

## Book Review

# Advancing Higher Education with Mobile Learning Technologies: Cases, Trends, and Inquiry-Based Methods

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*Advancing Higher Education with Mobile Learning Technologies: Cases, Trends, and Inquiry-Based Methods*

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## INTRODUCTION

*Advancing Higher Education with Mobile Learning Technologies* is a compilation of coherent and thorough chapters that investigate the effectiveness of mobile technologies and mobile social media tools in learning and teaching environments in higher education. Under the mobile learning (m-learning) context, teachers' instructional practices and students' academic performances are evaluated and promoted, drawing from both qualitative (e.g., case studies) and quantitative (e.g., surveys) studies. The reader can view a variety of creative pedagogical frameworks, teaching strategies, and technological applications, supported with particular learning theories, combined with instructional design (ID) models both for faculty's teaching effectiveness and students' higher academic performances. The book provides the reader with a comprehensive understanding of and appreciation for the contributions it makes to collegiate level education with mobile devices both from theoretical and practical perspectives. Teachers and students in higher educational institutions—domestically and abroad—can benefit immensely from this excellent resource in order to optimize their teaching, training, and learning experiences.

## TOPICS COVERED

- Mobile Social Media for Collaborative Curriculum Redesign
- Adult Learning and faculty Development Programs
- Distance Learning
- Role of m-Learning in Educational contexts
- Teacher Development with Mobile Technologies
- Teacher Preparation Programs via Mobile Technologies
- Integration of Mobile Technology within STEM Higher Education
- Technology-rich Teaching and Learning Models in the Workplace Context

- Role of Mobile Telephony in Teaching and Learning in Kenya
- Digital Reading Applications (e.g., iBooks Author) in Foreign Language Learning
- Student teachers' Use of Mobile Technology under the TPACK Framework
- Engaging and Authentic iPad-based digital learning activities in a Higher Education Environment
- Using Mobile Technologies to Support Teaching and Learning with FRAME Model
- Role of Mobile Technologies in Higher Education and Professional Development
- Use of Web 2.0 Technologies in Teaching and Learning in Kenyan Universities

## CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

The book examines the use of mobile technologies in higher education. It is organized to address faculty and instructors in higher educational institutions as its target audience. As an excellent resource introduced to the m-learning literature, the book embodies an array of topics pertaining to learning and teaching with mobile technologies, curriculum design, instructional design models, technology-rich pedagogical frameworks, as well as teacher preparation and professional development programs supported with mobile technologies. The manner in which m-learning was discussed through case studies conducted, creative pedagogical frameworks proposed, and mobile technology implementations encompasses both domestic and cross-cultural viewpoints. The latter perspective is especially evident in chapters 9 and 15, leaving the reader with the idea that developing countries like Kenya undertake solid mobile technology-related implementations at universities across their country. The reader is led to understand and appreciate a different vantage point of the book, which is one of its greatest strengths in terms of its content. Reading the cross-cultural look with respect to the use of mobile technologies in an African country like Kenya, the reader can clearly see the extent to which the authors of the book concert effort shed a different light to the m-Learning literature.

Simply put, throughout the book, the authors attempt to incorporate mobile learning tools into curriculum in higher education not only in the United States, but across the world. In terms of the overall content, the reader can benefit from a variety of topics such as mobile social media used for more effective collaborative curriculum design to increase learning outcomes in class, utilizing mobile technologies for faculty development in a collegiate class, pre-service teachers' preparation programs and in-service teachers' professional development, a distance learning course launched in a master's program, reading strategies by use of a digital reading application (i.e., iBooks author application), multimedia projects implemented in multilingual and multicultural classes, improving in-service teachers' work related experiences with mobile technologies, utilizing mobile devices in STEM higher education, mobile technology-based creative pedagogical frameworks and instructional design models such as FRAME and TPACK, and using mobile devices and Web 2.0 tools to catalyze authentic and engaging tasks that university students engage in.

## STRENGTHS

Especially in chapters 9 and 15, educational institutions which implement mobile technology-rich educational programs in Africa are presented to the reader. The authors elaborate on the effectiveness of m-learning—or address issues coming along with it—to highlight the extent to which the country's higher educational system as a whole has developed since 1990s. The fact that the book views learning and teaching in higher education from a cross-cultural perspective is very impressive and highly informative in a way that the reader gains a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the role of mobility in education and in life, in general, in developing countries, Kenya being a good example to this. With that said, implementations with mobile technologies in higher educational institutions

around the world add a substantive value to the overall content of the book. One particular chapter by Yu, Lee, and Ewing (2015) in the book draws attention to the importance of cross-cultural differences in teachers' and students' perceptions about their use of mobile technologies. Yu, Lee, and Ewing (2015) studied cross-cultural differences "in order to explore the effect of national differences and investigate importance of cultural factors on the use of mobile technology" (p. 65).

## WEAKNESSES

Higher educational institutions across disciplines do not seem to be the central population under study of m-learning when compared to student teachers, trainers, in-service teachers, faculty, etc. Thus, the effectiveness of mobile technologies in students' learning processes and the findings that could be obtained from students as participants were not emphasized throughout the book, except for a few chapters including this. For example, in Chapter 4, *Mobile Learning: Trends, Issues, and Challenges in Teaching and Learning*, it was refreshing to read about Taiwanese college students' attitudes and self-efficacy as they utilize mobile technologies in their learning processes. Regarding this, Yang (2012) investigated "mobile learning devices for college students in Taiwan, and showed that most students agreed their motivation for English learning was enhanced and most of the students had positive attitudes towards mobile learning" (p. 66). Further such examples could have been included—not left peripheral—in the book or made part of the general discussion on learning and teaching with mobile devices, so the readers could have been fully informed about college students' perceived use of these handheld devices, or their experiences with and attitudes toward m-Learning.

## SUMMARY

This book requires special expertise for faculty and instructors in higher education utilizing mobile technologies as they design, develop, and deliver content. With its technically rich content both from domestic and cross-cultural perspectives and its cross-disciplinary approach, it is an excellent resource to be introduced to the m-learning literature. The theoretical, pedagogical, and practical frameworks it presents empower the content and are not elusive to the reader. It stands out as a tremendously useful guide not only for teachers, but also for students in collegiate classes and/or master's programs, and therefore, I *highly* recommend this book.

## READERSHIP

Faculty and instructors in higher educational institutions, pre-service and in-service teachers, students enrolled in collegiate courses or master's classes, instructional/curriculum designers, m-Learning content experts, professional development experts, teacher trainers, digital learning/teaching specialists, and educational technologists.

Seda Khadimally specializes in Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and second language acquisition, with a focus on teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) to speakers of other languages. She has designed, delivered, and evaluated instruction by continuous use of educational technologies (both online and blended learning) as she has taught her diverse groups of learners for 17 years now. She also holds an international diploma in Business Administration at University of California at Berkeley, University Extension. Her other academic degrees include a BA in English Language & Literature at Istanbul University, an MEd in Educational Management & Control at Yeditepe University, and an ALM in Educational Technologies at Harvard University. She is completing her doctoral studies in Educational Leadership with Specialization in Educational Technology at School of Advanced Studies (SAS) of University of Phoenix.