

Chapter 67

Mobile Learning Experience: Resources and Review

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ABSTRACT

As the world is moving towards experience economy, consumers are paying more and more attention to memorable and fun experience beyond a product or service. Learners are the same, especially when learning goes mobile. Mobile learning has been examined in different areas ranging from forms and formats to features and functions. Mobile experience in learning, however, has not yet fully examined. After identifying mechanisms to measure and evaluate mobile learning experience, this chapter reviewed what mobile learning resources could be leveraged to enhance mobile learning experience, followed by recommendations for further studies.

INTRODUCTION

Mobile learning (m-learning) started as electronic learning (e-learning). Before smartphones and tablets, computers and the Internet allowed information to be shared and learning to take place, but typically one had to be stationed at a computer. Now smartphones and tablets enable learning to take place virtually anywhere. If information is stored, some resources can even be accessed without an Internet connection. This is often referred to as ubiquitous learning (u-learning) as it can take place anytime and anywhere. Mobile learning is often viewed as informal while e-learning can be considered more formal. Furthermore, e-learning is sometimes considered to be used for more in-depth topics, whereas, m-learning can be more for brief lessons. Learning management systems were typically websites that allowed access to course content for e-learning. Many of these systems now have apps that can be used to access course content for m-learning. The two classifications are often generalized as online learning and used interchangeably without considering the difference. To complicate things further, the notation of the word e-learning is debated as eLearning, E-Learning, and e-Learning are all variations of the word depending on the resource. There has been a considerable amount of research on online learning,

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electronic learning, and mobile learning, but in the quickly changing market, it is difficult to measure and evaluate success. This is complicated further by the reason for learning taking place. Learning can be intended for K12 education, higher education, individual purposes, or employment.

Interconnecting the different practices is a common thread, that is, mobile learning experience, which can be broadly defined in this chapter as a memorable, beneficial, and enjoyable interaction between learners and learning content or services. After a brief but critical review of earlier studies on mobile learning, this chapter provides resources that can be leveraged to enhance mobile learning experience. Furthermore, this chapter also offers recommendations on how mobile learning experience can be further enhanced by drawing up on the findings of earlier studies on mobile learning experience.

RESOURCES FOR ENHANCING MOBILE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Mobile learning continues to grow and more options are available making it difficult to evaluate and make recommendations. Recommendations from one study can completely change with new technology; thus it is important to look at mobile learning as a whole and take general recommendations from research that can be applied to multiple resources.

Traxler (2007) establishes categories of mobile learning as technology-driven, miniature portable, eLearning, connected classroom learning, informal personalized, situated, mobile learning, mobile training/performance support, and remote/rural/development mobile learning. Furthermore, he explains the challenge of evaluating mobile education is that it is difficult to classify “good” characteristics of mobile learning. Traxler (2007) provides possible attributes that would make a good evaluation as rigorous, efficient, ethical, proportionate, appropriate, consistent, authentic, and aligned, but states there are problems with the epistemology, ethics, and gathering and analyzing data for mobile learning evaluations.

A critical review of the challenges in eLearning in developing countries found 30 challenges that were broken down into four categories: (a) courses, (b) individuals, (c) context, and (d) technology (Andersson & Gronlund, 2009). Although all of these challenges were also faced in developed countries, the challenge of technology was more common in developing countries. As a result of their research, Andersson and Gronlund recommend creating a conceptual framework that could be used as a guide for eLearning issues faced in both developed and developing countries. Bhuasiri, Xaymoungkhoun, Zo, Rho, and Ciganek (2012) identified factors that influence eLearning success in developing countries. Curriculum design, technical knowledge, motivation, and learner behavior were found to be necessary for successfully implementing eLearning.

eLearning allows instruction to reach more trainees at a fraction of the price. According to the 2015 Brandon Hall Group Study, the five main reasons for switching Learning Management Systems are to improve user experience, improve administrative experience, enhanced reporting, integration of systems, and need for mobile capabilities. They recommended the five most important priorities of learning technology as social and collaboration tools, mobile delivery, data analysis, virtual classrooms, and content management (eLearning Market Trends and Forecast, 2016).

Recommendations for mobile learning are difficult without knowing the reason for the learning and learning goal. To better determine which recommendations to follow, it is essential to consider what the mobile learning is being used for and how it is being used. The following section provides an overview of a variety of resources for mobile learning organized by authoring software, K12, Learning Management Systems, Employee Training, Online Courses, and additional resources.

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