

KEY DETERMINANTS OF M-LEARNING ADOPTION FOR OPTIMAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORKPLACE IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Professionals often find it difficult to find time to attend training. Still in its infancy in South Africa, mobile learning (m-learning) – learning using a web-enabled mobile electronic device such as a cell phone or tablet – holds promise as a platform to deliver relatively convenient and inexpensive learning programmes. This intensive study sought to identify the factors key to m-learning adoption for professional development and how they affected m-learning in a South African context. Accountancy practitioners and business school students were invited to participate in this study, and human resource directors were interviewed to gauge their responses to similar questions from a corporate point of view. The constructs of Ally and Gardiner's Hybrid Smart Mobile Device Acceptance Model (2012), which explored the moderating influence of device characteristics and usage on acceptance of smart mobile devices, was adapted to form the framework for the study. Two dimensions were added to the constructs of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (relevance and tool sets) to explore what aided construction of meaning. The four top factors – relevance, enjoyability, the perception of being in control, and motivation, each bore a significant relationship to the other, along with a sense of security, organisational beliefs, and others' beliefs. A third dimension – willpower, added to explore hedonic motivation, brought to light issues that sapped willpower, rather than supported it. Participants expressed a marked preference for independent rather than social learning. While a sturdy framework for m-learning construction emerged from this study, the findings are not generalisable.
