Student Readiness towards Online Learning During Movement Control Order (MCO) in Malaysia: A Descriptive Analysis

Kesediaan Pelajar ke arah Pembelajaran dalam Talian Semasa Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan (PKP) di Malaysia: Analisis Deskriptif

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ABSTRACT

This research showed a descriptive analysis on student readiness towards online learning during movement control order (MCO) due to pandemic covid-19. The readiness of the students' needs to be studied due to the new normal which take an immediate effect and change our lifestyle including the way of learning. The focus of this research was on readiness elements such as technology access quality and facility, online learning time management, skills, tools, and online learning system. We also included additional questions about the response towards learning, if the movement control order period extended and response to the post (after) covid-19 events. This research design was using a quantitative approach through questionnaire survey that has been distributed online to the students of Kolej Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Selangor (KUIS). A total of 2208 respondents answered the questions and analyzed statistically. The results found that the students' readiness was in moderate level due to the pandemic of covid-19. The lecturers must be more creative and flexible in term of knowledge delivery in the new normal of learning environment.

Keywords: Readiness; Online Learning; Movement Control Order; Covid-19; Lockdown

ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan ini merupakan analisis deskriptif mengenai kesediaan pelajar terhadap pembelajaran dalam talian semasa perintah kawalan pergerakan (MCO) kerana pandemik Covid-19. Kesediaan pelajar perlu dikaji kerana situasi normal baharu telah memberi kesan dan mengubah gaya hidup kita termasuk cara belajar. Fokus penyelidikan ini adalah pada elemen kesediaan seperti kualiti dan kemudahan akses teknologi, pengurusan masa pembelajaran dalam talian, kemahiran, alat, dan sistem pembelajaran dalam talian. Kajian juga memasukkan pertanyaan tambahan mengenai tindak balas terhadap pembelajaran, jika tempoh perintah kawalan pergerakan dilanjutkan dan respons terhadap peristiwa (pasca) Covid-19. Reka bentuk kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif melalui tinjauan soal selidik yang telah diedarkan secara dalam talian kepada pelajar Kolej Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Selangor (KUIS). Seramai 2208 responden menjawab soalan dan menganalisis secara statistik. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa kesediaan pelajar berada pada tahap sederhana kerana pandemik Covid-19. para pensyarah harus lebih kreatif dan fleksibel dari segi penyampaian pengetahuan dalam persekitaran pembelajaran yang berupa normal baharu.

Kata kunci: Kesediaan; Pembelajaran dalam Talian; Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan; Covid-19; Penutupan dan penyekatan

INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic of Covid-19 has a huge impact worldwide in all sectors, including health, economy, society, and education sectors. Almost all countries affected by the pandemic have implemented a lockdown, shutting down their critical sectors in stages. Social isolation and maintaining hygiene are one way to curb the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic (Allcott et al., 2020; Simonov et al., 2020; Venkatesh & Edirappuli, 2020). Until now, there is no vaccine to prevent this disease.

A movement control order is a method of lockdown implemented by many countries, including Malaysia, to control the Covid-19 pandemic. The Prime Minister of Malaysia announced a movement control order on 18th March 2020. A series of movement control orders have taken place and until now, the country is still implementing the movement control order in fighting the pandemic. The decision makes the country able to control the pandemic and limit its spread from getting worse (Yusoff & Sarifin, 2021).

In the education sector, most institutions are affected in their learning activities and struggle to maintain their quality of education and qualification (Mohamed Hata & Mahmud, 2020; Thangaiah et al., 2020). The readiness towards online learning is an important aspect to be studied before the actual implementation during the movement control order period.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Online learning readiness is an important aspect to be investigated as it will construct the students' behaviour towards learning activities. Traditionally, the learning activities are conducted in physical classes and face-to-face between the teacher and students. When we talk about online learning, the physical environment being replaced by the virtual environment through the software, network communication, and different procedure than in traditional methods of learning (Mohd Danuri & Abd Rahman, 2016; Vermaat et al., 2016).

In order for students to benefit from the online learning environment, they have to be ready in terms of technology, know-how, mental and physical (Dray et al., 2011; Engin, 2017). The technology aspect, such as the access quality and facility, skills for using tools, and online learning system must be prepared by the students before the learning activities. The learning activities will probably be affected due to the movement control order imposed by the government. Therefore, we need to look into the students' readiness towards online learning during the movement control order.

Instead of the technology facility, the quality of technology also plays a significant role in successfully implementing online learning. One of the well-known researches on service quality measurement is the SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988). There are five dimensions outlined in the SERVQUAL model such as tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. It is a comprehensive analysis and model for measuring service quality (Stodnick & Rogers, 2008; Tan & Kek, 2004; Udo et al., 2011). However, we did not impose this measurement in this research as it is more towards descriptive analysis for getting an insight into the student online learning readiness situation in KUIS.

Time management is an essential aspect during online learning activities. Even though online learning is often associated with the learning anytime and anywhere, students still need to manage their own learning time (Mohamed Amin Embi et al., 2014; Firdaus et al., 2020; Horzum et al., 2015). With the condition that everybody needs to stay at home due to the movement control order, the students will probably face difficulty in managing their learning time (Chung et al., 2020; Sriwichai, 2020). Therefore, we think it is important to know the general time management among students for online learning during movement control order.

The skills, tools, and online learning system that students need to know are complementary during the movement control order. There will be less face-to-face interaction with people and more interaction with the online learning system (Chang & Fang, 2020; Fauzi & Sastra Khusuma, 2020; Horzum et al., 2015). The teacher will use the system for medium communication and interaction with the students. Somehow, the skill set needed by students to access the online learning system is essential for pursuing the learning activities (Vovides et al., 2007; Williams et al., 2012). We think, we should get some insight on how ready the students in terms of their skills and tools that they use in order to find the best suitable way.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used a quantitative approach for the research design. A questionnaire survey was used for data collection in April 2020 through a Google Form circulated to the students and later imported into SPSS for further analysis. We analysed the data collected using descriptive analysis as the context of this study is at the International Islamic University College Selangor (KUIS).

RESPONDENT AND PARTICIPANT

The total respondents' response to the questionnaire is 2208 out of 8057 students, which is near a 27.4% response rate. The questionnaires were distributed online and circulated by the lecturers and student representative council for more than two (2) months. Sixteen (16) compulsory questions need to be answered by the respondents.

TABLE 1. Demographic Profile of respondents

Demographics	Category	Frequency (n= 2,208)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	767	34.7
	Female	1441	65.3
Faculty *	FSIT	143	6.5
	FICS	681	30.8
	FMM	649	29.4
	FSL	408	18.5
	FE	288	13.0
	MC	39	1.8
Type of Home Internet Access	Broadband Mobile	748	33.9
		1460	66.1

* FSIT = Faculty of Science and Information Technology, FICS = Faculty of Islamic Civilization Studies, FMM = Faculty of Management and Muamalah, FSL = Faculty of Syariah and Law, FE = Faculty of Education, MC = Matriculation center.

From Table 1, 1441 female (65.3%) respondents answered the questions compared to 767 male respondents (34.7%). The female students' population is more than male at Kolej Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Selangor (KUIS).

However, the type of home Internet access showed a very interesting data. Most respondents, nearly 1460 (66.1%), have a mobile broadband type of Internet access. Mobile broadband Internet access usually refers to the wireless type of Internet access using smartphones or other wireless devices with 4G network infrastructure (Bhalla & Bhalla, 2010; J. Vora, 2015). Wireless Internet access is commonly known as unstable Internet connectivity depending on the user's geo-location while using the Internet. It is heavily relied on the telco base station location either in urban or rural area. Some telcos give best service in rural area, some are not and vice versa.

Meanwhile, only 748 (33.9%) of the respondents used home broadband Internet access at their home. Usually, this type of broadband uses wired connectivity such as copper and fibre optic infrastructure. This type of Internet access is more stable and has faster Internet connectivity compared to mobile broadband. As the respondents are more likely to use mobile broadband for online learning, there are probably some obstacles for them to getting a quality learning process at home during the movement control order period.

INSTRUMENT

We used 16 simple questionnaires as an instrument for the data collection of all students registered in KUIS. The questionnaire was adapted from previous research to ensure the reliability and validity of the instrument. Most of the questions asked were about nominal data collection and only two (2) questions were asked using the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 which is strongly not satisfied and very difficult to 5 which is strongly satisfied and very easy. The questions were adapted from the previous researchers (Davis, 1989; Mohamed Amin Embi et al., 2014; Mohd Danuri & Abd Rahman, 2016; Watkins et al., 2004).

ANALYSIS

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS QUALITY AND ONLINE LEARNING TIME MANAGEMENT

We only collected two (2) data using 5-point Likert scale for assessing respondent technology access quality and response to online learning time management at their home during movement control order. The rest of data were nominal type of data which will be elaborated in descriptive analysis section.

TABLE 2. Quality of Technology and Response to Online Learning Time Management during Movement Control Order

Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
What is the quality of PC / laptop facilities along with complete software for you to undergo online learning?	3.29	1.074
How do you arrange your learning time if the duration of the Movement Control Order (MCO) is extended?	3.01	1.004

Since the questions used the 5-point Likert scale, the mean scores were divided into 3 categories such as low, medium and high for further interpretation. In Table 2, both questions have a medium level of readiness towards online learning during movement control order. The quality of the respondent's devices in medium level of their satisfaction with the result of 3.28 mean score (more than 3.68 mean score is considered a high level). Meanwhile, the management of the respondents learning time during movement control order is also at a medium level with 3.01 mean score.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

A high Cronbach's alpha coefficient from the range of 0 to 1 indicates more consistency. The result for the internal consistency in this study is 0.68. Churchill (1979) suggests a Cronbach's value of 0.6 is acceptable reliability for description of internal coefficient consistency (Churchill & Suprenant, 1979). Meanwhile, the content validation was done to the instrument by the experts from the National University of Malaysia (UKM). Therefore, the reliability and validity of the instrument is acceptable for this study.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

We outlined 4 types of responds needed which reflect to the readiness of online learning during the movement control order. The categories are: -

1. Technology Access Facility
2. Skills, Tools and Online Learning System
3. Response towards learning at KUIS, if the Movement Control Order (MCO) period is extended
4. Response to Post (After) Covid-19 Events

The questions asked are to get an insight of student readiness for online learning that will be conducted by the university. Therefore, most of the questions do not use the scale of measurement and are more towards nominal data collection. This will make the respondents at ease to answer the questions during the movement control order by using any kind of their devices such as smartphone, tablet or personal computer. The respondents will also use minimal Internet access data.

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS FACILITY

In Table 3, we asked whether the respondents have limited data quota for Internet access. There were 1264 (57.2%) respondents who have Internet access with limited data quota. This is supported with the number of Internet used by respondents were mobile broadband which is near to 66.1% from Table 1. Usually, mobile broadband has limited access due to quota restrictions imposed by the Telco. There were only 944 (42.8%) respondents who have unlimited Internet access.

TABLE 3. Technology Access

Questions	Response Count / Percent	
	YES	NO
Do you have internet access with limited data?	1264 / 57.2%	944 / 42.8%
Is your Internet access stable enough to undergo the online learning activities?	1245 / 56.4%	963 / 43.6%
Do you apply for 1GB of free Internet assistance every day from telecommunication companies during the Movement Control Order (MCO) period?	974 / 44.1%	1234 / 55.9%
If you DO NOT have good internet access, will you look for alternatives to continue online learning?	1806 / 81.8%	402 / 18.2%

Meanwhile, 1245 (56.4%) respondents have stable Internet access at home to undergo the online learning activities. This gives a good indicator for both lecturers and students to undergo discrete online learning activities during the movement control order as the balance of 963 (43.6%) students have unstable Internet access. The lecturers should be more careful about selecting synchronised online

teaching method such as online video lectures in real time due to nearly half of the students have unstable Internet access at home. It is suggested that the lecturers to perform more asynchronized online teaching method during the movement control order period.

Surprisingly, the data showed that there were more mobile broadband users compared to the home broadband users The data also showed that 1GB of free Internet assistance everyday promotion was not really needed by 1234 (55.9%) respondents compared to 974 (44.1%) who really needed it. Since most of the mobile broadband users have an Internet access quota, the data showed uncertainty result by the respondent. This may be due to the fact that the students might not know that they were entitled to the free internet data or they thought that they had a sufficient amount of internet data.

The data also showed that 1806 (81.8%) respondents were willing to look for alternative ways to continue learning online if they had a problem with their Internet connectivity. Only 402

(18.2%) were unwilling to look for alternative Internet connectivity. This gives the lecturers a good indicator to pursue with online learning during the movement control order.

SKILLS, TOOLS AND ONLINE LEARNING SYSTEM

Figure 1 showed the type of learning preferred by the respondents in KUIS. There were 193 (8.7%) respondents who preferred fully online learning and 819 (37.1%) respondents who preferred traditional learning in class. Meanwhile, the majority of respondents with 1196 (54.2%) preferred blended learning as their type of learning. It seems that if the movement control order is extended, the students will have to adapt from the traditional type of learning to fully online learning in order to continue the learning process in KUIS. Since the majority preferred blended learning method, the students will have no issues with the fully online learning method during the movement control order period.
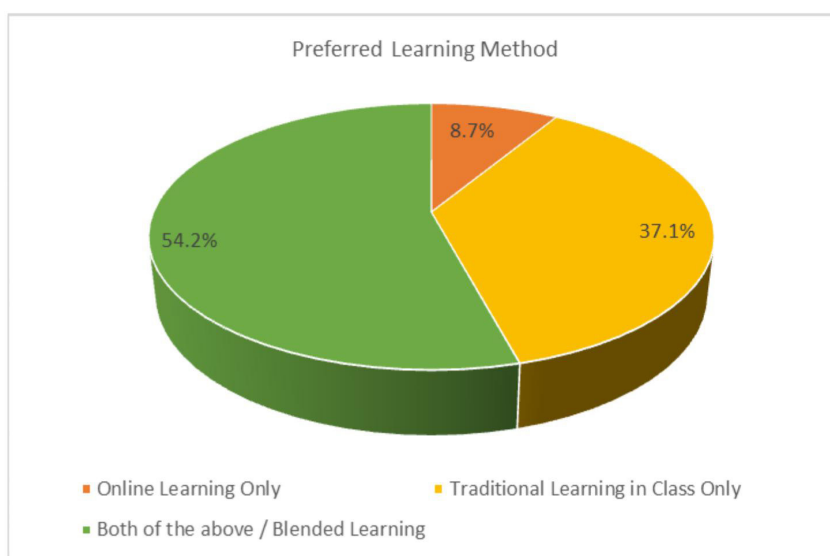

FIGURE 1. Preferred Learning Method in KUIS

We also asked the respondents the percentage division between conventional face-to-face (F2F) and online learning. We clustered the results into 3 categories such as conventional, blended and fully online learning. The result showed 1238 (56%) of the respondents corresponded to conventional

types of learning. Meanwhile, 772 (34.9) of the respondents preferred blended learning. Only 198 (9.1%) of the respondents preferred fully online learning. These results are near and almost similar to the result in Figure 1.

TABLE 4. Conventional Face-to-face (F2F) vs Online Learning

Questions	Response Count	Percentage	Learning Category	
F2F: 90%, Online Learning: 10%	630	28.5%	56.0%	Conventional Learning
F2F: 80%, Online Learning: 20%	312	14.1%		
F2F: 70%, Online Learning: 30%	296	13.4%		
F2F: 60%, Online Learning: 40%	197	8.9%	34.9%	Blended Learning
F2F: 50%, Online Learning: 50%	499	22.6%		
F2F: 40%, Online Learning: 60%	76	3.4%		
F2F: 30%, Online Learning: 70%	72	3.3%	9.1%	Fully Online Learning
F2F: 20%, Online Learning: 80%	41	1.9%		
F2F: 10%, Online Learning: 90%	85	3.9%		

We also asked the respondents about their learning methods while undergoing online learning after the Movement Control Order (MCO) period. The questions were multiple choice questions and the respondents were able to choose more than one answer from the answer options. In Figure 2, it seems that 1329 (60%) respondents like the short message type of learning such as through WhatsApp, Telegram, and other suitable platforms. Other top selections by the respondents were E-Book for 1293 (59%) and lecturer video recorded medium in YouTube for 1236 (56%). Meanwhile, the least chosen method by the respondents is the KLMS platform with only 393 (18%) respondents. This is probably because the students are not really accustomed to the newly launched platform. Other type of learning method that is least chosen by the respondents is social media such as Facebook, Twitter and others with only 572 (26%) respondents. This type of learning method is actually useful for mass gathering of students for online lectures. Social media would be the best platform for learning experience if it involves more than 100 students as the lecturers may utilise the big data information and resources in social media for teaching the students.
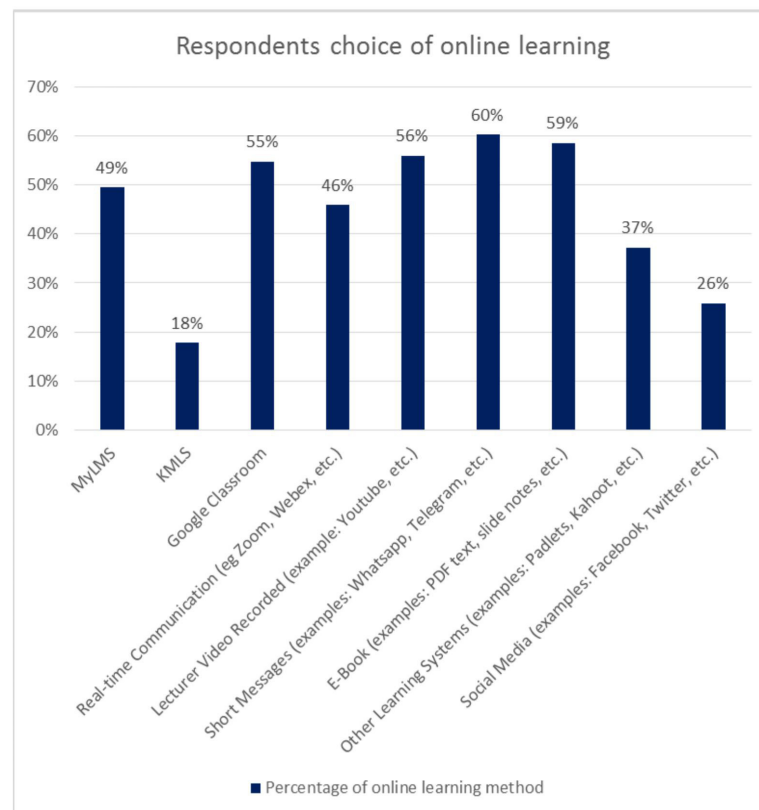

FIGURE 2. Respondents' learning method while undergoing online learning with the extension of the movement control order period

RESPONSE TOWARDS LEARNING AT KUIS, IF THE MOVEMENT CONTROL ORDER (MCO) PERIOD EXTENDED

We asked the respondents about their feelings if they had to continue fully online learning (100%) after the movement control order period was extended. In Figure 3, 305 (13.8%) respondents felt stressful and 749 (33.9%) did not like to study fully online if the movement control order period extended. There were 893 (40.5%) respondents who felt normal with fully online learning. Meanwhile, 183 (8.3%) respondents felt it was easy to learn online and 78 (3.5%) respondents felt happy with online learning. From these results, it seems that the respondents did not prefer fully online learning if the movement control order period was extended. It seems that only a few of them were comfortable learning online.
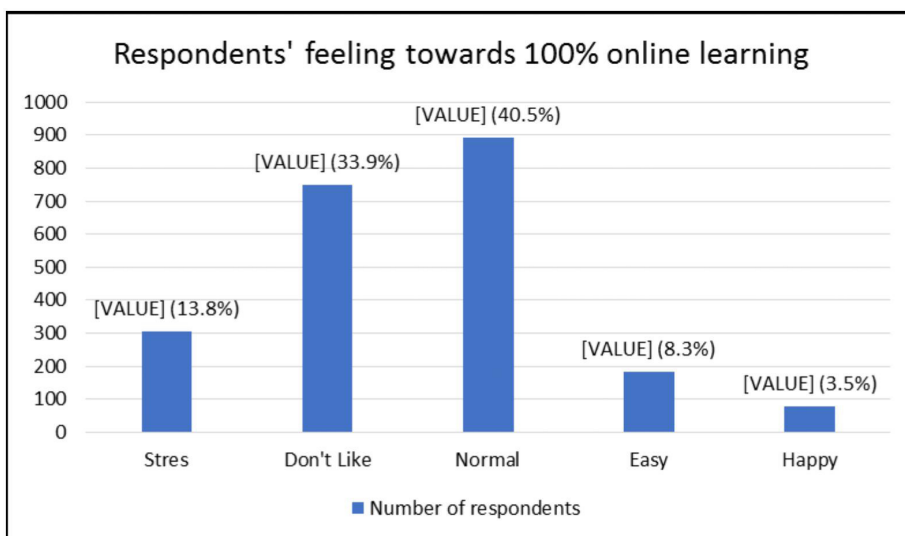

FIGURE 3. Respondents' feeling towards 100% online learning if movement control order extended

We also asked the respondents multiple questions regarding other problems that interfere with their online learning process. The majority of the respondents said they were unable to concentrate on online learning. There were about 1361 (61.6%) respondents who responded to this answer option. Meanwhile, there were 1106 (50.1%) respondents who preferred to attend class (F2F) compared to the result in Figure 1, there were only 819 respondents who preferred traditional learning in class.
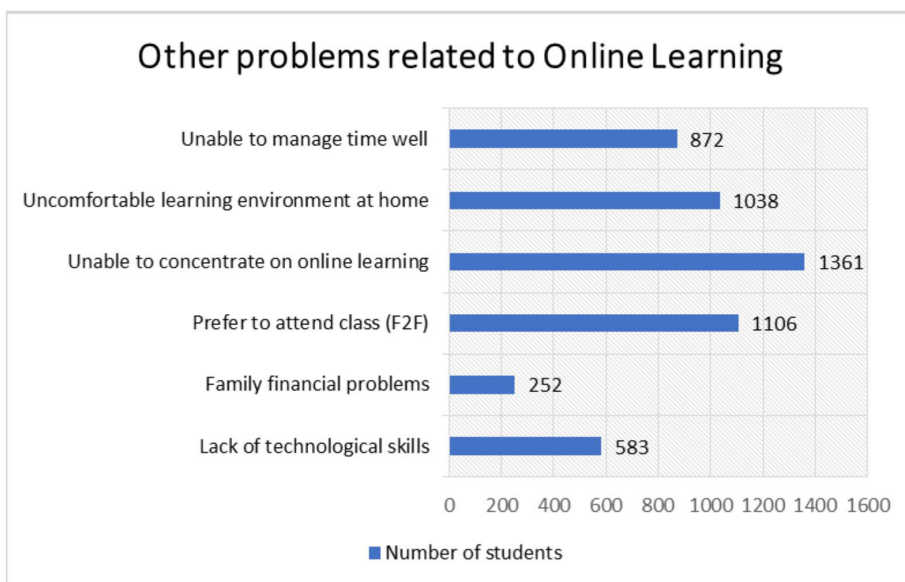

FIGURE 4. Other respondents problem related to Online Learning

There were 1038 (47.0%) respondents who said that the learning environment at home is not conducive. There were also 872 (39.5%) respondents who said that they were unable to manage time well enough to learn at home. There were 583 (26.4%) respondents who said that they lacked of technological skills for online learning. There were only 252 (11.4%) respondents who said they had family financial problems during the movement control order and it affected their online learning.

RESPONSE TO POST (AFTER) COVID-19 EVENTS

We only asked the respondents two (2) questions related to the post covid-19 event. The first question

we asked was whether the respondents were willing to register next semester due to the movement control order. There were 1974 (89.4%) respondents who wanted to register for the next semester. There were only 214 (9.7%) respondents who did not want to register and 20 (0.9%) respondents were unsure with their decision in the next semester. This finding gives insight university's students' interest in pursuing their studies even with the effect of covid-19 and movement control order.
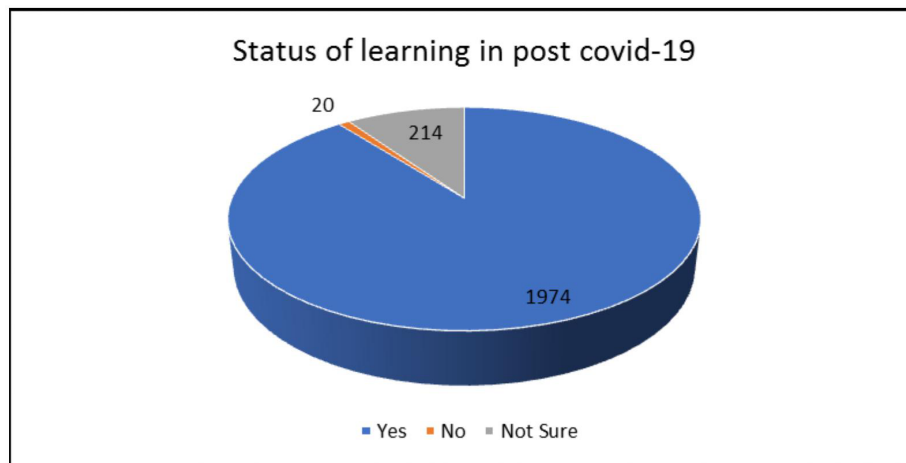

FIGURE 5. The respondent response on their willingness to continue learning in post covid-19.

The second question we asked is the reason why they chose the first question. It is an optional answer and only 748 (35.5%) respondents answered the question and 1424 (64.5%) skipped the question. In Table 5, there were 395 (50.4%) respondents who said that they had difficulty studying online. There were also 265 (33.8%) respondents who were not willing to share the problem. Meanwhile, there were 74 (9.4%) respondents who said they had lost family income and 33 (4.2%) had health problems (mental and physical) due to the movement control order. There were also 17 (2.2%) who gave other answers. Compared to the result in Figure 5, 784 respondents who answered this question also included the respondents who were willing to continue their study in post covid-19. Therefore, the university has to draft a holistic plan to help the students in the post covid-19 period.

TABLE 5. Reason of the respondents respond toward their learning in post covid-19

Answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Loss of family income	9.4%	74
The burden of having to study online	50.4%	395
Having health problems (mental and physical)	4.2%	33
Other problem that could not be stated	33.8%	265
Other answers	2.2%	17
Answered question		784
Skipped question		1424

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

These descriptive analyses give an insight to the university on how to understand their student situation during movement control order and pandemic covid-19. Since KUIS is the middle of drafting their own online learning policies and guidelines, the results of the analyses may give some insight to the drafter on how to outline the policies and guidelines.

The results show that the students are still willing to continue their studies despite many obstacles such as technological limitations, skill of using technology and the readiness of online learning. As a result, the quality of technology among the students is at a moderate level. The online learning time management by the student is also at a moderate level. Therefore, it is important for KUIS to outline flexible and not so rigid online learning policies and guidelines and ensure their students are able to follow it.

The descriptive analyses for technology access facilities show that most students have good facilities and are willing to find alternative solutions for studying if they have a problem with their facility. The students skills and tools for using the online learning system are also in a good shape. It means that the students are ready for online learning during the movement control order. However, students still prefer the blended learning or face-to-face (F2F) method of learning as it is probably the best way of learning in university using student-centered learning (SCL) or teacher-centered learning. SCL is a discipline that involves interaction between teams of students experiencing a learning environment that will be applied in real situations (Emaliana, 2017; Zohrabi et al., 2012). Meanwhile, TCL is a discipline that involvesdirect interaction between teachers and students in learning environment (Brown, 2003; Zohrabi et al., 2012). TCL is more suitable for conveying factual information and exercises that build low-level thinking (Dole et al., 2015; Mascolo, 2009). Therefore, lecturers and teachers need to choose and apply suitable SCL or TCL in their learning environment as well as more interactive learning activities utilising other educational tools such as Kahoot, Edpuzzle and others.

Meanwhile, if the movement control order period is extended, the lecturers and teachers need to ensure the respondents' health condition is good in order to adapt to the new normal and online learning. Figure 3, skewed more to the left indicates the students' health (mental and physical) condition is not so good during the movement control order. As the movement control order was imposed all of a sudden to control the covid-19 pandemic, this had an effect on the students' health conditions (Dray et al., 2011). Together with the result of problems related to online learning, it is advisable for lecturers and teachers to be more flexible and creative in knowledge delivery in the learning environment.

The students' responses to post (after) covid-19 events indicate that the university has to find an alternative to provide a better e- learning platform and ensure the learning activities run smoothly and well. The online learning development should also be more flexible as it could boost the motivation of the students (Mwende et al., 2020). If the university had a comprehensive supportive plan for the students in the post covid-19, this would also increase the students' motivation to learn in the new normal through challenging online learning.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, student readiness towards online learning is at a moderate level as most of the new generation of students are well versed and proficient with technology including hardware, software and Internet access. The global pandemic affected the entire world and students had no choice but to adopt the new way of learning in the new normal. Some researchers recommend changing the taxonomy for the assessment (Asensio et al., 2020). However, the lecturers and teachers have to be more creative and flexible in knowledge delivery. They also need to keep the motivation level among students are well taken and enhanced to ensure the learning activities are well adapted by the students.

This insight survey is very useful to the university in drafting the policies and guidelines of online learning. The national level of policies and guidelines for online learning can be adopted with more flexibility to ensure the successful implementation of online learning in the future.

It is recommended to pursue a simple survey among lecturers and teachers' readiness towards online learning during the movement control order period. This will be a good indication and assist the university in planning for their resources and infrastructure properly before fully embarking on the new technology in online learning. Furthermore, the university also needs to consider technology

availability and capability offerings to students in order to make them easier to use and benefit from online learning in their learning activities.

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