

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on vocational learning in higher education

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Mobile learning became a mainstay of education during the lockdowns and self-isolation periods of the COVID-19 pandemic across the globe. There were many problems facing teachers and students alike during these times, but there were also some advantages of this enforced distance learning. There have been numerous studies that have looked at the pros and cons as well as predicting the long-term effects on education. One area that has not been addressed wholly is vocational education where the hands-on requirements of such courses are perhaps

not served well by remote, mobile teaching and learning methods.

Work in the *International Journal of Mobile Communications* describes the results of a collaboration between researchers in China and the U.S. looking at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on vocational learning in [higher education](#). Zheng Li and A.Y.M. Atiquil Islam of East China Normal University in Shanghai, China and Jonathan Michael Spector of the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, U.S., have looked at the acceptance and use of technology in this context. They surveyed 900 students on vocational higher education courses in China and analyzed their responses to detect patterns and trends.

Fundamentally, the research showed that self-efficacy is important in mobile learning as are acceptance and effective use of the technology itself. Moreover, self-efficacy directly correlated with the effort and performance expectancies, [social influence](#), and facilitating condition among the students.

The team reports that their study offers suggestions for government, higher vocational colleges and learning platform development enterprises. These suggestions are aimed at enhancing student acceptance of mobile learning. In particular, the team suggests that developers should focus on content quality in their mobile learning platforms, while government and schools should focus on the optimization of the mobile learning environment in terms of both hardware and promotion of this approach to learning.

More information: Zheng Li et al, Unpacking mobile learning in higher vocational education during the COVID-19 pandemic, *International Journal of Mobile Communications* (2022). [DOI: 10.1504/IJMC.2022.121465](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMC.2022.121465)

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