

**THE USE OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY TO EXTEND OR REPLACE THE
CLASSROOM IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION**

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to understand if utilizing simulations beyond the classroom and accessing the simulations daily with mobile devices provide a holistic understanding and comprehension for learning and strategy building. It is concluded that mobile devices can become an extension of the traditional classroom, and in some cases, it can even become a substitute for classroom interaction.

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Keywords: Mobile, ERP Systems, Simulation Learning

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The study seeks to understand if utilizing simulations beyond the classroom and accessing the simulations daily with mobile devices provide a holistic understanding and comprehension for learning and strategy building. There are limited research efforts on accessing enterprise data using mobile devices. This study integrates the use of mobile devices to determine how mobile applications play an integral role in system learning by providing another means to access enterprise systems to run the transactions and view reports.

This study is conducted in the required in computer information systems course in a Master of Business Administration program. The format of the course is named “Hyflex,” where students have several options: to come in person, watch the recorded lectures or view the live streamed broadcast. Students use an app in their mobile phones to watch the live streaming of the lecture and for tutoring. They can also use the learning management system mobile to access and submit assignments, check their grades, and interact with the instructor.

The course includes a simulation that involves marketing, manufacturing and logistic decisions in a simulated business environment. They play the business simulation using enterprise software (ERP). In previous years, the traditional approach to conducting the simulation was within the classroom. This semester, because of the format of the class, classroom attendance is optional. Classroom attendance is not required or even expected, the same applies to team coordination; for this reason, students completed a business simulation game in virtual teams. Teams relied on communication tools, including their mobile phone. The use of mobile devices allowed teams to coordinate because they were not expected to meet face to face. This use of mobile devices was an excellent option to provide team coordination; some students used text messaging, other messaging applications like WhatsApp, voice calls, and checked their e-mail messages on their mobile device. Some teams set up a group text and send messages to discuss the game strategy, and assign responsibilities.

Students kept a log of communications and mobile device usage during the game. Also, they took pictures of the app (or browser interface) in their mobile devices. In this study, we analyze their logs to identify communication networks and patterns. They also completed a report where they describe their satisfaction with the use of a mobile application to play the simulation. In the report, students describe the disadvantages and limitations of the use of mobile apps. They reported issues with the app and using a browser interface as an alternative. The reports are analyzed using quantitative analysis software NVIVO.

Some of the preliminary results show major benefits. These are sample student comments:

“our strong communication for the final game allowed all of us to be on the same page at all times.

“Overall, the mobile application is what kept me in the loop with my team members and being able to update the system. The mobile application allowed me to participate whereas just the initial software would’ve helped me back from participating. One drawback of the application is that everything is so small. I would have to go back over and over because I continuously clicked the wrong item.”

It is concluded that mobile devices can become an extension of the traditional classroom, and in some cases, it can even become a substitute for classroom interaction.