

Blended Learning: Satisfaction among Accounting Students in UNITEN KSHAS

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to investigate the students' satisfaction towards blended learning among the third and final year accounting students in Universiti Tenaga Nasional Kampus Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah (UNITEN KSHAS).

Design/methodology/approach: A total of 252 questionnaires were distributed to the third and final year accounting students in UNITEN KSHAS. The independent variables in this study are the usage of technology, lecturer's skills and students' acceptance in blended learning while the dependent variable is students' satisfaction.

Findings: Based on the survey conducted, the usage of technology, lecturer's skills and students' acceptance in blended learning has a significant relationship with students' satisfaction.

Originality/value: This study contributed a valuable information to the universities to ascertain the valuable methods of delivering high-level education by using the blended learning. The blended learning approach can be used by students and lecturers to understand if there is some difficult topic that hard to be explained in a traditional way. Thus, students can capture the whole topics in the easiest way through video online or any blended learning tools.

Keywords: Blended Learning, Education, Usage of Technology, Lecturer's Skill, Students' Satisfaction

Introduction

Education is an important part in life which give influence to acquire and sustain the quality of life (Ross and Wu, 1996). Therefore, effective learning is essential to help people particularly students in achieving quality of education. O'keefe, Rienks and Smith (2014) stated that blended learning is the mix of learning material such as face-to-face, online, technologies and print bases that allow the students engaged with the content of course. Ashton and Elliott (2007) also stated that the combination of face-to-face and online learning environments put students in advantages side in terms of increased time and flexibility for their study, wider and easier access to learning resources, and a higher level of independence in regulating their learning. Students are expected to use technology as part of their learning experience at university when there are variety of learning style (Bradwell, 2009) as it can stimulate students' mind during process of education. Lopez-Perez, Perez-Lopez and Rodriguez-Ariza (2011) proved that in increasing students' performance, blended learning gives positive influence on the result as it is easier for them to achieve passing rate in examinations. In addition, when students mixed online materials into traditional learning, it proved the positive achievement on students' performance (Boyle, Bradley, Chalk, Jones, and Pickard, 2003).

Nevertheless, the interest of students toward technology is very moderate. Azleen Shabrina and Nor Aziah (2015) revealed that students only utilized the technology when they perceived it is not difficult to access. Therefore, they need to develop high interest as, they may not be able to capture full insights and perspective into the subject content during the face-to-face sessions (Azleen Shabrina and Nor Aziah, 2015). Thus, to facilitate the students' learning process, blended learning could improve students' knowledge towards what they will learn in their overall subjects. In addition, the lecturer also is the main predictor in ensuring that the accounting students are able to have an access to a helpful and effective learning materials using blended learning and traditional ways of transmitting the information (Azleen Shabrina and Nor Aziah, 2015). Thus, this study aims to investigate the relationship between the usage of technology, lecturer's skill and students' acceptance in blended learning with students' satisfaction.

Literature Review

Usage of Technology in Blended Learning

Akyüz and Samsa (2009) mentioned that the use of technology in blended learning had been classified as third gen of far learning systems. The first gen (Gen X) is a one way instruction delivery such as radio, television and e-mail. The second gen (Gen Y) is a far distance education with one technology, such as web or computer-based learning while the third gen (Gen Z) is blended learning, characterized as fully utilizing the multiple technologies to deliver learning and the best advantages by having face to face studying.

The use of technology in blended learning have the prospective to enhance the education familiarity and to provide students' better outcome compare to other approaches (Smart and Cappel, 2006). The students must gain access to dependable hardware (Bolliger and Martindale, 2004). Based on study by Ainley and Engers (2007), having knowledge in the usage of technology and the ability to conduct the technology helps the adoption of strategies that allow

prolonged pursuit of opportunity and, provides the students with a good control over their own pace of studying and satisfaction.

Lecturer's Skill in Blended Learning

Lecturers are anticipated to possess important capabilities to use technology effectively in class by merging it into diverse subject areas. Azleen Shabrina and Nor Aziah (2015) indicated that lecturers played an essential role to ensure that the students are well guided via offering access to beneficial reading materials, using blended studying instrument. Therefore, skills which includes giving manual, querying and facilitating is required to assist students' to find their very own solutions and to build their knowledge. Lecturers used their skill by offering guidance for the students to find and pick out relevant facts, and to evaluate the quality and validity of that statistics (McKnight, O'Malley, Ruzic, Horsley, Franey, and Bassett, 2016).

Students' satisfaction is extremely corresponding to the skill of the lecturer, mainly on her or his availability and to response on time (Naaj, Nachouki, and Ankit, 2012). Lecturers are changing students' life with the help of technology in blended learning as they are the facilitator with knowledge and skill, mentors, and coaches. They also assessed, analyzed and synthesized students' work to develop unique learning plans for each student by monitoring and working with small groups of students' or the entire classes. In contrast with traditional way of learning, blended learning gives greater learning sources and greater possibilities to allow lecturers and students to communicate, collaborate, and have interaction among each other (Wu, Hsia, Liao, and Tennyson, 2008).

Students' Acceptance in Blended Learning

Based on study by Owston, York and Murtha (2013), the success in blended learning courses is stimulated to a better extent via students' conceptions of studying, their acceptance towards blended learning, and the level of interactivity out of the classroom. Students are more likely to acquire better grades when they use a different method to their studying and elaborate cohesive intellectual ideas (Owston et al., 2013). On the other hand, Davis (1989) stated that the technology acceptance model (TAM) was adopted from the principle of reasoned movement which has been used as the theoretical foundation for numerous factual education of the students' acceptance of technology. According to TAM, the acceptance of a blended learning can be assessed through testing if it is easy to use (Davis, 1989). Davis (1989) explained further when learners perceived the ease of use and recognize the benefits, it will then affect to acceptance or willingness to utilize.

Moreover, the recognized usefulness is more related to the behavior than the perceived ease of use. Based on Owston et al., (2013), students who were tremendously attracted in blended learning and express acceptance within the subject have been capable of gain better grades, as compared to students who had been thwart with the course. For example, felt bored or overwhelmed.

Students' Satisfaction

Based on study by Thurmond, Wambach, Connors and Frey (2002), students' satisfaction is "an idea that display the result and mutual understanding that arise among lecturer and students". Naaj et al. (2012), stated that satisfaction is the amount of the students' emotion and point of view that outcomes from summation of the entire advantage that a student expects to gain from

blended learning. According to Keengwe and Kidd (2014), the students would go for online courses rather than traditional classroom. Students are saying that they are learning further in these classes, used up more time on these classes, and feel that these classes to be extra difficult but it is higher quality compared to the traditional classes. This showed that most of the students are satisfied with online courses which can lead to level up the interest and enjoyment in the subject (Keengwe and Kidd, 2014). Besides that, Saleem and Qureshi (2011) found that perception of the students about learning can be one of the factors that can influence the students' satisfaction which includes the involvement of the students in the class and the knowledge of the subject.

Theoretical Framework

Social Constructivist Theory

Social constructivist theory believed that students build their own knowledge through active engagement and learn from the outcome of the learning activities (Juniu, 2006). Lunenberg (1998) stated that constructivism and the integration of technology in the academic can improve the achievement of students in the core subject areas as supported by Ruey (2010) which mentioned that constructivism that uses educational technology can increase students' collaboration. According to Judson (2006), there is a relationship between constructivist instruction styles by lecturers and integrated technology into the learning process. Therefore, through developing constructivist course modules using technology can provide enhanced opportunities in blended learning activities and students' interaction. Doolittle and Hicks (2003) stated constructivism requires lecturers become knowledgeable facilitators to students and responsible to guide the students through the specific experiences or activities in blended learning. Constructivism theory makes lecturers able to use personal expertise to develop a classroom culture and values students' participation in intellectual tasks. Constructivist learning environment expected for students to play a more active roles and accepts responsibility for their own learning (Mohd, Noor and Maizatul, 2012). Thus, collaborative learning activities can engaged students' participation and interaction in order to achieve academic objectives that lead to increased level of satisfaction toward learning process (Alzahrani and Woolard, 2013).

Hypothesis Development

According to Duvall and Schwartz (2000), students' experience in the usage of technologies has been shown to be directly related to the students' satisfaction in blended learning that led to the good performance. In addition, students who have an advanced knowledge on the usage of technologies such as computer and other communication technologies can improve the students' satisfaction in blended learning (Delen and Bulut, 2011). The students that are familiar with technology that used in the course could do well in blended learning. In contrast, the students who do not have a technical support in the course experience could have the tendency to have lower satisfaction level and be more frustrated in the blended learning (Naaj et al., 2012). In addition, positive effects on the students' learning outcomes can be achieved by the use of technologies thus gain a better understanding of the subject content (Lopez-Perez, Perez-Lopez, Ariza, and Linares, 2013). Thus, the first hypotheses developed as below:

H1: There is a significant relationship between the usage of technologies in blended learning with students' satisfaction.

As stated by Gecer (2013), the lecturers as being a guide and given a positive vibe to the classroom and establish a strong relation with the students that can reveal a student's strengths and improved skill and directly to success in blended learning. This can motivated the student to expand their effort in learning, increased positive attitude towards the lesson, to attend other courses and any explanation on the content in an interesting manner (Naaj et al., 2012). The performance and availability of the lecturer must be flexible in teaching was highly correlated with the students' satisfaction (Naaj et al., 2012). According to Small, Dowell and Simmons (2012), has found that the interpersonal communication between students and lecturers that led to students be satisfied even with other general communication such online notice boards. In addition, lecturers who have positive and good skills in control of the technology when students have a technical problem are likely to experience more positive learning outcomes (Volery and Lord, 2000). It has been stated by Sher (2009), the positive relationship between students and lecturers leads to the satisfaction in blended learning thus showed the value of education. Thus, the second hypotheses developed as below:

H2: There is a significant relationship between the lecturer's skill in blended learning with students' satisfaction.

DeWitz and Walsh (2002) suggested that student's acceptance on the blended learning is important not only for academic but also to their lifestyle and individual perception. In addition, students who have higher levels of acceptance in blended learning tend to be more motivated, higher achievement and experienced to not being stress that led to higher level of students' satisfaction in blended learning (Solberg and Villarreal, 1997). According to Owston et al. (2013), blended learning has made a changes to the students to improve the learning productivity, to develop the communication skills and to improve their understanding of the subject content. Thus, blended learning made the students feel that they were part of the group that can enhance them to participate actively in group activities (Naaj et al., 2012; Nor Azian, Norashikin and Aini, 2015). Hence, the third hypotheses developed as below:

H3: There is a significant relationship between students' acceptance in blended learning with students' satisfaction.

Method

Population and Sample

The population of the study consists of 526 third and final year accounting students in Universiti Tenaga Nasional Kampus Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah (UNITEN KSHAS). The target respondents for this study are students taking Advanced Accounting Information System (AISB333) and Auditing (AUDB313) in UNITEN KSHAS. These subjects are chosen because the learning process are similar with the features in blended learning of both subjects such as video learning, Moodle and online quizzes. As the population of the study is 526, therefore the suggested sample size is 226 (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Hence, 252 questionnaires were distributed, more than suggested amount due to avoid any invalid questionnaires from the respondents. All 252 questionnaires were collected representing overall responses and able for further analysis.

Data Collection Procedures

Questionnaire survey was used to collect data and used closed-ended questions as it can help the respondents to make a quick decision regarding the question (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A covered demographic profile consisting of age, gender, year of programme, Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) and familiarity in the blended learning. This questionnaire had an optional question where the respondents who did not familiar with the blended learning do not have to answer for section B. This is due to in order to determine the students' satisfaction in blended learning, the respondent need to be familiar with blended learning. For section B, it covered the independent variables and dependent variable which consists of 15 statements' questions surveys that will be carried out. The questions in section B are based on five-point Likert scales which are 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree and 5 = Strongly Disagree.

Findings

Descriptive Statistics

Based on the Table 1, only 27.4 percent of the respondents were male, whereas 72.6 percent were female. Majority of the respondents are between the age of 20 to 23 years old which represented by 88.5 percent and the balance of respondents are from age 24 to 26 years old which shown by 11.5 percent. In addition, more than half of respondents are from third year with 53.6 percent and the balance 46.4 percent are from final year students which are taking almost all subject in accounting and have more experiences in learning process. Majority of respondents' cumulative grade point average (CGPA) are between grade 3.49 to 3.00 which represented by 46.8 percent.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Profile

Criteria	Category	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	69	27.4%
	Female	183	72.6%
Age Group	20-23	223	88.5%
	24-26	29	11.5%
Year of Programme	Third Year	135	53.6%
	Final Year	117	46.4%
Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA)	4.00-3.50	72	28.6%
	3.49-3.00	118	46.8%
	2.99-2.50	47	18.7%
	2.49-2.00	15	6.0%

Table 2 depicts the mean for students' satisfaction is 2.15 indicated that the respondents mostly satisfied in blended learning. Meanwhile, the mean for all independent variables are usage of technology is 2.2964, lecturer's skill is 2.2206 and students' acceptance is 2.312. Thus, results show that the respondents agree with all the variables in the questionnaire.

Table 2: Independent Variables and Dependent Variable

Variables	Mean
Students' Satisfaction	2.15

Usage of Technology	2.2964
Lecturer's skill	2.2206
Students' Acceptance	2.312

Reliability Test

According to Table 3 below, all the independent variables consist of the usage of technology in blended learning, the lecturer's skill in blended learning and the students' acceptance in blended learning show the Cronbach's Alpha of 0.844, 0.926 and 0.911 which indicate that the strength of association is very good (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Therefore, all the variables of the questionnaire is reliable.

Table 3: Reliability Test for Independent Variables

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Usage of Technology	0.844	5
Lecturer's skill	0.926	5
Students' Acceptance	0.911	4

Correlation Analysis

The first objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between the usage of technology in blended learning with students' satisfaction. From table 4 below, students' satisfaction on the usage of technology in blended learning were found to be significant ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, H1 is supported. The result is consistent with previous study, which stated that the usage of technology in blended learning has a significant contribution with students' satisfaction (Nor Azian, Norasyikin, Syezreen Dalina, and Mashitah, 2017). On the other hand, the correlation coefficient value of 0.642 indicates that there is a positive and high correlation between students' satisfaction on the usage of technology in blended learning.

The second objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between lecturer's skill in blended learning with students' satisfaction. Students' satisfaction on the lecturer's skill in blended learning were found to be significant ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, H2 is supported. The result is consistent with DeBourgh (1999) who concluded that lecturer's skill has a significant contribution to students' satisfaction in blended learning. Meanwhile, the correlation coefficient value of 0.738 indicates that there is a positive and high correlation between lecturer's skill in blended learning with students' satisfaction.

The third objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between students' acceptance in blended learning with students' satisfaction. Students' acceptance in blended learning were found to be significant ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, H3 is supported. Students' acceptance in blended learning does have an effect to students' satisfaction. Correlation coefficient value of 0.828 indicated that there is a highly positive correlation between students' acceptance in blended learning with students' satisfaction. This result is supported by Picciano (2002), which revealed that when students' participated in collaborative activities or group projects together with sharing ideas proved that there is students' acceptance in blended learning.

Table 4: Correlation between Independent Variables and Dependent Variable

Variables		Students' Satisfaction
Usage of Technology	Correlation	.642**
	Sig 2 tailed	.000
Lecturer's Skill	Correlation	.738**
	Sig 2 tailed	.000
Student's Acceptance	Correlation	.828**
	Sig 2 tailed	.000

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to analyse the students' satisfaction in blended learning among third and final year accounting students in UNITEN KSHAS. The findings showed that independent variables such as the usage of technology, lecturer's skill and students' acceptance in blended learning have significant relationship with students' satisfaction. Using technologies in a blended learning possess the ability to enhance the learning experience, to achieve more than what can be done in face-to-face or other approaches (Smart and Cappel, 2006). Belanger and Jordan (2000) also stated that students who considered reliable technology to be helpful are more likely be satisfied because it can enhance their understanding. Meanwhile, lecturer who are versatile and ready in delivering helpful material and demonstrate corroborative participation will lead to students' satisfaction in a blended learning environment (DeBourgh, 1999). American Psychological Association (1997) stated that the learning environment in which social interaction among students are allowed and encouraged lead to positive learning outcomes. Students will have the opportunity to share view points and talk about the important topics or problem with one another in a blended learning, thereby able to capture high understanding of a subject content (Bonk and Cunningham, 1998). Any future researchers is recommended to set a ceiling number of respondents for each category of gender. This is to ensure the achievement of a balanced perception of gender and age toward blended learning as this contributes to acquire a significant data. Furthermore, it will be able to overcome issue of bias in answering the questionnaires that being set. In addition, it is recommended to include the respondents from other faculties or other universities to ensure the findings are generalizable.

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