are popular in clinical settings where they support highly mobile medical staff through rule-based algorithms in the decision regarding more complex patient cases.

Their application was associated with learning and in particular with practice improvement of medical staff. Learning through work also occurs by interacting with distant peers via phone. "People tagging" is an approach whereby people assign topics they associate with co-workers. The aggregation of interests and experiences serves not only as a means to raise awareness but also to help find competent experts on demand, for example with context-sensitive expert location systems.

Cross-contextual learning: That bridges the gap between work settings and formal education formats has perhaps the biggest potential for work-based mobile learning, especially with respect to tertiary education systems. This involves approaches in which learning in the workplace is facilitated and substantiated (for example through formative assessments reflective questions] or the documentation of personal achievements in multimedia learning diaries or portfolios. The so-created materials are later used in more formal educational formats, for example in the classroom or in the discussion with tutors. The value of these mobile phone-mediated learning practices lies in the integration and reconciliation of work-based learning and formal education experiences which otherwise tend to remain separated.

Lifelong learning and self-learning: Mobile technologies and approaches, i.e. mobile-assisted language learning (MALL),

are also used to assist in language learning. For instance handheld computers, cell phones, and podcasting (Horkoff Kayes2008) have been used to help people acquire and develop language skills.

The value of mobile learning

Tutors who have used m-learning programs and techniques have made the following value statements in favour of m-learning.

- It is important to bring new technology into the classroom.
- Devices used are more lightweight than books and PCs.
- Mobile learning can be used to diversify the types of learning activities students partake in (or a blended learning approach).
- Mobile learning supports the learning process rather than being integral to it.
- Mobile learning can be a useful add-on tool for students with special needs. However, for SMS and MMS this might be dependent on the students' specific disabilities or difficulties involved.
- Mobile learning can be used as a 'hook' to re-engage disaffected youth.

Benefits

- Relatively inexpensive opportunities, as the cost of mobile devices are significantly less than PCs and laptops
- Multimedia content delivery and creation options
- Continuous and situated learning support
- Decrease in training costs
- Potentially a more rewarding learning experience
- New opportunities for traditional educational institutions
- Readily available a/synchronous learning experience

Technical challenges

- Connectivity and battery life
- Screen size and key size
- Meeting required bandwidth for nonstop/fast streaming
- Number of file/asset formats supported by a specific device
- Content security or copyright issue from authoring group
- Multiple standards, multiple screen sizes, multiple operating systems
- Reworking existing E-Learning materials for mobile platforms
- Limited memory
- Risk of sudden obsolescence
- Security
- Work/life balance
- Cost of investment

Social and educational challenges

- Accessibility and cost barriers for end users: digital divide.
- How to assess learning outside the classroom
- How to support learning across many contexts[
- Content's security or copyright infringement issues
- Frequent changes in device models/technologies/functionality etc.

- Developing an appropriate theory of learning for the mobile age
- Conceptual differences between e-learning and m-learning
- Design of technology to support a lifetime of learning
- Tracking of results and proper use of this information
- No restriction on learning timetable
- Personal and private information and content
- No demographic boundary
- Disruption of students' personal and academic lives
- Access to and use of the technology in developing countries
- Risk of distraction
- Mobile usage habits among different countries and regions

Growth

Mobile learning is widely used in schools, workplaces, museums, cities and rural areas around the world. In comparison to traditional classroom pedagogical approaches, mobile learning allows widened opportunities for timing, location, accessibility and context of learning. Current areas of growth include:

- Testing, surveys, job aids and just-in-time (J.I.T.) learning
- Location-based and contextual learning
- Social-networked mobile learning
- Mobile educational gaming
- Delivering m-Learning to cellular phones using two way SMS messaging and voice-based CellCasting (podcasting to phones with interactive assessments)

CONCLUSION

Mobile learning is a hot new item that will continue to gain popularity based on convenience. The fact is that convenience is everything in today's busy society and will continue to be in generations to come.

Mobile learning opens so many doors to new technology and will continue to get more complex as the years go on. So many more opportunities are being giving to get an education and to expand your knowledge. This is a great way to help people learn better.

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