PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PERCEPTION OF MOBILE BLOGS IN EDUCATION

Dr. ISIYAKU ABDULRAHEEM

Department of Primary Education Studies Kaduna State College of Education Gidan-Waya Kafancha

ABSTRACT

The use of mobile blogs in teaching and learning in Nigeria is still at its infancy and a review in the pre-service teacher learning process has become pertinent due to numerous benefits that blogs proffer. One hundred questionnaires were distributed exploring perceptions of pre-service teachers. Descriptive analysis was carried out in the analysis of data using thee Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. Majority of pre-service teachers were aware of blogs though they still had insufficient information of its use in learning, also pre-service teachers were more interested in the benefits of creative thinking, dissemination of information and ability to view pictures and videos of concepts as well as discussion with classmates. However privacy issues, solitary led insufficient information still limited the adoption of blogs in learning in Nigeria. There is need for to create an enabling environment for intellectual exchange by aligning the College of Education to promote creative thinking, collaborative learning and visualization of concepts in learning

KEYWORDS: Mobile Blogs, Learning, Nigeria & Pre-service Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Globally, technology had influenced on every aspect of human endeavour; agriculture, transportation, and communication among others. Specifically, technology had influenced the process of education through provision of innovative tools, platforms, environment and approaches. In view of this, many educational institutions are now using online tools, virtual learning environment and e-learning into their instruction as part of the technological revolution in education. The speed of this revolution is made possible through mobile technologies that have enhanced teaching and learning opportunities beyond the four walls of classroom setting. They have increased access to education for the

numbers of people who can afford the technology and integrate such technologies as part of the tools to accomplish their daily activities.

Mobile technology is overwhelming among the young ones because they are digital natives. These are individuals whose lives are greatly influenced by digital technologies such as mobile devices and platforms. Therefore, employing these mobile devices for teaching and learning among secondary school students had been advocated (Garba, 2018). Mobile devices such as smartphones in the hand of the young ones are 'engaging-machines' which engage them in day and night meaningfully or otherwise via playing of game, reading news, listening to audio, watching video, interacting with friends, creating and sharing posts among others. Mobile learning is a learning away from one's normal learning environment or learning involving the use of mobile devices (Adedoja and Ambimbade, 2013). M-learning is provided by the e-Learning Guild as an activity that allows individuals to be more productive when consuming, interacting, or creating information, mediated through a compact digital portable device that the individual carries on a regular basis and has reliable connectivity (Duffy, 2008).). M-learning has the same advantages as e-learning over traditional lectures, but extends its reach by making use of portable wireless technologies (Kumar, 2009). Devices such as digital media player, smartphone and personal digital assistants that could be used for m-learning come in-handy and can be used anytime, even while travelling on transport or waiting on queue in an office (Ma Q. and Liu L., (2004)).

At the initial invention of Web, all forms of online media were described as a one-way street as they didn't feature interactivity nor commentary. However, with the rapid development, proliferation, and the emergence of Web 2.0 (Oravec, 2002) and beyond, a new means of expressing opinions and gain access to information instantly emerged. Web 2.0 is the term used to describe a variety of web sites and applications that allow anyone to create and share online information or material they have created. A key element of the technology is that it allows people to create, share, collaborate and communicate (Xie, Ke and Sharma, 2008).). Web 2.0 differs from other types of websites as it does not require any web design or publishing skills to participate, making it easy for people to create and publish or communicate their work to the world.

Web 2.0 technologies are digital tools to communicate with the students and delivery platforms for educational contents. The nature of this technology

makes it an easy and popular way to communicate information to either a select group of people or to a much wider audience. Teacher can make use of these tools to communicate with students, staff and the wider academic community (Nwangwa, Yonionfoun and Omotere, 2014). It can also be an effective way to communicate and interact with students and research colleagues. There are number of different types of web 2.0 applications including wikis, blogs, social media, folksonomies, podcasting and content hosting services among others (Omotunde et al., 2014). But among all these application, weblog has been overwhelming embraced as a means of communicating to the larger audience and receive feedback via comments (Al-Busaidi and Al-Shihi 2010).

Blogs are new form of mainstream personal communication, allowing millions of people to publish and exchange knowledge/information, and to establish networks or build relationships in the blog world (Du, and Wagner, 2007). A blog is a contraction of the words web log. Blogs usually provide commentary or information on a particular issue, event or topic. In some cases, blogs can be about a particular person; an online, public, personal diary. A blog is usually maintained by a single person or a small group of contributors. Visitors to the blog can comment on the entries made or respond to comments made by other visitors. Blogs are primarily textual but can also accommodate any form of images, sounds, or video (Davis, Frydenherg, Gulati, 2007). Blog was proclaimed "word of the year" in 2004 by Meriam-Webster online dictionary. Like other media, blogs often focus on a particular subject, such as education, technology, or politics (Hain and Back 2008).

There are several ways of categorizing blogs, some authors give consideration to media types and in this category there are vblog (video blog); a linkblog (comprising links to others website), audio-blog (comprises of audios) and textual blogs (comprise text and graphics) and combination of all is known as multimedia-blog. Another way is legal status: A blog can be private, as in most cases, or it can be for business purposes. Blogosphere are the search engines which are used to search the contents of the blogs available on the net (Kim, 2008.). The devices in which the blogs were designed to suit is another category; a blog customized with specificity of mobile devices using cross platform application screen to accommodate size, Random Memory Capability (RMC), among others, are refers to mobile blog.

The term "mobile blog" is a combination of two words, mobile and web log. It was coined (Countinho, 2007). Mobile blogs are web log where entries are posted by a mobile device (Adedoja and Abimbade, 2013.). In similar fashion, the term mobile blogging is used to refer to action of sending an entry to a weblog by mobile device. Mobile blogs are used to facilitate context-sensitive learning (Ferdig, 2009). Students use mobile blogs to learn about basic concepts in data structure concepts (Ma and Liu, 2004). Mobile blogs serve as platforms that allow users to send, edit and publish their post via logging into the mobile blogs platform or via mobile message (sms or mms). In addition, the platform also enables users to send and receive messages between other mobile bloggers, make personal profiles and produce topical mobile circles (Omotunde et al, 2019). Mobile blog is essentially similar to blog and the only difference is in the method of delivery an entry.According to the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fisbein & Ajzen, 1975) human behaviour is shaped by perception, hence the objective of this paper is to ascertain the level of awareness of pre-service teachers on the use of blogs and the perception of NCE pre-service teachers on the perceived benefits and challenges in the use of mobile blogs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

E-learning has seen rapid development in recent years and is currently changing teaching and learning in higher educational institutions leading to new pedagogical approaches (Sharples *et al.,* 2009). This growth has been aided by advancements in mobile technology such as the introduction of 3G or third generation wireless system (Boas, 2011) allowing high-speed web service over the Internet, as well as production of mobile devices that includes tablet PCs (e.g. Apple iPad, Samsung Galaxy Tab) and multimedia-enabled smartphones. As mobile technology's nature is wireless, it allows users of m-learning to study just about anything, anywhere and at any time (Ally, 2009; Sharples *et al.,* 2009; Traxler, 2009; Siraj & Nonnan, 2011). One of the mobile web 2.0 technologies that show promise in facilitating teaching and learning is mobile blogs or "moblogs". Yet, the implementation of moblog technology in higher educational institutions is relatively new (Kin, 2011; Huang et al., 2009; Traxler, 2009), thus calling for a need for further investigation of their role in learning and instruction (Ryberg & Christiansen, 2008; Nordin *et al.,* 2010; Din *et al.,* 2011; Wong & Lui, 2011; Hussin *et al.,* 2012).

In a survey on the perception of pre-service teachers to blogging, Halic et at (2010) reported that majority of pre-service teachers found blogging enhanced their learning, it was also found that pre-service teachers with persona] blogs were more interested in blogging than pre-service teachers who did not have blogs (Kim 2008). Pre-service teachers also recognize the importance of blogs in facilitating intellectual exchange and improving classroom interaction (Davi et al. (2007); William & Jacob (2004). Blogs can be used as collaborative tools as reported by Davi et al, 2007 & Farmer ct.al. 2008). Blogs enable knowledge sharing of concepts learnt among pre-service teachers, Participation in group assignments and also serve as an information dissemination tool, Collaborating with lecturers and peers on concepts learnt has been said to the one of the most important benefits of blogging in education (Farmer et al. , 2008).

The Creative and analytical ability if pre-service teachers is also stimulated by the use of blogs (Duffy, 2008). Blogs enable pre-service teachers to think deeply on concepts learnt and relate these concepts to real-life issues. Hemmi et al. (2009) also states that pre-service teachers develop ideas due to the reflective nature of blogs. Blogs can be used as a platform for reflecting deeply on concepts learnt (Deng, Yuen, 2009) Halle et al. 2008) that when blogs are used for collaborative learning, peers prefer to read other peoples entries than write their own. Kim (2008) also found that pre-service teachers preferred blogging in personal blogs than group blogs. It was also noted that peer feedback affected the reflective thinking benefits of blogs (Xie et al, 2003) which is corroboted by Adedoja & Abimbade in stating that pre-service teachers and lecturer determine the success of blogs in education.

Blogs in Nigeria is still at its infancy, research on social media in education has focused majorly on academic performance of pre-service teachers in Nigeria (Ajewole & Fashola (2011); Onjeka Sajoh & Bulus(2013), Oluwatoyin (2011). Education in Nigeria must shift from tradition and embrace technology so as to achieve the benefits of higher education learning rather than the present focus on academic performance .Pre-service teachers attitude toward blogs determine its success. Diyaolu & Rifqah (2015) in a study on the educational use of web 2.0 tools among pre-service teachers found that 50 % of respondents found blogs useful in learning. Nwangwa et al, (2014) also suggests that pre-service teachers rely on blogs to develop their creative writing skills.

The study aims to answer 2 main questions

1. What are the perceived benefits and challenges on the use of mobile blogs among undergraduate pre-service teachers
2. What is the perception of the use of mobile blogs as it relates to learning

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Several theories have been adopted in explaining the acceptance of technologies. These models include theory of planned behavior (Fisbein & Ajzen, 1975) Unified theory of acceptance and Use of Technology (Venkatesh et al. 2003), Diffusion of innovation (Rogers, 1995), Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) amongst others.

Technology acceptance model has been seen to be widely accepted amongst researchers (Ma & Liu, 2004)). TAM postulates that behavioural intention and attitude is access by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of the system .Perceived usefulness is defined as the belief by a user that using a system will improve performance while perceived ease of use is the degree in which a user perceives a system free of effort (Davis, 1989).

This study did not adopt these models due to the focus of the research which was not solely on technical issues as relates to use which has been seen as a limitation of the user acceptance models (Al-Busald and Al-shishi, 2010)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was made up of Kaduna State College of Education Pre-service Teacher. This study was carried out using accidental sampling method. This method was adopted due to the differences in subscription among colleges. The overall sample size was 100. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection, to ensure face validity, the questionnaire was evaluated by other information science professionals to test its validity and modification was made based on assessment. Content validity was established by carrying out a pilot study, in which 10 pre-service teachers participated.

Descriptive analysis was used in the analysis of the data. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A measured the demographic characteristics of pre-service teachers ranging from gender, colleges and level of study. Section B measured the awareness and intention to use mobile blogs in education considering the specific benefits that blogs proffer. The questions were measured using a dichotomous scale of 'yes' and 'no' and Liken scales ranging

from strongly agree to strongly disagree, while Section C measures the perceived benefits and challenges of blogs in education.

RESULT

There was an even distribution of respondents of 54.9% were male and 45.1% were female. Respondents were also spread across technical education and 1evel of study with Department of Technical Education and amounting for majority with 52.7%.

TABLE 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	100	54.9
Female	82	45.1
Level of Study (N.C.E)		
100 Level	37	20.3
200 Level	55	30.2
300 Level	61	33.5
Section of Study		
Woodwork Tech	40	16.5
Metal Work Tech	38	11.4
Electrical & Electronic	36	10.8

Awareness and Use of Mobile Blogs in Education
95.6% of respondents indicated their awareness of mobile blogs; only 79.7% indicated their willingness to use mobile blogs in learning

TABLE 2: Awareness and Use of Mobile Blogs

|	Yes	No
Awareness of Blogs	47.3	1.7
Willingness to use Blogs	38.3	10.1

PERCEPTION OF MOBILE BLOGS IN EDUCATION

Table 3 reveals majority of respondents are interested in using blogs in learning. More than 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that blogs will improve their learning ability in general. Use of emerging technologies such as blogs improves the interest of pre-service teachers in learning

TABLE 3: Perception of Mobile Blogs in Learning

Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
Engaging in Discussions online will help remember concepts taught in class			
47.8	42.3	2.2	7.7
Discussing with Lecturers online will enable me Learn better			
47.8	39.0	3.8	8.8
Blogs will improve my writing skills			
39.6	40.7	7.7	11.5
Blogs will enable me share knowledge with classmates			
45.6	45.6	I2.2	6.6
Blogs will make learning interesting			
52.7	39.6	I0.5	I7.1

PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF MOBILE BLOGS IN LEARNING

In the assessment of the perceived benefits of mobile blogs in learning creative thinking and dissemination of classroom news were perceived highest with 58.2% respectively, also viewing concepts taught in pictures , videos and games amounted to 57.7%, perceived benefits of Discussion with classmates amounted to 55.5%.
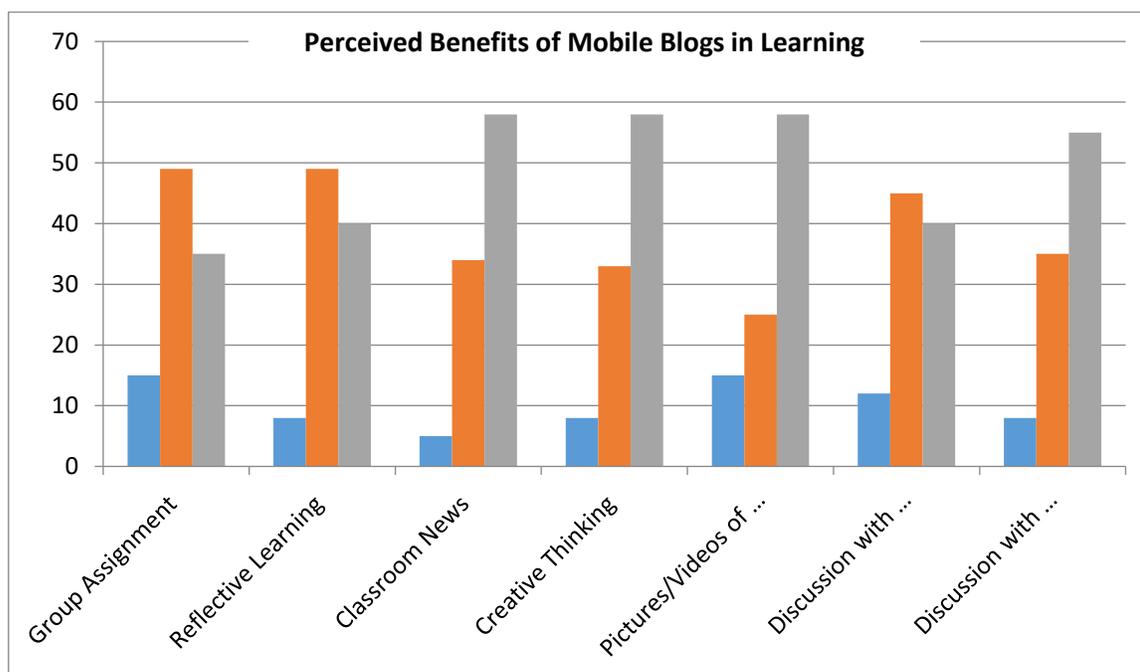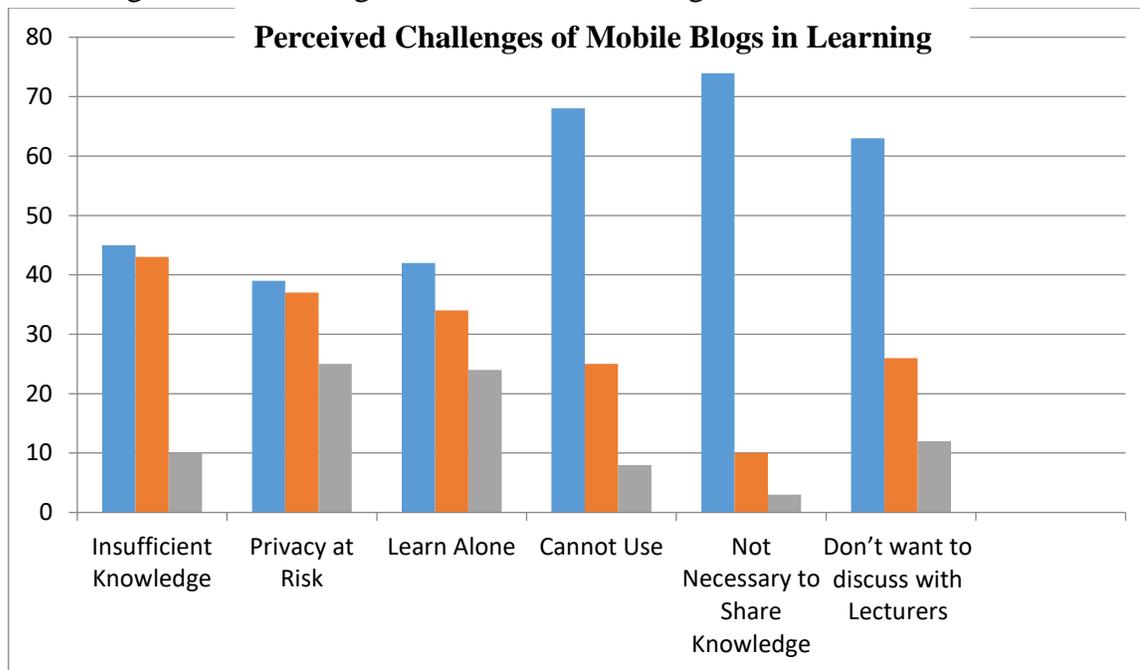
TABLE 4: Perceived Benefits of Mobile Blogs in Learning

Mobile Blogs in Learning	Low	Medium	High
Group Assignment	7.4	24.5	16.1
Reflective Learning	4.0	25.5	20.1
Classroom News	3.0	17.1	26.2
Creative Thinking	3.7	16.1	26.2
Ability to View Pictures, Videos & Games of Concept	7.4	12.5	25.5
Discussion with Lecturers	6.5	23.1	17.3
Discussion with Classmates	3.6	16.1	27.5

PERCEIVED CHALLENGES OF MOBILE BLOGS IN LEARNING

23.6 % of respondents stated that mobile blogs put their privacy at risk and also stated that they preferred learning alone which amounted to the highest perceived challenge affecting the adoption of mobile blogs in learning, Medium

and high challenges amounted for more than 50% of the total size of respondents. Also more than 50% of respondents still have an insufficient knowledge of mobile blogs as it relates to learning.

Perceived Challenges of Mobile Blogs in Learning

TABLE 5: Perceived Challenges of Mobile Blogs in Learning

Mobile Blogs in Learning	Low	Medium	High
Insufficient Knowledge of Blogs	22.1	21.4	5.5
Mobile Blogs Puts Privacy at Risk	16.5	17.4	11.7
Learning Alone	20.4	16.2	11.7
Cannot Use Blogs	34.1	11.5	3.5
Not Necessary to Share Knowledge	43.2	5.2	1.3
I don't want to discuss with Lecturers	31.1	12.1	5.7

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings show that majority of pre-service teachers are aware of mobile blogs in learning, however not all pre-service are willing to use it in learning.

The analysis also revealed that more than 80% of respondents stated that mobile blogs will improve their ability to learn. However factors that limited the actual adoption of mobile blogs in learning. More than 50% of respondents stated that mobile blogs put their privacy at risk (60.4%) pre-service teacher also said they preferred learning alone (57.1%), 53.9% stated that they had insufficient knowledge of mobile blogs in learning. These factors limited the actual adoption of mobile blogs in Learning. The analysis also revealed that the perceived benefits of mobile blogs most significant to pre-service teacher include creative thinking, dissemination of classroom news, viewing pictures, videos and games on concepts learnt and ability to discuss with classmates on mobile blogs. These findings have implications for colleges administrators and practitioners as today's generation of pre-service teachers are visual preferring concepts to be animated. There is also need to show pre-service teachers the benefits of knowledge sharing and negate fears about privacy preservation in the digital sphere. College administrators should also conduct training sessions on the usage of mobile blogs in learning before its adoption in learning.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the results of this study indicate that pre-service teachers perceive mobile blogs useful in learning and are willing to use this tool as part of their learning environment. However, they still face the limitation of isolated learning, fears of privacy and insufficient knowledge of mobile blogs. Emphasis should be made on aligning the colleges of education curriculum to promote creative thinking, collaborative learning and visualization of concepts in learning. It is therefore recommended that colleges of education administrators modify the current curriculum to enable participatory learning as knowledge is better retained when critically analyzed and shared, this will invariably improve the teaching- learning process.

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