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Adoption and Impact of Mobile Learning in Malaysian Higher Education

Jessica Ong Hai Liaw[1*], Nora Ibrahim[2] , Rachchamawati Novaria[3]
Inderjit Singh[4], Amnah Saayah Ismail[5]
[1]jessica@upnm.edu.my, National Defence University of Malaysia
[2]nora_am91@yahoo.com, University Poly-Tech Malaysia
[3] nova@untag-sby-ac.id, Universitas Augustus 1945, Indonesia
[4]inderjit@upnm.edu.my, National Defence University of Malaysia
[5]amnah@upnm.edu.my, National Defence University of Malaysia

Abstract
Mobile learning has become an integral component of higher education in Malaysia, driven by advancements in technology and increased accessibility to digital resources. The objective of this study is to examine the implementation of mobile learning across different educational levels in Malaysia. This study employs a qualitative research approach, analyzing secondary sources such as previous research studies, journal articles, and reports, factors influencing mobile learning adoption. The findings highlight the significant role of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in understanding students' behavioural intentions toward mobile learning. These models provide valuable insights into the key determinants affecting mobile learning adoption, such as perceived usefulness, ease of use, and facilitating conditions. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of mobile learning implementation in Malaysia and offers recommendations for enhancing its effectiveness in higher education.

Keywords: Adoption and Impact; Mobile Learning; Malaysian Higher Education

Introduction

The widespread adoption of mobile devices among youth has transformed communication, social interaction, and learning processes. The rapid advancement in mobile technology has resulted in increased affordability, making these devices more accessible to a larger population. As a result, young individuals have become highly dependent on mobile devices for various activities, including education, entertainment, and networking. This dependence is further reinforced by the convenience and efficiency mobile applications provide, enabling instant access to information and communication channels.

Moreover, the integration of mobile applications across various industries has created an ecosystem where mobile devices influence and are influenced by these technological advancements. In the education sector, mobile applications facilitate interactive learning experiences, enhancing student engagement and knowledge retention. Similarly, in business and finance, mobile applications have revolutionized digital transactions and remote work, reflecting the growing reliance on mobile connectivity. This interconnectedness demonstrates how industries are adapting to technological changes, leveraging mobile applications to enhance efficiency and service delivery.

Furthermore, the cultural and social impact of mobile devices on youth is profound, reshaping how they interact with the world. Social media platforms, messaging applications, and digital entertainment have become integral parts of youth culture, influencing their communication patterns

and lifestyle choices. The ease of connectivity has also led to concerns regarding digital addiction, privacy, and cyber risks, prompting discussions on responsible mobile usage. Despite these challenges, the continued evolution of mobile technology suggests that mobile devices will remain an essential tool for youth, shaping their experiences and interactions in an increasingly digitalized world. The objective of this study is to examine the implementation of mobile learning across different educational levels in Malaysia.

Theoretical Framework

Mobile learning (m-learning) has emerged as a transformative force in education, particularly in the field of communication studies. The integration of mobile technologies, such as smartphones, tablets, and digital applications, has redefined traditional learning environments by enhancing accessibility, engagement, and interactivity. This literature review explores the impact of mobile learning on communication education, focusing on student engagement, pedagogical approaches, and the effectiveness of mobile learning in skill development.

The foundation of mobile learning is rooted in constructivist and connectivist theories, which emphasize active learning, social interaction, and digital connectivity. Social constructivism suggests that learning occurs through interaction, a principle that mobile learning enhances by enabling real-time communication and collaboration. Connectivism theory further supports mobile learning by highlighting the role of technology in facilitating knowledge networks and continuous learning.

Studies have shown that mobile learning increases student engagement by providing flexible and interactive learning environments. Mobile applications, discussion forums, and multimedia content allow students to participate actively in learning, enhancing their communication skills. Moreover, mobile learning supports asynchronous and synchronous communication, improving collaboration and peer-to-peer learning.

Mobile learning enables personalized learning experiences, allowing students to progress at their own pace. Adaptive learning platforms analyze students' learning patterns and provide customized content, improving comprehension and retention. In communication education, mobile tools such as speech analysis apps and interactive simulations help students refine their verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

One of the significant advantages of mobile learning is its ability to bridge the digital divide by making education accessible to a broader audience. Mobile devices enable students from diverse backgrounds to access educational materials without the constraints of time and location. This accessibility is particularly beneficial in communication education, where exposure to diverse perspectives and global interactions enrich the learning experience.

Despite its advantages, mobile learning faces challenges, including digital literacy gaps, connectivity issues, and the potential for distractions. Studies indicate that students may struggle with self-discipline and time management when learning via mobile devices. Additionally, educators must ensure that mobile learning resources are inclusive, accessible, and aligned with curriculum objectives.

Figure 1 visually portrays the relationship between mobile learning, e-learning, distance learning, and flexible learning. Mobile learning is often considered a subset of e-learning, characterized using portable devices and wireless technologies. E-learning encompasses a broader spectrum of digital learning approaches, including web-based platforms and virtual classrooms. Distance learning, on the other hand, refers to educational programs that allow students to learn remotely without the need for physical presence in a classroom. Flexible learning integrates these concepts by promoting a learner-centered approach that provides students with control over the pace, time, and mode of learning. By visualizing these relationships, Figure 1 illustrates mobile learning enhances the overall digital education landscape by offering real-time access, personalized learning experiences, and interactive communication tools.

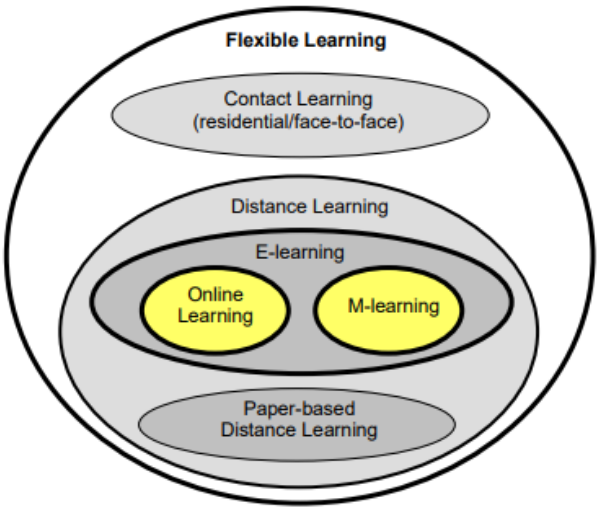

Figure 1: Flexible learnings

Accessibility of learning materials

Enhanced accessibility to instructional materials has been linked to improved learning experiences in higher education. Accessible and inclusive instructional materials support student-centered learning, thereby enhancing overall educational outcomes. By integrating universal design principles, educators can create content that accommodates diverse learners, including those with disabilities. This ensures that students, regardless of their physical or cognitive limitations, have equal opportunities to engage with academic content effectively.

Furthermore, the integration of Open Educational Resources (OER) has significantly contributed to improving accessibility in higher education. Found that OER, when designed with accessibility features such as screen reader compatibility and alternative text for images, can bridge educational gaps for students with disabilities. However, the study also highlighted that many existing OER lack these essential accessibility features, limiting their effectiveness. To address this issue, institutions must adopt inclusive design practices when developing digital learning materials.

Online learning platforms have also played a crucial role in improving accessibility, yet challenges remain. Many online courses still contain inaccessible content, such as videos without captions or documents that are not compatible with assistive technologies. Their research emphasizes the need for customizable learning environments that allow students to modify font sizes, contrast settings, and navigation methods based on their individual needs. Such accommodations ensure that students with visual, auditory, or mobility impairments can fully participate in online learning experiences.

In the context of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), accessibility issues persist despite the increasing popularity of these platforms. Revealed that most MOOCs do not adhere to accessibility guidelines, making it difficult for learners with disabilities to navigate course materials effectively. The study underscores the importance of institutional policies that mandate accessibility compliance in online learning platforms. By implementing these guidelines, universities and educational providers can foster an inclusive digital learning environment.

The need for accessible instructional materials extends beyond students with disabilities, benefiting all learners. Indicates that when learning materials are designed with accessibility in mind, they enhance engagement and retention for a broader audience, including non-native speakers and students from diverse backgrounds. Implementing inclusive design principles not only improves learning experiences but also aligns with global educational policies advocating for equal access to education. Therefore, institutions must prioritize accessibility in instructional material development to create equitable learning opportunities for all students.Use of mobile devices in education

The integration of mobile devices into educational practices has shown mixed results regarding communication effectiveness. While some studies emphasize the benefits of mobile technology in facilitating innovative teaching methods, others raise concerns about potential distractions. Found that teachers' acceptance of mobile technology is influenced by factors such as effort expectancy and habit,

suggesting that internal motivation drives the integration of mobile devices into teaching. Conversely, reports indicate that excessive screen time may lead to distractions, prompting some schools to reconsider the extent of mobile device usage in classrooms.

M-learning must be systematically structured to ensure effective learning outcomes. It incorporates applied learning activities and considers the duration of learning sessions. Teachers play a crucial role in planning lessons, selecting appropriate mobile devices, and ensuring that content aligns with educational objectives. According to Ozdamli and Cavus (2011), m-learning consists of several key components, including students, teachers, content, environment, and assessment, each of which contributes to a comprehensive learning experience.

Students in an m-learning environment take an active role by setting learning goals, accessing information, collaborating with peers, and conducting self-assessments (Ozdamli and Cavus 2011). Teachers, on the other hand, act as facilitators by guiding students, utilizing technology for information storage, and adapting different teaching strategies to overcome learning challenges. They are responsible for motivating students and organizing interactive activities to enhance engagement. Additionally, teachers must be skilled in using mobile learning tools to effectively support student learning.

M-learning content must be engaging and accessible, incorporating multimedia elements such as videos, quizzes, and interactive games (Ozdamli and Cavus 2011). Stakeholder collaboration, including input from students, teachers, and parents, ensures that the content is relevant and effective. The learning environment should be well-structured to support seamless interaction between students and instructors. Platforms like social media, wikis, and blogs can enhance collaboration and communication, making learning more interactive and engaging.

A well-designed m-learning environment must provide students with access to essential resources, including learning outcomes, assignments, and supplementary materials (Ozdamli and Cavus 2011). Mobile devices such as smartphones and laptops facilitate this process, ensuring students can learn anytime and anywhere. Additionally, fostering interaction among students and between students and teachers is crucial for a positive learning experience. This can be achieved through discussion boards, chat rooms, and online collaborations.

Assessment is a fundamental aspect of m-learning, as it enables tracking and evaluating student progress. Mobile technology allows for various forms of assessment, including online exams, quizzes, project evaluations, and discussion forums. Effective assessments should be tailored to students' abilities, offering diagnostic and formative evaluations to enhance learning outcomes. Providing timely feedback is essential to help students identify areas for improvement while maintaining their motivation and confidence in the learning process.

Mobile applications for communication studies

The integration of mobile applications into communication studies has significantly enhanced educational methodologies, offering interactive and flexible learning platforms. Discussed the use of mobile applications and statistical analysis in enhancing the educational system's effectiveness, indicating that such applications can serve as interactive platforms for learning. Their study emphasized that mobile applications provide an engaging learning environment by incorporating multimedia elements, real-time communication, and interactive assessments. Such tools facilitate personalized learning experiences, allowing students to access information at their own pace while improving comprehension and retention.

M-learning incorporates several fundamental features that enhance its effectiveness. It must be strategically planned, implemented, and evaluated to maximize its impact on students. M-learning encompasses seven key features: mobility and spontaneity, mobile devices, blended learning, personalization, interactivity, collaboration, and instant information access (Abduljawad and Ahmad 2023).

Mobility and spontaneity are core aspects of m-learning, allowing for immediate and flexible learning experiences. Wireless technologies, such as laptops and smartphones, facilitate rapid and adaptive education beyond traditional settings (Viberg, Andersson, and Wiklund 2021).

Mobile devices support the portability and convenience of m-learning. They are easy to operate and store, offering multiple functions despite their small size. This accessibility allows students and teachers to engage in learning seamlessly (Abduljawad and Ahmad 2023).

Blended learning in m-learning enables cross-curricular integration, incorporating elements from various subjects such as science, entrepreneurship, and moral education (Abd Samad, Hj Ihsan, and Khalid 2024; Abduljawad and Ahmad 2023). Teachers can also leverage mobile devices for assignments, projects, and co-curricular activities (Delplancq et al. 2024).

Personalization in m-learning ensures that each student has individual access to mobile devices for downloading and uploading materials, as well as interacting with teachers in both online and face-to-face settings (Abd Samad et al. 2024; Abduljawad and Ahmad 2023).

Interactivity is essential in m-learning, requiring a well-equipped technological environment to foster active participation. Schools with adequate mobile technology infrastructure enable an engaging and dynamic learning culture. Teachers play a crucial role in fostering interactive learning experiences by utilizing technology effectively (Abd Samad et al. 2024; Abduljawad and Ahmad 2023).

Collaboration is a key component of m-learning, facilitating teacher-student and peer-to-peer interactions. It promotes cooperative learning, enabling students to remain engaged and competitive while making the learning process more meaningful (Astuti et al. 2022; Laila and Asrizal 2021).

Instant information access allows both students and teachers to retrieve information quickly with just one click. High-speed communication technologies, such as optical fibers, enhance the efficiency of information retrieval. Reflective and engaging learning materials provided by innovative teachers ensure that students remain motivated and avoid monotonous learning experiences (Nordin and Norman 2018). These features collectively make m-learning a dynamic and effective educational approach that enhances student engagement, flexibility, and accessibility.

Mobile applications have also been pivotal in augmenting communication among specific demographics. Mobile apps designed for communication studies enable students to engage in collaborative learning and virtual discussions, which foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Additionally, these applications help bridge generational gaps by enabling seamless communication between students and educators. Further supports this claim, highlighting that mobile applications improve communication skills by offering features such as speech recognition, interactive simulations, and AI-driven language feedback.

In the realm of journalism, mobile applications have transformed traditional practices by facilitating real-time news production and distribution. Revealed that journalism students who used mobile applications for reporting and content creation demonstrated higher efficiency and adaptability in digital news environments. These applications allow journalists to gather, edit, and disseminate news instantly, thereby increasing audience engagement and participation in mobile news consumption. Furthermore, social media-integrated mobile applications provide aspiring journalists with platforms to practice citizen journalism, engage with audiences, and analyze media trends in real-time.

Moreover, the proliferation of smartphones has opened new avenues for mobile communication research. Revealed a significant shift towards investigating mobile applications in communication studies, reflecting their growing importance in digital education. The study found that mobile applications are increasingly being incorporated into academic curricula to enhance student engagement and facilitate blended learning models. Additionally, mobile-based learning strategies were found to improve student motivation, particularly in communication-related fields where interaction and responsiveness are essential.

Emphasized the need for effective design principles to enhance user experience. Their study found that well-designed mobile applications significantly improve user satisfaction and engagement by incorporating intuitive interfaces, adaptive learning systems, and accessibility features. The study also highlighted that mobile applications designed with user-friendly interfaces tend to have a greater impact on students' learning outcomes, as they encourage active participation and reduce cognitive overload. Consequently, the continued advancement of mobile applications in communication studies is crucial for ensuring effective and inclusive learning experiences.

Mobile learning, a subset of e-learning, leverages mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets to facilitate knowledge acquisition and skill development. Unlike traditional e-learning methods, mobile learning stands out due to the portability and ubiquity of these devices, allowing learners to engage with educational content anytime and anywhere. This flexibility eliminates the constraints of time and space, making learning more accessible and adaptable to individual needs. The ability to learn outside the physical classroom environment enhances self-directed learning, promoting greater engagement and motivation among students.

Research on mobile learning has gained significant traction, with studies primarily focusing on adoption and the factors facilitating its implementation. Conducted a systematic literature review, highlighting an increasing interest in mobile learning research. However, they noted that many studies tend to focus on adoption rather than its long-term impact on learning outcomes. Have expanded this research by exploring various dimensions of mobile learning, including user acceptance, technological advancements, and pedagogical implications. These studies contribute to a growing body of literature that underscores the importance of mobile learning in modern education.

One of the elements of mobile learning is its integration with social networking sites (SNS), which serve as effective platforms for academic engagement. Platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp are widely used by educators to make announcements, facilitate online discussions, and share educational resources. The interactive nature of these platforms enhances collaboration among students and instructors, creating a dynamic learning environment. By incorporating SNS into mobile learning strategies, educators can foster communication, peer learning, and knowledge sharing, ultimately improving the overall learning experience.

In the Malaysian context, studies have examined the role of mobile learning and social media in tertiary education. Moorthy et al. (2019) Explored students' intentions to use social media for academic purposes, finding that these platforms significantly enhance learning engagement and accessibility. The increasing adoption of mobile learning in Malaysia reflects a shift toward digital education, where students rely on technology to supplement their learning experiences. The integration of mobile learning into higher education institutions aligns with global trends, reinforcing the need for universities to embrace digital transformation in education.

Despite the benefits, challenges remain in fully implementing mobile learning in educational settings. Issues such as digital literacy, internet connectivity, and device affordability may hinder its widespread adoption, particularly in developing regions. Additionally, concerns related to data privacy, screen time, and information overload must be addressed to ensure a balanced and effective learning experience. Future research should focus on evaluating the long-term impact of mobile learning on academic performance and exploring strategies to enhance its effectiveness. By addressing these challenges, mobile learning can continue to evolve as a vital tool in shaping the future of education.

Material and Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, utilizing data from secondary sources, including previous research studies journal articles, on mobile learning in Malaysian higher education. The collected data is systematically analyzed to identify recurring themes, patterns, and key factors influencing mobile learning adoption. By reviewing past literature, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of mobile learning trends, challenges, and best practices.

Result and Discussion

Mobile learning adoption in Malaysian higher education has been explored through various studies, highlighting factors such as self-efficacy, behavioral intention, and social influence. Mahat et al. (2012) found that trainee teachers at Universiti Putra Malaysia exhibited moderate mobile self-efficacy, with personal innovativeness playing a crucial role in their readiness for mobile learning. Other studies using technology acceptance models, such as the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), indicate that students' perception of usefulness and ease of use significantly impact their willingness to engage in mobile learning.

Several studies emphasize the role of motivation and habitual behavior in mobile learning. Moorthy et al. (2019) identified habit and hedonic motivation as the strongest predictors of mobile learning behavior among accounting students. Similarly, Raman and Thannimalai (2021) examined e-learning adoption during the COVID-19 pandemic, showing that facilitating conditions and behavioral intentions were critical factors. In contrast, Fook et al. (2021) noted that while smartphones were widely used for academic purposes among postgraduate students at Universiti Teknologi MARA, excessive usage posed a risk of distraction, highlighting the need for balanced and structured mobile learning environments.

The integration of social media in mobile learning has been a notable trend. Lee, Chern, and Azmir (2023) explored WhatsApp usage among university students and found that it significantly

contributed to academic performance and team effectiveness. Additionally, Al-Rahmi et al. (2022) examined the use of social media through the UTAUT and Task-Technology Fit (TTF) models, demonstrating that social media platforms enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Furthermore, Al-Rahmi et al. (2021) investigated knowledge-sharing behaviors in mobile learning and found that peer interactions and collaboration positively influenced acceptance and effectiveness in higher education.

The findings suggest that mobile learning in Malaysian higher education is shaped by factors such as perceived usefulness, ease of use, motivation, and social influence. While mobile learning offers flexibility and engagement, challenges such as digital distractions and infrastructure limitations need to be addressed. Institutions must implement structured policies, enhance digital literacy, and integrate interactive learning tools to optimize the benefits of mobile learning. By addressing these challenges, higher education institutions in Malaysia can fully leverage mobile learning to improve academic success and student engagement.

Table 1: Mobile learning in Malaysia higher Education level

No.	Authors	Model	Education Level	Respondents
1	Mahat et al. (2012)	-	Higher Education	137 student Faculty of Educational Studies, University Putra Malaysia
2	Zainol et al. (2017)	UTAUT model	Higher Education	150 students in higher education
3	Moorthy et al. (2019)	UTAUT2 Model	Higher Education	358 Accounting students at public universities in Malaysia.
4	Al-Rahmi et al. (2021)	Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	Higher Education	200 students from UTHM
5	Raman and Thannimalai (2021)	UTAUT2 Model	Higher Education	159 university students in Malaysia.
6	Al-Rahmi, Al-Rahmi, et al. (2022)	Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	Higher Education	176 university students in Malaysia.
7	Lee et al. (2023)		Higher Education	12 students' university Sunway City, Malaysia
8	Al-Emran, Mezhuyev, and Kamaludin (2021)	Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	Higher Education	735 IT undergraduate students Malaysia and Oman
9	Fook et al. (2021)	-	Higher Education	55 postgraduate students at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi MARA,
10	Al-Rahmi et al. (2022)	UTAUT and TTF	Higher Education	383 students Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia,

Conclusions

The acceptance of mobile learning in Malaysia has significantly transformed the education landscape, offering students and educators greater accessibility, flexibility, and engagement in learning. The increasing adoption of mobile devices, combined with advancements in digital infrastructure, has facilitated a more inclusive and interactive learning experience. However, while mobile learning presents numerous benefits, challenges such as digital literacy gaps, internet accessibility, and device affordability must be addressed to ensure equitable access for all students. Effective policies, institutional support, and continuous technological advancements will be crucial in maximizing the potential of mobile learning in Malaysia. Ultimately, the integration of mobile learning in education contributes to improving students' learning outcomes, fostering lifelong learning, and bridging educational disparities. As technology continues to evolve, mobile learning will play an increasingly vital role in shaping Malaysia's education system and preparing students for the demands of the digital era.

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