

Editorial: Integration and use of mobile and other ICT to support learning

Stewart Marshall

The University of the West Indies, Barbados, West Indies

Wal Taylor

The Information Society Institute (TISI), South Africa

Welcome to Volume 12 Issue 3 of the *International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology (IJEDICT)*. This issue brings articles from or about Burkina Faso, Caribbean, Canada, Hong Kong, India, Mali, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, South Africa, Switzerland, Tanzania, Uganda, and USA.

The article “Pre-service training and ICT implementation in the classroom: ELT teachers’ perceptions” by Hicham Ziad explores practicing teachers’ perceptions of the approach adopted in their pre-service training programs with regard to educational technology. The thrust of the argument in the current study is that the way practicing teachers use educational technology is reflective of the inadequacy of the pre-service training programs that still insist on disentangling ICT from pedagogy and content. It was found that the integration of technology, pedagogy and content was left to the discretion of the teachers. This approach resulted in limited ICT implementation and inconsistent interpretations of how ICT can best be used in the classroom.

In their article, Sousa, Nicolay and Home, evaluate “Information technologies as a tool for agricultural extension and farmer-to-farmer exchange: Mobile-phone video use in Mali and Burkina Faso”. The participating farmers reported that 3G phones are readily accessible: including to people who had previously had limited access to information sources, such as young women. Video based information is particularly advantageous to illiterate farmers, and has potential to transform the typically top-down nature of information flow from extension agents to farmers. The authors conclude that video on mobile phones has tremendous potential as a tool for agricultural extension and farmer-to-farmer exchange in developing countries.

The results of the study “Experiences, perceptions and attitudes on ICT integration: A case study among novice and experienced language teachers in the Philippines” by John Paul Obillos Dela Rosa revealed that whilst the experienced language teacher had more exposure to ICT use than the novice teacher, the latter makes use of more ICT-related materials and activities in her language class. The novice teacher calls for a more knowledgeable manipulation of technological devices and the experienced teacher views insufficiency of resources and services like limited Internet access as detrimental to effective ICT integration. On the other hand, both novice and experienced teachers had positive attitudes towards ICT integration in English Language Teaching and hoped that ICT use would later be strengthened in the Philippines.

Many schools have adopted the Student Response System (SRS) with the purpose of increasing student engagement. However, there is very little research on mobile phone-based SRS using the Internet. In their article “A cross-cohort exploratory study of a student perceptions on mobile phone-based student response system using a polling website”, Adam Wong and Simon Wong report on their exploratory study to fill in this gap. In this study, 274 students, who were at different stages of study at a university, were taught using a mobile phone-based SRS and a polling web site. A subsequent online survey based on the Technology Acceptance Model was conducted. It was found that the students showed high perceived usefulness and high perceived ease of use on the SRS, despite their differences in their stages of study.

The article “Cyberbullying and self-perceptions of students associated with their academic performance” by Maham Muzamil and Gulzar Shah explores the factors influencing students’ academic achievements in secondary school level. Those factors include students’ self-reported psychological issues (e.g. perception of being bullied through social media) as well as socioeconomic status. The study shows that traditional as well as cyberbullying may have a significant negative impact on students’ academic performance when socioeconomic status is not considered in the model.

A large study of classrooms in the Caribbean context necessitated the use of a validated classroom observation tool. In an effort to promote efficiency of observation and data collection, the Stalling’s classroom observation tool was reconfigured as an iPad® application. The research described in the article “Evaluating classroom interaction with the iPad®: An updated Stalling’s tool” by MacKinnon, Schep, Lunney Borden, Murray-Orr, Orr and MacKinnon used four independent studies (utilizing video of classroom practice) in an attempt to establish reliability and validity of the new iPad®-based classroom observation instrument.

Few empirical studies have reported on the development of mobile phone application to support blended learning for smallholder farming communities in developing countries. The article “Mobile learning bridging the gap in agricultural extension service delivery: Experiences from Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania” by Sanga, Mlozi, Haug and Tumbo, addresses this gap. It reports on a participatory action research project to develop innovative communication pathways in dissemination of agricultural knowledge and proven agricultural technologies from either extension agents or agricultural research centres or universities to farmers.

The article “Activity Theory as a lens to understand how Facebook develops knowledge application skills” by Bagarukayo, Ssentamu, Mayisela and Brown explores how technological approaches can be adopted to produce better graduates with ability to apply knowledge in real life situations. The study aimed to explore 1) how Facebook affords students to transfer knowledge acquired in the lecture room to the workroom and 2) the usefulness of Activity Theory (AT) as a lens to analyze how students interact with Facebook to develop knowledge application skills.

The article “Evaluating shared access to ICTs” by Richa Kumar is a book Review of “Public Access ICT across Cultures: Diversifying Participation in the Network Society,” edited by Francesco J. Proenza and published by MIT Press in 2015. This edited volume is a timely reminder that there is still a large segment of the world’s population that is dependent on public access points. In light of the recent World Development Report 2016, “Digital Dividend”, this book provides valuable insights on the experience of ICT inclusion projects around the world.

Stewart Marshall and Wal Taylor
Chief Editors, IJEDICT

Copyright for articles published in IJEDICT is retained by the authors, with first publication rights granted to the journal. By their appearance in this open-access journal, articles are free to use, with proper attribution, in educational and other non-commercial settings.

Original article at <http://ijedict.dec.uwi.edu/viewarticle.php?id=2263>