

PERCEPTION OF FACILITATORS ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE USE OF MOBILE PHONE FOR INSTRUCTION IN ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMMES IN IBADAN METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the perception of facilitators on the use of mobile phone for instruction in adult literacy programmes. The survey research design was adopted and the purposive sampling technique used in selecting fifty (50) participants for the study. Data collected through a set of researcher-designed questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics of simple percentages and frequency counts. Results revealed that facilitators have a positive perception on the use of mobile phone for administrative and instructional purposes (Weighted Average (WA) = 3.15). Challenges likely to be faced by adult literacy facilitators in the use of mobile phones in adult literacy programmes include lack of adequate training (mean=3.24), limited number of file formats supported by a specific mobile phone (mean=3.00), additional time needed to develop learning materials for delivery on mobile phone (mean=3.20), risk of distraction (mean=3.00), insufficient knowledge and skills of facilitators on mobile phone use (mean=2.84) and the appropriate content and language of instruction (mean=3.04, SD=0.75). It was recommended based on these findings that government at all levels should endeavour to organise regular and adequate training for facilitators on the use of mobile phone for adult learning.

Keywords: Mobile phone; Facilitators; Perception; Adult Literacy

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Generally in the world today, there has been a great change in our manner of communication, social relationship and access to information, idea sharing as well as teaching and learning due to the widespread of mobile technology, most especially the mobile phone (Mezei, Benyi, & Muller, 2007; Munish, Sandeep, & Debasish, 2012). Specifically in Nigeria, since its evolution in the

late 1990s, the mobile phone has become an important means of communication and one people can hardly do without on daily basis. Thus, the usefulness of the mobile phone continued to increase with advancement in technology and internet access, making it possible for individuals to access and share information regardless of their geographical location.

Given the popularity, affordability, portability, ubiquity and flexibility of the mobile phone therefore, educators have considered it worthwhile harnessing this technology for educational purposes (Liu, 2007; Motiwalla, 2007).

As observed by Hysbye & Elsener (2013), mobile technologies are capable of being used in the classroom as tools to promote active engagement in learning. Mobile learning has been considered educationally beneficial to learners for its convenience, flexibility and the fact that it opens them up to unlimited access for learning materials (Armatas, Holt & Rice, 2005). Through mobile learning, learners are assisted to extend their learning experiences beyond the classroom environment. It becomes possible for learning to occur at any time and at any place. Learners as well as instructors also have unlimited access to resources. This implies that an appropriate use of mobile phones for learning create opportunities and enhance productivity of both instructors and learners in cooperative or collaborative work (Keskin & Metcalf, 2011).

The interest of educators in the use of mobile phones particularly for learning has been on the increase. It is believed that mobile phones have brought to us new means for accessing information which is useful for learning, thereby redefining our educational experiences (Suki & Suki, 2010). Invariably, mobile phones have presented us with new means of learning which, however, comes with its peculiar set of challenges for both educators and learners as they determine optimal mixes of technology and pedagogy (Kahari, 2013). However, the mobile phone has been proposed by several researchers as the most suitable device that can promote mobile learning (Keegan,

Kismihok, Mileva & Rekkedal, 2006). According to Suki & Suki (2010), mobility and ubiquity are two essential factors which make the mobile phone a suitable medium for learning. It is believed that integrating the use of mobile phones into teaching and learning will produce a mobile environment that will generate unlimited opportunities by increasing learning outcomes. It is the opinion of Attewell and Savil-Smith (2003) that mobile phones can facilitate learners' motivation, develop their organizational skills, encourage both independent and collaborative learning; act as a tool for referencing, tracking the progress of learners and delivering assessment outcomes. More recent researches in this direction found that mobile phones can enhance adult learning (Adelore & Akintolu 2016; Adelore & Itasanmi 2016; Adelore & Ojedeji 2016).

Furthermore, it has been found that mobile phones can assist learners to improve their literacy and numeracy skills; enabling them to recognize their existing abilities while identifying areas where they need help (Keskin & Metcalf, 2011).

With the heavy presence of mobile phone in education and its emerging yet rapid penetration in the field of adult literacy, educators have been challenged to change their perception about the use of modern devices and to understand how mobile phones in particular would best assist their learners to learn (Shuler, 2009). McClanahan (2014) is of the opinion that all literacy learners are not necessarily technology-illiterates as they are often perceived. Therefore, it is rather crucial that their instructors "dip a toe" in technology by experimenting with various educational tools, such as the computer, the Internet, smart boards and smartphones. Although technology does present its challenges,

avoiding its use because of our own fears as pointed out by Parrish (2004), limits both learners' and educators' access to veritable tools that can make learning more relevant.

Some experimental studies have been carried out in Nigeria, for example, Adedire & Akintolu (2016) – the use of mobile phone for adult learners; Adedire & Itasanmi (2016) – the use of two ICT tools (computer and mobile phone) for adult learners and Adedire & Ojedeji (2016) – the use of WhatsApp mobile application as tutorial delivery tool for adult learners. The results of these experiments reveal positive effect in the use of ICT tools on the achievements and attitudes of adult learners. Thus, having established the usefulness of the mobile phone for teaching and learning in adult literacy programmes, it is critical to investigate the perceptions of adult literacy facilitators towards the utilization of this technology as a tool to support teaching and learning process. This assessment will go a long way to boost the willingness of adult learners to use mobile technology to achieve better learning outcomes. Otherwise, all efforts put at experimenting with the use of mobile phones as well as other technology tools for adult learning will amount to a waste of time or resources especially if facilitators themselves who play a crucial role in helping learners to learn do not see a need for integrating the mobile phone into adult literacy programmes. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to investigate the perception of adult literacy facilitators on the use of mobile phone as a tool for teaching and learning in adult literacy programmes.

This study adopted Davis (1986) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which made use of the Theory of Reasoned Action

(TRA). TRA postulates that a person's actual behaviour could be determined by considering his or her prior intention along with the beliefs that the person would have for a given behaviour. TAM provides a basis with which one can trace the impact of external variables on belief, attitude, and intention of use. According to Davis (1989) the intentions of people to use or reject a new technology is influenced by two behavioural beliefs:

- Perceived Use (PU) and
- Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)

Perceived use can be described as the extent to which an individual believes the new technology will help to simplify his/her work better in comparison to the retention of the old technology while PEOU is the extent to which a person believes that new technology is easy to use or requires lesser effort (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). These two factors are significant variables linked to the behavioural intention to adopt any technology.

TAM has proven to be a theoretical model used to explain and predict user behaviour of information technology (Legris, Ingham, & Collerette, 2003). Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is the most cited theory in many studies on Information Systems as well as general ICT with respect to the adoption of an innovation. Davis (1989) presented this theoretical model with this aim to predict and explain ICT usage behaviour, by identifying what causes potential adopters to accept or reject the use of information technology. The two constructs of the model (PU & PEOU) are the fundamental determinants of system use, to predict attitudes toward the use of the system, that is, the user's willingness to use the system. The model suggests

that when users are presented with a new technology, a number of factors influence their decision about how and when they will use it. For instance, mobile phone users take into account available information about mobile phone and consider implications of adopting or not adopting the media. The information considered may be the cost implications, availability of support services, technical knowledge required to be able to adopt the technology and alternative ways of achieving the services offered by mobile phone (Otieno, Liyala, Odongo & Abeka, 2016). A person's perception of an information tool will therefore determine his/her attitude and behaviour towards the actual use and integration of the tool.

The study was guided by the following research objectives:

1. To investigate facilitators' perception of the use of mobile phone for administrative and instructional purposes in adult literacy programmes.
2. To identify the perceived challenges facilitators might face in using mobile phone for teaching and learning in adult literacy programmes.

Research Questions

1. How do facilitators perceive the use of mobile phone for administrative and instructional purposes in adult literacy programmes?

What are the perceived challenges facilitators might face in using mobile phone for teaching and learning in adult literacy programmes?

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the descriptive research design of the survey type designed to investigate the perception of facilitators on the use of mobile phone as a tool for teaching and learning in adult literacy programmes in

Ibadan metropolis.

A total of fifty (50) facilitators from literacy centres under the supervision of Oyo State Agency for Adult and Non-formal Education (AANFE) were purposefully selected for the study. Criteria for selection were based on availability and willingness to participate in the study.

A set of researcher-designed questionnaire were used in collecting data from facilitators in literacy centres across seven Local Government Areas (Ibadan South East, Egbeda, Ibadan North, Akinyele, Ibadan North East, Ibadan North West and Ido) in the Ibadan metropolis. The instrument used was revised by experts in the field of Adult Education of the University of Ibadan for content validity. The questionnaire comprised two sections; the first section reflected the demographic information of the participants while the second section consisted of questions relating to the facilitators' perception on mobile phone usage. All questions in Section B were structured on a 4-point rating scale of "Strongly Agree" (SA), "Agree" (A), "Disagree" (D), and "Strongly Disagree" (SD).

The data obtained were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics. Simple percentages and mean score were used in answering the research questions.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: How do facilitators perceive the use of mobile phone as an administrative and instructional tool?

Table 1: Perception of Facilitators on the Use of Mobile Phone as an Administrative and Instructional tool

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
Mobile phone is easy to use compared to other ICT tools for teaching and learning	21 42.0%	21 42.0%	5 10.0%	3 6.0%	3.20	0.85
Mobile phone can serve as a reminder for dates and time fixed for classes and tests.	27 54.0%	18 36.0%	2 4.0%	3 6.0%	3.38	0.83
It would be easy for me to conduct tests and quizzes for my learners using mobile phone	19 38.0%	19 38.0%	9 18.0%	3 6.0%	3.08	0.89
Facilitators can pass across necessary information to learners using mobile phone	24 48.0%	22 44.0%	1 2.0%	3 6.0%	3.34	0.79
Mobile phone would provide helpful guidance in carrying out tutorials for my learners	14 28.0%	21 42.0%	11 22.0%	4 8.0%	2.90	0.91
Mobile phone is flexible to interact with when it comes to teaching and learning	9 18.0%	26 52.0%	10 20.0%	5 10.0%	2.78	0.86
Messages can be sent on occasions to wish learners well.	30 60.0%	16 32.0%	1 2.0%	3 6.0%	3.46	0.81
Mobile phone can be used for sending results to learners.	27 54.0%	19 38.0%	1 2.0%	3 6.0%	3.40	0.80
It would be easy for me to engage my learners in more learning activities using mobile phone	16 32.0%	19 38.0%	9 18.0%	6 12.0%	2.90	0.99
Mobile phone would enhance collaboration and interaction among learners and facilitators	12 24.0%	32 64.0%	3 6.0%	3 6.0%	3.06	0.74

Key: Mean response ranges from 0.1 – 1.4=Strongly Disagree, 1.5 – 2.4=Disagree, 2.5 – 3.4=Agree & 3.5 – 4.0=Strongly Agree, **Weighted Average = 3.15**

Table 1 shows that facilitators have a positive perception on the use of mobile phone for administrative and instructional purposes (Weighted Average (WA) = 3.15). For instance, the facilitators agreed with the following items: that mobile phone is easy to use for teaching and learning activities compared to other ICT tools (mean = 3.20); that mobile phone would enhance collaboration and interaction among learners and facilitators

tors (mean = 3.06); that mobile phone would provide helpful guidance in carrying out tutorials for learners (mean = 2.90); that it would be easy to engage learners in more learning activities using mobile phone (mean = 2.90); that mobile phone can be used to pass necessary information to learners (mean=3.34) and that it would be easy to conduct tests and quizzes for learners using mobile phone (mean=3.08).

The mean scores imply that facilitators perceive mobile phone as a tool that is easily applicable to teaching and learning and useful for administrative purposes.

Research Question 2: What are the perceived challenges facilitators might face in using mobile phones for teaching and learning in adult literacy programmes?

Table 2: Perceived Challenges Facilitators might face in Using Mobile Phone for Teaching and Learning

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lack of adequate training on how to integrate mobile phone use into the curriculum	22 44.0%	21 42.0%	4 8.0%	3 6.0%	3.24	0.84
The number of file formats supported by a specific mobile phone	18 36.0%	18 36.0%	10 20.0%	4 8.0%	3.00	0.94
Additional time needed to develop learning materials for delivery on mobile phone	16 32.0%	30 60.0%	2 4.0%	2 4.0%	3.20	0.69
Risk of distraction	11 22.0%	25 50.0%	7 14.0%	7 14.0%	3.00	0.90
Resistance to change and negative attitude toward technology	16 32.0%	22 44.0%	8 16.0%	4 8.0%	3.08	0.80
Facilitators' insufficient knowledge and skills on mobile phone use	15 30.0%	27 54.0%	5 10.0%	3 6.0%	2.84	0.93
Content and language of instruction.	12 24.0%	24 48.0%	8 16.0%	6 12.0%	3.04	0.75

Key: Mean response range from 0.1 – 1.4=Strongly Disagree, 1.5 – 2.4=Disagree, 2.5 – 3.4=Agree & 3.5 – 4.0=Strongly Agree, **Weighted Average = 3.1**

Table 2 presents the challenges facing adult literacy facilitators in the use of mobile phone for teaching and learning activities. The Table reveals that the challenges faced by adult literacy facilitators include lack of adequate training (mean=3.24), limited

number of file formats supported by a specific mobile phone (mean=3.00), additional time needed to develop learning materials for delivery on mobile phone (mean=3.20), risk of distraction (mean=3.00), insufficient knowledge and skills of facilitators on mobile

phone use (mean=2.84) and the appropriate content and language of instruction (mean=3.04, SD=0.75).

Since the mean of all the items are more than 2.50, it then implies that facilitators are affected by all the challenges itemized above. These include lack of adequate training on how to integrate mobile phone use into the curriculum, the number of file formats supported by a specific mobile phone, additional time needed to develop learning materials for delivery on mobile phone, risk of distraction, resistance to change and negative attitude toward technology, facilitators' insufficient knowledge and skills on mobile phone use, content and language of instruction.

Discussion of Findings

The study examined the perception of facilitators on mobile phone use in adult literacy programmes. It investigated their perception on the use of mobile phone as an administrative and instructional tool and the possible challenges they might encounter in the integration of mobile phone into adult learning. Findings of this study suggest that literacy facilitators are in support of the use of mobile phone devices for delivery of adult literacy programmes. Facilitators were positive in their perception toward the use of mobile phone for teaching and learning activities. A good number of participants agreed that mobile phone is easy to use for teaching and learning compared to other ICT tools.

This buttresses the finding of Marcial (2015) who maintained that teachers perceive a mobile class record application as highly useful and easy to use. This researcher further explained that respondents in his study assuredly accepted the use of mobile

devices in their classroom for teaching and learning activities in contrast to the use of any other ICT tool. Furthermore, facilitators believe mobile phones can be used to remind learners of scheduled date and time for classes and tests as well as passing necessary information to learners. This is in line with the findings of UNESCO (2012) that teachers tended to use this tool to share information about lesson modules and tips as well as using it for reminders about deadlines and schedules, providing access to manage logistical information. These activities are administrative functions performed by literacy facilitators.

This study also revealed possible challenges facilitators might face in using mobile phones for teaching-learning activities. Challenges such as lack of adequate training coupled with facilitators' insufficient knowledge and skills on mobile phone use for teaching and learning. These findings align with previous studies indicating several barriers that affect mobile phone use in teaching and learning (Matimbwa & Anney, 2016; Ertmer & Orrenbreit-Leftwich, 2010; McCoy, 2013; Lotherington & Jenson, 2011; Gamble, 2013; Seabra, 2013; Birch, 2012; Kinik, 2014). If facilitators will adopt the use of mobile phones and effectively use them for teaching-learning activities, it is expedient that they are equipped with sufficient knowledge, skills and ability to use technology efficiently and successfully through proper training.

This corroborates the findings of Goad (2012) that the ability to design and assess lessons using technology is a barrier encountered by teachers and is one of the reasons for slow implementation of technology in education. She further indicated that the more confident the teachers were in their own ability to use technology, the more

comfortable they were with their ability to design and assess lessons. In other words, facilitators must have ongoing exposure to different trainings on mobile learning to gain confidence in order to adopt the use of mobile phone for daily instructions to learners. This affords learners to be exposed to several learning activities on daily basis to serve as a form of follow-up to previous lessons or preparation for next lessons respectively. This will enable the learners to familiarise themselves with the topic of discussion and also have ample time for interaction and questions.

Other challenges revealed in this study include risk of distraction, content and language of instruction and large number of file formats not supported by specific mobile phone. All these challenges pose a threat to the effective integration of mobile phone use in teaching and learning process in adult literacy programmes. Among the various challenges observed in this study, lack of adequate training is the major challenge for the respondents (mean = 3.24). This implies that the solution to the other challenges facing the facilitators is dependent on the quality of training given on mobile phone use.

CONCLUSION

This study has been able to investigate the perception of facilitators on the use of mobile phone in adult literacy programmes in Ibadan metropolis and it has concluded that the use of mobile technology for teaching and learning in adult literacy programmes would indeed be advantageous. Facilitators sampled in this study were positive in their perceptions toward the use of mobile phone for administrative and instructional purposes. It became glaring through their responses that they believe in the capacity

of mobile phone to enhance teaching and learning activities and they would want to use it to make their work easy and interesting. Some challenges were also identified as capable to confront facilitators in their use of the mobile phone for teaching and learning activities. Major among which include lack of adequate training on how to integrate mobile phone use into the teaching and learning process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made.

Since facilitators, who are the key drivers navigating learners' learning process agreed with the use of mobile phone in adult literacy programmes, there should not be any further delay in integrating mobile phone use into adult literacy programmes. It is expected that facilitators' positive perception will influence their behavioural intention to use mobile phone for teaching and learning. The government at all levels should endeavour to plan a curriculum that will be flexible enough for adult literacy education programme to incorporate mobile phone in teaching and learning activities.

Stakeholders in the field of adult education should endeavour to organise regular and adequate training for facilitators on the use of mobile phone in teaching and learning. The training should cover amidst other things, the various uses of mobile applications as well as the development of lesson materials on mobile phone.

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