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Mobile learning awareness of college students in Madurai district

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Abstract

Technology in education is most simply and comfortably defined as an array of tools that might prove helpful in advancing student learning and may be measured in how and why individuals behave. Educational Technology relies on a broad definition of the word "technology." Technology can refer to material objects of use to humanity, such as machines or hardware, but it can also encompass broader themes, including systems, methods of organization, and techniques. Some modern tools include but are not limited to overhead projectors, laptop computers, and calculators. Newer tools such as smart phones and games (both online and offline) are beginning to draw serious attention for their learning potential. Media psychology is the field of study that applies theories of human behavior to educational technology. Today mobile technologies are often common even in areas where schools, books and computers are scarce. As the price of mobile phone ownership continues to decline, more and more people, including those in extremely impoverished areas, are likely to own and know how to use a mobile device. The study was intended to find out the Mobile Learning Awareness of College Students in Madurai District, Tamil Nadu, India. Random Sampling Technique was used to compose a sample of 970 College Students. Mean, Standard Deviation and t values were calculated for the analysis of data. The result revealed that the Gender, Locality, Subject group, Residence and Internet users exhibited significant difference in respect of their Mobile Learning Awareness of College Students.

Keywords: Mobile Learning, Awareness and College Students

1. Introduction

M-learning or mobile learning is defined as "learning across multiple contexts, through social and content interactions, using personal electronic devices." A form of e-learning distance education, m-learners can use mobile device educational technology in many locations at their time convenience. M-learning is convenient in that it is accessible from virtually anywhere. M-learning, like other forms of e-learning, is also collaborative. 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. In addition, it is simple to utilize mobile learning for a more effective and entertaining experience. Mobile learning involves the use of mobile technology, either alone or in combination with other information and communication technology (ICT), to enable learning anytime and anywhere. Learning can unfold in a variety of ways: people can use mobile devices to access educational resources, connect with others, or create content, both inside and outside classrooms. Mobile learning also encompasses efforts to support broad educational goals such as the effective administration of school systems and improved communication between schools and families. Mobile education, however innovative, technically feasible, and pedagogically sound, may have no chance of sustained, wide-scale institutional deployment in higher education in the foreseeable future, at a distance or on site. This is because of the strategic factors at work within educational institutions and providers. These strategic factors are different from those of technology and pedagogy. They are the context and the environment for the technical and the pedagogic aspects.

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Need and Importance of the Study

Mobile learning is a much more recent modification motivated by mobile communications technology. M-Learning focuses on the mobility of the learner, interacting with technologies. Using mobile tools for creating learning aids and materials becomes an important part of informal learning. Obviously, m-learning is easily access, flexible, anywhere and anytime Today, Students without mobile is a rare sight, we cannot segregate students from mobile or technology.

Always, changes only unchangeable. Technology is a hot topic and undoubtedly students have a great interest in learning through mobile and they hesitate conventional mode of teaching-learning process. Mobile devices have become deeply ingrained in our everyday lives. M-learning is much more dynamic than just e-learning. M-learning is an innovative path to positive learning direction. Thus m-learning interest becomes the attitudes of the students. M-learning creates an informal learning space by enabling access to learning outside the classroom, empowering learners to take change of their own learning. Good m-learning platforms often include social elements so that learners are encouraged to share their experience and learn from each other.

Moreover, students are much aware of using technology since they know the need and use of that. M-learning can respond to the needs of an “always-on” society by providing learners with materials and resources that they can access wherever and whenever they choose. It’s giving new freedom to the students. In today’s busy schedule one cannot contribute much time, separately from the routine life schedule they want to enhance their knowledge rapidly within the routine busy life schedule .m-learning is not only effective for academic but also in general , to read any books, no need to wait for the weekend, like newspapers they can read even while travelling. Thus m-learning makes to utilize the time in useful manner instead of wasting the precious time.

Every concept has its dark side, a great draw back seems to be in m-learning is internet connection. Due to power problems, in developing countries, rural areas and remote areas constant internet or wifi connection is impossible. In some countries where data plans are either prohibitively expensive or unreliable as well as for people living in areas with poor coverage also a obstacle in m-learning. Hence Government takes several steps for creating smart cities by providing non-stop wifi connection for the benefit and betterment of common people. There is a very general idea in the society is m-learning is possible only for high class students. Since, Government provide low priced smart phones which made education possible for even those who could not pursue it due to economic problem, adults from rural and under developed areas where there no colleges and schools. M-learning helps talented students from rural areas which banishing the national barriers and provide facility to learn from mentor located in a distant country.

Summing up all the above ideas, as technology is inseparable from dynamism naturally m-learning is flourishing inevitably. Hence the student’s aware of the importance of m-learning and the present scenario highlights the need of the study and how the m-learning involvement, awareness and attitude blended with each other.

Since college students are the nation builders of tomorrow and are the vital part of our community, such awareness has to rightly start from here. That is why the researcher feels college students are the nation builders, if only they have enough Mobile Learning awareness they can in turn inculcate to their students. Hence the investigator decides to choose college students as the sample for this study.

Statement of the Problem

Mobile learning is a branch of ICT in education. Yet, because it employs technology that is more affordable and more easily self-procured and managed than tethered computers, it requires reconceptualizing traditional models of technology use and implementation. Where computer and e-learning projects have historically been constrained by hardware that is expensive, fragile, heavy and kept in tightly controlled settings, mobile learning projects tend to assume that students have uninterrupted and largely unregulated access to technology. The ever-increasing availability of mobile technologies requires policy-makers to revisit and rethink the potentials of ICT in education. These guidelines seek to assist this endeavour by detailing several of the unique benefits of mobile learning and then articulating high-level policy recommendations. Knowledge and use of ICT skills in teaching and learning have become imperative for today’s teacher. Although Mobile Learning plays a vital role in learning process, it is essential to know the awareness of College Students about Mobile Learning.

The main purpose of ICT in Education is implementing of ICT Equipments and Tools in Teaching-Learning process as a media and methodology. The purpose of ICT in education is generally to familiarise students with the use and workings of computers, and related social and ethical issues. Therefore it is highly necessary to improve the attitude and involvement in Mobile Learning. And College Students being vital part of our community and they being transparent, the researcher has chosen them as the sample. The title that he has selected for the present study may be stated as follows, “Mobile Learning Awareness of College Students in Madurai District”.

Objective of the study

The researchers have framed following objectives for the study to find out the difference in Mobile Learning Awareness if any, among:

1. Male and Female students.
2. Rural and Urban area students.
3. Arts and Science group students.
4. Hostel and day scholar students.
5. Internet users and non-users of college students.

Hypotheses of the study

For the present study, based on the objectives the researchers framed the following hypotheses,

1. There is significant difference between Male and Female college students in respect of their Mobile Learning Awareness.
2. There is significant difference between Rural and Urban area college students in respect of their Mobile Learning Awareness.
3. There is significant difference between Arts and Science group college students in respect of their Mobile Learning Awareness.

4. There is significant difference between Hosteller and day scholar college students in respect of their Mobile Learning Awareness.
5. There is significant difference between Internet users and non-users of college students in respect of their Mobile Learning Awareness.

Methods of the Study

Normative survey method was employed. The tool was administered to the samples of 970 college students. The data was collected and subjected to statistical analysis to arrive at a conclusion.

Tools used

Mobile Learning Awareness Questionnaire was constructed and standardized by Nagasubramani P.C (2011). This Questionnaire consists of 35 statements. In each statement two point scale ranging from “Yes”, “No” is used. The different points on the scale are assigned arbitrary weights, for example 1 and 0 in the order of “Yes”, “No” response for the statements. An individual score is the sum of all the score of the 35 items. The maximum score that one can get in this is 35. Higher score indicating the presence of high level of Mobile Learning Awareness. The Questionnaire used in this study, in order to measure students Mobile Learning Awareness has construct validity. Also the intrinsic validity found by the authors (Nagasubramani P.C. 2011) of this tool was 0.81 and the reliability was found to be 0.65 by the split-half technique.

The investigator has also found the reliability and validity of the tool. The reliability of the scale by split-half technique (consistency) followed by the use of Spearman-Brown prophecy formula is found to be 0.63. The significance of the reliability was tested with ‘t’ test. The ‘t’ value 11.51 was significant at 0.01 level. The formula was,

$$t = \frac{r\sqrt{N-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}}$$

$$t = \frac{0.63\sqrt{100-2}}{\sqrt{1-0.63^2}} = 8.02$$

Thus the reliability was highly significant at 0.01 level.

The intrinsic validity is also called as the index of reliability (Guilford, 1954). The formula to be used to determine the intrinsic validity is the square root of its reliability. Thus the validity of this test is

$$V = \sqrt{R} = \sqrt{0.63} = 0.79$$

The significance of the validity was tested with ‘t’ test. The ‘t’ value 12.74 was significant at 0.01 level. The formula was,

$$t = \frac{v\sqrt{N-2}}{\sqrt{1-v^2}}$$

$$t = \frac{0.79\sqrt{100-2}}{\sqrt{1-0.79^2}} = 12.74$$

Therefore the validity was significant at 0.01 level.

Thus from the two co-efficient it may be inferred that this Questionnaire is highly reliable and valid.

Sample of the Study

In this present study, 970 College Students in different Arts and Science Colleges were taken as sample. The random sampling technique has been used in the selection of the sample. The samples were collected from the College Students of various Arts and Science Colleges in Madurai District, Tamil Nadu, India.

Statistical Techniques Used

The following statistical techniques have been used in the present study for the analysis of collected data.

1. Descriptive Analysis
2. Differential Analysis

Table 1: Difference between the Means of the Attitude towards M-Learning

SL. No	Variable	Number	Mean	S.D	t'	Significant value	
1.	Gender	Male	433	31.84	5.53	3.82	S
		Female	537	27.12	5.41		
2.	Locality	Rural	436	23.82	5.65	4.04	S
		Urban	534	29.24	3.67		
3.	Subject group	Arts	440	24.32	6.42	2.42	S
		Science	530	26.84	5.21		
4.	Residence	Hosteller	409	27.64	4.87	2.89	S
		Day scholar	561	25.84	5.33		
5.	Internet Users	Yes	667	28.86	5.85	5.14	S
		No	303	22.21	4.63		

S=Significant, NS=Not Significant

Major findings of the study

- (i) The verification of the hypothesis based on the analysis of data indicates that there is significant difference in the Mobile Learning Awareness of Male and Female students (t=3.82) and it is inferred that the Male Students have more Mobile Learning Awareness than the Female Students.
- (ii) The testing of the hypothesis based on the analysis of data indicates that there is significant difference in the Mobile Learning Awareness of Rural and Urban area students (t=4.04) and it is inferred that the Urban area

Students have more Mobile Learning Awareness than the Rural area Students.

- (iii) The testing of the hypothesis based on the analysis of data indicates that there is significant difference in the Mobile Learning Awareness of Arts and Science group students (t=2.42) and it is inferred that the Science group Students have more Mobile Learning Awareness than the Arts group Students.
- (iv) The testing of the hypothesis based on the analysis of the data indicates that there is significant difference in the Mobile Learning Awareness of Hosteller and Day

Scholar students ($t=2.89$) and it is inferred that the Hosteller Students have more Mobile Learning Awareness than the Day Scholar Students.

- (v) The testing of the hypothesis based on the analysis of data indicates that there is significant difference in the Mobile Learning Awareness of Internet users and non-users of College Students ($t=5.14$) and it is inferred that the Internet users of College Students have more Mobile Learning Awareness than the non-users of College Students.

Conclusion

Today the more and more rapid development of the Technology contributes the wireless communications, which are main parts of the mobile learning. On the other hand for the implementation of mobile learning it is necessary to use a corresponding system for the management of such type of education. Mobile is a powerful device for enhancing learning process and mobile devices form an essential part of that. The strategies for education begin to include mobile devices along with digital learning materials, support for students and guidelines on best practices, mobile learning will soon become an important part of education. To sum up, the following conclusions have been reached in the light of the present investigation. Gender, Locality, Subject group, Residence and Internet users exhibited significant difference in Mobile Learning Awareness of College Students in Madurai District, Tamil Nadu, India.

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