

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**INVESTIGATING MALAYSIAN
STUDENTS' E-LEARNING
EXPERIENCES WITH MASSIVE
OPEN ONLINE COURSES (MOOCS)**

SAFWANA NURWIDAD BINTI SAFRI

Thesis submitted in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Hotel and Tourism Management)

Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management

February 2023

ABSTRACT

The Ministry of Education (MOE) of Malaysia has identified e-learning as an integral component of higher education and lifelong learning. However, the emergence of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and the development of various delivery systems for these courses have raised concerns about the quality of education. The new challenges in online education are characterised by the increased focus on users' reactions and fast-changing needs. Furthermore, because of the restricted availability of face-to-face (F2F) interaction and access between instructors and students, MOOCs have limited interaction and access between instructors and students. In particular, this study focuses on applying a hierarchical model to identify the dimensions of e-learning service quality as perceived by undergraduate students at public universities in Malaysia. The proposed research framework adapted the hierarchical and multidimensional model that Brady and Cronin (2001) developed, with modifications to make it more appropriate for MOOCs in Malaysia. The UiTM MOOC was chosen as the study setting focusing on the programme the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management (FHTM) offered. The undergraduate students are able to learn theories and practical skills such as housekeeping, pastry, and culinary through the UiTM MOOCs. Using convenience sampling, online questionnaires were distributed to students who have experience learning hospitality, culinary, and tourism courses through FHTM MOOC on the OpenLearning platform. Four-hundred and eighty-two responses were obtained from the data collection process. The data were analysed by using the structural equation modelling assessment. The hierarchical factor structure, including the e-Learning Service Quality, consists of four primary dimensions (Physical Environment Quality, Interaction Quality, Learning Quality, and Learning Outcome Quality), used to measure Student Experience and Continuance Intention MOOCs in Malaysia. This study has found that e-Learning Service Quality positively correlates with Student Experience and Continuance Intention. Besides that, only Learning Quality and Learning Outcome Quality have a positive relationship with the Student Experience. In addition, Physical Environment Quality, Learning Quality and Learning Outcome Quality have a positive relationship with Continuance Intention. Additionally, the Student Experience also has a positive relationship with Continuance Intention in MOOC. Meanwhile, based on the findings, Interaction Quality negatively relates to Student Experience and Continuance Intention. This study offers a valuable framework for understanding the interrelationships among e-learning service quality, student experience, and continuance intention in MOOCs.

Keywords: Massive Open Online Course (MOOC); e-Learning Service Quality; Student Experience; Continuance Intention

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah, I was able to complete my PhD studies in the end. I DID IT. Thank you, Allah, for fulfilling my wishes and answering the Dua' of a loved one who wished for me to complete my PhD research. It is a challenging adventure, and I am grateful to Allah for showering me with numerous unexpected *rezeki* throughout my PhD journey.

I always expressed my gratitude to Allah for providing me with such a beautiful and amazing SV and Co-SV. Only Allah can repay your kindness and sacrifice for me. I want to thank my supervisor, Associate Professor Dr Zurinawati Mohi, a.k.a Mommy. I may not be able to complete my PhD research without the help of Mommy. Thank you, Mommy, for having faith in me at all times. I am grateful to you for the direction and insight you have provided me over my thesis. Thank you so much for caring for me and allowing me to live with you without expecting anything in return. Thank you for all of the beautiful moments that we have had together. I love you, Mommy. I would also like to express my gratitude to Associate Professor Dr Mohd Hafiz Mohd Hanafiah, who served as my co-supervisor. Thank you so much, Dr Hafiz, for always being patient and friendly to me. I sincerely apologise if my slowness in finishing my PhD thesis has caused you any inconvenience. The fact that you are my Co-SV is precious to me because you always thoroughly review my thesis and provide help along the process.

Despite doing this for my achievement and satisfaction, I am well aware that I lose out on many things and neglect others along the way. Being preoccupied with my PhD research meant I could not consistently pay full attention to my parents, siblings, relatives, and friends. I want to thank Haji Safri Abdul Hamid and

for their unconditional love. Thank you, Mama and Ayah, for never losing faith in me, always speaking words of encouragement to me, supporting me, and always being there for me when I needed you. Thank you so much, Mama and Ayah, for everything you have done. I love you so much, Mama and Ayah. My siblings have been by my side through every step of this never-ending path: Syafiqah, Zulhelmie, Shukri, Amilia, Syazwani, Syakir, and Syafiq — thank you for your support. I appreciate how you motivate me never to give up and always trust in myself whenever I feel anxious. Every time I begin to doubt my ability to complete the task, you tell me that I am capable. I love you.

My Pak Su, Roseli Abdul, deserves a special thank you. There are no words to explain how much I respect you adequately. You helped me when I was to make a crucial decision in my PhD journey. Thank you so much, Pak Su, for your assistance. Insha'Allah, I will continue to assist others in the future. I love you so much, Pak Su. Lastly, thank you for your support, Dua', and encouragement to all my best friends (Nazihah, Hidayu, Syuhaily, Rafidah, Fatin Hanani, Najat, and Afiqah), relatives (GTH and Gopeng), cousins (Fatin, Kak Nirah, Ayuni, and Dayah), my support group (Monica, Alif, Jeff, Amin, and Farhan), my lecturers from KPM Beranang and my form 5 teachers from SMK Kajang Utama. You all are the best! Thank you for all your love throughout my life. I love you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS	ii
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF SYMBOLS	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xv
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement	6
1.3 Research Objectives	9
1.4 Research Questions	9
1.5 Significance of the Study	10
1.5.1 Theoretical Perspective	10
1.5.2 Practical Perspective	11
1.6 Definition of Term	12
1.6.1 e-Learning Service Quality	12
1.6.2 Physical Environment Quality	12
1.6.3 Website Appearance	12
1.6.4 Website Convenience	13
1.6.5 Website Multimedia	13
1.6.6 Interaction Quality	13
1.6.7 Student-Contents Interaction	13
1.6.8 Student-Student Interaction	13
1.6.9 Instructor-Student Interaction	13

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets the purpose and aim of the study. It begins with the background of the study, which introduces e-learning in higher education, then focuses on the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), and after that, the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management and relates it to e-learning service quality as a central focus of the study. Then it followed with a problem statement to better understand the issue. Next, the research objectives and questions are discussed in the subsequent section. After that, this chapter highlights the significance of the study from academic and practical perspectives. Last but not least, this chapter ended with the definitions of key terms of the dimensions used in this study and the thesis outline.

1.1 Background of the Study

Education plays a significant role in determining a person's future achievements in anything from medical discoveries and advances in agriculture to improvements in state administration and the growth of the private sector (King, 2011). Furthermore, people who lack lifelong learning skills face more significant barriers to earning potential and employment later in life because they are more likely to have poor health outcomes and are less likely to engage in decisions that affect them (UNICEF, n.d). Moreover, UNICEF (n.d) also mentioned that the lack of skills for lifelong learning could jeopardise a person's ability to create a better future for themselves and their communities. As a result, it was demonstrated that education is the backbone of any country; it is vital to technological growth and transmits a variety of skills, values, and awareness (Bansal, 2020).

Formal education in Malaysia begins at age four with pre-school education, which is optional. In order to prepare for school, most six-year-olds have started formal pre-school education. After preschool, the education system in Malaysia is structured with six years of compulsory primary education beginning at age seven, followed by five years of secondary education and two years of pre-university senior secondary study before entering higher education (Clark, 2014). In addition, certificate, diploma, undergraduate, and postgraduate study options are available throughout the tertiary education period. Tertiary education at the diploma level is