

# Future Trend of Education – Mobile Learning Problems and Prospects

**Sangeeta Paliwal**

HOD, Institute of Library Science  
IPS Academy, Indore, India  
paliwalsangeeta@yahoo.co.in

**K.K. Sharma**

Director  
CEDMAP Centre, Ujjain, India  
KK8034@gmail.com

## Abstract

*This paper describes a mobile learning development and future trends of education, where mobile devices are used for educational activities. The main focus of this paper is to find out the problem of the incorporation of mobile learning into mainstream education and training. Find out the answer that how we can implement M-learning in mainstream education? The goal of this paper is to create flexible teaching solutions which will enable access to information using different devices, and support learning in a variety of situations.*

**Keywords:** *m-Learning, Mobile devices, Flexible teaching.*

## Introduction

The evolution in education and training at a distance can be characterized as a move from d-learning to e-learning to m-learning. These three stages of development correspond to the influence on society of the industrial revolution of the 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the electronic revaluation of the 1980's and the wireless revolution of the last years of 20<sup>th</sup> century and now its mole revaluation. E learning is the state of the art in distance learning at the time of writing.

Mobile learning seeks to put in place a new virtual learning environment for the future which might be represented thus. This will be followed by the mid 2000's by the introduction of voice input and voice recognition into wireless devices to create a more user friendly environment for learners.

A first step in postulating a theory of mobile learning

is to distinguish what is special about mobile learning compared to other types of learning activity..

## Definitions

According to Quinn ( 2000)<sup>1</sup> 'Mobile learning is learning through mobile computational devices.'

Shepherd ( 2001)<sup>2</sup> Says: M- learning is not just electronic , it's mobile.

Kynaslahti (2003)<sup>3</sup> identifies three different elements for mobility and all of these are valuable to teachers and students while they are teaching and learning –

- Convenience
- Expediency
- Immediacy

Teachers are able to work anywhere even if that requires access to the Internet or a connection to others kind of electronic environment But I think and I feel the definition of mobile learning the focus should be on mobility. M learning should be restricted to learning on devices which a lady can carry in her handbag or a gentleman can carry in his pocket. I there fore define mobile learning as “ the provision of education and training on PDA's/ palmtops/smart phone and mobile phone.

## The failure of mobile learning

When one is discussing the question of the incorporation of mobile learning into mainstream

Functionality		Mobility		
Computer	Laptop computers	PDA's handhelds palmtop	Smart phones	Mobile phone
E- Learning		M-Learning		

**Figure 1: Functionality and mobility in a definition of mobile learning**

education and training it is important to realize that these projects were projects. That is, they were research undertakings to set out the first building blocks of a new sector of education and training provision.

The problem is that wireless applications are being developed for wireless devices for all walks of life. Learning and training do not figure in these developments. Learning and training do not seem to be high on the list of applications that are receiving attention today.

Isn't it strange that all higher and further education institutions today have frequent needs for providing information to their students about timetable changes, assessment deadlines, feedback from tutors and other urgent administrative details? Nearly all of these students carry a sophisticated communications device which they use constantly in all walks of life except in their education or training Programme.

The answer to these questions that I have been posing about why mobile learning has not moved from project status into the mainstream is well known. It is that mobile learning is not seen as a satisfactory revenue stream for the telecommunications operators. The urgent need for mobile learning is to emerge from its fragile project status and convince the telecommunications

Operators that it represents a viable and valuable revenue stream.

Towards a solution: a matrix for mainstream provision

We have posed the problem of the status and acceptance of mobile learning –we must now look for solutions to the problem.

One can develop a nine-point matrix for the use of mobile learning in mainstream education and training. One axis is made up of the three types of devices that make up mobile learning provision:

- PDAs
- Smartphones
- Mobile phones.

The other axis is the types of education provision that can reasonably be provided by mobile learning:

- Mobile learning academic administration SMSs.
- Mobile learning academic summaries.
- Full modules by mobile learning.

This is the presentation of full courses, or full modules of courses, on mobile devices.

This gives the following nine possibilities:

- Mobile learning for academic administration on PDAs

- Mobile learning for academic administration on smartphones
- Mobile learning for academic administration on mobile phones
- Mobile learning academic summaries for PDAs
- Mobile learning academic summaries for smartphones
- Mobile learning academic summaries for mobile phones
- Full modules by mobile learning for PDAs
- Full modules by mobile learning for smartphones
- Full modules by mobile learning for mobile phones.

### **Towards a solution: criteria for inclusion in the mainstream**

There are four criteria for the inclusion of mobile learning in mainstream education and training. These are:

1. Enrolment of mobile learning students in courses on the institution's official prospectus. This is essential for incorporating mobile learning into the mainstream. If the mobile learning course is not included in the institution's prospectus and listed as available for student enrolment it remains peripheral with the status of a research project in an isolated university department and cannot be considered as part of mainstream provision.
2. Enrolment of mobile learning students into fee-paying courses. This is essential for incorporating mobile learning into the mainstream. This is applicable to countries in which fees are payable for enrolment in further and higher education courses.
3. Enrolment of mobile learning students into assessed courses.. If the mobile learning course is not assessed with the same procedures as other courses offered by the institution it remains peripheral with the status of a research project and cannot be considered as part of mainstream provision.
4. Enrolment of mobile learning students into accredited courses. As happened in the field of distance education and then in e-learning, the achievement of accreditation for mobile learning is an indication that the sector has entered into the mainstream.

### **Towards a solution – the literature**

The development of the literature of mobile learning has high importance in the move of mobile learning into the mainstream. Mobile learning will never emerge from its present fragile project-based status and take its place in mainstream education and training unless

it has a vibrant literature. Deans of Faculties at universities throughout the world will never accept the introduction of mobile learning into their courseware unless they can verify the claims of mobile learning by consulting the research literature.

Similar initiatives are necessary for the literature of mobile learning if it is to convince academics in universities worldwide that it is a viable form of educational provision.

### **Conclusion**

Finally, the problem of the incorporation of mobile learning into mainstream education and training has been addressed in this presentation. The answer to the question 'Why has mobile learning not moved from project status to the mainstream?' has been identified. It is that mobile learning is not seen as a satisfactory revenue stream by the telecommunications operators.

Solutions have been proposed for this problem. Firstly, there are thousands of universities and further and higher education colleges all over the world. If they can all be convinced to accept mobile learning as their normal means of communication with all their students on changes of timetable, submission deadlines, enrolment procedures and other administrative necessities, a massive mobile learning revenue stream will already be set up.

Secondly, the production of a mobile learning development kit for distribution to universities and colleges to enable them to introduce mobile learning will set up another revenue stream.

Thirdly, the production of course guides, course summaries, examination reminders, helps with difficult parts of a course, will set up another revenue stream.

Fourthly, the production of full course modules for PDAs, handhelds, palmtops, and also for smartphones and eventually for mobile phones, will set up another revenue stream.

Finally, the literature of the field needs to be developed, books on mobile learning need to be written, conferences like this one need to be organized. The challenge to all of you attending this conference is to go away from here convinced of the need to establish mobile learning as a viable and valuable revenue stream for the telecommunications industry.

### **References**

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