

HOW DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AFFECTS THE QUALITY OF STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMES IN HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTION

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Abstract. COVID-19 has gained widespread acceptance, which has increased the use of online learning methodologies and procedures. This paper investigates how students evaluate the quality of arranging student extracurricular programmes using an online method instead of a face-to-face approach when comparing the two approaches. University leadership, and students from economically and geographically disadvantaged backgrounds, according to the author, are all interested in supporting an online approach to higher education. Student affairs units at the UiTM Cawangan Terengganu performed a series of surveys to examine student leadership among university students between 2020 and March 2022 to understand their viewpoints better. Although online implementation has various advantages over conventional face-to-face education, students believe that the extracurricular program's quality is inferior to that of traditional face-to-face instruction, particularly in strengthening their leadership and decision-making abilities. One of the issues that students are experiencing when it comes to online learning is their incapacity to pick information and evaluate its trustworthiness and their inability to discern essential information from irrelevant information to assure high-quality student leadership through extracurricular programmes. After conducting a poll, it was determined that an additional study into the effects of digitalisation on the quality of student leadership should be carried out.

Keywords: *student, leadership, higher learning institutions, digital, technology*

Introduction

Information is now considered to be a valuable commodity. The Digital era is sometimes referred to as the information age, and both terms are intended to call attention to the rapid entry into our lives of new technical tools, digital technology, new technical tools, advanced software, and cloud databases. The information age is sometimes referred to as the information society. These shifts are also taking place in extracurricular activities for college and university students. As a result, online implementation is becoming increasingly popular, the internet is becoming a more critical resource of information and knowledge, and the role of the educator is shifting. Because of the advancement of digital technology, the possibility of establishing cross-cultural connections between people from different countries has increased significantly. It is necessary to investigate the influence of these new strategies on the overall quality of student leadership as demonstrated through extracurricular activities. The merits and downsides of digitising the programme process in higher education must be evaluated, and the consequences for students must be understood and documented. The search for solutions to these problems is particularly urgent at this time.

The article relates to several different techniques that several scholars have proposed in terms of methodology. A study has been conducted on the problem of the information society and the features of this society by Chu (2022), Korchak (2022), Norris (2022), Elena-Bucea et al. (2021), Fernández-Rovira et al. (2021) as well as Geiger et al. (2021). The quality of education and student extracurricular programmes in digital

processes and information will now focus on a broad spectrum of scientists. Research by Kokhan et al. (2022), Papapanou et al. (2022), Ryabikina et al. (2022), Syvyi et al. (2022) and Tinacci et al. (2022) is one of the strategies for getting information and education that includes internet platforms. Moreover, other research in Çetinkaya and Kırık (2022), Egorov et al. (2021), Finlay et al. (2022), Kokhan et al. (2022), Kruszewska et al. (2022) and Maatuk et al. (2022) reflects the benefits and drawbacks of using an online learning platform. This article discusses student learning and upskills trends and how digitisation transforms higher education Malik et al. (2022), Mohamed Hashim et al. (2022), Pu et al. (2022) and Zhao et al. (2021).

Materials and Methods

The author's team did several studies in sociology. Most of the team members are the Student Affairs Unit's support staff from the Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Terengganu. The study is made during the COVID19 pandemic and continues until the post-pandemic end. The analysis reported here is from results from a survey from 2020 to 2022 (n=300 in 2020; n=430 in 2021; and n=511 in 2022). The opinions of university respondents were considered during the 2020-2022 research period. An empirical sociological experience was used to construct the author's data collecting techniques, which were then used to gather data.

Results and Discussion

The study results show that digitalisation has a more extensive and significant effect on all parts of the teaching and learning process and organising extracurricular activities. Information technologies are making their way into various branches of the teaching and learning system (its planning, organisation, and evaluation process). Because of the COVID-19 epidemic, almost all students' learning has moved to an online platform. The amount of online learning in the pedagogical process has increased significantly. Online learning is becoming more and more of a standard, day-to-day activity. Forcing instructors and students to participate in online learning and teaching activities, both began to actively grasp technology for arranging student extracurricular activities, gaining access to online materials, assessing students' understanding and leadership skills, and connecting via the internet. Unfortunately, there has been a slight improvement in the overall quality of the learning process at this early point.

In 2021, research by AKÇAYOĞLU and DAĞGÖL (2021) stated that, although online learning cannot completely replace face-to-face learning in specific ways, technology has facilitated and enabled learning and teaching during times of crisis, according to the definition. As a result, it is primarily helpful to university administrations, as it provides considerable cash benefits while incurring minimal material expenditures. With most universities reliant on their funding sources for the majority of their operating expenses, online learning allows them to save money on classroom upkeep, lecturer man-hours, cost per head for running student activities, and power costs. Furthermore, creating an online extracurricular platform involves working gradually according to the trajectory defined by the ministry, which contributes to the university's positioning as a leading educational institution of higher learning. As a result, university administrations are actively promoting online learning opportunities.

Another group embracing this online platform for extracurricular activities is students, particularly those who live in rural or distant portions of the country. As our research has revealed and the important facts are highlighted in *Table 1*, the vast majority of them have problems acquiring internet access throughout the initial stages of the study. In their opinion, online learning is a viable option for acquiring a certificate in higher education and improving their leadership skill both during and after the epidemic. When online learning is far less expensive than traditional full-time education is considered, the outcome is predictable: students fund online extracurricular activities through the internet. In response to the question, "If you presently had the possibility to pick a method of operating student activities, which would you prefer?" students who answered the survey said they would prefer an online platform (75.5 per cent) as well as face-to-face approach (25 per cent) in 2022 (24.5 per cent). Perhaps the most significant difference between this research and the prior one can be seen here (2020). Previously, 43.1 per cent of respondents said they would prefer online learning and activity, while 56.9 per cent said they preferred face-to-face instruction.

Table 1. Summary of the targeted research question and student respond.

Survey questions	2020 (n=300)		2021 (n=430)		2022 (n=511)	
	Face-to-face	Online	Face-to-face	Online	Face-to-face	Online
If you presently had the possibility to pick a method of operating student activities, which would you prefer?	43.1%	56.9%	64.4%	35.4%	75.5%	25.5%
The method gives more options for accessing high-quality extracurricular programming.	47.2%	52.8%	50.3%	49.7%	60.6%	39.4%
The challenge for a full-time student to enroll in extracurricular classes.	30.5%	69.5%	38.2	61.8%	48.8%	51.2%
Extracurricular activities in the form of face-to-face or online (live webinars).	72.6%	27.4%	82.4%	17.6%	90%	10%
Student perception on asynchronous full-time online platform.	55.2%	44.8%	79.5%	20.5%	85.5%	14.5%

Even though students prefer online platforms, the vast majority of those who answered the survey know that the quality of extracurricular programmes they get online is lower than what they get in person. When it comes to the level of information gained, the online technique cannot match the face-to-face method, particularly regarding their leadership abilities: According to 39.4 per cent of respondents, the face-to-face method gives more options for accessing high-quality extracurricular programming. However, just 9.2 per cent of students stated that the online platform gives them additional opportunities to gain high-quality skills and information. Blended learning was deemed adequate by 29.4 per cent of those who answered the survey questions (2022). According to the most recent study in 2022, when full-time students have to enrol in extracurricular classes in person and online, it can be challenging; 48.8

per cent of 3-year students questioned choosing a face-to-face approach over alternative learning formats. An estimated 34% of students support blended learning. Part of the classroom-based activity is replaced by a method that uses online technologies (for example, mass lectures); only 10 per cent of students liked online extracurricular activities in the form of live webinars, and 14.5 per cent of students would rather have a "full-time online platform" where they could listen to recorded lessons whenever it was convenient for them.

As previously indicated, an increase in the number of people who prefer face-to-face learning has occurred. The number of people who participate in a variety of extracurricular activities has also increased in recent years. In addition to being more significant in number, individuals who choose the online approach may be attributed to the fact that online technologies have been deeply interwoven into the teaching and learning environment and it would be stupid to try to oppose their penetration. A further aspect influencing the educational environment is the fact that the internet has permeated our daily lives. All experts agree that the internet has many beneficial elements and that it has played a significant role in the growth of intercultural collaboration in recent years. For students, the internet has surpassed all other sources of knowledge to get adequate leadership skills as their principal information source. In the recent past, students primarily relied on library books, teacher lectures, and communication with extracurricular programme instructors for their learning, and this teaching and learning material served as one of the most important ways for them to get information and enhance their skills. They now get most of their information from the internet. A large number of books and guidelines have been digitised and made available online, and electronic periodicals and newspapers are being produced. However, a small amount of scepticism remains regarding the internet's credibility as a source of information. Based on the scientific literature review, it is clear that relying only on this source of information is complex and that we need to come up with an algorithm and criteria that can be utilised to check information from the world wide web.

There are many resources on the internet, and they are easy to get to, which can be seen as a good thing about this knowledge resource base. The source of this knowledge, on the other hand, might come from anyone, including a user who is not exceptionally knowledgeable. As a result, the issue of determining the credibility of information is of critical importance. The profusion of information, which is referred to as an "information explosion" nowadays, gives birth to a new problem: the selection of information. It will need time, patience, self-organisation skills, and leadership and decision-making abilities to make the final choices. Our research has shown that not all students have these traits: "a high degree of independent work" is one of the biggest problems that students face when they study online, which is close to 66.6 per cent, and "the need for self-organisation of the learning process" is at 30.2 per cent, and "a lack of constant control by the teacher" for the year 2022 is at 18.8 per cent.

When it comes to knowing anything, logic, clarity, and rigour are essential. There is also an important distinction between truth and mistake. Science is the highest point of this achievement. People have said that information on the internet is the information itself. Internet use does not mean that the person knows much about what they are studying. There are elements of fact and fantasy mingled together in them. It has the appearance of knowledge, yet it lacks the depth of insight. Event simulations are used to place events in their material reality within the framework of a virtual environment that

is filled with simulations in the information space. In today's world, catastrophe films are no different from natural disasters in their impact on people. When the similarity to virtual reality spreads beyond the TV or computer screen, a person's experience becomes more like virtual reality Hilbert (2020).

The human learning process also involves much moral growth, but there are almost no filters on the internet that would stop the spread of immoral content, cruelty to animals, and phishing. Consequently, the road to a decent teaching and learning process has grown more challenging to navigate today. In rare cases, the viva-voce for the student thesis is defended even if the student is not physically attended (master and distinguished scientist) being able to make a report without reading it from paper or the presentation screen. As a result, the role of a lecturer and instructor is becoming increasingly vital, mainly because many students cannot verify the authenticity, importance, and worth of the information they receive. As discussed in our research, it is elaborated that students require the supervision of their professors and instructors.

Conclusion

Soon, the rise of a digital economic order, which will include the automation, robotisation and digitalisation of almost every aspect of life, will make the labour market dominated by "complex" professions in the "Knowledge" category that involve skills, leadership, creativity, like architects and engineers. Workers' knowledge and skills will become obsolete due to technological advancements and the digitisation of the industry, and no amount of retraining will be able to remedy the issue (Khachatryan, 2022). Experts believe that in the near future, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, the "Internet of things," robots, and other technologies based on an electronic devices will all be represented in digital transformation. Therefore, the introduction of digital technologies into the teaching and learning arena appears to be unavoidable as we enter the Sixth Industrial Revolution (also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution). Extracurricular activities are also incorporated into the curriculum. How lecturers and students try to understand Internet technologies shows how skilled and knowledgeable they are. One meaningful way to educate a person in the modern world is to look for information on websites like Wikipedia and learn from them. More research needs to be done to determine how digitalisation affects higher education and the quality of extracurricular programmes and activities. Even though the issue is continually changing, some parts of the issue are still unclear. The role of the lecturer and instructor in the introduction of new digital technologies, especially gender-related issues, as well as an analysis of the effectiveness of using different methods in an online platform (such as tests, presentations, and running extracurricular activities with the community), all need further research, to find out a factual finding regarding the effect of digitalisation on the discusses issues.

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Conflict of interest

The author confirms that there is no conflict of interest with any parties involved with the study.

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