Readiness and Challenges of Post-Endemic Covid-19 e-learning Implementation among University Students – A Preliminary Study

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ABSTRACT

The employment of e-learning or online instruction has persisted beyond the post-COVID-19 era. In fact, several sophisticated and state-of-the-art tools have been developed to streamline the online learning experience for students. All groups of students, regardless of primary school level to higher education level, have started to adapt to e-learning in their learning process. Therefore, the researcher seeks to investigate whether students, particularly at the tertiary level, possess the necessary readiness to effectively execute e-learning. The objective of this study is to identify the level of readiness of Sultan Azlan Shah University students in using e-learning and to identify the challenges faced by students in implementing e-learning. The study was conducted on 38 undergraduate students from the Islamic Studies Bachelor's Degree program at Sultan Azlan Shah University. The study found that students are still not fully ready to implement e-learning and lack encouragement from parents to participate in e-learning while at home with the highest score being

Keywords: Readiness, challenges, e-learning, Covid-19

INTRODUCTION

The rapid modernization of society has significantly influenced contemporary teaching and learning practices. In the past, conventional learning was the sole means of knowledge acquisition, which relied on direct tutoring within a specific physical location. Now, learning can be done anywhere at any time. The swift advancement of cutting-edge technology has made it possible to access information with ease and convenience, literally at one's fingertips. Whatever question arises in the mind, information and answers can be obtained with just a few clicks on the internet. This simultaneously gives a new breath to the world of teaching and learning today.

In addition, in 2020, the wave of the Coronavirus disease attacked the world. Almost the whole world had to quarantine at home to stop the spread of the epidemic. The quarantine that took about 2 years almost paralyzed the world economy. Nevertheless, what is noteworthy is that the education sector has undergone several transformative revolutions, allowing for the continuity of knowledge acquisition, and preventing humanity from falling behind in the pursuit of knowledge. As a result, various online learning applications and methods or E-learning methods have been created to facilitate students and educators to learn and teach wherever they are, at any time.

E-Learning

E-learning is an online teaching and learning technique that uses the Internet as a communication tool and as a reliable source for obtaining information (Nur Fatin Ashikin Mohamed Aziz and colleagues, 2020). It has become the norm for students worldwide, including students at Universiti Sultan Azlan Shah located in Kuala Kangsar, Perak. Before the Movement Control Order (MCO) was enforced throughout the country, the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) was at a minimum level. However, after the MCO was tightened in 2020, LMS has become the main tool for communication between lecturers and students. In addition, the use of Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom has gained a place to facilitate online teaching and learning (Rosmawat et.al, 2020). However, the readiness of students to commit to the concept of e-learning cannot be ascertained. There are certain challenges that students face to give full commitment during e-learning. Therefore, this study was conducted to assess the level of readiness and challenges of the implementation of post-pandemic Covid-19 e-learning among Universiti Sultan Azlan Shah students.

In Malaysia, since the MCO began on March 18, 2020, the government has directed the closure of all schools and educational institutions. In line with this, the Ministry of Education Malaysia has issued a directive for the implementation of Teaching and Learning (PdP) at home (KPM, 2020). All educators, from kindergartens to higher education institutions, use PdP based on E-learning methods such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Classroom, Zoom meeting, Google Meet, and many other applications to ensure that students do not miss out on learning (Abdul Aziz Ishak and colleagues, 2021).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Numerous educators express their inability to guarantee the attendance of students during virtual classes. This is primarily due to students' reluctance to not only activate their cameras but also their tendency to remain unresponsive when presented with queries during online sessions. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the level of readiness and challenges

students to face in implementing e-learning. Indirectly, it can lead to solutions to face these challenges in the future (Noraznida Husin and Nursyaheera Atan, 2020). This study will benefit the university to determine the level of readiness and challenges faced by students in implementing e-learning. Those responsible at the university will be able to find the best solutions to improve the effectiveness of e-learning among students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted quantitatively through a survey using a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to students of Sultan Azlan Shah University. The study was analyzed through Microsoft Excel descriptively, by analyzing the percentage and minimum score of the collected data. The questionnaire was divided into three parts, namely Part A, which consisted of respondent demographics, Part B, which focused on students' readiness to face E-learning, and Part C, which focused on the challenges faced by students in implementing E-learning. Parts B and C used a Likert scale ranging from (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree). The items in the questionnaire were modified based on previous studies and have been validated (Abdul Aziz Ishak et.al, 2021). The data were analyzed using descriptive analysis. Microsoft Excel was used to measure the data analysis by creating a description table and evaluating the minimum score based on the data contained in the Google Form application.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Demography of respondents

Demography	Frequency	Percentage
Islamic Study	38	100
Age (year):		
18-23	38	100

According to Table 1, the overall demographic of the respondents by study program consists of 38 individuals who are students of the Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Islamic Studies program. All respondents are between the ages of 18-23 and are students of Universiti Sultan Azlan Shah.

Table 2: Readiness among Students of Islamic Studies in Using e-learning.

Item	Mean Score
My family does not provide support for my e-learning	3.76
I am not willing to continue with e-learning if I have personal problems	2.95
I have a deep knowledge of computing.	2.82
I am more willing to choose the e-learning method compared to the face-to-face method	2.39
I did self-learning before the start of the e-learning class	2.39
I am willing to take on the challenge of implementing E-learning	2.21
I always refer back to the lecturer if I face any confusion in understanding the content of the lesson	2.18

I am using my own expenses to subscribe to the internet for the purpose of e-learning	2.03
I am ready to carry out e-learning even after the post-Covid-19 period.	2.02
I am willing to employ online learning resources such as YouTube for remote learning.	2.00
I will strive to obtain the latest gadgets and equipment to fulfill the requirements for e-learning classes	1.97
I am willing to use e-learning management systems such as Google Classroom, Zoom, or Meet as tools for online learning	1.89
I am willing to utilize printed modules as a tool for home-based learning.	1.87
I do not want to be left behind in using new methods of e-learning	1.87
I will find a way to attend e-learning classes even if the Internet at my home is not functioning	1.87
Average	**2.28**

Based on Table 2, to assess the level of readiness, the study found that the level of readiness of ISM Pengajian Islam students in implementing e-learning at home is not good. This is based on the highest minimum score obtained on item "*My family does not provide support for my e-learning*", which is 3.76. This indicates that students are facing problems in committing to online learning while at home due to the lack of family support.

The lowest minimum score is 1.87 for items *"I am willing to utilize printed modules as a tool for home-based learning", "I do not want to be left behind in using new methods in e-learning" and "I will find a way to attend e-learning class even if the Internet at my home is not functioning"*. This indicates that the respondents are still not ready to implement e-learning even after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Based on the analysis in Table 3 to assess the level of challenges, the study found that the highest minimum score was 4.03 for *"I play games while e-learning is in progress"* indicates that did not focus during lecture because they were playing online games. The second highest mean score is 3.89 for "*I am not receiving enough learning support from my parents/guardians to facilitate the e-learning process at home*". This clearly shows that one of the challenges faced by students in implementing e-learning is the lack of support from parents/guardians at home.

Table 3: Challenges among Students of Islamic Studies in Using e-learning

Item	Mean Score
I play games while e-learning is in progress	4.03
I am not receiving enough learning support from my parents/guardians to facilitate the e-learning process at home	3.89
I do not have the facility of a mobile phone, laptop, tablet or any other device for the purpose of e-learning	3.76
I am not interested in joining e-learning classes	3.61

I live in a rural area where it is difficult to access the Internet	3.45
I browse social media while e-learning is in progress	3.45
I am not proficient in the use of social media, email, and online education platforms	3.42
I need to help my parents at home while the e-learning process is in progress	3.29
I do not have enough money to buy e-learning equipment	3.26
I often do other tasks while e-learning is in progress.	3.21
My focus during e-learning only lasts for the first 15 minutes	3.16
I lose focus during e-learning sessions	3
I have a lack of knowledge and skills in the process of e-learning	2.82
I am having difficulty establishing two-way communication with the lecturer during the e-learning process	2.97
I do not have stable Internet access	2.84
I feel embarrassed to turn on the camera during e-learning classes	2.68
I am only following the university administration's instructions to attend the e-learning process	2.34
AVERAGE	**3.25**

Meanwhile, the lowest minimum score in terms of challenges is for item "*I am only following the university administration's instructions to attend the e-learning process*" with score of 2.34. It was found that students did not have major problems following the instructions of the university administration to attend e-learning sessions.

CONCLUSION
In conclusion, the students are still not fully prepared to implement e-learning at home due to the lack of family support, but they do not have a problem implementing e-learning at the university. The study also found that these students face challenges such as not receiving enough support from parents at home to carry out e-learning. Therefore, it is recommended that these students stay on campus and in the surrounding area to achieve more effective e-learning. The researcher suggests that further research be conducted to develop the understanding and perceptions of students regarding the implementation of e-learning after Covid-19. The researcher also recommends that the study be conducted more widely among a larger number of students from various fields of study.

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