DO WE MATCH ? FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING VS. BLENDED LEARNING FROM THE STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

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1. ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the education landscape from face-to-face to online. Although the world has entered the endemic phase, this method is continued by using hybrid or blended learning methods. Hybrid teaching and learning methods differ from face-to-face learning because these methods use a creative, innovative, dynamic, and entertaining approach to attract students. Therefore, the study aims to examine students' views on face-to-face and hybrid learning methods. The questionnaire serves as the instrument of this study. A total of 1,693 students from Sunway University and Sunway College at various levels of study answered the survey for this study. The study results show that students are more interested in blended learning methods than face-to-face learning. The study's findings show that the shift in teaching and learning pedagogy from face-to-face to mixed has a positive impact on the current learning environment for the IT literate generation.

2. INTRODUCTION

The teaching and learning process is an activity that covers the teacher's teaching and is accompanied by student learning. Therefore, the location and learning atmosphere is essential in ensuring that teaching and learning run smoothly. This is supported by Mokhtar and Lakman (2021), who says that learning activities need to be conducted in a conducive environment to create a more dynamic learning environment. For example, the learning and teaching process that is usually done face-to-face in the classroom or lecture has been replaced by online platforms such as Webex, Google Meet, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp and Telegram (Azhar & Adnan 2022). In contrast to the study by Bali and Liu (2018), online learning will cause a lack of interaction between students compared to face-to-face learning. This lack of interaction is due to students studying in different locations far away, for example, in their own homes or other flexible places. This is supported by Oye et al. (2012) said blended learning is more student-centred than face-to-face learning, which is more teacher-centred. This learning technique makes students focus on the teacher's instructions.

Based on the explanation above clearly shows that there is a need to see the extent of students' acceptance of blended learning and what are the challenges faced by students in face-to-face learning. Therefore, this study aims to identify students' acceptance of blended learning and review the challenges faced by students in face-to-face learning. Therefore, the focus will be on the problems discussed above so that the researcher can find out the students' perception of the learning methods suitable for today's young generation, especially when the world is transitioning to an endemic phase.

3. TEACHING STRATEGIES ADOPTED

Blended learning has been implemented in the General Studies Department starting in 2019. To begin with, blended learning was conducted on the subjects of Islamic Civilization and Asian Civilization first to see the effectiveness and student feedback on blended learning. After proving the effectiveness of blended learning for students, the General Studies Department took steps to implement blended learning for other subjects. The study's results prove that blended learning in blended learning is a trend of the current generation (Yaacob et al., 2021).

In addition, the blended learning model is seen as suitable for a small number of students or large class groups. Blended learning began to be fully implemented for all general subjects in March 2020 after the Malaysian government announced the first Movement Control Order and continues until today.

4. METHODOLOGY

This research instrument uses a questionnaire prepared by the Department of General Studies. This questionnaire has 13 sections that start from sections A to M. Of these 13 sections, only two are closely related to this study, which are sections C and K. Section C is titled student acceptance of Blended Learning, and section K is titled challenges faced students in face-to-face learning. There are five items for each section.

The questionnaire was developed using google forms and distributed to respondents using email, Whatsapp, and Telegram. The data was then analyzed using SPSS 25 (Qomusuddin & Romlah, 2021). Table 1 summarises the analysis method used based on the research question constructed to find the level of interpretation of the average value of the mean score. The interpretation of the average mean score was adopted by Yaacob (2016), which was modified to simplify the data analysis process, (Refer Table 1).

Cronbach's Alpha value for the item of student acceptance of blended learning is 0.923. Cronbach's Alpha value for the challenge items faced by students in face-to-face learning is 0.943. Based on the two alpha values, it shows that the questionnaire that was built has high reliability and can measure the variables in this study well (Refer Table 2).

Table 1 : Interpretation of Mean Score Values

Means Score	Level
1.00 until 2.40	Low
2.41 until 3.00	Moderate
3.81 until 5.00	High

Table 2 : Level of Instrument Reliability

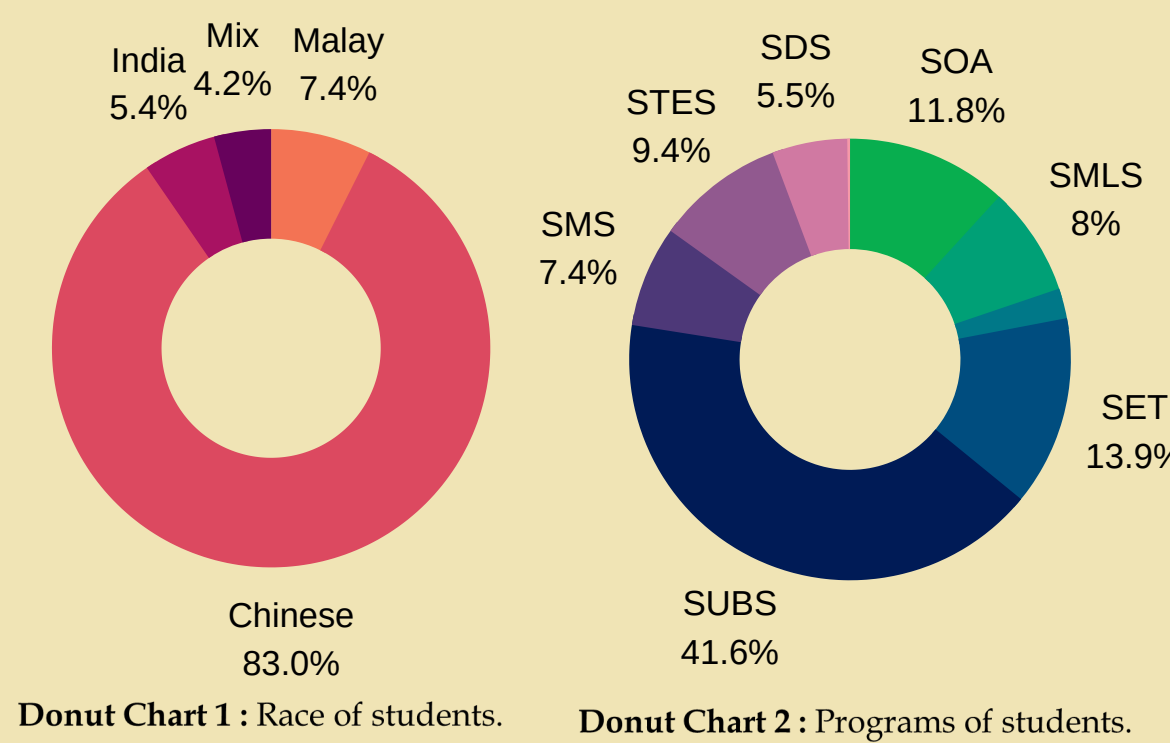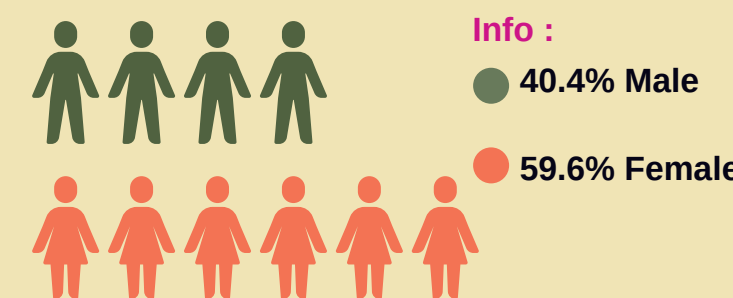| Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Total Items
Acceptance	0.923	5
Challenge	0.943	5

5. DEMOGRAPHIC

As a result, this section discusses the study design, sample, instrument, and procedure of the study analysis fund. This study also uses a survey technique by preparing a questionnaire to collect data from the respondents.

This study used a random sampling technique. The target respondents are Sunway University and Sunway College students who took MPU courses in the Department of General Studies between January and March 2022. The sample of this study totaled 1,693 students. A total of 1,008 respondents were female (59.6%), while 684 were male (40.4%). In terms of ethnicity, most of the respondents for this research are Chinese (83.0%), followed by Malay (7.4%), Indian (5.4%), and mixed (4.2%) (Refer Donut Chart 1).

Following that, the total respondents consisted of three levels of study, namely a degree for 1,383 people (81.7%), followed by a diploma level for 197 people (11.6%), and a certificate level for 112 people (6.6%). The entire respondent consists of seven school, namely Sunway University Business School (SUBS), Sunway Arts School (SOA), Sunway TES (STES), School Engineering and Technology (SET), School Mathematical Science (SMS), School Medical Life Science (SMLS) and Sunway Diplomas Studies (SDS). The majority of respondents (41.6%) were from SUBS, followed by SET (13.6%), SOA (11.8%), STES (9.4%), SLMS (8%), SMS (7.4%) and SDS (5.5%), (Refer Donut Chart 2).

1,693 students from Sunway College and Sunway University

Info :
- 40.4% Male
- 59.6% Female

Donut Chart 1 : Race of students.
- India 5.4%
- Mix 4.2%
- Malay 7.4%
- Chinese 83.0%

Donut Chart 2 : Programs of students.
- STES 9.4%
- SDS 5.5%
- SOA 11.8%
- SMLS 8%
- SMS 7.4%
- SET 13.9%
- SUBS 41.6%

6. RESULTS

Table 3 : Statistics on Blended Learning Adoption

Elements	(B1) eLearn tools	(B2) Awareness' eLearn	(B3) Attitude	(B4) Enjoy	(B5) Readiness	Overall Score Means
Mean Score	4.16	4.13	4.05	3.85	3.68	3.97
Rate	High	High	High	High	High	High

Based on Table 3, the findings of the above analysis show that all items are at a high level, with an overall mean score of 3.97. The highest mean score is for item B1, which is 'eLearn tools' with a mean score of 4.16, and item B2 which is 'Awareness' eLearn with a mean score of 4.13. This finding shows that students' acceptance of blended learning is positive. The number of responses is higher agree than disagree. Table 4 shows the distribution of mean scores for the challenges faced by students in face-to-face learning

Table 4 : Statistics on Face to Face Adoption

Elements	(C1) Environments	(C2) Facilities	(C3) Educator Factor	(C4) Limited Access	(C5) Less Motivation	Overall Score Means
Mean Score	2.98	2.72	2.96	2.84	3.01	2.90
Rate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Based on Table 4, the analysis results show that all five items related to challenges are at a moderate level, with an overall mean score of 2.90. The mean score at a moderate level is for item C5, which is 'Less Motivation' with a mean score of 3.01, and the lowest mean score is for item C1, which is 'Environments' with a mean score of 2.98. Findings show that the challenges faced by students in face-to-face learning are moderate.

7. DISCUSSION AND IMPACT ON LEARNING TO STUDENTS

Most Sunway University and Sunway College students choose blended learning over face-to-face learning. Based on the study's findings, the student acceptance of blended learning is high. This proves blended learning is positive and should be implemented compared to face-to-face learning. The results of this study are supported by the study of Azahari & Rahimi (2022), which is that face-to-face learning is seen as inappropriate if the blended learning method approach does not accompany it. The blended learning method is proven to be able to produce students who are creative and actively process learning content independently. In addition, the study conducted by Widiara (2018) also shows that blended learning is more effective than face-to-face and online learning.

The study results found that Sunway University and Sunway College students prefer to use eLearn to study General Subjects. All lecturers in the General Studies Department (GSD) use eLearn as a teaching and learning platform. The unique features found in eLearn make it an exceptional platform for GSD lecturers. This is a study conducted by Yaacob et al. (2021) which states that eLearn is a user-friendly platform with convenient features that can be used as a platform or online-based Learning Management System.

The study results also show a high awareness among students of using eLearn as a learning tool for MPU subjects. The awareness to use technology for learning purposes depends on the student's ability. The result of students' awareness will motivate them to be more enthusiastic and have the initiative to learn and explore the world of technology more deeply, as by the study by Solangi et al. (2018) found that motivation has a positive relationship between student actions and online learning.

The findings of this study show that the challenges faced by Sunway students in face-to-face learning are moderate, with an overall mean value of 2.90. The results of this study allow students not to face significant problems when learning face-to-face but prefer blended learning. The findings of this study coincide with the study done by Manea et al. (2021). His study found that the blended learning system became an option for engineering students in Bucharest, Romania, after the Covid-19 pandemic crisis.

The study results prove that students quickly get tired of face-to-face learning sessions. Student motivation to learn is essential in ensuring student consistency in learning. A study conducted by M. Syaubari & A. Yunus (2017) states that students will easily become bored and quickly lose focus in learning if there are no elements of imagination, animation, fantasy and musicals that are sourced from Higher Level Thinking Skills (KBAT) and Technology Communication Information (TMK) in teaching.

In addition, the results of the study also found that students quickly get bored following face-to-face learning. Students are not enthusiastic about learning because they feel that general subjects are boring. In addition, the attitude of lecturers who are not good at attracting students' attention encourages students to think that the subject of general subjects is very dull. Lecturers play an essential role in the learning process by creating a cheerful class atmosphere and helping students pay full attention. A study by Rudzi (2021) states that lecturers need to organize, plan and act prudently and dedicatedly to increase students' interest in a subject. In addition, lecturers also need to be more creative and critical in class in order to be able to develop new ideas so that they can stimulate students to think actively and think at a high level (Rusdin & Ali, 2019). Students' application of positive values can create a sense of love for the subject.

8. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION FOR PRACTISE

In conclusion, two objectives have been achieved: identifying students' acceptance of blended learning and the challenges faced by students in face-to-face learning. Overall, the study's findings on student acceptance of blended learning are high. This proves that Sunway University and Sunway College students already have knowledge and exposure to blended learning, which makes them more comfortable with the learning technique. In addition, the support from the university in providing a platform suitable for the current globalization now makes teaching and learning smoother.

Next, the lecturer's role in providing exposure and guidance to students causes students to feel comfortable and show a high interest in blended learning. Therefore, the findings of this study are significant to be used as a reference primarily for researchers to further expand the field of research. Meanwhile, this study is essential for educators to be used as a guide in identifying appropriate teaching methods and techniques and preparing teaching materials that can attract students' interest in blended learning. Effective teaching and learning will increase student motivation to continue the learning process and get excellent results in their learning.

9. LITERATURE CITED

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