



**Use of Mobile Phones by Students to Support Learning in College :
A Case Study of Rajarshi Shahu Mahavidyalaya (Autonomous), Latur**

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Abstract :

Mobile technologies play an increasing role in the academic lives of college students. Devices such as smart phones, tablets, fablets, e-book readers, etc. connect users to the vast resources of e-contents available through internet, which help the students to learn at their convenience from anywhere and at anytime. Mobile devices have become an inevitable part of every human being including the students' community. It is estimated that about 65% of the students have access to smart phones. Hence, the present study aims to find out whether the students' use the mobile technology for learning purpose, in addition to communication. It was found from the study that, about 70% of the students of Commerce faculty of Rajarshi Shahu Mahavidyalaya (Autonomous), Latur have access to smart phones. The study found that, 73% of the students use it for learning purpose and the most popular application is WhatsApp followed by Youtube, Google search and e-mail. It was also found from the study that 58% of the students use the M-technology for enrichment of subject knowledge in addition to entertainment and access to social media.

Keywords : M-technology, Mobile Phone, Tablets, Fablets, e-resources, e-learning.

Introduction :

Devices such as smart phones, tablets, fablets, e-book readers, etc. connect users to the world instantly, heightening access to information and enabling interactivity with others. Students consume the data through the applications run on these devices. Mobile devices have become a major part of students' everyday life. Students can use mobile applications for both personal and academic purposes. Mobile devices have great potential as classroom learning tools and many students use them to take class notes, while others use them to record lectures for later reference in addition to access to social media and internet resources. The pedagogy used to learn with mobile devices is referred to as M-Learning.

Now-a-days, students are more adept in using a variety of technologies to acquire and transmit knowledge as compared to conventional method of dissemination of information. Mobile learning is that learners can learn at anytime and anywhere through the use of wireless internet and mobile devices. Mobile learning allows students to learn according to their convenience. Despite the tremendous growth and potential of the mobile devices and networks, mobile resources are not exploited for learning purpose. The rationale of studying students' attitudes towards the mobile phone learning environment stemmed from the popularity and affordability of devices and also the availability of data at low cost. Surveys show that college students' interest and use of technology continue to increase and that are more prominent amongst students who aspire for career oriented courses.



Review of Literature :

Mobile learning is contributing to improved educational outcomes in the developing countries of Asia and found that mobile phones help to improve educational outcomes in two specific ways i.e. (i) in improving access to education and (ii) in promoting new learning (Valk et.al. (2010). Technology enabled mobile devices are used for interactive learning at anytime and anywhere. Traditional teaching methods have numerous drawbacks, one of them is that very often students attend a class, take notes and leave without any collaboration in the classroom. Mobile learning can be used to solve this problem (Economides and Vasiliou (2007). The smart mobile phones can be used to help learner's access to web-based content, remix it, share it, collaborate with others and create media-rich deliverables for the classroom teacher as well as a global audience (Miller and Piller (2005). Mobile phones have been used by students as a tool for learning and functions such as the calculator, creating messages and the alarm reminder (Ison et.al. (2004). From this aspects the authors want to find out whether the students of commerce faculty of Rajarshi Shahu Mahavidyalaya (Autonomous), Latur use the M-technology for learning purpose.

Objectives of the Study :

- 1.To study the attitude of students' towards mobile phone for learning purpose.
- 2.To study the most popular mobile application amongst the students'.
- 3.To study the use of mobile phone for acquiring enhanced knowledge.
- 4.To draw some conclusions.

Research Methodology :

The primary objective of the study is to investigate the attitude of higher education students' towards educational uses of mobile phones. The students of commerce faculty from Rajarshi Shahu Mahavidyalaya (Autonomous), Latur were selected for the purpose of the study. The samples are selected on the basis of simple random sampling method, consisting of undergraduate and postgraduate students. The study is based on primary data which is collected with the help of a structured questionnaire.

The population consists of all students of commerce faculty of Rajarshi Shahu Mahavidyalaya (Autonomous), Latur. Out of 867 students, a sample of 473 students was selected through stratified sampling method. Approximately 55% of samples are selected from each stratum.

Table 1 : Samples of the Respondents

No.	Programme	Population	Samples	Percentage of Sample
1.	B.Com. I Year	310	169	55%
2.	B.Com. II Year	264	144	55%
3.	B.Com. III Year	204	111	54%
4.	M.Com. I Year	60	33	55%
5.	M.Com. II Year	29	16	55%
	Total	867	473	55%

Data Analysis and Interpretation :

1) Number of students having smart phone :

It was found from the study that, out of 473 students selected for the study, 332 students have smart phones and the remaining 141 students have feature phones, which is equal to 70% and 30% respectively of the total respondents.

Table 2 : Number of students having smart phone

No.	No. of students Using Smart Phones	No. of students using Feature Phones	Total
1.	332 (70%)*	141 (30%)*	473 (100%)*

Note : * Percentage of respondents to total.

2) Mobile phones are necessary tool for today's life :

All the respondents unanimously agree that, mobile phone is a necessary and inevitable communication device for today's life. Many tasks are done with the help of mobile whether it is bill payment, fee payment, ticket booking or visiting to institutions site for educational purpose, etc.

Table 3 : Mobile phones are necessary tool for today's life

No.	Mobile phones are necessary	Response
1.	Yes	332 (100%)*
2.	No	00 (00%)*
	Total	332 (100%)*

Note : * Percentage of respondents to total.

3) Use of mobile phone in learning :

73% of the students use mobile phone for learning purpose as it saves time and convenient. About 11% of the students do not use mobile phone for the learning purpose and 16% of the respondent was not sure whether they have been using it for learning purpose or not.

Table 4 : Use of mobile phone in learning

No.	Use of mobile phone in learning	Response
1.	Yes	242 (73%)*
2.	No	37 (11%)*
3.	Not sure	53 (16%)*
	Total	332 (100%)*

Note : * Percentage of respondents to total.

4) Most popular application of mobile phone :

The most popular application is WhatsApp (87%) followed by Youtube (73%), Google search (26%), e-mail (11%), etc.

Table 5 : Applications of using mobile for learning

No.	Applications of using mobile for learning	Response	Rank
1.	WhatsApp	210 (87%)*	1
2.	Youtube	176 (73%)*	2
3.	Google Search	64 (26%)*	3
4.	e-mail	26 (11%)*	4
5.	Any Other (Recording lectures, etc)	21 (9%)*	5

Note : * Percentage of respondents to total.

5) Utility of Mobile Learning:

62% of the students agree that, the use of mobile phone helped them in learning course contents and also useful for the examination point of view. Whereas, 27% of respondents states that, the learning through mobile was not helped them in any way and 11% of the respondents have not sure whether it helped them or not.

Table 6 : Utility of Mobile Learning for the students

No.	Utility of mobile learning	Response
1.	Yes	205 (62%)*
2.	No	90 (27%)*
3.	Not definite	37 (11%)*
	Total	332 (100%)*

Note : * Percentage of respondents to total.

6) Easy access to learning resources :

50% of the respondents agree that, mobile devices provide easy access to learning resources as compared to physical resources available in the library, whereas 35% of the respondents state that library resources are easy to access and remaining 15% of the students are not definite whether mobile resources are convenient or not.

Table 7 : Easy access to learning resources

No.	Easy access to learning resources	Response
1.	Yes	166 (50%)*
2.	No	116 (35%)*
3.	Not definite	50 (15%)*
	Total	332 (100%)*

Note : * Percentage of respondents to total.

7) Useful for enriching knowledge :

The use of internet as a learning resource for enhancement of subject knowledge is tested and it was found that, 58% of the respondents use mobile phones for enriching their subject knowledge and clarification of doubts, whereas 36% of the respondents do not use it for enhancement of subject knowledge.

Table 8 : Mobile is beneficial for enriching subject knowledge

No.	Useful for enriching knowledge	Response
1.	Yes	193 (58%)*
2.	No	118 (36%)*
3.	No response	21 (6%)*
	Total	332 (100%)*

Note : * Percentage of respondents to total.

8) Uses of Mobile Devices :

In addition to communication, the most popular use of mobile devices amongst the students' is for storage of information, followed by social media, entertainment, sharing of information, e-payment and e-commerce.

Table 9 : Uses of Mobile Devices

No	Uses of Mobile Devices	Response	Rank
1.	Storage of Information	293 (88%)*	1
2.	Social Media	290 (87%)*	2
3.	Entertainment	287 (86%)*	3
4.	Sharing of information	276 (83%)*	4
5.	E-Payment	271 (82%)*	5
6.	E-commerce	247 (74%)*	6



Note : * Percentage of respondents to total.

Findings and Conclusions :

It is found from the study that, 70% of the students use smart phones for various purposes such as, storage of data, for interaction with social media, entertainment, sharing of information, e-payment and e-commerce. Similarly, 73% of the students' uses mobile technology for learning purpose. The most popular use of the mobile technology amongst the students' for learning purpose include WhatsApp (87%), Youtube (73%), Google search (26%) and e-mail (11%). About 50% of the students found that mobile technology provides them easy access to e-resources as compared to physical resources available in the library. As about enriching subject knowledge 58% of the students found that the use of mobile technology is helpful.

Even though it is widely believed that the indiscriminate use of mobile technology vitiates the learning environment inside and outside the classroom that is why majority of the institutes prohibits the use of the mobile phone in the college premises. However, the technology can be effectively used for learning purpose as open access learning resources are available on the internet. The study found that students can effectively used this technology for upgradation of subject knowledge, sharing of learning resources, clearing of doubts, taking notes, capturing lectures, etc. Hence, it is suggested that M-learning should be encouraged at institutional level for teaching and learning purpose.

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