



MOBILE LEARNING DEVICES: VERITABLE TOOL FOR PROMOTING SKILL ACQUISITION AMONG YOUTHS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

Social technology has presented essential devices for youths to learn and progress continually. Fast social technologies like mobile device enhance skills learning which is crucial for self-sustainable growth. It aims at addressing youths' idleness, ineptitude and its related menace confronting the society. Besides, the advent and utilization of mobile devices have bridged the traditional classroom mode of education where youths can easily access effective teaching and learning through mobile devices. Unfortunately, most youths with sophisticated mobile phones/devices are bewailed and besieged with idleness and lack of skills. Hence this paper examined mobile learning devices as veritable tool for skill acquisition among youths in Anambra. The study deployed survey design. A total population of 50 youths constituted the sample of the study. Questionnaire was administered for data collections. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. Result of data analyses revealed that mobile devices are viable learning tools amongst the youth's populace and have exposed the younger people to social communication, pace collaboration, profitable knowledge and skills aptitude, vast educative content and other nasty content. Based on the findings, it was recommended that youths should assiduously explore the efficacy of mobile learning for self-sustainability, research and skill development.

Keywords: Mobile Learning, Skill Acquisition, Youth.

Introduction

The 21st century advancement in social technology has enhanced the way people explore knowledge, skills, information and communication with others through the emergence of mobile technologies. These mobile technologies serve as a rapid means of learning, information and communication, mailing of correspondence amongst others. They are technologies that transformed the world into a global community, where physical traditional classrooms and textbooks may no longer be seen as the major citadel for teaching and learning. Chu, Reynolds, Notari, Taveres and Lee (2017), notes that 21st century is characterized by its rapid technological advancement. Our lifestyles and ways of interacting with people have changed significantly as digital technologies turn ubiquitous in our life.

The invention of mobile learning devices has enhanced knowledge and skill acquisition. Numerous teaching and skills exhibition can be downloaded online and stored up for



consumption thus, making it affordable and accessible to the youths'. Human life has become more closely connected to mobile devices and heavily dependent on multimedia mobile technologies. More tutorial room activities are now mobile or computer-based instruction, and learning has capitalized upon the convenience brought about by the world-wide-web (Chu et al. 2017). According to Nzeneri (2010), our 21st century is characterized by an upsurge of information technology which dictates the pace of development through the use of mobile learning devices. A century where communication and infrastructural facilities such as telephones, fax and computer networking are tools that are turning our world into a global village, where classrooms may no longer play prominent roles as major access to education.

The advent and integration of mobile learning devices in education have played the key role in teaching and learning as well as in social life of the people. Mobile learning devices fosters collaboration in the areas of knowledge and skilled aptitude for entrepreneurship, trade, craft and other vocation processes in line with people needs and aspirations. The accessibility of mobile devices plays a crucial role in learning as it avails better atmosphere to explore skills learning. Through mobile devices, youths have access to the needed knowledge and information at the tip of their fingers and at the comfort of their domain (Kirkpatrick, 2011). However, habitually the use of mobile devices has the tendency of promoting eye weaknesses, exhaustion and some element of indiscipline and these may likely weaken the quest for knowledge, skills and rationality in learning. Netsweeper (2022), notes that learners who spend too much time on social devices are likely to suffer from poor sleep, eye fatigue, depression, anxiety, cyber bullying, vulgar attitudes and amongst others.

Concept of Mobile Learning

According Volodymyr (2024) mobile learning, often termed “m-learning” involves accessing educational content through mobile devices such as smart phones or tablets, capitalizing on their ubiquity and capabilities to facilitate learning anytime and anywhere. Traxler (2005) defines mobile learning as any educational provision where the sole or dominant technologies are handheld or palmtop devices. Mobile learning, in a simplest form, is the utilization of mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets (palmtops, mini laptops, digital notebooks etc.), to access educational contents. According to Brew (2017), the most important element of mobile learning is its focus on mobility of the learner – giving them the ability to choose when and where they want to access learning means that they can go at their own pace, increasing engagement and improving knowledge retention. This is why Alreend (2023) buttress that the content can range from formal courses and tutorials to informal resources like videos, podcasts, and interactive apps. The defining feature of mobile learning is its ability to grant learners (youths) the freedom to learn at their own pace and convenience, unbound by geographical or time restrictions. This approach empowers learners, offering both convenience and innovative engagement with course materials and real-world contexts.

Concept of Youth and Skill Acquisition

Youths are termed the future plinth and frontrunners of every society. African Union Youth Charter (2006), defined youths as young people or persons between the ages of 15 and 35 years. These aged brackets indicate the pre and post puberty stage when people are physically and psychologically energetic and curious about life. Being young is a synonym of change,



progress and future. United Nation (2008) describes those persons between the ages of 15 and 25 as youth without prejudice to other definitions by member states. This can be best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood's independence. That is why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed age-groups. Yet, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment, because youth is often referred to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding their first job. UNESCO World Youth Report (2020) notes that there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 years, accounting for 16 percent of the global population. It reinforced youth creativity, innovation and capacity to make change happen in the world, and firmly believed that young people are crucial actors, leaders, and partners. Being young is, ultimately, facing challenges and creating a space for future full development. It means turning problems into opportunities and solutions and being the driving force of the society (Rojas, 2020).

Meanwhile, skill acquisition is pivotal to youth empowerment. Rahul (2024) describe skill acquisition as acquiring, developing and improving specific skills or abilities through learning and practice. It is the art of aptitude learning to perform a specific task in order to earn a living. It involves acquiring cognitive and physical skills, ranging from essential motor to complex cognitive abilities. It encompasses the steps taken to learn and master a particular skill, starting from the initial stages of learning to the point where the skill becomes automated and can be performed effortlessly. For example, in Nigeria skill learning like apprenticeship is a form of indigenous skill acquisition process which a learner underwent to acquire skills, values and knowledge before starting a business. It is a learning system where someone learns through serving another for a prescribed period of time to acquire knowledge, skill and values through relevant occupational trade or artisanship, and also explore the holistic knowledge in the process (Obiajulu and Chukwuji, 2023). Nneji (2006), further buttress skill acquisition in youth development is so important that National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) (2004) makes it one of intervention strategies targeted at youth development and to enhance urban poverty reduction. Unemployment is accelerating because the youth job seekers possess little, outdated or skill and a youth without a skill is a youth without a future. This is why NEEDS buttressed that poverty can be reduced, wealth can be created and quality of life improved when people are trained to acquire skill relevance for world of work (Nneji, 2006). Notable 21st century profitable skill for youths include: ICT skill, catering skill, art/painting skill, hairstylist skill, detergent/soup making skill, cosmetics makeup skill, literacy skill, foot-wears, fashioning designing, agro-allied skill, communication skill, leadership skill, marketing skill, conflict resolution skill, etc. These skills are paramount in the life of every youth in the contemporary society.

Presently, the world has advanced drastically, and through the introduction of mobiles devices, curious-minded youths now engage themselves in all forms of learning, exchange of critical information, sharing of ideas, photos and clips and other related utilizations, regardless of the distance, making it open for them to easily network by sharing their talents capacity, information, brainstorming of ideas and conduct real-time conversations. Equipping the youth with viable and functional skills is crucial in the 21st century. It is a solution-oriented drive that helps to combat idleness, criminality and menace in our contemporary society. Mobile devices avails, updates and equips youths with modern skills with socioeconomic dynamics of the environment, as well as developing them maximally in the society.

In Nigeria, notable number of youths engaged in artisans/craftsmanship like woodwork/carpentry, metalwork, plumbing, hairstylists, tailoring, farmers (poultry, fish pond, snail, agriculture etc.), catering, interior decoration, art and painting, automobile electricians, phone repairing, bricks designing, tiling, soap production, beads weaving, basket weaving, photographing, shoe production and other forms of vocations/occupations needs an easiest and closest form of accessing, updating or upgrading themselves with new inventive and sustainable knowledge and skills which will invariably minimize loneliness, idleness, inaptitude, poverty, illiteracy, and thus further curb them from reverting to ignorant and anarchy. It is therefore possible that the growth rate at which youth can learn, thinks, interact, computes, assimilates, adapt and adjust can also be determine through their exposure and exploration to mobile devices. As a result of proficient use of mobile devices, most youth have gained additional experience, ideas, skills and knowledge and thus continues to upgrade and update themselves in a literate manner, nevertheless despite these successes, there are youth who operates various sophisticated mobile devices yet bewailed and besieged with ignorance and lack of functional skills; therefore, this paper examines mobile learning as veritable tool for skill acquisition of youth.

Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of this study was to examine:

1. The mobile learning devices for promoting skill acquisition among youths in Anambra.
2. Extent to which mobile learning devices are used for promoting skill acquisition among youths in Anambra.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the mobile learning devices for promoting skill acquisition among youths in Anambra?
2. To what extent does mobile learning devices promote skill acquisition of youths in Anambra?

Methodology

The study utilized survey design method. Survey, according to Mbanefo (2002) involves the use of questionnaire or interview in collecting relevant responses from a population or sample. The population of the study comprised 50 youths in five artisans/crafts centres at Oko and Umunze in Orumba North and South L.G.A of Anambra state. Five youths were randomly and respectively selected from the following centres - "hair/make-up saloon, catering, fashion designing, farming (poultry), bead making, shoe production, metal work (welding), phone repairing, interior designing, photographing, and soap and tissue production. The whole population was used as sample. Questionnaire with four point likert scale weight and 11 structured items was used for data collection and was collected immediately at the spot. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyzed and answer the research questions. Based on this, any response with mean value of 2.50 and above was considered agree, while less than is considered disagree.



Research questions one: What are the mobile learning devices for promoting skill acquisition among youths in Anambra?

Table one: Mean Responses on the Mobile Learning Devices for Promoting Skill Acquisition Among Youths in Anambra

SN	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	T	X	SD	Remarks
1	Tablets	21	14	9	6	50	3.00	5.21	Agree
2	Smart/Android phone	31	11	3	5	50	3.36	5.01	Agree
3	Mini laptop	9	12	11	18	50	2.24	5.00	Disagree
4	Notebooks	11	10	18	10	50	2.48	5.12	Disagree
5	Palmtops	18	7	10	15	50	2.56	5.07	Agree

From table one, item 1, 2 and 5 with mean scores of 3.00, 3.60 and 2.56 were regarded as agree by the respondents, while item 3 and 4 with mean scores 2.16 and 2.32 were disagree. This indicates that Tablets, Smart/Android phones and Palmtops are the mostly mobile devices used amongst youths.

Research questions two: To what extent does mobile learning devices promote skill acquisition among youths in Anambra?

Table two: Mean Responses on the Extent Mobile Learning Devices Promote Skill Acquisition Among Youths in Anambra.

SN	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	T	X	SD	Remark
1.	Mobile learning facilitates skill upgrade and exposed youths to innovative and profitable knowledge and skills.	29	14	2	5	50	3.34	4.72	Agree
2.	Mobile learning bridges the traditional classroom mode of learning and also enhance team communication and collaboration	27	11	5	7	50	3.16	5.06	Agree
3.	Mobile learning as an offspring of social technology occasionally exposes youth to vulgarity, vices and lack of concentration	31	10	4	5	50	3.34	4.79	Agree
4.	Mobile learning serves as an agent of distance learning, self-pace and autonomous form of skill learning	28	9	6	7	50	3.16	5.05	Agree
5	Mobile learning enhance youths creativity, innovation and talent exhibition	32	8	6	4	50	3.36	4.85	Agree
6.	Mobile learning devices accelerate research and development with the help of world-wide-web connectivity.	27	15	2	6	50	3.26	4.80	Agree

From table two above, item 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 with mean scores of 3.04, 3.34, 3.16, 3.34, 3.16, 3.36 and 3.26 were regarded as agree by the respondents. This indicates that Mobile learning keeps youth abreast with educative and productive information; facilitates skill upgrade and exposed youths to innovative and profitable knowledge and skills; bridges the traditional classroom mode of learning and also enhance team communication and collaboration, occasionally exposes youth to vulgarity, vices and lack of concentration in learning; serves as an agent of distance learning, self-pace and autonomous skill learning; deploy instructional based Apps and manual procedures to aid skill acquisition and Use of internet in mobile learning accelerate talent exhibition, research and development.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined mobile learning devices as veritable tool for promoting skill acquisition among youths in Anambra. Table one: The result in item one, two and five indicates that tablets, smart/android phones and palmtops are the prominent mobile learning devices used amongst youths. This result affirms the finding of Volodymyr (2024) that mobile learning, often termed “m-learning” involves accessing educational content through mobile devices such as smart phones or tablets, capitalizing on their ubiquity and capabilities to facilitate learning anytime and anywhere. This result strengthen the finding of Traxler (2005), mobile learning as any educational provision where the sole or dominant technologies are handheld or palmtop devices.

Table two: The result in item six indicates that mobile learning facilitates skill upgrade and exposed youths to innovative and profitable knowledge and skills. This result is similar to the findings of Alreend (2023) with defining feature of mobile learning is its ability to grant learners (youth) the freedom to learn at their own pace and convenience, unbound by geographical or time restrictions. This approach empowers learners, offering both convenience and innovative engagement with course materials and real-world contexts. Additionally, the result is related to the findings of Chu et al (2017) that 21st century is characterized by its rapid technological advancement. Our lifestyles and ways of interacting with people have changed significantly as digital technologies turn ubiquitous in our life

The result in item seven indicates that mobile learning bridged the traditional classroom mode of learning and also enhances team communication and collaboration. This result agrees with the findings of Nzeneri (2010) that in 21st century where communication and infrastructural facilities such as telephones, fax and computer networking are tools that are turning our world into a global village, where classrooms may no longer play promotion roles as major access to education. The result in item eight indicates that mobile learning as an offspring of social technology occasionally exposes youth to vulgarity, vices and lack of concentration in learning. This result is similar to the findings of Netsweeper (2022) that learners who spend too much on social devices are likely to suffer from poor sleep, eye fatigue, depression, anxiety, cyber bullying, vulgar attitudes and amongst others. The results in item nine indicates that mobile learning serves as an agent of distance learning, self-pace and autonomous form of skill learning. This result reinforces the finding of Brew (2017), that the most important element of mobile learning is centered on mobility of the learner – giving them the ability to choose when and where they want to access learning means that they can go at their own pace, increasing engagement and improving knowledge retention. This finding strengthens the views of



Kirkpatrick (2011), that accessibility of mobile devices plays a crucial role in learning, mobile devices is another better way to explore skill learning. Through mobile learning, youths have access to the needed knowledge and information at the comfort of their domain.

The result in item ten shows that mobile learning enhance youth's creativity, innovation and talent exhibition. This result affirms UNESCO world youth report (2020) which reinforced youth creativity, innovation and capacity to make change happen in the world, and firmly believed that young people are crucial actors, leaders, and partners. The result in item number eleven shows mobile learning accelerate research and development with the help of world-wide-web connectivity. This result is similar to the findings of Chu et al. (2017) which states that invention of social technologies has enhanced knowledge and skill acquisition. Human life has become more closely connected to mobile devices and heavily dependent on multimedia social technology. More tutorial room activities are now computer-based instruction, and learning has capitalized upon the convenience brought about by the world-wide-web.

Conclusion

Mobile learning devices has become crucial bedrock of gaining skills and ideas especially amongst the younger people. It has positively influenced the traditional classroom teaching and successfully revolved into a global hub of teaching and learning. The use of mobile learning promotes research, ideas and skill hunt has increased drastically. However, most mobile phone device users are ignorant of the fact that mobile learning is the 21st century stronghold for teaching, learning, exhibition and research thereby enhancing and revamping ideas, knowledge and skills evolution amongst youths in Anambra community.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Mobile learning enhance youth's creativity, innovation and talent exhibition, therefore youths should assiduously explore the efficacy of mobile learning for self-sustainability.
- Mobile learning devices facilitates skill upgrade and exposed youths to innovative and profitable knowledge and skills, therefore awareness campaign on the decisive utilization of mobile device for learning should be instituted nationwide as part of 21st century mass literacy activities, to enlighten both youths and adults citizenry on the potential impact of engaging themselves in learning through mobile devices.
- Mobile learning accelerate research and development with the help of world-wide-web connectivity, therefore municipal/education authorities should ensure accessible and affordable mobile e-learning enablement to facilitate knowledge, skill acquisition collaboration and self-pace learning. This will enable youths explore relevant e-learning apps for global collaboration on skill erudition, exploration, research and development.



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