An Assessment of an Online Learning Program of Hospitality College in a Private University

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Abstract. The education sector had same demand for technology in thriving and evolve. e-Learning continues to thrive in technologically advanced educational setting. The hospitality education is no exception to this advancement. This study was conducted to address any issues that might hinder the program usage effectiveness. This study aimed to provide basis on the effectivity and applicability of eLearning Access Program (eLeAP) usage in the service-oriented nature of the hospitality education setting. The two data gathering tools were utilized to provide data needed for this study. The survey questionnaires has been disseminated to Hotel and Restaurant Management students of different collegiate level and facilitators of different courses within HRM program. In this study, the qualitative aspect had utilized semi-structured interview guide for both student and facilitators. This study expound further on applicability of eLearning Access Program (eLeAP) in its technological nature in contrast to the service-orientation of hospitality industry.

1. Introduction
Technology becoming an integral part of modern lives. The technology has strongly influenced in every aspect of everyone within any society. An increment in technology usage over years, demand for technological advancement also increased. Most notable advancement in technology relevant to education are creation and distribution of e-book and online learning application or programs. Information technology and communication represent an ensemble of tools and technologies necessary to process information through computers and information transmission through electronics means [1]. Technology is integrated into education helps in opening up new possibilities that increase education activity effectiveness [2].

eLearning is an abbreviated name for electronic learning. eLearning is learning process with Internet tools usage [3]. Based on European Union, eLearning is defined as new multimedia technologies usage and internet in improving learning quality by facilitating access to resources and services included remote exchanges and collaboration [4]. A more concrete example of a learning program currently used is e-Learning Access Program (eLeAP). There are many advantages and disadvantages in online teaching platform usage compared to traditional pedagogical approaches [5]. The learners have flexibility in the adjustment of time and space and individual planning [6]. eLearning and eLeAP is one of key attributes of respondent-university’s education which both students and facilitators are more interconnected and provided with a platform to communicated while
accessing and sharing or distributing learning materials. eLeAP is not free from hitches and issues as the system still requires constant review and improvement.

This study is conducted to determine negative and positive implications of eLeAP usage and effectiveness in the hospitality. The student participants exclude those from three sections in the fourth year level who are doing their practicum in various establishment. Besides, the study also exclude hospitality students in the second year due to gap caused by curriculum changes through senior high school implementation. The facilitators involved in this study who implemented eLeAP in their work.

In additions, this study was primarily guided by three overarching theories included The Model of Information System Success by Delone and Mclean, Learner Centered Framework for E_learning by Mccombs and WHisler and VAK or VARK Learning Style Model by Neil Fleming.

The information system model success by DeLone and Mclean is one of theoretical perspective that guided this study. This model provides a profound understanding of information system success by explained interrelation of its six components such as system quality, information quality, service quality, use, user satisfaction and net benefits. Furthermore, this model also provides basis in assessing effectiveness of e-Learning access program and existing issues and complication that arise form e-Learning usage.

The Learner Centered Framework by McCombs and Whisler consists of 14 principles which grouped into 4 research domain that can be applied in e-Learning environment such as cognitive and meta-cognitive, motivational and effective, development and social and individual differences factors. This framework explained the relationship between 4 domain factors and e-Learning tool usage among university students. The Learner Centered Framework focused on individual experience, perspective, background, talent, interest, capabilities and needs. Besides, best available knowledge and teaching practices is suggested as most effective in promoting highest motivation level, learning and achievement for all learners [7].

Last theoretical anchor is Neil Fleming’s VAK or VARK Learning Style Model which measured four learning preferences which are visual (V), aural (A), read/write and kinesthetic (K) [8]. The VARK model addressed learning style that was open to self-modification. These theories helped in theoretical basis for data analysis. This study aimed to provide basis on the effectivity and applicability of eLearning Access Progrma (eLeAP) usage in the service-oriented nature of the hospitality education setting.

2. Methodology
A cross-sectional research design had been used in compared eLeAP perception between coordinator, facilitators and students with regarded to e-learning access program effectiveness. This study was conducted in one private university in Manila with target respondents comprised by hotel and restaurant management students facilitators and eLeAP coordinator in the college. The sampling method was purposive since this study was focused on eLeAP utilization in hospitality education setting. This method was collected data to provide information necessary for analysis.

The survey questionnaires had been used for quantitative aspect and semi structured interview guide for quantitative aspect. The study instruments were validated by three experts and underwent pilot testing. Cronbach ‘s Alpha was used to determine survey questionnaire reliability. Meanwhile, the data collected used survey method was subjected to hypothesis testing used T-test for independent samples.

3. Result and Discussion
Based on Table 1, most facilitators claimed that eLeAP catered to all learning style of hotel and restaurant management (HRM) students. Most students were agreed on eLeAP ability in catered to the visual, auditory and reading or writing. However, the students disagreed on eLeAP effectiveness to cater to the kinesthetic type of learners due lack of technical training such as culinary art, industry demanded.
For second item, the students preferred traditional classroom setup due to its physical aspect which proved more effective. There was argument due to industry service orientation, physical hands on setup type which were more beneficial to learn technical skills demanded of the industry. Besides, the respondents also claimed that lack of physical contact needed with eLeAP usage. The facilitator had no control over their attention through eLeAP. Both students and facilitators agreed that eLeAP was tool to augment and support traditional classroom set up.

Meanwhile, both facilitators and student were agreed that technology rather than eLeAP was applicable in the service oriented hospitality industry. The respondents agreed that eLeAP helped the student became more competent with technology usage, thus the students were prepared for technological literacy demanded of the industry. In additions, the students preferred traditional classroom setup due to its capability to cater to technical skills demanded of the industry rather than theoretical learning.

For forth item, both respondents were agreed that less skills and knowledge imparted or developed. Notable skills developed by the students were their time management skills. This skill was developed through time bounded by the students were time management skills. This skill was developed through time bounded online examinations and need to cope up with their requirement. The skill and knowledge imparted through eLeAP usage was dependent on the pedagogy of the facilitator.

Several students agreed that eLeAP helped promote collaboration among students while the facilitators concur otherwise. The collaboration might enhance collaboration through group work usage such as discussion boards within the program. Some students had developed system which assigned certain individual in regularly check the program and disseminate material upload from eLeAP to their Facebook group.

For sixth item, both facilitators and students perceived eLeAP was more professional platform through communication. The program also cater to introvert students which too shy to ask the question personally. Besides, the students also claimed the message was lead to misinterpretation through technological nature of program, thus personal communication was still best for conveyed the message.

In seventh item, the respondents agreed that main hindrance that faced was system errors or program down time. Furthermore, both parties had agreed that internet connectivity played an important roles in eLeAP effectiveness. Besides, there was significant difference on training and seminar provided by the university based on students and facilitator perspective. The students were strongly disagreed and claimed there was minimal to lack of training and seminars administration. Some students stated there was confusion between eLeAP with another online application used by the respondent and university.

| Items                                      | Students     | Facilitators |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| eLeAP caters all learning styles of students | Disagree     | Agree        |
| eLeAP versus classroom setup               | Classroom setup | Split        |
| Applicability of eLeAP in hospitality education | Disagree     | Agree        |
| Skills and knowledge developed              | Technical and time management skills | Technical skills |
| Collaboration among students                | Split        | Agree        |
| Communication between the students and facilitators | Agree | Disagree |
| Hindrances                                 | System error | System error |
| Training and seminars                      | Disagree     | Agree        |

Table 1. Interview result with students and facilitators
Based on Table 2, there was significant difference between eLeAP coordinator perception and facilitator from student perception in term of assessment on distribution of learning materials, usage frequency, e-Learning program quality, notification issues and ease of communication.

The eLeAP coordinator and facilitator were satisfied with eLeAP performance in distributed learning material. However, dome students were still dissatisfied due to difficulty in program usage. Many students claimed unable to access learning material uploaded by the facilitators since the system was down. Meanwhile, eLeAP was good program for learning material distribution but still need to be improved.

The facilitators had spent more time in using eLeAP than the students. Besides, some students claimed that some facilitators did not accessed their eLeAP accounts. Most facilitators also were agreed that eLeAP was provided professional environment for the users which some students only satisfied with eLeAP environment provided for the users. Furthermore, the students were suggested that professional environment that eLeAP offers still further improved for its users.

In additions, the facilitators were aware on notification feature of eLeAP on notification issues. However, the students were unaware that eLeAP had notification feature. In term of ease of communication used eLeAP, the facilitators had claimed eLeAP enhanced the communication with their students. The facilitators readily support eLeAP usage as an enhancement tool in terms of collaboration among the students.

| Items                              | t-value | p-value | Interpretation       |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| IA: Discussion of content topics   | 0.961   | 0.355   | No significant difference |
| IB: Distribution of learning material | 2.425   | 0.032   | Significant difference |
| IC: Assessment of competencies     | -0.895  | 0.388   | No significant difference |
| IDL Remediation of learning deficiencies | 1.127   | 0.281   | No significant difference |
| IIA: Frequency of usage            | 3.877   | 0.002   | Significant difference |
| IIB: Convenience of access         | 1.779   | 0.099   | No significant difference |
| ICC: Quality of e-Learning program | 2.218   | 0.046   | Significant difference |
| IID: User friendliness             | 1.350   | 0.202   | No significant difference |
| IIE: Technological issues          | -1.625  | 0.126   | No significant difference |
| IIIA: Usage protocols              | 1.932   | 0.077   | No significant difference |
| IIIB: Notification issues          | 3.122   | 0.007   | Significant difference |
| IIIC: Visual appearance            | 0.993   | 0.340   | No significant difference |
| IIID: Ease of communication        | 3.800   | 0.002   | Significant difference |
4. Conclusion
In conclusion, eLeAP was only support and not to replace traditional classroom set-up. The internet connectivity was hindrance for program usage effective. In additions, the students were not given sufficient training and seminar on program usage though provided basic navigation for its users. The program access through different technological devices such as mobile phones was helpful since ease the learning materials assessment. There was still room for improvement in term of educational experience of both stakeholders encounter once the program itself was improved.

5. Conclusion
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