“It is unfortunate, but true, that some academics teach students without having much formal knowledge of how students learn” according to Heather Fry, Steve Ketteridge, Stephanie Marshall. Similarly, clinical teaching at bedside should be about analysis of symptoms and signs to arrive at a diagnosis, and thereafter about treatment/s and follow-up. Very often the analysis of clinical features is forgotten or omitted and the management of the disease is discussed.

The problem is further exacerbated because most textbooks and lecture material are often based on the diagnosis, which is actually something that is derived during process of management of the clinical problem that the patient presents with. It is due to this reason that a book on symptom analysis in Gynaecology was drafted. However, it accidentally dawned on me that this approach can be easily converted to a digital format because of its algorithmic approach.

Technology has evolved and continues to grow at an ever-increasing rate which is exemplified by the growth of telecommunications industry and the 5th industrial revolution. The conviction to make a mobile application became stronger when considering the behaviour of millennials who are more at ease with browsing or surfing the web as opposed to reading a book. Therefore, in the current day and age, a digital presence is a necessity.

Mobile applications appear to be have a better user experience considering the new millennial generation along with a lesser cost compared to conventional paper-based publications. They also have a distinct advantage over paper-based methods as it can be updated in real time. Paper-based publications require space as well with mobile applications requiring hardly any space. The only disadvantage is that most of the applications need internet to be fully functional. Online website-based applications also exist and are an intermediary version between paper-based methods and mobile applications, albeit closer to the latter. One advantage of website-based applications is that applications that require typing are better suited for this as it is easier on the eyes because most are based on laptops or computers. One advantage of mobile applications over website-based applications is that the former can be used at any time even when a person is on the move.
A mobile application was designed on an android platform and posted in google play store on a freely downloadable basis without a subscription or membership fee to facilitate penetration in low-income countries. This application is ideal for any health care professional as a guide to logically analyse clinical problems in gynaecology. It is even helpful for more senior professionals as a quick reference guide. The limitation of the application is for the developer, with the cost of developing being considerable considering the current scenario. However, cost is likely to come down as technology becomes cheaper with time.

The uses of mobile applications are many and far reaching and this application reflects the tip of the iceberg of things to come in the future. The future of medicine itself will be very different to what to practice now. Thus, it is better to embrace technology to be ahead of the curve and not make the excuse of limited resources for change, especially for resource poor developing countries like Sri Lanka.

“The art of clinical deduction based on symptoms and signs is a vanishing skill. My goal is for this app to fill this void and serve as a quick reference guide to all grades of health care professionals”.

References


5. Available at: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gyno.chanils