Evaluation on Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) Awareness and Readiness among Radiographers in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the awareness and readiness towards Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) among radiographers in Malaysia. As part of healthcare providers, radiographers also acquire long-life learning which can be relate to the purpose of MOOC. The data obtained can be utilized to improve the current MOOC in Malaysia and also help in creation of new MOOC specifically for Medical Imaging Programme in UiTM. This study was a prospective study, involving radiographers who are currently practices and work within the field. The questionnaire was disseminated via online survey through social media (WhatsApp® and Facebook®) using random sampling technique. Only 102 respondents from total of 377 responded to the online survey. Based on the acquired result from the survey, statistical analysis was done to evaluate the awareness and readiness of radiographer in Malaysia and to compare the Malaysian radiographers' awareness and readiness with demographic variables, background on mobile devices and their understanding towards blended learning. The result showed that all respondents are ready but most (76.5% from 102 respondents) are not aware about MOOC. Next, Kruskal-Wallis One Way ANOVA analysis revealed that the all comparisons between the demographic variables, understanding on blended learning and mobile

device background with MOOC readiness and MOOC awareness variables provide p-value more than 0.05(p>0.05), indicating the null hypothesis is retained, except for between MOOC awareness with understanding on blended learning which is less than 0.05(p<0.05), thus indicating the null hypothesis is rejected. Radiographers in Malaysia are ready but mostly not aware about Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC). Demographic variables, background with mobile devices and understanding on blended learning proved to have no relation with the awareness and readiness of radiographers in Malaysia, except for relation between understanding on blended learning and awareness which proved to be significant.

Keywords: *MOOC, Radiographer, Awareness, Readiness, Malaysia*

INTRODUCTION

The demand for highly-specialized healthcare professionals in recent years is constantly growing. Over the years, the extensive access to internet made it possible for everyone to explore numerous resources and education platforms that offer continuous education via online. The quantity of active online courses is rapidly growing and education been taken to a new level of development with the emergence these mediums. MOOC is a new learning atmosphere created in response to the challenge faced by students (Aboshady et al, 2015). It is expected to offer a quality education online to everyone who has internet connection with no fees. Firstly initiated in Canada by Stephen Downes and George Siemens, it was later gained popularity in the U.S. when a Stanford University's professor, Sebastian Thrun held a free online course on "Artificial Intelligence" in 2011. Some years later, MOOC expanded their audience to over tens of thousands users enrolling in courses in science and humanities. Then, it started to get attention from policy makers and creators, which resulted in the number of contracts involving major leading American universities. Coursera, edEx and Udacity are the three primary ventures that pointing the path to a new era of learning (Muzafarova, 2014).

The structure of MOOC is designed for mass audience and at the same time fits the needsof each student as a user and learner. A short video for example, where the students are able to pause or rewind the video will assist them to grasp the knowledge shared by the educators with their own pace. This then followed by interactive quizzes and activities to test their understanding which can be automatically graded. The most important part of MOOC is the feedback which is provided by both the instructor and the peers. MOOC comes with one major problem, which is there are limited number of teachers to handle a large number of students. However, to deal with this problem, MOOC offers a simple solution, whereby the system lets the students to teach and grade each other. Peer-review can help to motivate and support the students by giving them chances to share knowledge and ideas thus improving their way of thinking in the process(Muzafarova, 2014). Plus, this technique can be useful for students in health sciences who mostly learn via Problem Based Education (PBL) and experiential sharing session.

In Malaysia, the government has already voiced up their support for MOOC which was highlighted in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 on 23rd February 2015. The blueprint acknowledges the contribution of learning technologies towards improving student outcomes and access to higher education. The government focus is to covert common undergraduate courses into MOOC and advocates the use of blended learning models for up to 70% from the total programs offered. This is to create a diverse set of educational options and greater emphasis on lifelong learning programs (Kelleher, 2015). In Eleventh Malaysia Plant 2016-2020 (RMK11), the MOOC development strategy is highlighted under the Six Strategic Thrust (ST). One the plan is to raise the quality of graduates and programs and strengthening research for innovation by promoting online learning opportunities through MOOC (The Economic Planning Unit, 2016).

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RESEARCH PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main attraction of MOOC is its characteristics; massiveness, openness, and connectivity.MOOC is inclusive as it offers access to huge numbers of people who cannot formally register for a full time course due to many factors. Initially, the ministry has introduced four pilot courses for MOOC via OpenLearning® platform which are *Tamadun Islam danTamadun Asia* (TITAS) course, *HubunganEtnik*course, Introduction to Entrepreneurship course and ICT Competency, and language courses which also contributed by UiTM. However, none of these courses are the major courses for radiographers and other healthcare professionals. As MOOC can be very useful for healthcare professionals to pursue further in their career, justification on the need to develop related MOOC courses for them as part of Continuous Medical Education (CME) strategies is really crucial. Their awareness and readiness towards MOOC can indicate whether offering such course can be really beneficial to them. The evaluation about the radiographers' readiness toward MOOC was conducted so that the data retrieved by this project can be useful for further development and improvement of MOOC system in UiTM and other universities that offer Health Science Program in Malaysia. Evaluation and comparison were also done between different demographic variables such as gender, age, working experience and academic qualification and between different background on mobile devices and their understanding on blended learning and MOOC to justify specific differences.

METHODOLOGY

This research is a prospective, cross-sectional study involving quantitative method using a set of validated questionnaire as the main tool. The questionnaire is based on a few themes or categories that represent the readiness towards MOOC based on blended learning which are Flexible Learning (FL), Online Learning (OL), Study Management (SM), Technology (T), Online Interaction (OI) and Classroom Learning (CL). The respondents were selected based on random sampling and disseminated to a convenient sample of respondents and contacts**.** The questionnaire were disseminated to all qualified radiographers who are currently practicing medical imaging or radiography in Malaysia via online survey using *Google Form*®. The

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link for the self-administered questionnaires was initially send via email between mid of January 2017 to end of April 2017, but the response was very low as most of the target respondents were not regularly engaged through the email. Thus, the survey then was distributed through Facebook page related to the profession including the Medical Imaging Malaysia and Medical Imaging Student Association (UiTM) that pool majority of the radiographers and alumni from UiTM. Plus, majority of the target group use Facebook as their main tool for communication and discussion. A total of 102 respondents completed the questionnaire and submitted it back via thee-survey. "Qualified radiographers" are meant for the ones who are within the accepted qualifications. The respondents must be currently working in Malaysia with a minimum diploma in Medical Imaging or radiography from any universities or institutions recognized by Malaysian authority. As the survey was shared among the target group, the possibility of getting feedback from respondents who are not considered inclusive for this study can be avoided. Plus, the survey also required the respondents' to state their level of education and working experience in Medical Imaging or radiography. The respondent samples were randomly selected via *GoogleForm*®. The data collected from the survey were processed and analyzed using Statistics Software, SPSS version 22.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data

Table 1: The Frequency and Percentage of the Demographic Data

Demographic		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	79	77.5
	Male	23	22.5
Age	18-20 years old	1	1.0
	21-25 years old	47	46.1
	26-30 years old	27	26.5
	31-40 years old	23	22.5
	Above 40 years old	4	3.9
Working experience	1-5 years	69	67.6
	10-15 years	16	15.7
	16 years and above	6	5.9
	6-10 years	11	10.8
Academic qualification	Degree	34	33.3
	Diploma	67	65.7
	Master	1	1.0
Prior Learning Institution	IPTA	43	42.2
	IPTS	29	28.4
	KKM	16	15.7
	KSKB	13	12.7
	Overseas	1	1.0
Mobile devices	Android based phone	80	78.4
	iPad	4	3.9
	iPhone	17	16.7
	Tablet	1	1.0
	Total	102	100.0

Table 1 summarizes the overall demographic data in this study. The result shows that female was the higher respondents which is 79(77.5%) as compared to male which is 23(22.5%). This figure correlates to the ratio female and male radiographer in Malaysia. In term of age, the result shows that out of 102 respondents, only 1(1.0%) respondent was between 18-20 years old, 47(46.1%) respondents were between 21-25 years old, 27(26.5%) respondents were between 26-30 years old, 23(22.5%) respondents were between 31-40 years old and 4(3.9%) respondents were above 40 years old.

The result also shows that 69(67.6%) respondents are between 1-5 years working experience, 11(10.8%) respondents are between 6-10 years working experience, 16(15.7%) respondents are between 11-15 years working experience and 6(5.9%) respondents have 16 years and above working experience. Based on this, most of the radiographers in the study population have working experience between 1-5 years, followed by 11-15 years, 6-10 years and lastly 16 years and above.

Justifying the academic background also is necessary as to evaluate if there is any different perspective towards MOOC. The result shows that out of 102 respondents, 34(33.3%) are with Degree qualification, 67(65.7%) are with Diploma qualification and only 1(1.0%) is with Master Degree qualification. Based on the result, we can see that most of the respondents have Diploma qualification, followed by Degree qualification and lastly only one with Master Degree qualification. From this, a total of 43(42.2%) were from local public institutions (*IPTA*), 29(28.4%) were from private institutions (*IPTS*), 16(15.7%) were from Ministry of Health (MOH) sponsored colleges, 13(12.7%) were from *Kolej Sains Kesihatan Bersekutu* (*KSKB*) and 1(1.0%) from an oversea institution.

The data for age, working experience and academic qualification were consistent to each other. Majority of the respondents' age were between 21 to 25 years old, as this is the normal range for the radiographers who have qualified with diploma. Plus, majority of them also have less than 5 years experiences as they newly graduated with diploma (65.7%), started working as a radiographer as majority of them were between 21 to 25 years old.

MOOC Readiness

Based on the result obtained, it indicates that Malaysian radiographers are ready for the implementation and application of MOOC as it shows that most of the respondents agree with the questions in all sections given which proved that they are ready with MOOC. All of the finding in every section of the MOOC readiness questions are almost the same and does not differ from the overall which is the sum of data of all sections as shown in Table 2. Thus, this shows that the radiographers in Malaysia have equal readiness in term of learning flexibility, online learning, study management, technology, online interaction and classroom learning. The study conducted by SitiFairusz, Fesol and Salam (2016) proved a similar result to this study as both studies agreed that the respondents have positive attitude towards learning flexibility, positive attitude towards online learning, positive feedback towards technology and positive attitude towards online interaction reflect a high readiness toward MOOC.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, Median, Mode and Skewness Value for All Themes and Categories

		Overall	Flexible Learning(FL)	Online Learning(OL)	Study Management(SM)	Technology(T)	Online Interaction(OI)	Classroom Learning(CL)
N	Valid	102	102	102	102	102	102	102
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.9902	4.2451	3.8529	3.5686	4.0490	3.8529	4.1961
Median		4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000
Mode		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		.47710	.72353	.49547	.68231	.73629	.65093	.70415
Skewness		-.030	-.410	-.310	.033	-.381	-.066	-.469
Std. Error of Skewness		.239	.239	.239	.239	.239	.239	.239

There are a few factors contributing to these finding. One of the factors identified was due to range of respondents' age. As majority of them were between 21 to 25 years old, they are more IT literate and exposed to technology. Considered as gen Y, their way of learning are different as compared to earlier generation. Thus, engaging online learning and the usage of gadget were not a problem for this age group (SitiFairusz, Fesol& Salam, 2016). Plus, majority of the respondents were considered as newly

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