Proposal for Project

Title: Mobile Learning in Developing Countries

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Learning as a process has always been a challenging at times. It requires a lot of attention and motivation from the learners themselves, and most of the times additional properties are needed such as learning materials in a form of text books, direct knowledge transfers from teachers, or multimedia equipments.

In developing countries, learning process is even more challenging and can be a frustrating affair. One example is in India where education seems restricted to urban areas while it is still nascent in the rural areas due to its population that normally do not have access to basic amenities or the luxury to pursue education by choice (Sampangi, Viswanath & Ray, 2010). Another example will be in Ghana’s rural areas where there are a lot of challenges faced by education development. Among those challenges are the lack of teachers, small numbers of trained teachers, and the lack of equipment in schools (Grimus, Ebner & Holzinger, 2013).

One of the solutions to break this problem is the use of distance learning in a form of mobile learning. This method of learning allows anyone to access information and learning materials from anywhere at any time without any boundaries. Learners will also feel empowered due to the fact that they can learn what they want to and they do not have to wait for certain time to learn or to go to a certain place to acquire the knowledge (Ally, 2009).

Mobile learning technology is the new approach that is brought to conventional classroom. Mobile learning technology includes mobile phones, handheld devices, i-pad, tablet and other kinds of portable devices. Primarily, Mobile learning focus on interaction with the mobile devices and mobility of learners. Being convenient and accessible from everywhere, mobile learning is collaborative like other forms of e-learning. The technology has been proven as effective learning tool to increase rates of mobile users for learning purposes and moreover, decrease rates of dropouts in technical field by 22 percents.(Crompton, 2013)

An interesting fact found in India is that with or without proper education, people have no difficulty in operating a mobile phone (Sampangi, Viswanath & Ray, 2010) as indicated through report by Telecom Regulatory Authority in India (TRAI) stating the presence of more than 100 million mobile phone subscribers in rural India as of 2009. This data indicates that mobile learning is feasible to be done in developing countries not only for its flexibility but also due to its ease of use by people.
PROBLEM STATEMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

In developing countries, many children don’t have an opportunity to attend the schools and some of them that are enrolled in schools drop out of primary education. Moreover, in some countries, traditional role patterns stops parents enrolling girls in school. Some countries like Africa, Middle East that have strong gender preference for boys, the chance of gender equalities for girls is greater. Furthermore, there are some more reasons why people are prevented from going to schools. Some of them are -

- **Inadequate Budget**
  
  Normally, allocated budget for education is low to meet the requirements. According to UNESCO, developing countries only use average 4.4 percent of national income to education. As the number of school-age children is growing, more investment will still be needed in educational sectors.

- **Lack of School and Teaching Staff**
  
  As mentioned above, due to inadequate budgets on education, most of the schools are poorly supplied lacking text books and teaching materials. Teachers are working under unacceptable conditions. Some are the schools are forced to remain closed because of the shortage of teachers.

- **Costs of Attending School**
  
  Many people in developing countries can’t afford to pay school fees and overall charges.

- **Failing Education System**

  Since the education is not sufficiently funded, course are not updated, only few are sufficiently fulfil their researches.

General objective of the study is to propose mobile learning technology as the learning materials to eliminate the barriers of education. Being available and accessible everywhere, learners don’t need to go far away schools and it helps to save costs on education also as not much teachers are needed to guide the lectures when they can do self study by themselves. Moreover, teachers and students are encouraged to interact with each other and sharing contents is instant since updated learning tools and resources can be downloaded easily.

**RESEARCH SCOPE**

This study will be conducted over the course of one semester, starting from January 2014 until May 2014. The materials collected will be focused in developing countries and how to utilize the use of mobile learning in such areas, including the development and application stage, problem and constraints faced, and the evaluation of the results and outcome of the development.
IMPLICATIONS

The study will explore opportunities of using mobile as an e-learning tool in remote areas or developing countries where there are people who are not familiar with advanced technology, in doing so, will attempt to:

- Examine the outline of the current area of domain
- Identify the problems and constraints of the research area
- Provide more insight on constructing a comprehensive mobile learning concept in developing countries.
- Evaluate the results and outcomes of the development.

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

Below are the preliminary approaches to cover the research areas such as background educational situation, factors influencing to use enhanced technology in learning, applicability, usability and sustainability of mobile learning concept in these countries:

- Inspecting literature in advance before quantitative and qualitative research
- Generalizing the results
- Identifying most well documented and most suitable project articles or journals
- Studying more details and sifting the most relevant data.
- Figuring out the facts that are not noted or covered in researches
- Transforming the gathered information into actual work (term paper)
- Evaluation of the work and changes

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

The following dates are the major milestones for this project. This list of milestones is used to generate the project schedule.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project selection</td>
<td>24th Jan 2014</td>
<td>Forms to be submitted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project proposal submission</td>
<td>30th Jan 2014</td>
<td>To schedule meeting with supervisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work on Project</td>
<td>3rd Feb - 13th March 2014</td>
<td>To schedule meeting with supervisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit IRB Application</td>
<td>14th March 2014</td>
<td>Subjected to approval from ethics committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work on Project</td>
<td>17th March - 14th April 2014</td>
<td>To schedule meeting with supervisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of project presentation</td>
<td>15th April - 20th April 2014</td>
<td>To schedule meeting with supervisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project presentation</td>
<td>21st April 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final report submission</td>
<td>5th May 2014</td>
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**REFERENCES**


