



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE LEARNING AMONG STUDENTS IN
UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA SARAWAK (UNIMAS)**

Choo Xin Zhu

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CHOO XIN ZHU

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PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE LEARNING AMONG STUDENTS IN UNIMAS

CHOO XIN ZHU

This project is submitted
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
Bachelor of Psychology with Honours

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The project entitled 'Perception towards Online Learning among Students in UNIMAS' was prepared by Choo Xin Zhu and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honours (Psychology)

Received for examination by:

(Name of Supervisor)

Date:

Gred

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ABSTRACT

Covid-19 pandemic is a factor that lead the changes of learning method among students from face-to-face learning method to online learning. Difference students may have difference perceptions towards online learning in their learning journey. The purpose of the research was to explore the perception towards online learning among students in UNIMAS. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a modal that play an important role to aid the researcher in analysing and progressing the research. The TAM-based questionnaire had been modified to collect the data and UNIMAS students were selected as target population for this research. Due to the implementation of Movement Control Order (MCO) during this pandemic, the researcher decided to use the Google Form as a platform to collect data from the respondents. The collected data based on the research questions of the study will be then analysed by the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Based on the indicated likely scale in the questionnaire, the higher the score of each question, the higher the agreement or positive perception towards the terms of TAM models among students. There are 4 terms indicate in the TAM models, including perception of usefulness, perception of ease of use, attitudes and intentions. Among the terms, the researcher indicated the Descriptive Statistics for each of the terms and indicate Welch's t-test to study the terms, including perception of ease of use and attitudes to perceived in whether there would be any difference between gender of UNIMAS students towards online learning. There were 231 students participated in this research. 181 of them were female students and the rest are 50 male students. Majority showed positively perceived usefulness and ease of use towards the terms in the features of online learning and easy usage of online learning platform. The term, perception of ease of use indicate no significant difference in students' perception of ease of use based on gender. Besides, another term, attitude, can be indicated as the opinion of online learning and it was shown that most of the students had positive attitudes towards online learning. A test was conducted to have a

clearer picture on the attitudes of students and gender and the test result reflected a significant difference in students' attitudes towards online learning based on gender. In the research study, majority supported the hybrid learning mode in their future and the reasons of the preferred learning methods of the students had been explored as well.

Keywords: Online Learning, Synchronous Learning, Asynchronous Learning, Hybrid Learning, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Perception of Usefulness, Perception of Ease of Use, Attitudes, Intentions

ABSTRAK

Pandemik Covid-19 adalah faktor utama yang menyebabkan perubahan kaedah pembelajaran dalam kalangan pelajar. Pelajar-pelajar dikehendaki menyesuaikan diri terhadap kaedah pembelajaran baharu, iaitu pembelajaran atas talian. Disebabkan perubahan kaedah pembelajaran, pelajar-pelajar berkemungkinan mempunyai persepsi yang berbeza terhadap pembelajaran atas talian dalam tempoh pembelajaran semasa ini. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneroka persepsi para pelajar UNIMAS terhadap pembelajaran atas talian. Model Penerimaan Teknologi (TAM) telah digunakan untuk membantu penyelidik lebih mendalami kajian ini. Soal selidik berasaskan TAM telah diubahsuai untuk mengumpul data. Oleh sebab pelaksanaan Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan Malaysia, penyelidik telah menggunakan Borang Google untuk mengumpul data daripada para pelajar UNIMAS. Selepas itu, data yang dikumpul akan dianalisis oleh Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Kegunaan Skala Likert dalam kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan persepsi para pelajar terhadap pembelajaran atas talian. Sekiranya kebanyakan pelajar bersetuju terhadap unsur-unsur yang tercatat dalam soal selidik tinjauan, maksudnya kebanyakan pelajar mempunyai persepsi yang positif terhadap unsur-unsur TAM yang dikaji. Unsur-unsur TAM termasuklah persepsi kegunaan, persepsi kemudahan, sikap-sikap pengguna dan niat-niat pengguna terhadap sesuatu teknologi. Penyelidik menggunakan kaedah “Descriptive Statistics” untuk menganalisis semua unsur TAM dan seterusnya menggunakan kaedah “Welch’s t-test” untuk menganalisis unsur persepsi kemudahan pengguna dan sikap-sikap pengguna untuk tujuan menguji keberangskalian perbezaan antara jantina terhadap pembelajaran atas talian. Sebanyak 231 pelajar UNIMAS telah mengambil bahagian dalam soal selidik tinjauan. Antaranya, terdapat 181 pelajar perempuan dan 50 pelajar lelaki. Kebanyakan pelajar mempunyai positif persepsi terhadap kegunaan dan kemudahan penggunaan pembelajaran atas talian. Penyelidik pula mendapati hasil kajian bahawa tiada perbezaan yang signifikan antara kumpulan jantina dengan

kemudahan penggunaan terhadap pembelajaran atas talian. Di samping itu, para pelajar juga menunjukkan positif sikap terhadap pembelajaran atas talian, tetapi penyelidik mendapati hasil kajian yang menunjukkan perbezaan yang signifikan antara kumpulan jantina dan sikap-sikap pelajar terhadap pembelajaran atas talian. Selepas kajian ini dilaksanakan, kesimpulan penyelidik yang dapati adalah kebanyakan pelajar UNIMAS telah menunjukkan niat untuk belajar melalui pembelajaran hibrid pada masa depan. Kajian ini juga disertakan dengan sebab-sebab para pelajar UNIMAS dalam pemilihan kaedah pembelajaran.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran atas talian, Pembelajaran Synchrony, Pembelajaran Asynchrony, Pembelajaran Hibrid, Model Penerimaan Teknologi (TAM), Persepsi Kegunaan Pengguna, Persepsi Kemudahan Pengguna, Sikap-sikap Pengguna, Niat-niat Pengguna

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

The rapid development of technology in the world creates a convenient and comfortable environment for the people. Various fields are impacted by technology advancement worldwide, such as economy, health, education, and others. One of the examples of the development of technology in education is online learning. Online learning started in 1994. CALCAMPUS offers the first online courses with real-time instruction and participation (David, 2019). Online learning becomes more and more familiar to people all over the world, either the lecturers and students or trainers and trainees. Since 2000, many businesses began using online learning to train their employees because online training can improve the knowledge base and expand their skill sets in the workplace (“*The history of e-learning*” , n.d.).

Online learning is also known as a learning system based on formalized teaching with electronic resources ("*Definition of 'E-learning'*," 2020). As stated by Sander (2019), online learning is the acquisition of knowledge by accessing to electronic technologies and media. Fundamentally, there are two types of online learning, respectively are synchronous learning and asynchronous learning. Synchronous learning happens when learning took place in real-time, and it involves the interaction between the participants and the instructor via online meeting applications, while asynchronous learning method allows participants to complete the web-based training at their own pace (Anubha, 2019).

The learning method in UNIMAS mostly is depending on the traditional learning before the Covid-19 pandemic. The traditional learning method is the face-to-face learning method, which the students have to attend the tutorial rooms or halls. Before Covid-19 pandemic, UNIMAS eLEAP is the platform for UNIMAS students to study online. UNIMAS eLEAP is a Learning Management System used by all UNIMAS academics or lecturers to support their teaching and learning deliveries. Information about the course, lecturer's notes, class activities and other reading materials are being uploaded to this platform to view, read, and participate activities by UNIMAS students. Moreover, the eLEAP platform can be known as a bridge between the lecturers and students. For example, students can read and download the learning materials that had been edited and uploaded by the lecturers. Besides, they can also add their discussion in the forum that had been opened in the eLEAP. In addition, UNIMAS has an online learning platform named UNIMAS Massive Open Online Courses (UNIMAS MOOC). MOOC collected online courses and openly to the world free of charge (Centre for Applied Learning and Multimedia, 2020). According to Open Learning (n.d.), the UNIMAS MOOCs' courses are based explicitly on three niche areas: Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation, Information Communication and Creative Technology as well as Sustainable Community Transformation. To conclude, UNIMAS students are familiar with online platforms such as UNIMAS eLEAP and UNIMAS MOOC before the pandemic started. However, these tools are not used exclusively for teaching and learning but just as an additional tool to support learning.

Due to the dramatically increasing of Covid-19 cases, the teaching and learning landscape in UNIMAS changed to fully online classes in the mid-year 2020 after the announcement of implementing Movement Control Order (MCO) by Malaysia's government. According to World Health Organization (2020), "Covid-19 is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which spreads between people, mainly when an infected person is in close contact with

another person" (para 1). An infected person can spread the virus anywhere through the liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breathe heavily, consequently, anyone who have been in close contact with the someone with coronavirus disease might catch the virus (World Health Organization, 2020). Due to the increasing cases of Covid-19, students and lecturers had to fully utilise the online platform to conduct online learning classes. The sudden change in the learning method have drawn much discussion about the students' acceptance of various online learning systems (Liu, Liao & Peng, 2005). Students are required to master or learn the online learning applications such as 'Microsoft Team', 'Zoom', 'Webex' and others. There are many ways to access students' acceptance of online learning. One of the methods is to investigate students' perceptions of the usefulness and ease of use of online learning. To conduct a detailed data collection and data analysis process, a model namely Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is recommended in the research.

TAM is a theoretical model that helps to prove and predict the users' system acceptance behavior after a period of interaction with the system (Park, 2009). Hence, TAM is suitable to be used as a guide to explore the perceptions and acceptance of students towards online learning systems.

1.1 Problem Statement

Covid-19 is the breaking point that lead to the adoption of fully online classes in UNIMAS. According to World Health Organization (n.d.), "Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus" (para 1). The virus of Covid-19 can spread by the droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person sneezes or coughs (World Health Organization, n.d.). To curb the spread of Covid-19 cases more effectively, Malaysian government had been implementing the movement control order (MCO) among the people since 18 March 2020. During MCO period, most educational institutions, organizations, industries, and others are not allowed to operate, and people had to stay at home to protect themselves from Covid-19. It is the turning point that people started to rely on online learning or working to facilitate daily learning progress. Online learning enables people to study anywhere, anytime as long as Wi-Fi connection is available. As an educational institution, UNIMAS announced a fully online teaching and learning method that will start implementing from 12 October 2020 in the upcoming semester (Lim, 2020).

Online learning in UNIMAS is mostly conducted based on synchronous or asynchronous learning. The learning methods are mostly depending on the lecturers who conduct the classes. Some lecturers will carry out asynchronous learning and have a short time of synchronous learning during the Q&A session, in which students raise out their doubts and questions and lecturer will answer each on the spot via online. Every person has a different view on the learning methods, as well as its usefulness in essence. Some students might think that online learning is useful for them, while some do not support the point. This is probably due to several factors such as line connection, area, weather, and so forth that will indirectly influence the learning classes' fluency.

Apart from that, students may be having a different attitude towards online learning. Some students enjoy studying at home because they feel mentally and physically comfortable when they stay in a familiar place with familiar people and without worrying about three meals a day. This type of person usually has severe homesickness when they go to an unfamiliar place, and they might feel repulsive to new environments, friends and activities. They need a long period of time to build their confidence and adapt themselves to the new environment. On the other hand, some of them might not or less enjoy studying at home. They do not enjoy online learning because they will feel hard to be prepared, learning via online builds a sense of distance as well as they can easily get distracted by their own learning environment or electronic devices (Ferlazzo, 2020).

In a nutshell, everyone has a different perception on things, relying on self-education level, jobs, life experience or others. Same as here, students may have different perceptions on online learning, and they still needed to adapt to the changes and treat online learning platform as a bridge of learning. Hence, the TAM method is a crucial tool to help the researcher to identify the perception of the students UNIMAS towards online learning in the field of usefulness, ease of use, attitude, and intention.

1.2 Objective of the Study

1.2.1 General Objective:

To explore the perception towards online learning among students in UNIMAS.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives:

- To identify the perception of usefulness towards online learning among UNIMAS students.
- To identify the perception of ease of use towards online learning among UNIMAS students.
- To examine whether there is any difference between gender in the perceived ease of use of UNIMAS students towards online learning.
- To identify attitudes of UNIMAS students towards online learning.
- To examine whether there is any difference between gender in the attitudes of UNIMAS students towards online learning.
- To explore the intention of UNIMAS students towards online learning in the future.