

Chapter 12

Critical Online Learning Implementation and Determinants in Rural Areas in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of technological advances has brought many alterations and development to many profit-driven as well as non-profit-oriented organizations. Higher learning institutions have also benefited from technological advancements in this setting. Although the use of technology and the widespread use of online learning are no longer uncommon in the technology world, the introduction by students, undergraduate and postgraduate students of online learning courses, however, is still not as familiar as expected. This study focuses on the adoption and implementation of Malaysian higher education online courses to reach out to rural students and thus provides a systematic conceptual framework that emphasises the effect of different aspects. Students are enrolled in online courses at public and private universities in Malaysia, as they have been removed from the path of formal education. Using a self-directed survey, the data will be collected. Ultimately, the outcomes of this study can provide valuable insights into organisational methods and strengthen the leadership of a university administration that can contribute to improving student involvement and efficient programme usage.

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INTRODUCTION

Online learning is amongst the most recent developments in academic achievement. It has been a prevalent model for students to learn, create and interact new content with educational institutions to achieve a high level of coverage in academic modules and subject areas, regardless of time constraints and geographic location (Means et al., 2009; UUK, 2012a). More involvement would dramatically reduce cost relative to the conventional system, as the need for services such as machinery and decreases in the lack of physical facilities (HEA, 2012b). Besides, online learning raises the ability to enhance self-learning, self-discipline effectively, monitor student skills, assess the most appropriate tools to be used for online learning, assist in students' performance as well as to support just-in-time method of learning utilising environmental friendly approaches, that have successfully proven far more prominent besides being very beneficial (Marcum, 2014). That being said, usage of online courses by learners, undergraduate as well as postgraduate learners, however, is still not as prevalent as anticipated (Saade et al., 2009; Witt et al., 2016; Kilmurray, 2003). These conditions have triggered research relates to e-learning as well as online learning (Hara, 2000; Grandon et al., 2005; Yi & Hwang, 2003; Lee, 2006;).

Similarly, the rising population for information systems in education, technological advancement and recognition of the link between significant factors and online-learning acceptance continues to be substantial (Grandon et al. 2005). This study emphasises on the adoption and introduction of online courses on Malaysian higher education to reach out to rural students and thus have a detailed conceptual framework that stresses the influence of various components. Eventually, it offers useful insights into management strategies and to better manage and to improve university administration that can contribute to more student participation and successful program use.

Online teaching and learning have been used as a teaching and learning method that takes place over the internet without meetings and physical interaction (Witt et al., 2016; Allen & Seaman, 2007). It appears that internet and extranet networks and digital intranets, being a substantial part of e-learning (Garrison, 2011; Agourram et al., 2006; Govindasamy, 2002; Khan, 2001). Hung (2012), in his study, stated that online learning should be accessible offline and that it should solely depending on the internet, while nevertheless, online leaning only takes place via the internet. Thus, online instruction, therefore, comes under the framework of e-learning (Bachman, 2000). It also points out that distance learning is a far broader sense as compared to e-learning method (Selwyn, 2014). The crucial distinction of online education is the non-interactive method of learning, whereby it is believed that learning power itself may be controlled entirely by the learner himself, for which, as in e-learning, thus, the learning experience often rely heavily on course management activities (Beetham & Sharpe, 2013).

The need for a virtual learning network has now been expanded. Because online learning is the best approach for people who could not afford to gain a college degree while working (Crompton et al., 2016), in a developing country such as in the rural region of Malaysia will benefit from it. It may be the most ultimate method for women who are in a culturally domineering area are not able to travel.

Malaysia's higher education institutions have adopted and disseminated online learning platforms in their pedagogical cycle to gain a significant degree of penetration for the target market, overlooking at the time constraints and geographical location at a reasonably lower cost (Abeywardane, 2009; Abeysekera & Perera, 2015). In the official reports by the Ministry of Higher Education in Malaysia, many states and private universities are currently offering online courses for their students in several disciplines, such as research, social sciences and engineering, including social sciences and natural sciences. The aim of the analysis is twofold; (a) to assess the degree of acceptance of online courses; (b) to recognise variables

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