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The Readiness and Challenges for Student in Shifting to Online Learning in New Era

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Abstract

Online learning platforms have indeed become a cornerstone of modern education, particularly highlighted during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study aims to assess the readiness and challenges faced by students in transitioning to online learning in the new era. A structured questionnaire was developed specifically for this study to gather comprehensive data on students' experiences transitioning to online learning. The questionnaire was designed to capture four dimensions of the online learning experience, which are transition towards online learning (TTOL), trust in online learning (TOOL), self-directed online learning (SDOL) and information quality on online learning (IQOL). Data for the study was gathered from 51 students enrolled in mechanical engineering program at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM). Using several statistical analyses, which are Cronbach Alpha to measure questionnaire reliability, descriptive analysis and correlation analyses, relevant insights into the effectiveness and impact of online learning were revealed. The results indicate IQOL aspect is the highest at 4.12 and SDOL is the lowest at 3.65. Meanwhile, the correlation analysis indicates a moderate correlation of 0.5003 between TTOL and TOOL. Additionally, least correlation is 0.3235 between SDOL and IQOL is found. Students perception and emotion towards online learning is generally positive. As students adapt to the transition to online learning, they have the opportunity to cultivate valuable skills such as self-discipline, adaptability and digital literacy, all of which are essential for their future careers. To further enhance the online learning experience, it is crucial to improve technical support and foster better communication between the university and students. By addressing these areas, online learning can become an even more viable and effective option for a wider range of students.

Keywords: Covid-19, Online Learning, Readiness, Transition, UTeM.

Introduction

Online classes during the Covid-19 pandemic have provided several significant benefits, including the establishment of a digital learning community, the enhancement of students' digital skills and the ability to maintain connections during challenging times. These advantages not only facilitated academic continuity but also fostered a sense of community and support among students and lecturers. Most universities have implemented an online learning

system to ensure that students can continue their education during the Covid-19 pandemic. Converting from traditional face-to-face classes to online mode is not a simple process. Students must adapt to the rapid changes and workload, which are mandatory for them to participate in (Hadi et al., 2022). The shift to online classes during the Covid-19 pandemic constituted an unprecedented experience that provided invaluable lessons for lecturers and students alike. This transition highlighted the importance of flexibility, adaptability and innovation in education, offering insights that can shape the future of learning in a digital landscape.

The epidemic brought about some beneficial effects on education, particularly in the area of remote learning. Universities around the world were presented with a unique opportunity to test and refine online learning methods, offering students a comprehensive experience with technology-supported education. The epidemic has accelerated the adoption of e-learning platforms and information technology in higher education, pushing universities to innovate and adapt to a rapidly changing educational landscape. This evolution has allowed institutions to offer more flexible and accessible learning experiences, positioning them better to meet future challenges and the diverse needs of students (Mohammad et al., 2023).

Online learning platforms are typically composed of several core elements designed to enhance the virtual learning experience such as video lectures, interactive quizzes, discussion forums and assignments (Giday & Perumal, 2024). These elements create a dynamic learning environment that aims to replicate the interactivity and engagement of face-to-face classes while leveraging the flexibility of online learning.

There are distinct motivations and challenges for students in online learning mode and face-to-face mode. The primary factors influencing their decision to choose online learning include flexibility to manage their time effectively, making it easier to balance personal, professional and academic commitments. Besides, the ability to access learning materials from anywhere provides convenience, particularly for those with busy schedules or geographical constraints. It is convenience for students to appreciate the freedom to work at their own pace and on their own time, reducing the pressure of rigid class schedules. Students are drawn to the innovative and self-directed nature of online learning, which offers a different learning dynamic compared to traditional methods. In contrast, face-to-face students value the classroom interaction with peers, faculty and course content. They prefer in-person engagement, discussions and the structure of a physical classroom environment.

An effective e-learning platforms and tools significantly enhance student motivation. When students find the e-learning system enjoyable and easy to navigate, they are more likely to be motivated to participate actively in their courses. High levels of motivation can lead to increased engagement, persistence and effort in their studies, ultimately resulting in higher performance, better grades and improved overall learning experiences (Yahiaoui et al., 2022).

Literature Reviews

Online teaching and learning have been shown to be effective, providing convenience and cost savings for both lecturers and students. With proper implementation, online learning can offer a level of training quality similar to conventional in-person instruction.

Transition towards Online Learning

The ongoing disruptions caused by the pandemic is a valuable opportunity to explore the potential impact of a significant shift towards online learning in higher education. This shift indicates a growing comfort and adaptation to the virtual learning environment, which was initially accelerated by the pandemic but has now become a viable long-term educational method (Shaid et al., 2021). Students have developed positive perceptions toward online learning and have largely accepted it as the new learning system. The focus is on how these institutions, traditionally reliant on brick-and-mortar classrooms, might benefit from integrating or fully transitioning to online learning technique (Wright et al., 2023). Undergraduate students have generally shown readiness for online learning in areas such as motivation, access to facilities and technology capabilities. This indicates that many students are equipped with the necessary tools and are motivated to participate in virtual education.

The emphasis on attitude factors, lecturer support and flexibility as foundational elements for enhancing the effectiveness of online teaching and learning is essential for both the current landscape and future developments in education (Li, 2021). Pedagogy, teaching style and teaching effectiveness play a crucial role in shaping student perceptions of online classes as they can shape their overall attitude toward the virtual learning experience. Lecturers who successfully adapt to online methods tend to foster more positive student perceptions (Vikas & Mathur, 2021).

Trust in Online Learning

Online teaching and learning have indeed been proven as effective educational solutions, offering significant advantages in terms of convenience and cost savings for both lecturers and students. When implemented properly, online learning can deliver a quality of training that is comparable to traditional which is face-to-face instruction (Son, 2022). There is an interplay between value, social support and expectancy as key factors in shaping students' motivation in online learning. Addressing these factors in tandem creates a conducive learning environment that not only nurtures intrinsic satisfaction but also cultivates positive self-efficacy beliefs. In this environment, students are more likely to build confidence in their abilities and develop stronger academic motivation, which in turn leads to better learning outcomes and academic success (Zahid et al., 2024).

Students' desire and motivation to use technology play a key role in the adoption of cloud computing in education. This is driven by their need for quick, reliable access to university resources like course materials and communication platforms. The success of cloud computing adoption depends on changes in teaching roles, effective instructional methods and strong support systems. Further research is needed to explore how cloud computing can best support educational goals and improve learning experiences (Todorova & Karamsnska, 2015).

Self-Directed Online Learning

Online learning often requires greater independence, time management and self-motivation, as students need to manage their learning with less direct supervision. Developing self-directed learning skills can take time and practice and this may explain why students feel only moderately prepared in this area (Kamaruzaman et al., 2021). Online learning often comes with distractions, responsibilities and a lack of structure. Some students may need support in time

management, coping strategies, or accommodations from university to create more flexible learning environments (Ismail et al., 2022).

Without the immediate presence of a lecturer, students may struggle with self-paced learning and fall behind if they do not understand the material. Additionally, issues like technical difficulties, lack of clear guidance and insufficient interaction can make it harder for students to keep up (Hadi et al., 2022).

Information Quality on Online Learning

Google applications are the most favored tools for online learning (Ramli et al., 2021). The widespread use of Google applications is likely due to their user-friendly interface, accessibility and seamless integration of various features that support communication, collaboration and content sharing, making them ideal for both students and lecturers. Furthermore, one study highlights a positive correlation between lecturers' skills and students' participation in online learning. This suggests that when lecturers are proficient in using online tools and effectively designing interactive online lessons, student engagement increases. Skilled lecturers can leverage the features of online platforms to create dynamic and engaging learning environments that foster active participation (Hazzam & Wilkins, 2023).

Students prefer online learning platforms with high educational system quality and information quality, as these factors shape their overall experience. A study shows that greater satisfaction with the platform leads to a more positive attitude and willingness to continue using it (Maroof et al., 2021). When both the system's performance and content quality meet expectations, students are more motivated to engage, resulting in better learning outcomes. This approach enhances satisfaction, fosters a positive attitude toward online learning and promotes long-term engagement.

Challenge in Online Learning

The transition from face-to-face classes to virtual learning is indeed a complex process that presents several challenges. The rapid shift required by the pandemic made it even more difficult for both students and lecturers to adapt quickly. This transition relies heavily on access to stable internet connections, which can create disparities for students without reliable access. In the future, addressing these connectivity and accessibility issues will be crucial to ensuring that online learning is equitable and effective (Saputra et al., 2022). Not all students have access to a conducive study environment, which can lead to feelings of isolation and inadequacy as university students. Studying alone without opportunities for discussion with classmates can hinder their learning experience.

The greatest challenges for online students is adapting and effectively using various online platforms and digital tools can be a barrier, especially for those less familiar with technology. Online students often struggle with receiving prompt feedback from faculty, which can hinder their progress and sense of engagement. However, despite these challenges, students still prefer online learning as their preferred modality, acknowledging that it provides them with the opportunity to achieve their educational goals. This suggests that while there are obstacles, the benefits of flexibility, accessibility and convenience outweigh the challenges for most online students (Mather et al., 2018).

Methodology

In this study, a descriptive research design was employed to investigate how undergraduate students at the Faculty of Mechanical Technology and Engineering at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) navigated the transition from traditional face-to-face learning to online learning. The research utilized a random sampling technique and adopted an exploratory sequential mixed-method design to capture both quantitative and qualitative data.

A structured questionnaire was developed and distributed through Google Forms to a total of 114 students, with 51 responses received. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. For each of these sections, a five-point Likert scale was utilized, with response options ranging from 1 = 'strongly disagree' to 5 = 'strongly agree'. This scale was designed to quantify students' readiness and perception regarding the transition to online learning. Additionally, the questionnaire included open-ended questions that invited respondents to share their perceptions, challenges and benefits related to online learning. This qualitative component aimed to provide deeper insights into the students' experiences and perspectives during this significant shift in their educational journey.

To ensure a rigorous and accurate analysis of the data, this study employed both the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Minitab software to process and analyse the collected data.

Results

The distributed questionnaires were structured into four sections: transition towards online learning (TTOL), trust on online learning (TOOL), self-directed online learning (SDOL) and information quality on online learning (IQOL). TTOL focuses on the readiness of students to shift from face-to-face learning to online learning. It consists of seven statements assessing how prepared students feel in making this transition. Also consisting of seven statements, another section TOOL evaluates the level of trust students have in online learning as a reliable mode of education. It explores factors related to confidence in the effectiveness of online learning. With ten statements, SDOL dives into students' experiences with self-directed learning in an online environment. It assesses students' ability to manage their own learning without direct supervision and their comfort with independent study. The final section IQOL contains five statements regarding the quality of information provided through online platforms and the support given by lecturers to ease the online learning process. It evaluates how well their lecturers support students and the adequacy of the educational materials provided. Each of these sections aims to capture different dimensions of the online learning experience, ranging from technical and emotional readiness to the quality of instructional support and information delivery. The responses provide valuable insights into students' perceptions and experiences in adapting to online learning.

Table 1 shows a reliability and descriptive analysis of the data obtained from the survey. A reliability analysis was conducted to ensure the questionnaire's consistency and reliability. The reliability test measures how consistently the items in the questionnaire would yield the same scores if filled out by the same person multiple times. To assess this, Cronbach Alpha was used for evaluating internal consistency reliability. It helps to determine whether the items within a section are closely related and consistently measure the same underlying concept. Cronbach Alpha ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better internal consistency. If the value

less than 0.60, it considered poor reliability. Acceptable reliability will be considered if the value is between 0.7 and 0.8. Whereas the value greater than 0.8 is considered good reliability (Saputra et al., 2022). From Table 1, all sections of the questionnaire had Cronbach Alpha values exceeding 0.8. This indicates that the items within each section are closely related and reliably measure the intended concepts. The high Cronbach Alpha values across all sections suggest that the questionnaire items are consistently reliable and effectively gauge the same underlying concepts. This strong internal consistency ensures the reliability of the responses and the validity of the results.

Table 1 also presents a descriptive analysis featuring the mean and standard deviation for each section of the questionnaire. IQOL recorded the highest mean with 4.12 This high mean indicates that most respondents agree with the statements regarding the platform, learning environment and materials provided by the university and lecturers. This suggests a strong overall satisfaction with the quality of information and support available for online learning. The mean values approaching 4.00 for another sections TOOL and TTOL indicate that students generally have a positive perception of their trust in online learning and their readiness to adapt to this new mode of study. On the other hand, SDOL recorded a mean 3.65 indicates that while respondents are somewhat comfortable with self-directed learning, the majority still feel they require guidance to effectively navigate the challenges associated with online learning. This suggests an area where additional support and resources could be beneficial. The standard deviation for all factors is above 0.5, indicating that the data points are spread out over a wider range of values. A higher standard deviation suggests a greater variability in responses, which may reflect differing levels of agreement or experience among respondents regarding the various aspects of online learning.

Table 1
Reliability and descriptive analysis

Section	Number of item	Cronbach Alpha	Mean	Standard deviation
Transition towards online learning (TTOL)	7	0.8794	3.89	0.88
Trust on online learning (TOOL)	7	0.9192	3.92	0.82
Self-directed online learning (SDOL)	9	0.8956	3.65	0.87
Information quality on online learning (IQOL)	5	0.8131	4.12	0.69

As demonstrated in Table 2, the correlation analyses reveal important relationships among the variables related to online learning. The correlation between transition towards online learning and trust on online learning was 0.5003. This indicates a moderately positive relationship. As students' trust in online learning increases, their willingness to adapt to this new mode of learning also rises. This finding underscores the importance of building trust in online learning environments to facilitate smoother transitions for students which is consistent with the finding that trust is among the greatest effect on students' willingness to learn online (Jiang et al., 2022). Meanwhile, a correlation of 0.443 existed between trust on online learning, information quality on online learning and self-directed online learning which considered as a weak positive correlation. While there is some relationship, it suggests that improvements in

information quality may lead to increased trust in online learning, but the connection is not as strong as with the transition variable. Similarly, the correlation between transition towards online learning with self-directed online learning and information quality on online learning are approximately 0.4. This indicates a weak positive correlation, suggesting that as students become more ready to transition to online learning, they may also become slightly more capable of engaging in self-directed learning and benefiting from information quality. However, there was the weakest correlation between self-directed online learning and information quality on online learning with correlation 0.3235. This is the weakest correlation observed among the pairs analysed. This may indicate that even when information quality is high, students may still struggle with self-directed learning, potentially due to a lack of guidance or support.

Table 2
Correlation between sections

Section	TTOL	TOOL	SDOL	IQOL
TTOL	1	0.5003	0.3966	0.3968
TOOL	0.5003	1	0.4427	0.4439
SDOL	0.3966	0.4427	1	0.3235
IQOL	0.3968	0.4439	0.3235	1

Table 3 presents a frequency analysis of the transition towards online learning, which includes seven statements related to students' perceptions and experiences regarding the shift to online learning. More than 80% of respondents agree that there is an urgent need to transition to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This indicates a strong recognition of the necessity for this shift in light of the ongoing circumstances. A significant majority also believe that the university's decision to implement this shift is appropriate and comes with clear instructions. This suggests that students appreciate the administration's efforts in facilitating the transition (Reisenwitz & Fowler, 2021). Respondents generally feel ready for the transition to online learning. This reflects a positive sentiment towards adapting to the new mode of study, reinforcing the earlier findings on trust and preparedness. More than 18% of respondents expressed a lack of interest in learning on new online platforms. This highlights a segment of students who may be resistant to or uncomfortable with the change, indicating a potential area for targeted support or intervention. Almost 12% of respondents expressed doubts regarding how to reach the learning outcomes of their courses through online learning. This concern points to a need for clearer communication about course objectives and additional guidance to help students navigate online learning effectively.

Table 3
Frequency analysis on transition to online learning

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	sagree (%)	atural (%)	\gree (%)	Strongly (%)	Agree
TTOL-1	0	3.92	13.73	41.18	41.18	
TTOL-2	1.96	1.96	11.76	47.06	37.25	
TTOL-3	0	11.76	27.45	47.06	13.73	
TTOL-4	0	3.92	9.8	58.82	27.45	
TTOL-5	1.96	1.96	13.73	66.67	15.69	
TTOL-6	3.92	15.69	27.45	35.29	17.65	
TTOL-7	1.96	11.76	23.53	37.25	25.49	

Table 4 highlight students' perceptions and emotions regarding their trust in online learning. Remarkably, only one respondent expressed a lack of confidence in embracing the new mode of learning. This suggests that the vast majority are open to and prepared for the transition. Over 80% of respondents expressed confidence that they would manage to navigate online learning effectively during the current semester. This demonstrates a strong belief in their ability to adapt and succeed in this new environment. Many respondents anticipate that the transition to online learning will yield benefits and positive experiences. This optimistic outlook is crucial for fostering resilience and motivation as they adapt to the new learning modalities. As members of the millennial generation, students feel confident in their ability to perform basic functions on the online platforms utilized by the university, such as Ulearn and other tools for information gathering and discussion. This technological proficiency can enhance their overall experience and effectiveness in online learning (Panoy et al., 2022). Table 4 reveals a generally positive trust in online learning among students, despite some stress and anxiety. The overwhelming confidence in their ability to manage online learning, along with the expectation of positive experiences, indicates a readiness to adapt.

Table 4
Frequency analysis on trust on online learning

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	sagree (%)	atural (%)	\gree (%)	Strongly (%)	Agree
TOOL-1	0	5.88	17.65	56.86	19.61	
TOOL-2	1.96	9.8	11.76	62.75	13.73	
TOOL-3	1.96	7.84	11.76	60.78	17.65	
TOOL-4	1.96	3.92	5.88	60.78	27.45	
TOOL-5	1.96	1.96	15.69	64.71	15.69	
TOOL-6	1.96	1.96	15.69	56.86	23.53	
TOOL-7	1.96	3.92	7.84	64.71	21.57	

Table 5 summarizes student responses regarding their perceptions of self-directed online learning. Almost one-fifth of respondents indicated that they do not feel they possess sufficient self-discipline to succeed in fully online learning. This suggests a potential challenge in managing their time effectively for studying, which is crucial for success in an online

environment. Nearly 40% of students reported being easily distracted by other online activities, such as internet surfing and instant messaging, while trying to study. This distraction can hinder their focus and productivity, emphasizing the need for strategies to improve concentration during online learning sessions (Vikas & Mathur, 2021). Despite the challenges mentioned, the majority of students expressed a positive outlook regarding their diligence and demonstrated an effort to perform well in their online learning endeavours. This indicates resilience and a commitment to their studies, which can be beneficial in overcoming obstacles. Approximately 27% of respondents expressed neutrality (neither agreeing nor disagreeing) about their ability to cope with the stress and pressure resulting from the shift to online learning. This neutral stance may indicate uncertainty or ambivalence regarding their coping mechanisms in the new learning environment.

Table 5
Frequency analysis on self-directed online learning

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	sagree (%)	atural (%)	\gree (%)	Strongly (%)	Agree
SDOL-1	1.96	7.84	17.65	58.82	13.73	
SDOL-2	0	9.8	13.73	58.82	17.65	
SDOL-3	0	7.84	19.61	58.82	13.73	
SDOL-4	0	3.92	7.84	70.59	17.65	
SDOL-5	1.96	15.69	27.45	43.14	11.76	
SDOL-6	1.96	5.88	17.65	64.71	9.8	
SDOL-7	15.69	23.53	17.65	37.25	5.88	
SDOL-8	0	3.92	5.88	74.51	15.69	
SDOL-9	5.88	5.88	27.45	54.9	5.88	
SDOL-10	3.92	1.96	21.57	58.82	13.73	

Table 6 summarizes student responses regarding the information quality received from the university and lecturers in the context of online learning. A significant majority of students agreed that the platform provided by the university is appropriate for online learning. This reflects positively on the university's choice of tools for facilitating the online learning experience. Students acknowledged that the online learning environment has provided convenient facilities for discussion during class hours. This suggests that students value the interactive elements of online classes, which can enhance engagement and collaboration. Respondents generally felt that sufficient materials are provided to support online learning. This indicates that the university and lecturers are fulfilling their roles in ensuring students have access to necessary resources for their studies. Almost 20% of respondents expressed neutrality regarding the availability of lecturers to be contacted. This suggests that while some students may feel comfortable reaching out to their lecturers, there is still a significant portion who may feel uncertain or indifferent about the accessibility of faculty for support and guidance (Mansor et al., 2021).

Table 6
Frequency analysis on information quality on online learning

Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	sagree (%)	atural (%)	\gree (%)	Strongly (%)	Agree
IQOL-1	0	0	5.88	60.78	33.33	
IQOL-2	0	3.92	11.76	62.75	21.57	
IQOL-3	0	3.92	5.88	49.02	41.18	
IQOL-4	0	1.96	19.61	58.82	19.61	
IQOL-5	0	3.92	9.8	60.78	25.49	

Discussion

This small survey reported on student perceptions and challenges of the transition to online learning in UTeM. The results describe on transition to online learning, the trust on the shifting, study by self-directed and how the information flow smoothly during online learning process. Flexibility, accessibility and utilize new online software or application better are among the advantage for online learning. Even though majority of the student confident they are ready to shift to new mode of studying, there is still a number of student worried on their discipline and time management in online learning (Wulanjani & Indriani, 2021).

The correlation findings suggest that trust in online learning plays a significant role in facilitating the transition to online learning. Additionally, while there are positive correlations with information quality and self-directed learning, the weaker correlations indicate that these areas may need further attention. Enhancing the quality of information provided and offering more support for self-directed learning could help strengthen these relationships and improve overall student experiences in online learning (McLoughlin & Luca, 2002).

The use of online platforms at UTeM provide a comprehensive overview of the synchronous and asynchronous learning modes implemented. For synchronous learning, Microsoft Teams is the primary platform used for live classes, facilitating real-time interaction between students and lecturers. For asynchronous learning, Ulearn is utilized for various activities, including tutorials, quizzes, recorded videos and feedback. This allows students to engage with the course material at their own pace. Telegram is employed for discussions and inquiries, offering a more informal channel for communication between students and lecturers. The majority of students expressed a preference for classes to be conducted in a hybrid mode, which combines both synchronous and asynchronous approaches. This format allows for flexibility while still providing opportunities for real-time interaction during live sessions. Lectures conducted in synchronous mode are recorded and made publicly available for students. This is particularly beneficial for revision purposes and serves as a backup in case of internet disruptions during live sessions. Access to recorded lectures can enhance students' learning experience by allowing them to revisit complex topics at their convenience (Nkomo & Daniel 2021). Attendance in online classes is strictly enforced, with no option to be absent. Weekly assessments are counted as part of attendance, which may encourage students to participate consistently and stay engaged with the course material.

The challenges faced by students in the online learning environment are multifaceted and highlight several areas that need attention for improvement. Unstable internet connections lead to lagging during online classes, which can significantly hinder learning and participation

(Mallillin et al., 2020). Reliable connectivity is crucial for effective online learning experiences. Some students reported that their devices are not sufficient for online learning, which can affect their ability to access materials and participate fully in classes. Besides, students find that the videos provided during asynchronous sessions are often too long. It is suggested that shorter with more engaging videos be created to enhance understanding of subtopics and maintain motivation (Larreta-Azelain & Monje, 2016). Creative presentation of content can help keep students engaged (Khan et al., 2017). Students struggle with time management, as they can be easily distracted by their surroundings during online classes. Developing better time management skills is essential for maintaining focus and productivity.

Group assessments pose additional challenges in an online mode. Teamwork can be difficult due to varying availability of group members, making it hard to coordinate discussions and complete tasks collaboratively. Often, tasks are assigned through messaging platforms and members complete them independently, which diminishes the benefits of teamwork. Students indicate that face-to-face interaction is the most convenient way to complete tasks that require collaboration, suggesting a preference for in-person discussions over online communication for group work (Ekblaw, 2016).

Online environment comes with specific challenges, such as maintaining student engagement, addressing technical issues and ensuring equitable access to resources. These challenges can affect the overall learning experience if not managed effectively. It is essential for both lecturers and students to play an important role to maximize the benefits of online learning (Paudyal & Rana, 2021). Lecturer should adapt teaching methods to suit online platforms, incorporating interactive elements and fostering active participation. Student need to develop time management and self-discipline skills as these are crucial for success in a flexible online learning structure. Besides, university task is to ensure adequate technical support and access to necessary tools for both lecturers and students to avoid disruptions (Chan Mow & Faleupolu Tevita, 2022). By addressing these challenges and embracing the strengths of online learning, institutions can provide an educational experience that is both effective and sustainable in the long term.

Conclusion

This paper demonstrates the readiness and challenges students face in transitioning to online learning in the new era. Students generally have a positive perception of online learning and as they adapt, they develop skills like self-discipline, adaptability and digital literacy, which are essential for their future careers. Improving technical support and communication between universities and students is key to enhancing the online learning experience and making it a more effective option for diverse students.

The structured approach to online learning at UTeM, using platforms like Microsoft Teams and Ulearn, reflects a commitment to providing diverse learning experiences. The preference for a hybrid mode indicates a desire for flexibility and balance between live interaction and self-paced learning. The availability of recorded lectures enhances accessibility, while the strict attendance policy underscores the importance of active participation. Overall, these elements contribute to a robust online learning environment that aims to meet the needs of students effectively.

The challenges outlined highlight the need for universities to address technical, environmental and pedagogical factors that affect the online learning experience. Improving internet connectivity, providing adequate resources and creating shorter, more engaging content can enhance student engagement and motivation. Additionally, fostering a supportive learning environment that encourages interaction among peers can help alleviate feelings of isolation and improve teamwork for group assessments. By addressing these challenges, universities can enhance the effectiveness of their online learning initiatives and support student success.

Overall, the shift to online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic has sparked both challenges and opportunities for growth in education. As students adapt to these changes, they can develop valuable skills in self-discipline, adaptability and digital literacy that will benefit them in their future careers. Improving technical support and enhancing communication between university and students could further improve the online learning experience, making it an even more viable option for a broader range of students.

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