BYOD/BYOT
Bring Your Own Device/Bring Your Own Technology
What does the research tell us?

Introduction
The ownership of mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets has grown rapidly. 93% of adults in the UK owned or used a mobile phone in 2014; 66% owned a smartphone. Amongst children and young people the trend has been to move away from phone to tablet use, although this does depend on the age range in question. Figures from 2013 suggest that in the 12-15 age range smartphones remain more widely used than tablets. 62% own a smartphone with 26% owning a tablet. 'The use of tablets has tripled among 5-15s since 2012 (42%, up from 14%), and one quarter (28%) of infants aged 3-4 now use a tablet computer at home.' A move towards using personally owned devices in the workplace and in education has subsequently arisen.

The Research
Given the rapid rise of the technology, relatively few research studies exist in relation to the impact of a BYOD/BYOT approach to learning and teaching. Those that do exist consist mainly of case studies, focused on one particular context.

“Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)” for seamless science inquiry in a primary school. 2014. Author: Yanjie Song.

This one year research project took place in a primary school in Hong Kong. It examined improvements in content knowledge and student perceptions of learning with mobile devices. It found that student understanding improved beyond what was available in their classroom textbook and they developed a positive attitude to ‘science inquiry supported by their own mobile devices.’

Engaging students using their own mobile devices for learning mathematics in classroom discourse: a case study in Hong Kong. 2014. By Gary W Kong.

This research was conducted with ‘pre-service primary mathematics teachers’, through surveys and interviews, to explore their perceptions of the impact of a BYOD approach on their pedagogy. Results suggested that such use improved teacher discourse in relation to pedagogy.


This research was based on a study of 1095 teachers from two states in the USA. It sought to understand any relationship between age, mobile phone ownership and perceptions relating to the use of such technology in the classroom. ‘There were no significant differences in the findings for the teachers who were less than 32 and the ones who were 33–49; however, they both significantly differed from those over 50 in mobile phone ownership and support for the use of mobile phones in the classroom as well as in their perceptions regarding the useful mobile features for school-related work and instructional barriers.’
Further Thoughts

Stephen Heppell has suggested that we need to move away from talking about BYOD/BYOT to ‘use your own device’. What is the point of bringing your own device to school if its use has not been planned for and built into classroom learning and teaching?

The Digital Learning Community brings together all those who have an interest in the ways in which digital technology can support, enhance and improve learning and teaching.

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