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THE PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS ON THE USE OF MOBILE LEARNING IN GENERAL NIGERIAN STUDIES IN LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This paper was designed to find out the perception of students on the use of mobile learning in General Nigerian Studies in Lagos State University. Mobile learning is learning delivered or supported solely or mainly by handheld or mobile technologies. Mobile learning is primarily delivered over the wireless network which can adapt quickly to meet changing learning needs. The GNS program of the Lagos State University is under the program termed "General Studies Programme (GSP)" by the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) and all courses under this program are taken by all university students in Nigeria. The purpose of these General Studies Courses is to get the student acquainted with other general subjects of importance outside the scope or field of study of the student's department or faculty with the aim of getting students acquainted with subjects of study deemed generally important by the existing educational bodies. A simple random sampling technique was adopted to selected respondents. A total of 250 questionnaires were sampled and all questionnaires collected were valid. This study was a quantitative research and an inferential statistic was used to test the hypotheses. Two Hypotheses' were raised and tested at a level of significance of 0.05 using a chi-square test. Statistical package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0 for windows was used. The results indicated that there was no significant difference between male and female students' attitude toward the use of Mobile Learning Technology in GNS. It was also revealed there was significant difference between male and female students on the amount of time they spend on the internet. A conclusion was drawn and it was recommended that Awareness should be created by the University to eliminate any cultural, religious or societal perception that may hinder students having equal opportunities to utilize mobile learning platforms, Provisions should be

made by the government, school managements, private organization or citizen for public internet facilities in the University campuses to ensure that there are equal opportunities for students in regards to the time they choose to spend on the internet.

Keywords: *Mobile learning, General Nigerian Studies (GNS), General Studies Programme (GSP), m- learning, National Universities Commission (NUC)*

Introduction

Learning in the 21st century is omnipresent with computer technology gaining momentum in the lives of the young and becoming a part of the educational system. Students use technology on a daily basis and this has an impact on their education. Technology used effectively in the classroom enables students to be innovative, while developing new skills and provide students with futuristic information (Saxena, 2013). In recent times, the increase in use of technology is shifting traditional teaching methods in the classroom by facilitating learning that takes place anytime and anywhere, because of the highly mobile nature of these new forms of learning which adopts the ability to obtain or provide educational content on personal pocket devices such as smartphones, laptops, personal digital assistant, mobile electronic devices, and the internet. The characteristics of face-to face education or traditional education are, that the educational transaction takes place within the learning group, by interpersonal communication between the teacher and the taught, this form of learning has in one way or the other caused decline in educational standards in our tertiary institutions in modern times (Ugwu, 2012). As Prensky (2001) has suggested, today's students are no longer the people the current educational system have been designed to teach. Today's students have enormous access to digital technology and display characteristics such as digital fluency and familiarity with new technologies that as never before imagined, they have been termed digital natives. Mobile learning allows students acquiring their learning materials anywhere and anytime using mobile technologies and the internet (Jasmina and Vukovac, 2015).

The Federal Military Government on October 22nd, 1977, directed Nigerian Universities to introduce a programme on national

awareness and that the programme should be made compulsory for all students in Nigerian Universities. An enabling decree was promulgated in the same year providing for the establishment and recognition of General Studies unit in all Nigerian Universities. In accordance with the provision of the Decree and the recommendation of the National Universities Commission (NUC), most universities established the General Studies Division in the early 80's. In the year 2004, the panel on the merger of Benchmarks and Minimum Academic Standards (MAS) on General Studies, took a critical look at the University academic programme and what it takes in the production of better skilled graduates, who will be sufficiently empowered to meet the changing needs of the nation and global competitiveness (Rasheed, 2017)

The GNS programme of the Lagos State University is under the Centre for General Nigerian Studies (CGNS). The purpose of these General Studies Courses is to get the student acquainted with other general subjects of importance outside the scope or field of study of the student's department or faculty with the aim of getting students acquainted with subjects of study deemed generally important by the existing educational bodies. The courses under the General studies programme include:

- Use of English I (Including Use of Library)
- Use of English II
- Philosophy, Logic and Nigerian Culture
- Introduction to Social Sciences and Citizenship Education
- History and Philosophy of Science
- Nigerian Peoples and Culture
- Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies
- Entrepreneurship Studies.

The courses taken by students under GNS in Lagos State University include:

- GNS 101 – Use of Library
- GNS 102 – Use of English
- GNS 201 – Lagos Nigerian and African History and Culture
- GNS 301 – Science and Logic

The main objectives of the General Studies Programme in Nigeria universities are

- To improve the language and communication skills of all students and to help them develop adequate competence in the Use of English Language as a tool for their present studies and future employments.
- To assist students to develop and expand the awareness of their social, cultural and physical environments which invariably will prepare them to function effectively in their society.
- To socialize the Nigerian students to cultivate desirable habits, values, attitudes, patriotism, nationalism and to appreciate the status of the Constitution as the will of the people and to sensitize students to the functions and obligations of Government at all levels.
- To introduce students to the broad areas of sciences and to create awareness of the services of science to man and the effect of science on human society (Anyia, 2022).

Mobile learning, is certainly not merely the conjunction of 'mobile and learning', it has always implicitly meant mobile E-Learning and its history and development have to be understood as both a continuation of conventional E-Learning and a reaction to this conventional' E-Learning and to its perceived inadequacies and limitations. It is the mobile' aspect of mobile learning that makes it stand apart from other types of learning, specifically designing learning experiences that exploit the opportunities that mobility' can offer us. M-Learning focuses on the mobility of the learner, interacting with portable technologies, and learning that reflects a focus on how society and its institutions can accommodate and support an increasingly mobile population. This is because mobile devices have features and functionality for supporting learners. For example, podcasts of lectures can be made available for downloading. Learners are to expect to engage with these learning resources whilst away from the traditional learning spaces. Benefits of m-learning (Elias, 2011; Crescente and Lee, 2011):

- i. Relatively inexpensive opportunities, as the cost of mobile devices are significantly less than PCs and laptops.
- ii. Multimedia content delivery and creation options.
- iii. Continuous and situated learning support
- iv. Decrease in training costs.
- v. Potentially a more rewarding learning experience.

- vi. Improving levels of literacy, numeracy and participation in education amongst young adults.
- vii. Using the communication features of a mobile phone as part of a larger learning activity, e.g.: sending media or texts into a central portfolio, or exporting audio files from a learning platform to your phone

Over the past ten years mobile learning has grown from a minor research interest to a set of significant projects in schools, workplaces, museums, cities and rural areas around the world. The M-Learning community is still fragmented, with different national perspectives, differences between academia and industry, and between the school, higher education and lifelong learning sectors (Singh, 2010). Many researchers have unearthed differences across gender in regards to access to and use of mobile devices. In its 2018 study *Connected Women*, GSMA, a mobile phone industry association, concludes, “unequal access to mobile technology threatens to exacerbate the inequalities women already experience.”⁷¹ The GSMA study found that in 86 percent of all low- and middle-income countries, more men than women own mobiles; to be specific, 184 million fewer women than men own mobile phones. Even when women do own a mobile phone, they are generally less likely to use it to connect with the internet. A total of 327 million fewer women than men use mobile internet. Many researchers have unearthed differences between men’s and women’s access to and use of mobile devices. In its 2018 study *Connected Women*, GSMA, a mobile phone industry association, concludes, “unequal access to mobile technology threatens to exacerbate the inequalities women already experience.”⁷¹ The GSMA study found that in 86 percent of all low- and middle-income countries, more men than women own mobiles; to be specific, 184 million fewer women than men own mobile phones. Even when women do own a mobile phone, they are generally less likely to use it to connect with the internet. A total of 327 million fewer women than men use mobile internet.

Statement of the Problem

Education is said to be worthwhile when it meets the relevant needs of the recipients in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude to contribute to

societal development. The quality of higher education is therefore a reflection on the quality and quantity of staff members, relevant infrastructure, adequate instructional facilities and the evaluation procedures. Core curriculum courses such as the GNS are usually accustomed with overpopulated lecture halls, poor student participation, poor evaluation procedures, poor instructional facilities and poor students' attendance. The introduction of mobile learning technologies/platforms will tackle the problems as highlighted above and the abilities of mobile technology to provide learners and professionals with access and opportunities to information instantaneously regardless of location and time. Although, the use of technology in education is remarkable and has a positive trend, there is a need for concern, as there are several obstacles that restrain the integration of technology in the classroom setting (Vrasidas and Kyriacou, 2008). The existing process needs to be reassessed and new methods may have to be implemented to be used in classrooms. However, there are some concerns on the use of mobile technological devices in education raised by students and teachers such as the rapid developing pace of technology, cost of purchasing mobile technological devices, time consumption, distraction of attention by social media, inadequate infrastructure that enables the effective utilization of mobile learning technology on campus such as internet hotspot facilities. The availability of mobile learning devices among students is a positive trends and this study will look into the impact of mobile learning technologies on students

Objective of the Study

The objective of this research work was to examine the perception of students on the use of mobile learning in General Nigerian Studies in Lagos State University by exploring the potency of appropriate use of mobile learning technology in core curriculum courses in higher institutions in Nigeria.

To guide this study, two hypotheses were raised:

Ho₁: There was no significant difference between male and female students' attitude toward the use of mobile learning technology in GNS

Ho₂: There was no significant difference between male and female students on the amount of time they spend on the internet

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. This research design type was suitable because it helps to gather, organize, analyze and present data for the purpose of describing the occurrence of an event within the group of people. The population for this study was comprised of the all students offering GNS in Lagos State University. A simple random sampling technique was adopted to select 250 respondents from the population. Respondent were selected across the seven faculty in the university main campus, Ojo. The researchers adopted the use of a self-structured Questionnaire on 4-Likert scale format to elicit responses from the respondents. A sample of three copies was given to three lecturers in the department of Science and Technology Education to determine the validity of the instrument. Moreso, after removal and modification of items in the instrument, construct and content validity was met. To determine the reliability of the instrument, the use of Cronbach Alpha, a form of reliability type, an index value of 0.864 was obtained meaning that the items in the instrument is very reliable and suitable for the study. Descriptive statistic tools such as percentile was used to present information on the bio-data of respondents while chi-square was used to analyse the data sourced and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Result

Respondents bio data

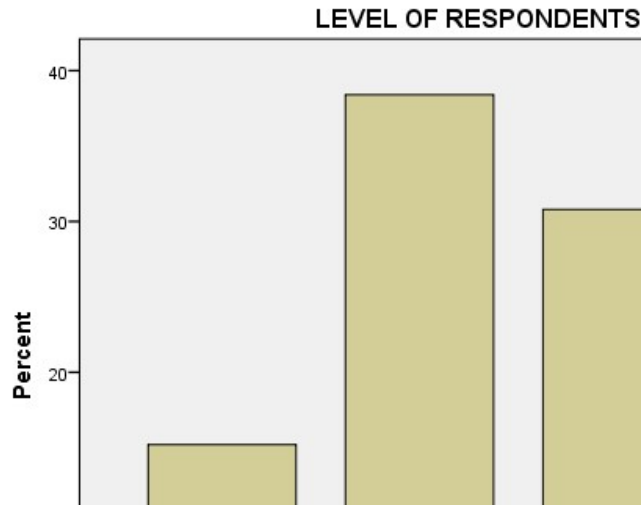


Fig: 1.1 Level of respondent

Fig.1.1 represents the respondents on their level in the university. 15.2% (38) are in 100 level, 38.4% (96) in 200 level, 30.8% (77) in 300 level and 15.6% (39) in 400 level. The total respondent of 250 took part in the study

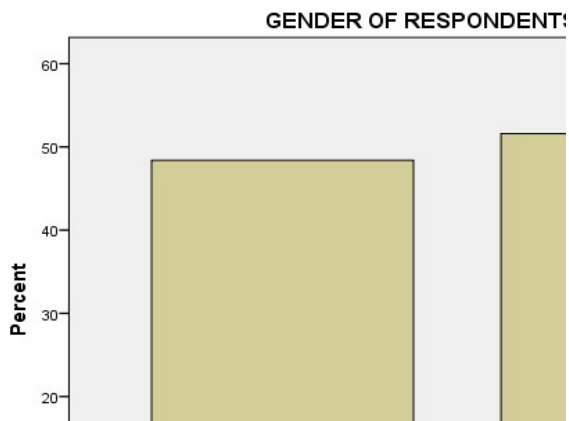


Fig 1.2: Gender of respondent

Fig. 1.2 represents the respondents based on gender. 48.4% are male and 51.6% are female with 121 and 129 respondents respectively

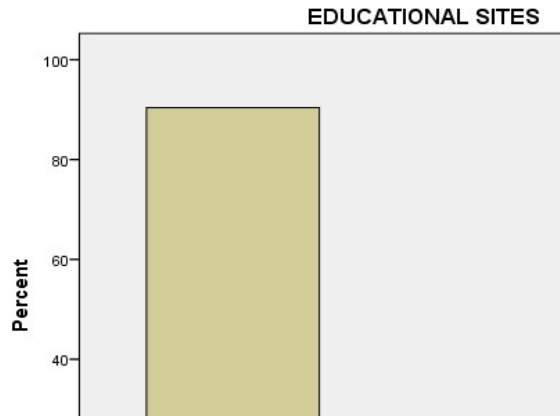


Fig 1.3: Knowledge of educational Sites/Network

Fig. 1.3 represents the respondents based on their knowledge of any existing educational sites. 90.8% (227) said they have knowledge of an existing educational platform/site while 9.2% (23) have no knowledge of educational sites.

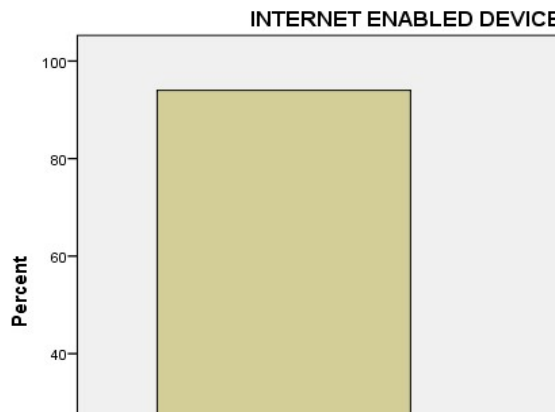


Fig 1.4: Access to internet enabled devices

Fig.1.4 shows the distribution of respondent's access to internet enabled devices. It indicated that 94% (235) have access to internet enabled devices, 6% (15) do not have access to internet enabled devices.

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant difference between male and female students' attitude toward the use of Mobile Learning Technology in GNS

Table 1.1: Chi-square analysis showing no significant difference between Gender and attitude toward the use of Mobile Learning Technology

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.548 ^a	3	.136
Likelihood Ratio	5.646	3	.130
Linear-by-Linear Association	.000	1	.994
N of Valid Cases	250		
a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.87.			

Table 1.1 revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female students attitude toward the use of Mobile Learning Technology in GNS. This was reflected in the result: chi-square value= 5.646, P= 0.136, which states that $P > 0.05$. The null hypothesis is hereby not rejected which shows there was no significance between male and female students attitude toward the use of mobile learning technology for GNS.

1.2 Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant difference between male and female students on the amount of time they spend on the internet

Table 1.2: Chi-square analysis showing significant difference between Gender and the amount of time they spend on the internet

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.328 ^a	3	.040
Likelihood Ratio	8.501	3	.037
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.203	1	.074
N of Valid Cases	250		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15.00.			

Table 1.2 revealed there was significant difference between male and female students on the amount of time they spend on the internet. This was reflected in the result: chi-square value= 8.328, P= 0.040, which implied that $P < 0.05$. The null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

Discussion of Findings

From hypothesis 1, it was revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female students' attitude toward the use of Mobile Learning Technology in GNS. This was reflected in the result: chi-square value= 5.646, P= 0.136, which states that $P > 0.05$. The null hypothesis is hereby not rejected which shows there was no significance between male and female students attitude toward the use of mobile learning technology for GNS. This was in line with attempt was made by Al-Emran and Shaalan (2015) to examine students and faculty members' attitudes within the higher educational institutions in Gulf region (Oman and UAE). Two surveys have been conducted: one for students and one for faculty members to examine whether there was any significant difference among the students' attitudes and the faculty members' attitudes towards the use of M-learning with regard to their gender. Results revealed that there was no significant difference among the students in their attitudes in terms of gender. A similar study carried out by El-Emran, El-Sherif and Shaalan (2016) investigated attitudes toward the use of mobile learning in higher education to examine if there was any statistical significant difference among the students' attitudes towards the use of M-learning with

regard to their gender. The results implied that the mean values for both male and female students do not indicate any significant differences among the students in their attitudes in terms of their gender.

Hypothesis 2 revealed there was significant difference between male and female students on the amount of time they spend on the internet. This was reflected in the result: chi-square value= 8.328, $P= 0.040$, which implied that $P < 0.05$. The null hypothesis is hereby rejected. There have been numerous debates in the link between gender and internet usage, many researchers are aware of gender inequality in internet usage. However, inequalities are not only reflected in internet technology, but also in numerous aspects such as in education, politics, and workforce. Norris's (2001) studies in Europe on internet access highlights that social economic or individual factors may be significant for understanding the internet access. Thanuskodi (2013) in his study of Gender Differences in Internet Usage among College Students revealed there was a significant difference between male and female respondents with respect to their overall access to internet/Web sources with the male respondents taking the first position in their overall access to Internet/Web sources and female respondents lag behind them. Also Adeniran and Kehinde (2013) indicated that there was a significant difference in the general internet use by male and female participants in their study of gender and internet use pattern of pre-service teachers in Nigerian College of Education.

Conclusion

Higher education is regarded as an instrument of social, political and economic development. The products of higher education in any nation will determine the development of such nation. Therefore, higher education contributes to national development through high level relevant manpower training, in order to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which enable individual to be self-reliant and useful members of the society (FRN, 2004). Nigerian Universities were established to facilitate creation of new knowledge, innovation and technologies for the overall socio-economic empowerment of an individual and national integration. The roles of technology in teaching and learning process cannot be overestimated, especially in Nigeria

where emphasis is being placed on technological development. The survival of tertiary education institutions in the 21st century increasingly rely on various forms of electronically delivered contents that requires education to be flexible. This research examined the perception of students on the use of mobile learning in General Nigerian Studies in Lagos State University. Since gender has no impact on students' attitude and use of mobile learning devices such as smartphones, laptops and tablets, learning tasks can be prepared more easily accessible to learners irrespective of gender. However, students should be more motivated to make use of learning on the mobile devices since their attitude are not affected by gender however there is a difference by gender in regards to time spent on the internet are not high in this study. It is therefore the responsibility of the school management to create awareness and provide public internet facilities in the University campus to ensure that there is equal opportunities for students in regards to the time they choose to spend on the internet.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Awareness should be created by the University to eliminate any cultural, religious or societal perception that may hinder students having equal opportunities to utilize mobile learning platforms
2. Provisions should be made by the government, school managements, private organization or citizen for public internet facilities in the University campuses to ensure that there are equal opportunities for students in regards to the time they choose to spend on the internet.
3. There is a generally positive attitude of students in regards to the use of mobile learning devices hence, Lecturers should be advised to incorporate virtual classrooms on platforms such as WhatsApp, telegram or zoom or google where students can participate in classroom from any location, submit assignments and ask/answer questions about their related courses through social networking.
4. Government and school authorities should organize in-service and workshops to enable students and lecturers update and

- acquire the skills needed to handle mobile learning effectively and efficiently.
5. The universities should be equipped with latest infrastructure to aid easy connectivity to educational sites that will help students with researches and assignments, etc.
 6. There should be proper safeguard that helps limit social media interference with academic work

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