PERCEPTION OF YOUNG ADULTS ON THE USE OF MOBILE LEARNING FOR PRE-MARITAL COURSE IN MALAYSIA: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Mobile learning is a learning method delivered by using mobile devices and technologies. Previous studies indicate that mobile learning has potential to enhance formal as well as informal learning in Islamic marital practices. This study focuses on how young adults perceive the use of mobile devices for pre-marital course. Eighty participants in the pre-marital course held in Malaysia were gathered for the study. A structured questionnaire was distributed to the gathered participants and the final results were based on their valid responses. The results indicate that participants' expectations on mobile learning expectations of mobile learning were very high and two-thirds of them were interested to learn more about Islamic marital practices through mobile learning. Based on the results, a few pedagogical recommendations have been made for the relevant authorities.

Keywords: young adult perceptions; mobile learning; m-learning; marriage course.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Mobile devices are crucial in our daily life today because they are not only used for voice

communication, but also offer mobility for accessing information. The function of mobile device covers almost all human daily activities including performing office works, business, entertainment, personal diaries, location trackers, mobile libraries, health system and more. Nowadays, the main function of a mobile device is to find information various sources such as Google, e-book, e-libraries and e-magazine.

In Malaysia, the potential use of mobile device or devices throughout the paper for learning is increasing because its usage keeps growing every year. According to [21], the number of smartphone users in Malaysia for 2017 is estimated to reach 17.8 million (60% from total Malaysian population) and the number is increasing almost to 21.3 million in 2021. The enhancement and improvement of mobile tools and technologies increases the usage of mobile devices for educational purposes [15]. Mobile learning or m-learning technologies has become ubiquitous in education because of its capability to provide a medium of lifelong learning [4]. Previous studies also indicated that m-learning has a great potential to be an effective learning tool because of new innovation and improvement of mobile devices [7]. In Malaysia, the adoption of m-learning as one of the educational tools is not new. Several courses have been designed for m-learning, such as, science for primary education [11], structural programming [19] and basic computer architecture [8] for higher education and Islamic education for secondary education [10]. Generally, the feedback received from teachers and students are positive and satisfactory [13] which proven the potential of its implementation.

Among the benefits of m-learning as an educational medium for learners and teachers, likely are its portability character which may reduce the use of lecture halls or tutorial rooms [16]. It also aided distance learning, reduce cultural communication barrier between teachers and learners [17] and provide quick feedback, engagement and motivation improvement [12].

In the nutshell, m-learning can be one of the promising and potential learning mediums for the current and future generation. Hence, it can be one of the alternatives in providing the knowledge to unmarried and married couples for their life time or lifelong learning because of its higher acceptance among younger generation [14]. Lifelong learning is known as a consistency in learning over one's life and beyond formal educational settings that provide flexibility in common ways in which the learning takes place. The concept of continuing

education may lead to skills, academic and personal developments [20].

The promising features of mobile technology in providing a medium for lifelong learning can be used an alternative medium to educate our new generation on Islamic marital practices for their lifetime. Islamic marital practices are important because it prepares Muslim young adults for marriage and throughout their married life (marital enrichment program) as a husband and wife. In developed countries, to reduce the divorce rates among the married couples various educational programs were introduced such as pre-marital preparation, facilitate married couple communication, relationship enhancement and couples coping training and many more.

In Malaysia, pre-marital course is made compulsory by the religious department. It is conducted in conventional way, which consists of instructor and participants. The purpose of this course is to disseminate the Islamic marital practices education to help individual and couples to achieve happiness and success in marriage. Islamic marital practices are not limited to pre-marriage course only, they consist of knowledge and skills to be practiced and implemented throughout their relationship and life time [5]. Thus, the teaching and learning process implemented in this course should be engaging and interactive to attract participants' attention. In line with the development of technology, computer-aided learning through interactive multimedia application is one of the recommended ways of learning [1] in the 21st Century Curriculum.

The course also initiated to overcome the rising numbers of divorce rate among Muslim couples in Malaysia. It has been reported by the Syariah Judiciary Department Malaysia that the number of Muslim couple divorce cases are more than 274,000 for the last 5 years. Hence, the average estimation of divorces also reported to be 156 cases per day.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the perception and acceptance of the young adults on the implementation of m-learning as a lifelong learning medium for pre-marital course in Malaysia. According to State Adolescent Health Resource Centre, young adult is generally a person in the age range of 18 to 24. This is the range of age who contributes to the highest usage of Internet and mobile technologies [21]

The findings from this study will contribute to the development of m-learning pre-marital course model that will adopt the multimedia learning principles. In the next section, this paper

will explain more on the concept of Malaysia pre-marital course, followed by the findings and the discussion.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study adopts a mixed methodology that is best to implement a theoretical study. The methodology suggested that the data collection and analysis either qualitative or quantitative data first. Consecutively, the results of the study will be integrated in the interpretation phase. Instrument that was used to collect primary data is the pre-study survey. All participants were required to complete the pre-study survey. This survey gathered learners' views on the use of mobile learning for pre-marital course. The results of this survey determined their learning preferences (i.e., their degree of comfort with adopting mobile technology in learning).

2.1. Sample

A total of 80 participants gathered for the study. They enrolled in pre-marriage course that was held in Gombak, Selangor. As shown in Table 1, of the 80 participants, 40 were male and 40 were female. The age of the participants ranged from 18 years to 26 years.

Table 1. Range of participants' age

Age	18-20	21-23	24 and Above
Male	8	22	10
Female	24	10	6
Total	32	32	16

2.2. The Design of the Instrument

The multidimensional instrument of questionnaire was developed in 5 sections to capture respondents' information. Section 1 contained respondent demographic. Section 2 focused on courses' characteristic with close ended question. Section 3 captured the information on the learning module based on 5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree). Section 4 consisted the proposed criteria that should be included in the mobile learning module. This section was measured with three items questionnaire. Section 5 provided details of the general views and comments from respondents. The questionnaire is shown in Table 2.

Table 1. Sample of questionnaires

<table>
<tr><td>

FEEDBACK FORM

PERCEPTION OF YOUNG ADULT ON THE USE OF MOBILE LEARNING FOR

PRE-MARITAL COURSE IN MALAYSIA (RESPONDENT)

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The objective of this questionnaire is to obtain feedback on the medium of instruction in courses that you attended. Thank you for your cooperation.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">

PART A
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Age:</td><td>Education Level:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gender:</td><td>Field:</td></tr>
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PART B

Circle your answer and provide an explanation for the related questions.

#	Course Aspect	Answer
1	Is it important to get reference after attended this course?	Yes | No
2	If you have questions regarding Munakahat (married, marriage, problems, etc.), where are the resources that you will refer to?	Resources:
3	Do you feel sufficient to gain knowledge of Munakahat if just attend this course?	Yes | No
4	Is the solution of Munakahat problems can be found through the following ways: (You can select more than one option)	• References material • Pre-marriage course • Expert • Internet • Other:_____
5	In your opinion, is Munakahat problems can be prevented through this course only?	Yes | No

#.	Module Content Aspect	Answer				
1	What is your understanding level towards module provided in this course? (1-not understand, 2-partially understand, 3-understand, 4-partially satisfied, 5-very satisfied)	1	2	3	4	5
2	Do you will going to refer references book provided by courses' organizer again after attending this course?	Yes		|		No

#	Initiative Aspect	Answer
1	Do you agree if the mobile application related to Munakahat matter will be created? State your reasons why it is needed.	Yes | No Reason:
2	Are the use of current technology such as video, audio, animation and interactive learning can increase the level of understanding of the participants?	Yes | No
3	Are the 'real time chat' virtual question and answer to the Munakahat issue is important?	Yes | No
4	If the application is created, what are the features that you are expected? (You can select more than one option)	• Portable • Touch screen • Offline • Freeware • Interaction • Multimedia content • Other : _____

#.	General View Aspect	Answer
1	In your opinion, what are the main causes of marital problems that happen? (Please specify in the order number)	o Lack of religion knowledge o Financial problem o Background differences o Attitudes differences o Family/third party involvement o Other : _____
2	In your opinion, is the pre-marital course will prevent the collapse of the marriage?	Yes | No
3	Does the increase in the divorce case due to lack of understanding of Islam against the Islamic knowledge?	Yes | No
4	In your opinion, what is the best solution to address the problem related to Munakahat issue?	Solution:
5	Do you tend to use the mobile application as a main reference for lifelong learning after this?	Yes | No

If you have any comments or suggestions to the relevant mobile multimedia applications, please specify:

2.3. Model of Mobile Lifelong Learning for Pre-Marital Course

As for the suggestion, a mobile application which integrates multimedia elements and principles will be designed for learning about pre-marital course. The suggestion also takes into account the mobile lifelong learning concepts as a supplementary material for learning

about marriage.

Fig. 1 depicts the model of mobile lifelong learning for this study. Five important guidelines and elements have been identified as important for the mobile learning for pre-marital study based on the literatures and previous studies. This model is adapted from the study of persuasive hajj learning environment [9] by using multimedia integrated. They are related to CTML theories, multimedia principles and mobile learning principles. Further details on how the model guidelines were used in the pre-marital prototype application are elaborated in the following sections.
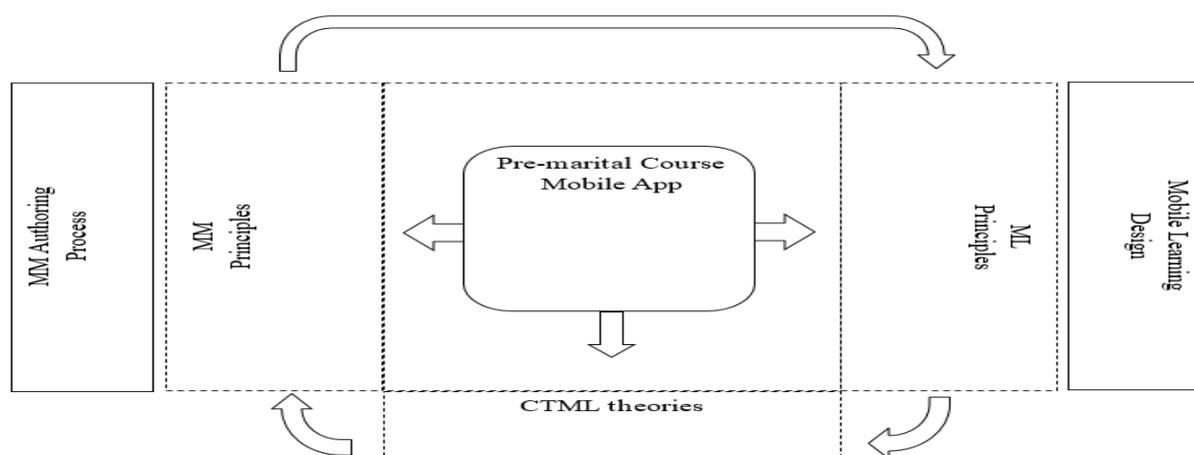
Fig.1. The model of mobile lifelong learning for pre-marital course

The principles and guidelines were referred to three parts: mobile learning principles, multimedia design guidelines and CTML principles as shown in the model of study (Fig. 1).

2.4. Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)

This research will adopt the principles of Cognitive Theory of Mult1med1a Content (CTML), which is important in designing instructional tool [2]. According to this theory, the visual information processing channel may become overloaded when students must process on-screen graphics and on-screen text at the same time. However, when words are presented as narration, words can be processed in the verbal channel, thereby reducing the cognitive load in the visual channel [18]. In several studies testing this theory, both non-interactive multimedia environments and interactive media environments were used. The results show students who learn from interactive (graphics and narration) learn more deeply and perform better on problem solving transfer tests than students who learn from non-interactive (graphics and on-screen text) [3]. The strength of the above facts and CTML theories can be

best implemented for preparing a comprehensive content for JAKIM pre-marriage course. The idea of combining the nature of multimedia learning and CTML model is likely to fit into three multimedia pedagogy principles of engagement, presence and flexibility.

2.5. Multimedia Learning Principles

Based on [18] multimedia principles, there are seven principles for the multimedia design principles proposed as guidelines for development process. Some of principles seem to be suited with the concept of study in order to give lifelong learning impact to learners. Therefore, four principles will be used in the mobile learning application for pre-marital course which is multimedia principle, contiguity principle, modality principle and signaling principle.

2.6. Mobile Learning Principles

Mobile learning apps or m-learning, mean learning that is done through portable devices such as smartphones and tablets. Mobile platform have big potential to attract users' engagement and interest towards learning. In order to maintain users' engagement and to ensure that the learning content is suit with the mobile devices, all of mobile learning principles design will be applied to design of mobile learning. From analysis of the data, the following characteristics are recommended for the incorporation of mobile learning into a pre-marital course; Real world relevance, Mobile contexts, Explore, Blended, Whenever, Wherever, Whomsoever, Affordances, Personalise, Mediation and Produse.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we present and discuss the results of our study. We specifically present the findings on respondents' level of understanding during the pre-marital course, main reference for marital problem solving, the important of reference as problem solving and the use of mobile learning for pre-marital course.
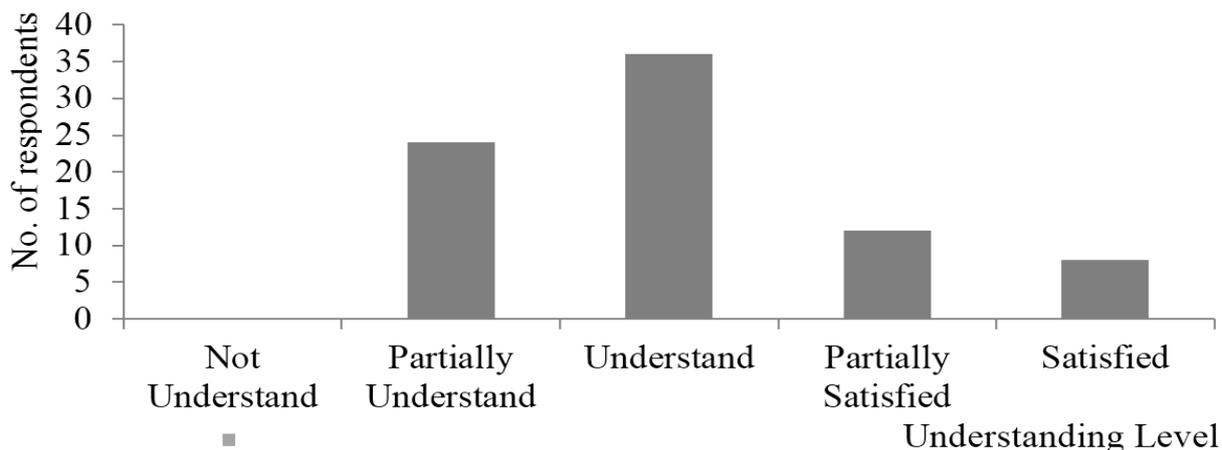
Fig.2. Level of understanding of the course contents among participants

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of understanding towards the delivered course based on five-point Likert-scale. In Fig. 2, majority of respondents understood the delivered course and only a few fully satisfied with the course.
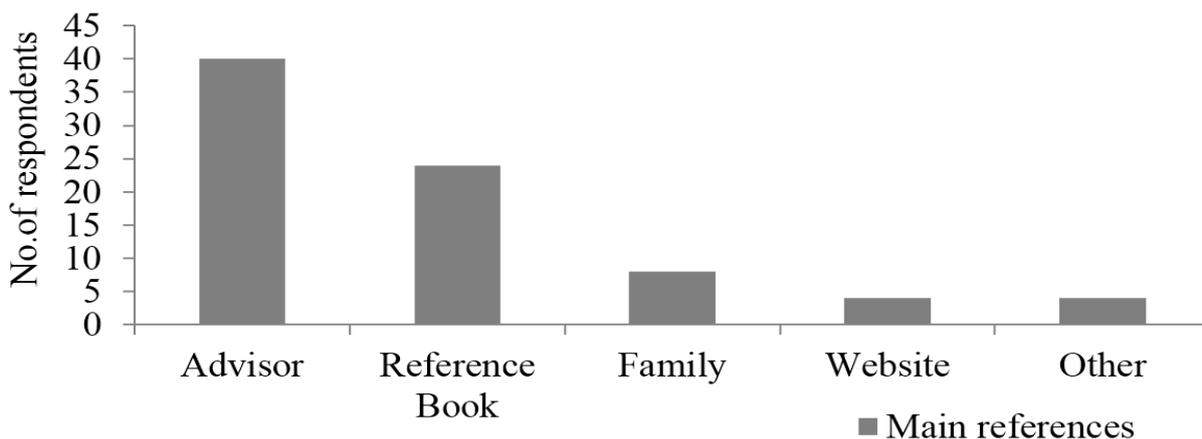

Fig.3. Type of references for marriage problem solving

Fig. 3 indicates the main reference in seeking an advice to marital problem, majority (40 respondents) chose to refer to a qualified advisor and 24 respondents chose to refer to the included guide book for the course. A minority of the respondents (8 respondents) chose to refer to family. Referring to website and other are less favorable by the respondents (4 respondents) of this study.
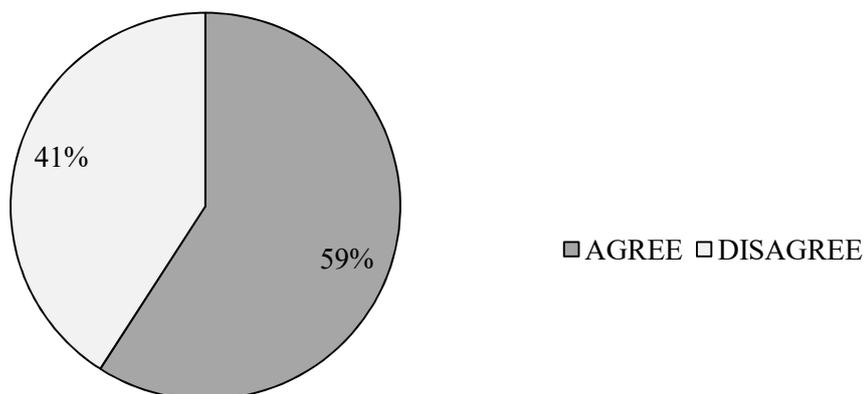
Fig.4. Percentages of the importance of marital reference book as main reference for problem solving

One interesting finding was that 59% of 80 participants indicated that they agree marriage reference book is important as main reference, but less than half the participant disagree (41%) (Fig. 4).
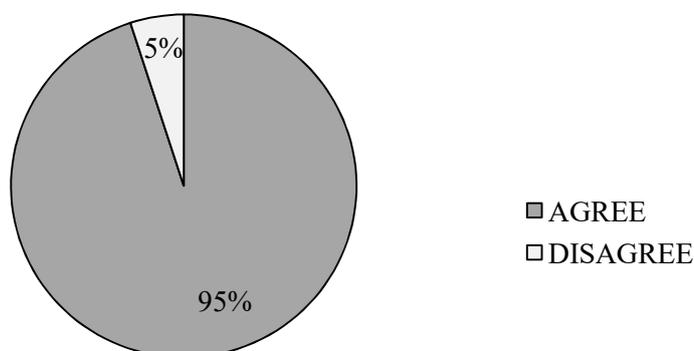

Fig.5. Percentages of participants towards existence of mobile learning

The result presented in Fig. 5 indicates that 95% of 80 respondents are agreed the use of digital mobile learning on pre-marriage course. The rest 5% indicate that only few respondents are disagreed the proposed solution.

3.1. Perception towards Traditional Learning Approach

Basically, the approach of pre-marital course organized by JAKIM has a few sharing sessions with speaker or teacher and offer a guide book to each participant as references. The question asked participants' opinion and perception towards this conventional approach used in

delivering the course. The results indicate that majority of respondents, 80% from 80 respondents, agreed that the content delivered by the speaker is insufficient and should contain more information related to marital references.

3.2. Perception towards the Use of Mobile Learning

In order to study young adults' learners' perception on the use of mobile learning, the respondents were asked about the proposed initiatives to enhance the existing learning approach of the course. 95% of 80 respondents indicated from a very large extent to somewhat, while 5% were not sure or did not think it was the case. These findings indicate that very positive views on mobile learning among participants. Results obtained show that majority of the participants think the existence of mobile learning as a reference tool related to Islamic marital practices will helps them to enhance their understanding and gives them access for future reference.

3.3. Suggested Criteria for Mobile Learning Features

The analysis of the data also shows that a few features and criteria of technology are needed to be implemented in certain mobile learnings. For example, 90% of 80 respondents suggested that the features of mobile learning in sync with current technology such as use of touch screen, easy to access and portable which learners are able to access learning contents anywhere and anytime. It is suggested that mobile learning should include online discussion or forum with authorized advisor.

3.4. Limitations of the Study

The study is limited in terms of sample size and selection. The respondents were selected using non-random sampling techniques, which they were selected based on their enrollment in pre-marital course that were held in Gombak area. Thus, it is recommended to increase the sample size in future studies and employ random sampling technique to avoid sampling bias.

4. CONCLUSION

The initial findings from the study indicate that most of them were interested in learning Islamic marital practices through references designed for mobile devices references with their mobile devices, and they expected mobile learning to be interactive and engaging for lifelong learning.

The findings of this study suggest that mobile technologies have the potential to provide new learning experiences. In these experiences, learners can engage more frequently in learning activities outside life, providing them with more interactive learning opportunities in their community of practice.

The results also show that majority of respondents strongly believe that mobile learning can improve their learning understanding in different ways. As such, we also observe a very positive perception of m-learning amongst the respondents. The results on respondents' evaluation of the contents delivered in current course show that the majority of them found the contents should be improved and updated. We are strongly believe that further investigation on how mobile learning actually helps learners to improve their knowledge and how the contents help them in understanding Islamic marital practices. We believe further process of creating and delivering the contents of mobile learning and development of measures for evaluating these practices would be valuable in monitoring the effectiveness of mobile learning for pre-marital course.

Based on the findings and validated by the past research at other institutions, we can recommend that pre-marital course in Malaysia to adopt m-learning to improve learners' understanding towards Islamic marital practices as lifelong learning.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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How to cite this article:
Ali NAM, Samsuri S, Seman MSA. Perception of young adults on the use of mobile learning for pre-marital course in Malaysia: a preliminary study. J. Fundam. Appl. Sci., 2017, *9(4S), 492-506.*