

MOBILE LEARNING FOR CAPACITY BUILDING OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

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ABSTRACT

The capacity building and development institutes are increasingly using mobile technology to train Rural Development Professionals. The paper is based on the study undertaken to elicit the educators and rural development professionals' opinions on Mobile for learning and distance education. The research involved semi-structured questionnaire. The sample consists of two groups: 20 Educators and 100 Rural Development Professionals. This study indicates that Mobile learning could be the right communication vehicle and learning source. In conclusion, this contribution identifies future research avenues relating to the use of mobile learning among capacity building institutes.

Keywords Distance Education, Smartphone, Video Calling, Virtual Classes

INTRODUCTION

Mobiles are valuable apparatuses for helping individuals in handling their daily life with ease. Advanced mobile devices such as smartphones are popular among all age groups as they are used to access the internet and social media. It means that the users can load files, educational material, music, videos, and pictures onto their smartphones and can benefit from it while on the move. Thus, the fame of these gadgets is a result of their capacity to work at various levels in view of the headway of portable innovation. Mobile learning is defined as the type of learning that can be achieved through minicomputers. These include smart phone, iPads, and others that are all viewed as e-learning modes.(Zhang 2015a, b).

The issue of mobile learning has been widely explored/investigated in Mobile learning, which alludes to portable organization innovation, basically by means of the Internet, to convey data and directions to people.

Mobile Learning facilitates teachers to conduct classes over the smartphone with the Internet. The technologies also allow people to interact with learners and communicate between a trainer and a learner. Mobile learning may be interactive, which includes more contact, correspondence, and cooperation with individuals (Vavoula 2005), and it provides the features listed below:

- a) Virtual Classes
- b) Audio/Video Conferencing
- c) Chat by Social media applications
- d) Shared learning

As per oneself coordinated learning hypothesis, learning projects ought to be intended to underline self-guided figuring out how to help Rural Development Professionals sort out the working environment and their work encounters (Merriam 2001). There is no certainty that M-learning's objective in the work environment is to upgrade singular execution (Rosenberg 2006).

Understanding portable learning influences the association of homeroom education. Educators ought to refine their present pedagogy techniques and if understudies wish to utilize this strategy for learning, Rural Development Professionals ought to be appropriately ready for an innovation driven climate. (Chen 2016).

According to Ahmad, 2020, his findings revealed that Rural Development Professionals have a generally positive attitude about using mobile phones as a learning tool and incorporating smart phones into learning activities. Rural Development Professionals stayed enthusiastic about its potential as a social networking and collaboration tool.



Objectives

The key objectives of this study are:

- To find out the opinion of the Faculty, Rural Development Professionals on mobile learning for distance learning program.
- To establish the curriculum in the Interactive Video Lesson through a smartphone
- To find out better Mobile Learning systems / Technology for Rural Development Professionals.
- It is hypothetical that interactive mobile learning by smartphone will:
- Support in simplifying the learning process
- Help the learners to understand better the acts, government schemes, success stories, and technological tools that can be used for a variety of versatile and personalized learning activities.

METHODOLOGY

A list of rural development professionals from Alumni of Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development Management (PGDRDM) of the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD&PR), Hyderabad, was collected. A well-structured interview questionnaire was constructed. Questionnaires with covering letters were sent to faculty and learners through email, requesting them to fill them up and send them back via email. Apart from this, the researcher also collected data from State Institute of Rural Development, Ranchi. The study has used the random sampling technique. The sample consists of two groups- 20 faculty members of Rural University and NIRD&PR Hyderabad and 100 rural development professionals. Only those respondents who had prior exposure to e learning or distance learning were selected for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table1 shows that for 50 percent of the faculty and 25 percent of the student's video calling and video chat are the useful tools for mobile learning. 35percent of the faculty opined that Text message is a useful tool for sharing information and 40 percent of the rural development professionals said that chatting through WhatsApp is used as a counseling tool for distance learner.

Table 1: Feedback of Faculty and Rural Development Professionals Regarding Different Forms of Mobile-Learning Adopted in Distance Learning

Respondents	Email	Text message	Counseling	Video
	(%)	(%)	Chats (WhatsApp)	Calling
			(%)	(%)
Faculty (20)	2 (10%)	7 (35%)	1 (5%)	10 (50%)
Rural Development	15 (15%)	20 (20%)	40 (40%)	25 (25%)
Professionals (100)				
Total	17	27	41	30

It can be observed from Table 2 that for 80 percent of Rural Development Professionals and 75 percent of faculty mobile learning is a useful tool for interactive learning. It shows that RuralDevelopment Professionals and faculty were positive toward mobile learning, which is a good sign in distance education. The outcomes are likewise reliable with the results of studies by Uddin M (2012)

Respondents	Very useful	Useful	Least useful	Not at all Useful
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Faculty (20)	15 (75%)	-	5 (25)	-
Rural	80 (80%)	10 (10%)	5 (5%)	5 (5%)
Development				
Professionals(100)			
Total	95	10	10	5

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Communication venice					
Respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	
Faculty	15 (75%)	-	5 (25)	-	
RuralDevelopment	80 (80%)	10 (10%)	5 (5%)	5 (5%)	
Professionals					
Total	95	10	10	5	

Table 3: Response of Faculty and Rural Development Professionals Regarding Mobile-learning as a Good Communication Vehicle

As per Table 3, it is known that mobile learning feature is to make effective communication. As high as 75 percent of faculty and 80 percent of Rural Development Professionals strongly agreed that mobile learning is an effective and efficient communication tool. This finding is likewise in accordance with the discoveries of Gan and Balakrishnan (2014) who found that utilizing versatile innovation in the homeroom could improve instructor understudy commitment, and that elements like convenience, self-adequacy, and satisfaction assume a major part in portable learning acknowledgment.

Table 4: M-Learning Provides Immediate Instruction and Student Feedback.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
15 (75%)	5 (25%)	-	-
80 (80%)	10 (10%)	10 (10%)	-
95	15	10	-
	Strongly Agree (%) 15 (75%) 80 (80%) 95	Strongly Agree Agree (%) (%) 15 (75%) 5 (25%) 80 (80%) 10 (10%) 95 15	Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure (%) (%) (%) 15 (75%) 5 (25%) - 80 (80%) 10 (10%) 10 (10%) 95 15 10

According to Table 4, 75 percent of faculty and 80 percent of Rural Development Professionals strongly agreed that mobile learning tool was to providing immediate feedback from faculty and Rural Development Professionals. It is a good sign for the institution that are planning to use mobile learning for distance learner. However, 10 percent Rural Development Professionals were not sure of it.

Table 5: Mobile Learning Process Increases Understanding of the Subject.

Respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Faculty	-	15 (75%)	5 (25%)	-
Rural Development	15(15%)	75(75%)	10(10%)	-
Professionals				
Total	15	90	15	-

With reference to understanding of the subject through mobile learning, 75 percent of faculty and 15 percent, Rural Development Professionals agreed that mobile learning upholds in understanding the subject well (Table 5). The rates of respondents who differ were irrelevant. The outcomes are additionally predictable with the after effects of studies by Uddin (2017), Brown (2018), Bas and Sarigöz (2018), Bere and Rambe (2019).

Table 6: Does M-Learning Replicate the Physical Classroom Model?

Respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	
Faculty	-	2 (10%)		18 (90%)	
Rural	-	20 (20%)	20 (20%)	60 (60%)	
Development					
Professionals					
Total	-	22	20	78	

Table 6 shows that, as high as, 90 percent of the faculty and 60 percent of the Rural Development Professionals disagreed that mobile learning replicates the physical classroom mode. 20 percent Rural Development Professionals couldn't recognize the reality about the replication of actual homeroom model so they didn't know. While mobile learning can never totally supplant conventional learning, but when utilized accurately, it can improve the benefit of existing learning styles. (Liaw et al., 2010).



CONCLUSION

Mobile learning integration in educational systems has become one of the most important tools in the learning and teaching process today. Since the start of the epidemic, there has been a substantial growth in the use of mobile learning applications in learning and education. From the above results, we can assume that the available technological development will contribute to the improvement of mobile learning systems for distance education for rural development professionals. This research proves that mobile learning could be the right communication vehicle. Academic and training institutions looking for advanced technologies in their current learning platforms can consider mobile learning as one of the right alternatives.

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