A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON STUDENT'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS LEARNING USING SOCIAL MEDIA AND LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, using technology in academic purpose has helped in harnessing young people's interest and engagement in classrooms. Blended learning has been realized using different platforms such as learning management system, online meeting/conference applications, two-ways audio/videos, and currently, social media has gained its popularity among educators. This study compares the students' feedback on using learning Management System (LMS) and social media in learning a theoretical subject. Pre and post questionnaires were distributed to the students to analyse their prior and current knowledge on using LMS and social media in learning activities. The analysis from the questionnaires shows that students have better knowledge and experience in using social media in real life. They also prefer to use social media in learning.

Keywords: Social Media; Learning Management System (LMS); e-Learning; Teaching and Learning; Perspectives

INTRODUCTION

e-Learning has been the current revolution in education nowadays. This revolution provides opportunities for people to access their education anywhere, anytime. Recently, the education system has experienced significant changes in teaching and learning process form “teaching as instruction” to “student centred learning”. Every education institution in Malaysia is pursuing to improve teaching and learning by utilizing internet access and practicing online learning as devised in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025) in which also is called as Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia (PPPM) [1]. Many e-learning tools and applications have been introduced in the market to provide better access to e-learning. Some e-learning applications provide users with an enjoyable and informative experience, others inflict stress and boredom while seemingly failing to educate them at all [2]. According to [3], recent research has shown that student engagement will determine the academic achievement, thus it
is best to discover methods to increase student participation at any level of education.

Learning Management Systems (LMS) is one of the available platforms to support e-learning. LMS is defined as well-known software platforms for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of e-learning education courses or training programs. According to [4], Learning Management System (LMS) is a software that can help educator in their course management that incorporate various services. In 2015, [5] discovered that LMS could be classified into three main categories, which encompasses of proprietary LMS, open-source LMS, and cloud-based LMS. Subsequently, LMS provides great number of benefits consisting of easy access to course contents, easy to communicate and share, improve students’ collaboration and give permanent record on student assessments. One of the available functions in LMS is on the content management like creating, importing, and exporting course materials [4]. In spite of the widely used LMS in the Higher Education Organizations, continuous improvement is needed in terms of courses organization, accuracy of records management, and the effectiveness of communication among teachers and students. The rapid development of LMS emerged as the incorporation of e-learning in classrooms expanded. However, [6] listed some problems that are mentioned by the users of LMS such as lack of mobile features, dated appearance and user experience, difficulty in use, poor reporting features, poor customer support and inability to adapt to changing needs.

Meanwhile, the adoption of social media in teaching has gained the interest of educators as an alternative platform to support e-learning. From a list of social networking applications, WhatsApp has been recognised as the most popular messenger application among the college university students [7]. In Malaysia, WhatsApp is the most popular social networking apps used by Malaysian students. According to the research made by [8], they found that the most widely used social media among the students is WhatsApp and this is due to the fast response and user-friendly interface. In addition, the application of technologies in teaching and learning can nurture the students to become independent and encourage them to work as a team in exploring something new. In an initial survey done among the CSC134 students in UiTM, 98% chose WhatsApp as the most frequently used social media. Many articles also have emphasized the positive benefits of WhatsApp mobile learning, as it has the potential to enhance deep student learning and thus improve students’ experiences with technology [9].

This study was conducted to investigate the knowledge and ICT competencies among higher education students in Universiti Teknologi MARA. In this study, LMS is specifically refers to i-Learn Portal, which all students are granted access to the system by the university. At present, the students are enforced to use i-Learn, the LMS platform to study a theory based subject, CSC134. Thus, this study explored the acceptance on WhatsApp as a tool to communicate and
collaborate among university students. Currently, there is no study done to compare which platform students prefer to use, between social media and LMS. Therefore, a comparison of students’ perceptions and preferences on WhatsApp and LMS based on their experience in using both platforms were examined.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total number of 158 respondents were students of UiTM Cawangan Sarawak, from various diploma programs, in both campuses - Samarahan Campus and Samarahan Campus 2, taking up course code CSC134 - Computers and Information Processing.
Pre-questionnaire components were:
Section A: Respondent’s demographic profile
Section B: Social media platforms’ usage experiences
Section C: WhatsApp's usage experiences
Section D: UiTM's i-Learn portal usage experiences
Post-questionnaire conducted after teaching and learning sessions were done through WhatsApp and i-Learn consisted of:
Section A: Respondent’s demographic profile
Section B: Student’s perception towards WhatsApp learning
Section C: Student's perception towards i-Learn learning,

Data Collection

Data collection was done using pre-questionnaire prior teaching and learning sessions done through WhatsApp and i-Learn. Pre-questionnaire was given as to measure the skills and knowledge of the respondents on WhatsApp and i-Learn. Meanwhile, post-questionnaire was conducted after teaching and learning sessions done through WhatsApp and i-Learn.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Pre-Questionnaire Findings

In pre-questionnaire, students were asked about their skills and knowledge on WhatsApp and i-Learn.

WhatsApp

The top five favourite social media platforms used by most of the respondents were WhatsApp (98.1%), followed by Instagram (89.2%), Youtube (85.4%), Facebook (65.8) and Twitter (57.6%) as shown in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Social Media Platforms Used by Students](image)

The students were also asked to choose academic related activities they always do on social media. Five main academic related activities the students always do on social media are as follows as indicated in Figure 2:

1. Use social media to do research for an assignment/project (88%)
2. Share notes, references through social media (84.2%)
3. Send/receive an email to do with college work (78.5%)
4. Read a pdf of an academic journal article, book chapter or ebook (76.6%)
5. Collaborate with other students through social media (74.7%)
All respondents used WhatsApp. It was observed that 99.4% use Smartphone to access WhatsApp, while 57.6% access WhatsApp through Laptop and another 13.3% using Desktop computer (Figure 3).
When asked to choose the devices use to access i-Learn Portal as shown in Figure 4, most of the respondents used Laptop (91.8%), while 86.1% used Smartphone and another 42.4% used Desktop computer, either their own or in the computer lab, to access i-Learn Portal. This finding is slightly different from Figure 3 whereby most of the respondents preferred using Smartphone to access.

Figure 4. Devices Use to Access i-Learn Portal

Figure 5. i-Learn Portal Activities
Figure 5 shows the top uses i-Learn Portal as ranked:
1. to fill in entrance survey for all courses
2. to fill in exit survey for all courses
3. to fill in SUFO for all courses
4. to download course materials
5. to answer online quizzes/assessments
6. to participate in online discussion
7. to submit assignments

Post-Questionnaire Findings

The findings were described.

WhatsApp

As the respondents were more familiar with the features in WhatsApp based on their frequent use, the outcome was reflected in their ability to use WhatsApp as one platform of learning tools. As shown in Figure 6, the top three benefits and advantages of using WhatsApp in student’s learning found that 94.9% of respondents agreed WhatsApp was easy to use as long as Internet connection was available, 90.5% agreed easy access to WhatsApp anywhere, everywhere through mobile devices and 73.4% agreed using WhatsApp to communicate in new ways with new people helped so much, especially when working in a team.

![Figure 6. Benefits and Advantages of WhatsApp in Student’s Learning](image-url)
Although WhatsApp was popular among respondents, there are few drawbacks or disadvantages when it comes to student’s learning. These are indicated in Figure 7. The highest response was “I do not have regular Internet access” (70.9%), followed by “Cost of Internet connectivity is high” (55.7%) and “It is too difficult or time consuming to use” (25.9%).

Figure 7. Drawbacks or Disadvantages of WhatsApp in Student’s Learning

i-Learn Portal

Figure 8 shows the top three benefits and advantages of using i-Learn in student’s learning. It was found that 62% agreed it was better to use i-Learn when learning new things in new ways, 57.6% agreed using i-Learn improves technology proficiency and 43.7% agreed using i-Learn helps to organize course materials. This finding was different from responses for WhatsApp (Figure 6), where learning new things in new ways scored 63.9%. Meanwhile, improves technology proficiency using WhatsApp scored 57%, which was similar to i-Learn but in terms of course materials organizations, WhatsApp responses scored lower with only 28.5%.
However, Figure 9 shows there were a few drawbacks or disadvantages for student’s learning using i-Learn. The highest response was “I do not have regular Internet access” (76.6%), followed by “Cost of Internet connectivity is high” (72.8%) and “I have difficulties to access” (63.9%).
After conducting both pre- and post-questionnaires, the findings do reflect the theory mentioned by Apeanti & Danso, 2013.

CONCLUSIONS

From the discussion, students basically use LMS during teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, students are also exposed to social media platform particularly in WhatsApp, whereby access to this platform is based on individual, not provided by the university. Students do agree that both WhatsApp and i-Learn Portal are important for educational learning. However, the study shows students prefer to use WhatsApp as compared to iLearn as a better platform to complement the teaching and learning process as shown by the majority of the respondents (84.8%) choosing WhatsApp compared to the minority that chose iLearn (15.2%). Therefore, to make the current teaching and learning process to be more interactive and convenient, it is strongly recommended for educators to incorporate WhatsApp into the process in their own creative ways.

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