

The Relevancy of Google Meet as an Online Learning Tool towards Art and Design Students in Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam

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Abstract

The utilization of the Google Meet platform that substitutes the traditional method of learning Art and Design subjects has been one of choice by Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in recent years whether fully for online classes or hybrid classes. The problem of learning through Google Meet can be seen from previous research that the students face problems with satisfaction, adapting to technological approaches, studio processes, or lacking of focus. Hence, there is a need to further investigate the relevancy of Google Meet in the aspects of art students in studio pedagogy to achieve an environment of lifelong learning in line with the goal of Education 4.0. This study aims to determine the relevancy of Google Meet as a medium of learning during Online Learning towards Art and Design students in UiTM Shah Alam. It specifically studies on Fine Art students and Textile Design students as representatives of the College of Creative Art (CCA) as part of Fine Art and Design Studies. This research is based on data obtained from a survey questionnaire that was distributed to the students that have or are currently studying through the Google Meet platform. The data were analyzed to evaluate the level of appropriateness of Google Meet in the aspect of ease of use, perceived usefulness, communication and interaction, and satisfaction. The result of the study found that learning theory and studio pedagogy through Google Meet achieve higher agreement among students. It is hoped that this study is able to contribute to the higher improvement in utilizing Google Meet as an Online Learning tool towards art pedagogy.

Keywords: Art and Design, Google Meet, Online Learning Tool

Introduction

The past Covid-19 pandemic situation has transformed the education system throughout the world into distance education which is the alternative to traditional education (Dilmac, 2020). Similarly, the education in Malaysia, both instructors and learners are given no choice but to proceed with Online and Distance Learning as the replacement for the conventional face-to-face method (Mathew and Chung, 2020). Learning through Google Meet has made a transformation in adaptive learning in a way of student's function. Moreover, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) has also been impacted by the situation and its learning environment is shifting into online learning mode (Karim, 2020). However, looking at the relevancy of online distance learning in UiTM somehow give advantages to the students.

Online learning as distance learning needs to be attentive to its effectiveness to achieve the learning target with the resources that is beneficial for students (Rahman et al 2020).

Research has been done investigating the integration of physical face-to-face learning into online learning (Dilmac, 2020). However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) has shifted to online learning methods to limit spreading among students (Karim, 2020). However, CCA students that use traditional methods of textiles, metalsmithing, sculpture, and ceramics as examples that use machinery, tools, and hands-on equipment provided by the university inevitably are facing some complications in this transition. In this research, Google Meet was chosen due to its large number of users and surge in traffic from late March 2020 until today. According to The Star (2021), Malaysian teachers and students recorded the highest number of logins to Google Classroom and Google Meet researchers have yet to examine whether the physical learning method of A&D students is specifically able to incorporate online learning during video conferencing in Google Meet. By exploring the students' experiences and perceptions, future educators and IT engineers can better shape and create future development of online learning towards art students and classes. The overall purpose is to investigate the usefulness of Google Meet considering the A&D students' learning environment.

Literature Review

Online learning is constantly shifting with the development of new technologies and this intense and immediate transformation in education systems comes with new possibilities and challenges (Kanuka, 2004). Moreover, online learning has transformed the learning environment due to technological change and pedagogical change (Yuzer and Kurubacak, 2010). The aspect of changes is also shown in several studies towards art students such as loss of motivation due to lack of practice needs in art lessons (Dilmac, 2020). Furthermore, online education also faces challenges in conducting learning in the element of students' adaptability, quality of the course, and range of technical issues of the technology used (Rizvi and Nabi, 2021).

Studio pedagogy is one of the major learning methods of Art and Design (A&D) students and it is referred to as conventional physical learning spaces where students experiment with A&D (Marshaley and Schlater, 2020, cited in Boehm, 2021). Winters (2011) stated that the process of responding to a project brief (set by educators or self-initiated by students), action (concept generation or development), and analysis and reflection (critique and evaluation) are representative of studio-based learning in A&D classrooms. On the other hand, a compelling study by Gaimster (2008) raises a question about creating a studio environment and its interaction within virtual worlds as it benefits students in engaging in work-based learning, working collaboratively, managing projects, reflecting, and engaging with the wider A&D community. Gaimster (2008) also states that technology is able to support artists and designers through a wide range of media to display, share, and discuss their work.

Rizvi and Nabi (2021) state that several online techs such as Google Classroom, Blackboard, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams have allowed the shift towards online education making it more accessible, engaging, and contextualized. However, online education also faces challenges in conducting learning in the element of students' adaptability, the quality of the course, and the range of technical issues of the technology used (Rizvi and Nabi, 2021). Google Meet is a video conferencing application which can be used for teaching and learning activities (Prisuna, 2021). Within the effect of the usage of Google Meet on learning outcomes, Prisuna (2021) has investigated pre-test and post-test while using Google Meet.

Through this study, it shows that using Google Meet has positively benefited the students' learning based on higher results in the post-test compared to the pre-test. Through this study, it shows that using Google Meet has positively benefited the students' learning based on higher results in the post-test compared to the pre-test. Furthermore, due to the platform's ease of use, the students have quickly adapted without complication, aligned with the study that has been previously discussed (Al-Marroof et al, 2020). Moreover, in a journal written by Boehm (2021) researching the A&D students' experiences and satisfaction regarding traditional and technology-enhanced learning, Boehm finds high satisfaction in terms of traditional studio earnings with traditional hands-on tools.

Interestingly, even though the A&D programs were happening during the pandemic Covid-19, the study found that student has low satisfaction with online studio learning opportunities and a desire for digital skills in studio learning. However, there is agreement from the student that using digital resources and technology-enhanced tools for online learning is an alternative to improve course quality (Boehm, 2021). Differ from the findings of Boehm's study, Dilmac (2020) earlier found that students have explored various applications that can be applied in the courses of A&D Courses, and with further research, Dilmac found that students have utilized technology to the extent of virtual trips to the museum and historical works, as well as organizing a virtual exhibition. However, it is shown that a major problem of online education is due to the dimension of the learning as more course hours may be needed due to the guidance of instructors being better in a small group at one time (Dilmac, 2020). We have to bear in mind that Dilmac's study is done in the early stage of the pandemic phase, whereby the students are unprepared for online learning as the shift of the environment is too abrupt. However, based on experiences and period, the students in Boehm's study still prefer traditional learning while students in Dilmac's study are more prone to exploration and flexibility of technology but constrained by lack of preparedness of external organizations

Methodology

This research, which was carried out to determine the practicality of Google Meet as a learning tool towards A&D students in UiTM is adopting a survey research design, specifically focusing on the form of quantitative research by utilizing a descriptive correlation design regarding one or more following variables: usability level, satisfaction, and communication of higher education students. The data from respondents is measured through closed-ended questions utilizing a Likert Scale: a) 1- strongly disagree. b) 2- disagree, c) 3- neutral, d) 4- agree, and e) 5- strongly agree. The following figure shows the flowchart of the method of the study. The population of the study is Fine Art students and Textile Design students with a total sample of 113 respondents. The total number of respondents is calculated using the formula by Morgan and Krejcie, 1970. Before distribution is done, the instruments will be reviewed by an expert to ensure their content validity. Moreover, the adapted questionnaire has been conducted to test its reliability with Cronbach Alpha greater than 0.9.

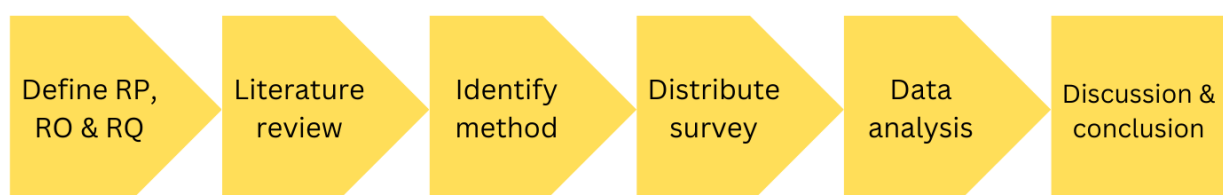


Figure 1 Flowchart of method

Findings and Discussions

Google Meet is a video conferencing application which can be used for teaching and learning activities (Prisuna, 2021). Based on the study by Winters in 2011, Art and Design students' studio-based classrooms are a process of responding to a project brief (set by educators or self-initiated by students), action (concept generation or development), and analysis and reflection (critique and evaluation). Figure 2 shows the learning process of Art and Design students occurring within the setting of Google Meet as a medium of learning. It shows the process of students engaging in discussion, collaboration, and reflection with lecturers and vice versa.

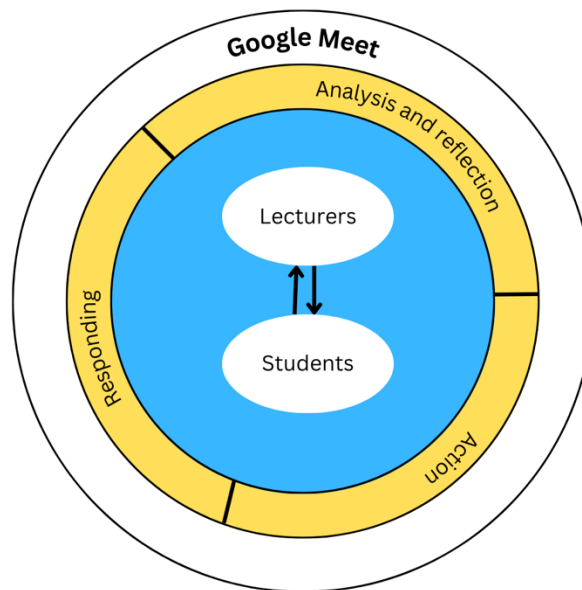


Figure 2 Learning process of Art and Design students through Google Meet

Data was obtained from distributed questionnaire to 113 respondents from the Department of Textile Design and the Department of Fine Art in the College of Creative Arts situated in UiTM, Shah Alam. A total of 106 have responded, however, out of 106, 8 respondent is found to be within exclusion criteria as they are already graduated. Hence, the data analysis will analyze a total of 98 respondents. These respondents are currently studying studio and theory subjects in their faculty, however, they have experienced with Google Meet prior to last year. All the data were analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 29. Table 2 shows the level of usefulness of Google Meet among Art and Design students.

Table 1

Level of Usefulness of Google Meet among Art and Design students

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Level of Ease of Access	98	3.5944	.89061
Level of Perceived Usefulness	98	2.8997	.96346
Level of Communication & Interaction	98	2.8918	1.03791
Level of Satisfaction	98	2.8878	1.25449

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the overall mean score of EOA, PU, CI, and S. The highest value obtained is the level of EOA with a mean score of 3.594 (sd = .891) while

the lowest score obtained is by the level of S with a mean score of 2.888 and a standard deviation of 1.254. Analyses of the data in relation to research question 2 show that the level of ease of access (EOA) majority strongly agrees on Google Meet for this section while the level of perceived usefulness (PU) is slightly below achieving the scoring range of agree (2.61 – 3.40). Furthermore, the respondents were found to agree on communication and interaction (CI) as the scores obtained are well above 2.40. This brings upon their satisfaction (S) level similar to the previous section with a mean score of 2.888, which lies in the scoring range of agree. Obtained data shows that Art and Design students are able to undertake studio and theory pedagogy through Google Meet. Moreover, based on the agreed value on the component of Perceived Usefulness and Communication and Interaction, it conveys that Google Meet can be utilised similarly to a face-to-face studio-based classroom.

In terms of the level of Ease of Access (EOA), the data state that the respondent strongly agrees with the ease of access of Google Meet in the aspects of accessibility, receiving, navigation, sharing and collaboration. With a mean score of 3.59 and a 'strongly agree' Likert score, this is in line with previous research by Al-Marroof in 2021, where the researcher found that Google Meet has been highly evaluated due to its ease of use. Due to highly evaluated score in ease of use, it has a close relation with its perceived usefulness, communication and interaction, and satisfaction which is akin to the statement by Al-Marroof whereby the acceptance of Google Meet has close relation with the perceived value, and enjoyment (Al-Marroof et al, 2021). The aspects of perceived usefulness have managed to achieve a mean score of 2.90 and achieving Likert score of 'agree'. This component includes quality of learning, medium for social interaction, monitoring performance, examining through "Whiteboarding" option, and consistency of the learning. The basis of the high score on the question of quality of learning, it can be seen that the result contradicted previous research by Rizvi and Nabi in 2021, which states that quality of learning is a challenge faced during online education. However, it does in line with the study by Boehm (2021) whereby the students in the study agree that technology provides as an alternative to improve course quality.

The next aspect of the analysis is the level of communication and interaction (CI). Based on previous readings, the researchers estimate that there will be a low score in this section as they face challenges in communicating and interacting during their Google Meetings. However, contradictory, the analysis shows that the Likert score of 2.89 obtained by the respondent is in the range of 'agree' (2.61 – 3.40). This reveals that the students are now able to adapt to the use of Google Meet differs from earlier research by Dilmac in 2020 where the students in the early covid 19 years are unprepared for the sudden change in the learning environment. Higher agreement in this section shows that the A&D students are well versed in using Google Meet to communicate and discuss with their lecturers and peers which goes along with the statement by Gaimster in 2008 that technology is able to support artists through a wide range of media to share and discuss their work.

On the other hand, the level of Satisfaction (S) of the respondents on Google Meet has managed to achieve a similar result whereby the mean score of 2.89 brought upon the Likert scoring in the range of 'agree'. The result of the analysis contradicted the previous research by Boehm in 2021 where the students have low satisfaction with online studio learning opportunities. Furthermore, it also reveals that motivation is still high when learning through Google Meet which is the opposite of Dilmac's statement in 2020 whereby art students lose motivation due to lacking practice needs in art lessons.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The use of Google Meet to fully incorporate the essence of the face-to-face approach is a complex issue. This study has delved into one part of Google Meet looking at the front line of the uses in the aspects of ease of access, perceived usefulness, communication and interaction, and satisfaction of Google Meet in an attempt to understand the extent of strengths and shortcomings as a medium of learning. Findings pertaining to the uses of Google Meet by the students are very encouraging with high agreement scores on all aspects from ease of use, perceived usefulness, communication and interaction, and satisfaction level. This study presents an honest picture of the students in terms of their applying Google Meet as a medium of learning with the purpose of bringing to light what has been agreed upon and what has not. It is only information that the College of Creative Art, in particular, directly involved in online courses and major uses of Google Meet can identify the areas of concern within Google Meet.

This study was conducted using a quantitative approach, with a questionnaire as a means of data collection. A qualitative approach would also yield very practical insights into the cross-relation between the process of learning and the impact of learning through Google Meet. Findings from qualitative studies could verify the findings of this study or could yield new understandings about A&D students and the uses of Google Meet as a medium of learning. Whatever approach is taken, the education sector can benefit from further research on this ongoing learning environment that is much in line with Education 4.0 to create lifelong learning. Such research needs to be undertaken regularly and by enough interested parties so that the evolvement of learning methods in Google Meet can be continuously monitored and improved.

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