

Connecting User Emotions and User Experience (UX) Among University Students during Open Distance Learning

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Abstract—A catastrophic event such as the coronavirus pandemic (COVID -19) could have an impact on the global economy and on people's lives. When the virus COVID -19 began to spread uncontrollably in late February 2020, some schools and universities in the affected countries were closed. The universities have no choice but to use open distance learning (ODL) to stay in business. Therefore, the platform used for ODL should be effective and practical to optimize the learning experience of students. The important aspects include accessibility, practicality, ease of use and usefulness of the platform used. Furthermore, the learning experience would affected the students' emotions in either positive or negative ways. Hence, the aim of this study was to identify the factors that influence the user experience during ODL and how the emotions is connected to the user experience. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis of this study showed that accessibility was the most important factor influencing user experience, followed by desirability and usability of the ODL learning platform. However, the experience was not influenced by gender, age or the institution where the students were enrolled. Besides, poor internet connection causes the negative emotions such as tensed, frustrated and bored to the students and consequently found out that the learning is no longer useful, while positive emotions such as happy and excited would be achieved when the students could appreciate the usability of the ODL platform.

Keywords—user experience (UX), emotions, open distance learning (ODL), correlation, multiple linear regression

I. INTRODUCTION

Any catastrophic event, such as the pandemic COVID -19, could affect the global economy and people's daily lives. In late February 2020, when COVID-19 transmission was uncontrollable, certain schools and academic institutions in affected countries were closed to maintain social distance and contain the spread of the virus. Nearly one billion students

around the world have been affected by these decisions [1], including 67% of the world's higher education students [2].

Although both schools and universities were affected, institute of higher learnings (IHL) suffered the most as they serve international students. Fortunately, due to the readiness and convenience of technology use in education, all Web 2.0-based ICT resources were immediately deployed, allowing the teaching and learning process to continue [3]. Traditional learning approaches are no longer the only option available. Open Distance Learning (ODL), which provides access to numerous platforms and learning resources, has replaced traditional or blended learning in most IHL programmes worldwide [4], [5].

ODL learning interactions require sufficient learning supports and materials to meet the expectation that students can direct and manage their own learning [6]. Students who prefer face-to-face instruction have a harder time with self-efficacy influencing performance [7]. For this reason, many aspects need to be considered in the design and delivery of ODL courses to ensure that distance learning courses and programmes can be delivered effectively.

ODL providers need to be aware that their educational products and services play an important role in supporting and motivating learners. Since the user experience (UX) of a product influences its success or failure in the market, the online platform used for ODL must be practical and efficient to ensure effective teaching and learning. To address this research gap, this study investigated how the different components of the platform affect students' experiences in open distance learning. Four aspects of the ODL learning platform were measured: its usability, desirability, accessibility and usefulness. This study also investigated how user experience (UX) and how positive and negative emotions affected ODL among university students.