

Active Learning: Review Among Faculty of Business and Management Students

Junaida Ismail¹, ETTY Harniza Harun², Aishah Musa³, Samsiah Bidin⁴,
Muna Abd Jalil⁵ & Meriam Ali⁶

¹Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia

^{3,4}Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia

^{2,5,6}Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia

Abstract

This paper describes one of the criteria for student's success in learning which is student engagement. Active learning is one of the platforms to enhance student engagement. However, active learning is rarely used as a learning tools at the tertiary level. According to the National Survey of student Engagement (NSSE) and the Australian survey of students Engagement (AUSSE), active learning involves "students' efforts to actively construct their knowledge". As cited in Brame (2016), active learning is desired as "activities that students do to construct knowledge and understanding". Thus, to venture into the issues of active learning this study is constructed to determine the students' perceptions of active learning. The students were given a set of survey to rate their perceptions towards active learning approach that was being applied by their respective lecturer. Their ratings were gathered and analysed using SPSS Software. In total there were 166 respondents from Faculty Business Management of UiTM Kedah. Majority of the respondents were female with 118 students. The findings revealed that majority of respondents preferred active learning as it helped them to remember things better, enjoyed the lesson and improved their social skills. It is hoped that this study will provide good understandings to lecturers in terms of promoting their creativity in teaching especially in applying active learning approach.

Keywords: Active learning, Student engagement, Faculty of Business Management, UiTM Kedah

INTRODUCTION

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One of the criteria for student's success in learning is student engagement. Student engagement is the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught that affects their motivation level in learning. The concept of student engagement is based on the belief that learning improves when students are "engaged." Thus, stronger or improved student engagement has become one of the main instructional objectives expressed by educators. Active Learning is one platform to enhance student engagement. However, active learning is rarely used as a learning tool at the tertiary level.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researches were conducted on the issue of active learning. Most researches conducted on active learning yielded positive results. A research conducted by Lumpkin, Achen & Dodd (2015) revealed that students rated highly participating in engaging learning activities. This also had a positive impact in their learning. Similar responses were recorded by the respondents in the study conducted by (Roach, 2014) regarding students’ perception on flipped learning (an example of active learning activity). 76% of the students admitted that flipped learning helped them learn better.

Similarly, in a study conducted by Smith & Cardaciotto (2011)(Smith & Cardaciotto, 2011) on student perceptions of active learning in large lecture classes, it was found that the students in the active learning group reported having substantial retention of the course material. Miller & Metz (2014) carried out a research on 119 first-year dental students to examine the students’ perceptions on the effectiveness and the usage of active learning techniques in the classroom. The students rated positively on the effectiveness of active learning. They also proposed that 40% of the class time should be used for active learning (as cited in Patrick, Howell & Wischusen, 2016).

The most common characteristic of an active learning classroom is the students should participate in the process of thinking, creating activities and problem solving, rather than being passive and listening to the lecture the whole time (Armbruster, P., Patel, M., Johnson, E., & Weiss, M. : 2009). Information literacy in the post-graduate classroom provides research skills and understanding of the research process to the post-graduate students; the adult learner (Parramore, 2019). According to Parramore (2019) the active learning activity is a highly sought skill needed for post-graduate study rather than the undergraduates. In active learning, employing the discussion technique, nurturing discourse on the topics between the students and encouraging

participation, or even making participation in the discussion mandatory is very useful in making active learning process a success (Parramore, 2019).

There are several examples of active learning techniques and strategies that can be applied to encourage active learning in the classroom. Firstly, the lecturer is able to encourage all students to interact with the material, using the one minute paper as a formative assessment (where at the end of the class the students are given 1-2 minutes to write one or two of the most important points on a piece of paper). Besides that, when the students are able to work together in a group effectively and actively engage with the course is also considered as active learning. The process of involving or encouraging the students to discuss the case studies and apply the course content to solve real world problems, such as issues related to public policy, environment or human resources management is also one technique of active learning. By applying active learning techniques in class it would increase the happiness index among the students and also increase their satisfaction attending the course at the university.

Engaging students through active learning is the gold standard of teaching especially in higher education; however, it is not clear whether students appreciate being so engaged (Joseph Lobo, 2017). From the findings of Lobo (2017), students appreciate active learning, but when it comes to evaluating on which type of learning they prefer, they preferred the traditional lecture rather than active learning. Looking at the findings, one point to ponder is at what level of education active learning should be emphasised?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE, RESEARCH QUESTION & HYPOTHESES

This study was carried out to achieve several objectives, partial of the research objectives, research question and hypohtheses are as follow:

Research Objectives: to investigate the views of students' perceptions of active learning among Faculty Business Management Students at UiTM Kedah.

Research Questions: What is students perception of active learning at UiTM Kedah?

Research Hypotheses: There is a positive relationship between active learning and student engagement.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participant of this study are Diploma and Undergraduate students from Faculty of Business and Management (FPP) at UiTM Kedah Branch. The study used the questionnaire as the data collection technique. 166 students from the Faculty of Business Management were the samples of this study. Age range of respondents between 20-25 years old.

Instrument

The questionnaire was divided into 2 parts. Part A comprised questions regarding the demographic information. Part B comprised of statements regarding the active learning approach. The questionnaire was adapted from national survey student engagement (NSSE). The 4-point Likert Scale was used, ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: *Gender * Lesson Involved Active Learning Crosstabulation*

Findings 1: Involve Active Learning

Count		Lesson Involved Active Learning				Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Gender	Male	0	5	19	24	48
	Female	1	6	77	34	118
Total		1	11	96	58	166

Table 1 shows that **154 (93%)** respondents agreed with the statement *I learn best when my lesson involve active learning*. This indicate that the active learning approach have a positive impact on students learning.

Table 2: Gender * Al Helps to Remember Things Crosstabulation
Findings 2: Helps to Remember

Count		Al Helps To Remember Things				Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Gender	Male	0	3	24	21	48
	Female	1	4	56	57	118
Total		1	7	80	78	166

Table 2 shows that **158 (95%)** respondents strongly agreed with the statement *active learning helps me to remember thing better*. This indicates show that students able to learn and remember the course material better.

Table 3: Gender * Enjoy Lesson That Involve Al Crosstabulation
Findings 3: Enjoy Lesson That Involve

Count		Enjoy Lesson That Involve Al				Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Gender	Male	0	2	25	21	48
	Female	1	5	72	40	118
Total		1	7	97	61	166

Table 3 shows that **158 (95%)** respondents agreed with the statement *I enjoy lessons more if they involve active learning*. This illustrates that the variety of approach in teaching and learning during the lecture is able to increase students gratification in the class.

Table 4: Gender * Learn Better When Work With Other Crosstabulation
Findings 4: Learn Better When Work With Other

Count		Learn Better When Work With Other				Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Gender	Male	0	4	25	19	48
	Female	1	1	73	43	118
Total		1	5	98	62	166

Table 4 shows that **160 (96%)** respondents agreed with the statement *I learn better when I work with other students*. Results indicate that discussions and work between students can enhance students understanding of course content.

Table 5: Gender * Develop Social Skill Crosstabulation
Findings 5: Develop Social Skill

Count		Develop Social Skill			Total
		Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Gender	Male	0	18	30	48
	Female	2	45	71	118
Total		2	63	101	166

Table 5 shows that **164 (99%)** respondents agreed with the statement *working with other students helps me to develop my social skill*. This result shows that active learning approach lead to increase students' communications skill and develop a good relationship with others. This is another example that can measure the active learning process in classroom.

CONCLUSION

The results have shown that most students agree that by allowing them to explore the method of active learning in their learning process helps them to improve their learning skills and capabilities in many areas. Not only that, studying via active learning is said as able to help them remember better the key points in the subjects

studied. They enjoyed lessons more, and this is true as stated by Malik and Janjua (2011) where their study found that students lose their concentration after 15-20 minutes of lectures. Therefore, having active learning helps students to concentrate better as the learning process involves a two-way interaction between the instructor and students. And the last part is that respondents agree they are able to develop their social skills with their counterparts. This is in line with the study found by Daouk, Bahous & Bacha (2016) where they found that when students participate in classroom discussions and written responses, their oral, communication, and written skills tend to improve. Therefore, from the findings it can be concluded that the results shown in this study were in line with the studies made by previous researchers. It is about time for the instructors to adapt active learning in their teaching strategy to inculcate the two-way method of learning process and at the same time giving space to the students to explore new ways of exploring new knowledge. However, as mentioned by Parramore (2019), active learning is more applicable to adult learners or in this case, post-graduate students. Therefore, future research can be done to see whether there is a difference in the practicality of practicing active learning only on postgraduate students or it can actually be done at all levels of study.

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