BENEFITS OF MOBILE LEARNING UTILIZATION IN TEACHING BUSINESS EDUCATION IN AMBROSE ALLI UNIVERSITY, EDO STATE

BY

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Abstract
The study examined the benefits of mobile learning (m-learning) utilization in teaching business education in Ambrose Ali University, Edo State. Three research questions were raised to guide the study with one corresponding hypothesis formulated and tested at 0.05 levels of significance. The case study research design was adopted in the study. A sample of 100 business education students was randomly selected from the population of 265 final year (400 levels) students in Ambrose Ali University, Edo State. The structured questionnaire titled: 'Benefits of M-learning Utilization in Business Education Questionnaire (BOMUBEQ)' was developed by the researcher and was structured in a 4-point scale, showing Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was validated by 3 experts in the field and the Cronbach’s Alpha was used in obtaining a reliability coefficient of 0.83. The data collated were subjected to further statistical analysis using Mean, Standard Deviation and the Independent Sample t-test. The Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 was used for this purpose. The findings revealed that there are several benefits in m-learning utilization. The study also revealed that business education students in Ambrose Alli University (AAU) do not significantly differ in their perceptions of m-learning utilization. Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that there are several benefits derivable from the utilization of m-learning in teaching business education; and they include making research work easy, facilitating the revision of course content, making field trip experience memorable, promoting individualization of learning, facilitating quick information sharing, promoting greater utilization of technology and reducing the volume of paper work. Based on the conclusion drawn, it is therefore recommended that business educators should always give online assignment to their students to encourage the utilization of mobile devices.

Keywords: M-learning, business education and benefits

Introduction
The increasing unemployment in the country has again reinforced the need for business education programme. Business education is seen as a skill-based programme that is geared at equipping the learners with appropriate business and education competencies needed to function in the world of work. According to Imeokparia and Ediagbonya (2014), business education is an aspect of education that is geared at equipping the learners (students) with business and education competencies (that is, skills, knowledge and attitude) needed to effectively function in the world of work either as an employee or an employer (job/wealth creator). For the objective of business education programme to be fully realized, there is need for appropriate human and material resources to be provided in educational institutions and training centres. Human resources in this context refer to business educators while the material resources refer to different technological...
devices that the educator can utilize to add more value to learning. This is the reason mobile educational devices are emphasized in the teaching and learning process. These devices are ubiquitous in nature.

Ubiquitous technologies are making it possible for learners not to be tethered in orchestrated fixed classrooms for learning purposes. These resources can further make learning possible anytime, anywhere and even anyhow. Such ‘anytime’, ‘anywhere’ computing platforms have ignited a paradigm shift from e-learning models to m-learning models (Muyinda, 2010). Hence, increasing research attention is unfolding around m-learning from industrialists, researchers, educationists and policy makers (Brown, 2005; Caudill, 2007; Uden, 2007; Traxler, 2007; Ayala and Castillo, 2008). Because of the foregoing, m-learning has been defined in various ways; considering a mobile device as an enabler of learner mobility. Sharma and Kitchens (2004) defined m-learning as a learning process which takes the advantages of mobile devices, ubiquitous communications technology and intelligent user interfaces. In a similar vein, Ting (2005) defined m-learning as the application of mobile or wireless devices for learning when the learner is moving. Luis de Marcos, Gutierrez, Pages and Martinez (2006) defined m-learning as a form of e-learning which employs wireless, tiny, handheld and portable devices to extend and deliver learning to learners. Traxler (2007) defined m-learning as learning which takes place at any time in any place using a mobile device. According to Ediagbonya (2016), m-learning is the utilization of mobile technologies in promoting effectiveness and efficiency in the teaching and learning process. This trend of m-learning has resulted to several mobile technologies related education projects (Abt and Tim, 2007; Mantei and Kervin, 2009).

Ubiquitous technologies are revolutionizing not only the education sector but also the commerce, business, banking and entertainment sectors. The convergence of internet with wireless mobile technologies has seen the replacement of the prefix ‘e-’ in the terms e-commerce, e-business, e-banking, e-entertainment and e-learning with the prefix ‘m-’ (Traxler, 2007). The prefix ‘m-’ conjures the ‘mobileness’ brought about by mobile technologies in learning, commerce, business, banking and entertainment. According to Traxler (2007), m-learning is more than just the use of mobile devices for learning but the ability for one to electronically learn on-the-go. The new generation of smart phones offers mobility of learning contents and has prompted the development of education applications that exploits the ubiquitous connectivity and high levels of portability (Cochrane & Bateman, 2010; Hall & Anderson, 2009). These mobile applications (mobile apps) can be used as learning aids that students access virtually from anywhere and communicate with peers and teachers (Young, 2011).

Hefling (2012) has emphasized that the utilization of m-learning will go a long way in reducing costs in education by encouraging transition from paper based to digital textbooks in schools. This no doubt has significant economic implication on all stakeholders. The ubiquitous nature of m-learning has equally been identified by Cochrane and Bateman (2010) as one of the benefits of m-learning utilization because it conquers the barrier of location that is peculiar to the conventional classroom. It is also interesting to note that m-learning takes care of the individual differences of the learners (Motiwalla, 2007). That is, with m-learning, business education students can learn at their own pace.

This era of technological advancement has in no small measure affected all facets of the country; and as such, stakeholders are making conscious efforts aimed at utilizing the available technologies. The use of mobile devices has remained a prominent feature in this age by all categories, especially students in our campuses. Students are seen with various mobile devices
and they are being used in carrying out series of activities, either academic or non-academic. Some students are seen in campuses using their mobile devices in taking snap shots, playing music, watching films and others. This trend seems not to be academic in nature. The researcher is worried if the students know what they stand to benefit in utilizing mobile devices in their academics. What could possibly be the benefits derivable from utilizing m-learning? It is upon this premise that the researchers intend to empirically investigate the benefits of m-learning utilization in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State. These issues have remained unresolved, hence, this study is apt.

The main purpose of the study was to ascertain the benefits of m-learning utilization in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State; while the specific purposes were to determine:

1. The benefits arising from the utilization of m-learning in the teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State; 
2. The difference in the perceptions of male and female business education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State; and
3. The difference in the perceptions of Accounting and Secretarial education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State.

This study was guided by the following questions and analysed using appropriate statistics:

1. What are the benefits arising from the utilization of m-learning in the teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State?
2. What nature of difference exists in the perceptions of male and female business education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State?
3. What nature of difference exists in the perceptions of Accounting and Secretarial education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State?

Research questions (ii) and (iii) were hypothesized and the null hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H01: there is no significant difference in the perceptions of male and female business education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State;

H02: there is no significant difference in the perceptions of Accounting and Secretarial education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State.

Methodology

This study utilized the case study research design since it is basically an enquiry into the benefits of m-learning utilization in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State. The population of this study consists of all final year students of business education in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. The total population was 265 business education students. The systematic
random sampling technique was used in selecting a sample size of 100 business education students. The instrument used for this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was used in eliciting information from the respondent and it was titled: Benefits of M-learning Utilization in Business Education Questionnaire (BOMUBEQ). It was divided into two parts – A and B. Part A consists of the demographic characteristics of the respondent such as sex; while Part B consists of eight opinion statements designed in a 4-Point Rating Scale showing Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD); and weighted 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively.

The instrument was subjected to content validity. It was given to three experts in business education in the faculty of education in AAU and University of Benin; and their inputs to the draft instrument were incorporated into the final questionnaire. The Cronbach’s Alpha was used in ascertaining the reliability of the instrument and it yielded a coefficient of 0.83. The researchers personally administered the questionnaires to the concerned respondents during their combined 400 level departmental course. The researchers utilized mean, standard deviation and independent t-test in analysing the data. Research question 1 was answered using mean and standard deviation while the t-test was used in testing the hypothesis formulated at 0.05 level of significance. Any mean value of 2.50 and above was considered as agreed while below 2.50 was considered as disagreed. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 was used in the analysis.

**Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion**

This section dealt with the presentation and analysis of data collected and the discussion of findings. The results of the analysis are presented according to the order of the research questions and hypotheses:

**Research Question One**
What are the benefits arising from the utilization of m-learning in the teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State?
Questionnaire items 1 – 8 were designed to address the research question. The summary of responses is as given in Table 1.
Table 1
Mean and Standard Deviation on Benefits of M-learning Utilization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>M-learning makes research works easy to business education students</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M-learning enables business education students to easily revise their course content.</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Field trip exercise is memorable and interesting with M-learning facilities.</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>M-learning promotes individualization of the learning content of business education.</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>M-learning favours students irrespective of their locations.</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>M-learning is a quick way of sharing information among course mates and colleges.</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>M-learning promotes greater technology awareness and utilization among business education students.</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The volume of paper work by business Educators and students are reduced as a result of M-learning.</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant Score > 2.50 Source: Computed from Field Work (2017)

In response to research question one, Table 1 shows that the respondents rated all items as agreed with a mean rating ranging from 2.85 to 3.70 and a standard deviation ranging from .30 to .95. The implication of this therefore is that m-learning utilization has benefits in the teaching of business education in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.

Hypothesis One
There is no significant difference in the perceptions of male and female business education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State.

Table 2
T-test Analysis of Male and Female Business Education Students’ Perception on Benefits of M-learning Utilization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-val</th>
<th>p-val</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25.58</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>-1.015</td>
<td>.285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>26.17</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2016
The result of table 2 shows that the degree of freedom of 98 has a t-value of -1.015 and a p-value of .285. Since the p-value of .285 is greater than the alpha value of .05, the null hypothesis is retained. This means that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of male and female business education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State.

Hypothesis Two
There is no significant difference in the perceptions of Accounting and Secretarial education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State

Table 3
T-test Analysis of accounting education and Secretarial Education students’ Perception on Benefits of M-learning Utilization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t-val</th>
<th>p-val</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Edu</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>26.21</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>1.695</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial Edu</td>
<td>2725.19</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The result of Table 3 shows that the degree of freedom of 98 has a t-value of 1.695 and a p-value of .093. Since the p-value of .093 is greater than the alpha value of .05, the null hypothesis is retained. This means that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of Accounting and Secretarial education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State.

Discussion of findings
The findings from research question one revealed that business education students agreed that m-learning utilization has great benefits in the teaching of business education in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State. The findings of this study also corroborate the findings of Al-Fahad (2009), Cavus and Ibrahim (2009), Clarke, Keing, Lam and McNaught (2008) where the authors concluded that the utilization of m-learning facilitates teaching and learning process. The findings also revealed that m-learning promotes individualization of learning content. This finding also corroborates the findings of Motiwalla (2007). This study has equally revealed that m-learning favours students irrespective of location. This also corroborates the findings of Brown (2005) and Uden (2007) where the authors stressed the ubiquitous nature of m-learning. That is, learning on the move.

The analysis of hypothesis 1 clearly shows that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of male and female business education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State. The finding may be because of the similarity of the demographic variables of the respondents. That is, similar chronological and mental age, and orientation background.

The analysis of hypothesis 2 clearly shows that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of Accounting and Secretarial education students on the benefits of utilizing m-learning in teaching business education in Ambrose Alli University, Edo State. The finding may
be because of the similarity of the demographic variables of the respondents. That is, similar chronological and mental age, and orientation background.

Conclusion

Based on the findings made, it is concluded that there are several benefits derivable from the utilization of m-learning in teaching business education; and they include making research work easy, facilitating the revision of course content, making field trip experience memorable, promoting individualization of learning, facilitating quick information sharing, promoting greater utilization of technology and reducing the volume of paper work. It can also be concluded that business education students in Ambrose Alli University (AAU) do not significantly differ in their perceptions of m-learning utilization.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn in this study, the following recommendations are therefore put forward for the advancement of business education programme:

1. Government should invest more fund in m-learning, especially in the development of mobile apps that will promote learning;
2. Government should subsidize the cost of mobile devices to encourage more access;
3. Business educators/lecturers should encourage the students to research for materials online using mobile devices;
4. Business educators should always give online assignment to their students to encourage the utilization of mobile devices; and
5. Business education students should be encouraging to always take their mobile devices along during field trip to capture memorable events or tasks

References


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