CYBER LAW EDUCATION VIA E-LEARNING: AN EXPERIENCE IN UNIVERSITI SAINS ISLAM MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Blended learning has been identified as one of the method which can be used in teaching which combines face-to-face and online delivery. Researchers argue that blended learning is able to enhance students skills via receiving feedbacks and participating in online forum discussions. Hence, this paper seeks to discuss and analyse cyber law education via e-learning at Faculty of Syariah and Law, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). This study is exploratory using qualitative approach. The result of this study shows that the usage of blending learning as one of the teaching method is useful because it helps to monitor students activities effectively.

Keywords: blended learning, cyber law, Faculty Syariah and Law, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Blended learning is the combination of face-to-face and online delivery where 30-60% of the course content is electronically delivered. This is the definition provided by the E-learning Guidelines for Malaysian HEIs (2014). The online component of a blended learning course comprises activities such as lectures, projects, problem based tasks and discussion in general. These can be translated in various forms such as, playing a learning game, watching and comprehending animations, completing a simulation, readings, forum discussion and responding to each other, self assessment and participating in quizzes (E-learning Guidelines for Malaysian HEIs, 2014). As indicated by the E-learning Guidelines for Malaysian HEIs (2014), attendance in the blended mode teaching need not be measured solely on physical presence. It should include student's participation in completing tasks provided online, such as participating in forum discussion which should be regarded as equal or more important than their physical presence.

2.0 METHODS

This study explores students engagement in e-learning for cyber law subject. This exploratory study employs qualitative research method approach of focus group to analyse their participation in e-learning for cyber law subject.

3.0   BLENDED LEARNING IN USIM

The support towards blended learning in USIM is carried out by Centre for Global Open Access Learning, Immersive Technology and Quality Assurance (GOAL-ITQAN). GOAL-ITQAN fuctions as coordinator for innovation in teaching and learning in USIM. So far, USIM requires 30% blended learning to be achieved by every lecturers for each semester.

Figure 1 shows an example of how to achieve 30% blended learning provided by the GOAL-ITQAN in USIM.
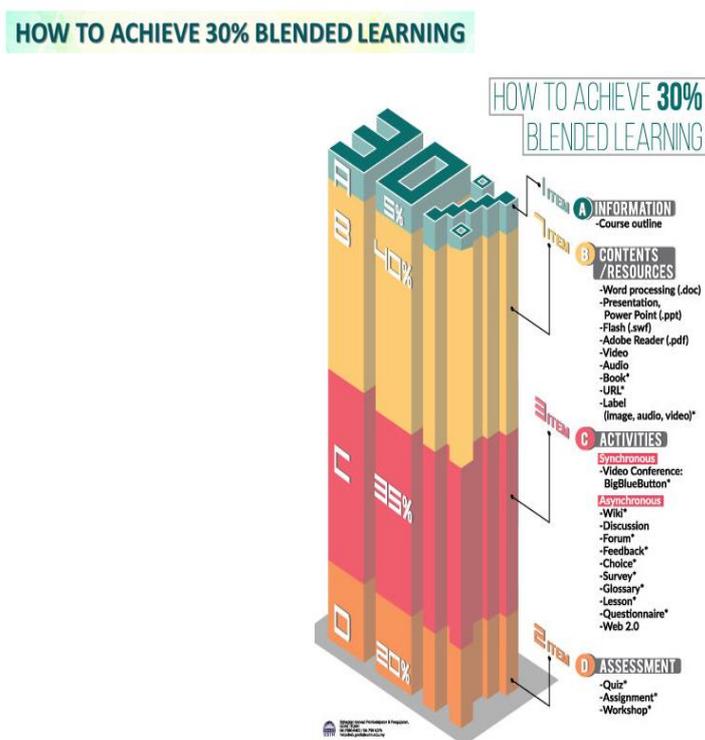

Figure 1: How to Achieve 30% Blended Learning

The above example provide comprehensive guideline for lecturers to obtain 30% blended learning by uploading 1 item on information of the course, or commonly known as course outline, uploading 7 items which forms the contents or resources for the course which may be in the form of word documents (.docx) power point (.ppt), PDF document (.pdf) or URL.   In addition to that, 3 activities and 2 assignments should be performed via online in order to achieve 30% blended learning. Activities such as forum, questionnaire, glossary and feedbacks are, in my opinion the simplest activities which can be performed online. On the other hand, quizzes,

assignments and workshops are some of the options available for lecturers to conduct assessment via online. Hence, fulfillment of the 1,7,3,2 ruling would enable lecturers to obtain 30% blended learning.

4.0   CYBER LAW SUBJECT VIA E-LEARNING: AN EXPERIENCE

For the students, using e-learning to learn is rather new because they usually used e-learning to download learning materials such as lecture notes but 'learning' in the e-learning space is seldom. Cyber law subject is an elective subject for *Sarjana Muda Fiqh dan Fatwa* (SMFF) program. The coverage of this course includes legal development on media such as the internet, issues of online copyright, intellectual property, cyber crime, data protection, privacy and other legal issues associated with cyber law. This subject requires students to critically discuss about cyber law related issues and demands activities such as debating, reason out and analyze issues which can be time consuming. E-learning serves as the suitable platform for this subject with features such as forum, questionnaire tools, and quiz tools. Blended learning can be easily implemented which both can save time and cost effective.

4.1   Blended Learning Materials

In the first week of our face-to-face meeting, students were asked to enroll themselves in the e learning course, cyber law subject course code LAC5262 as shown in Figure 2. In the current semester 2 (2016/2017), there were 13 students in the course. Learning materials such as the course outline, lecture notes, decided cases, articles and related links were provided in the topics that had been pre-arranged before the semester starts (see Figure 3).
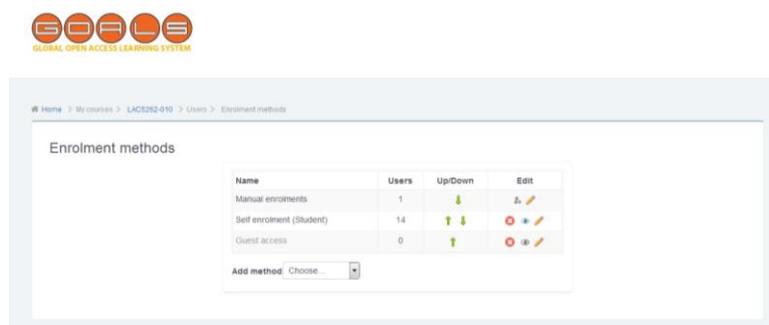

Figure 2: Number of students' enrolment and enrolment method
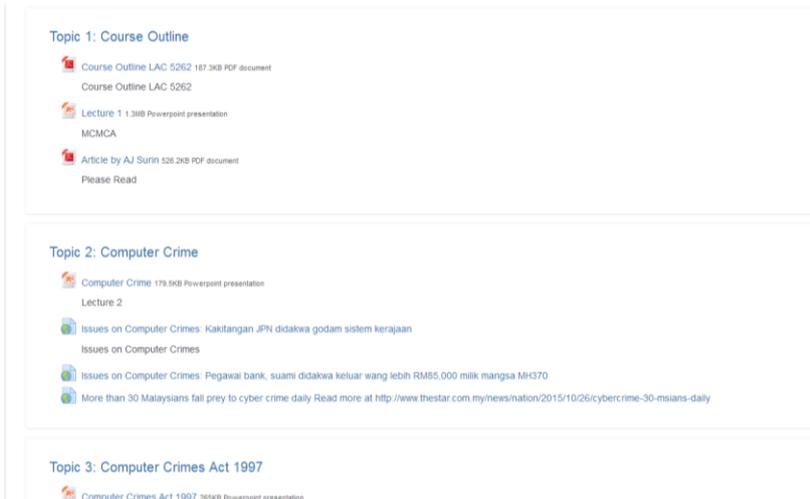
Figure 3: Some of the learning materials assigned to respective topics in the course

4.2   Blended Learning Activities

Every week, the lecturer meets the students face-to-face but they also have to study materials online and carry out e-learning activities in the course. Some of the activities were short questions and answers (see Figure 4) and online discussion about a specific case presented to them (see Figure 5). Every activity has to be completed within 1 week and the answers to these activities were discussed in face-to-face lecture.
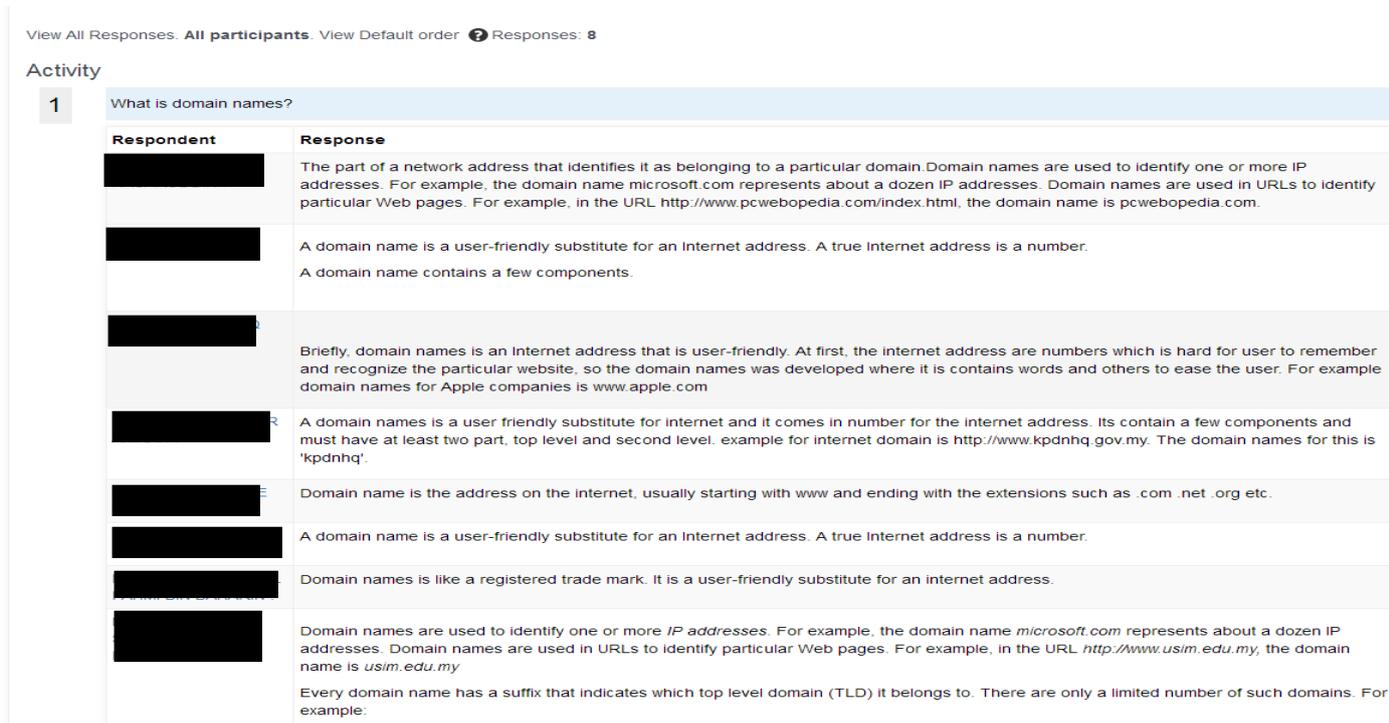
Figure 4: Example of short questions and answers activities for blended learning
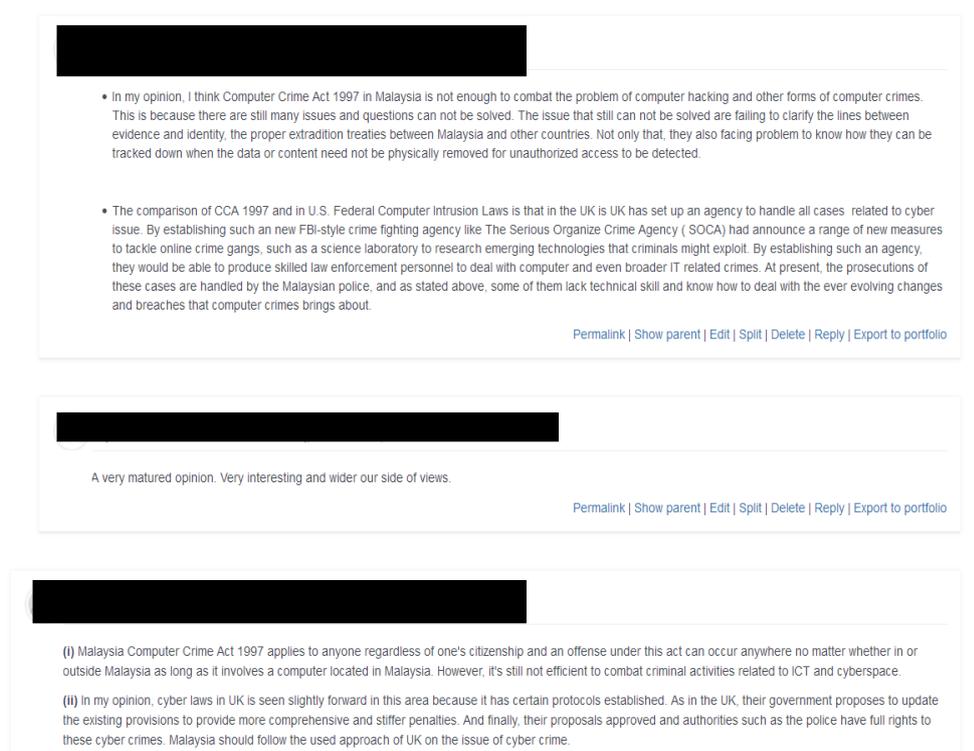
Figure 5: Example of forum about an article discussion

4.3 Blended Learning Assessments

Students' participation in online learning was assessed and 25% of their coursework marks were based on e-learning participation. They also have to submit their assignments online and marks were given through the system which makes it easier for the students to reflect on their learning (see Figure 6(a) and Figure 6(b)). It is also a lot easier for the lecturer to identify students who failed to submit their work and due actions could be provided in due time.

User report - ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Select all or one user All users (14)

View report as User

Grade item	Calculated weight	Grade	Range	Percentage	Feedback	Contribution to course total
LAC5262 CYBERLAW						
Assignment 1	-	-	0–100	-		-
Assignment 2	-	-	0–100	-		-
x̄ Course total Simple weighted mean of grades.	-	-	0–100	-		-

User report - ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Grade item	Calculated weight	Grade	Range	Percentage	Feedback	Contribution to course total
LAC5262 CYBERLAW						
Assignment 1	-	12.00	0–100	12.00 %		-
Assignment 2	-	5.00	0–100	5.00 %		-
x̄ Course total Simple weighted mean of grades.	-	-	0–100	-		-

User report - ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Grade item	Calculated weight	Grade	Range	Percentage	Feedback	Contribution to course total
LAC5262 CYBERLAW						
Assignment 1	-	11.00	0–100	11.00 %		-
Assignment 2	-	5.00	0–100	5.00 %		-
x̄ Course total Simple weighted mean of grades.	-	-	0–100	-		-

User report - ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Grade item	Calculated weight	Grade	Range	Percentage	Feedback	Contribution to course total
LAC5262 CYBERLAW						

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Grade item	Calculated weight	Grade	Range	Percentage	Feedback	Contribution to course total
LAC5262 CYBERLAW						
Assignment 1	-	12.00	0–100	12.00 %		-
Assignment 2	-	5.00	0–100	5.00 %		-
x̄ Course total Simple weighted mean of grades.	-	-	0–100	-		-

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Grade item	Calculated weight	Grade	Range	Percentage	Feedback	Contribution to course total
LAC5262 CYBERLAW						
Assignment 1	-	-	0–100	-		-
Assignment 2	-	-	0–100	-		-
x̄ Course total Simple weighted mean of grades.	-	-	0–100	-		-

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| Grade item	Calculated weight	Grade	Range	Percentage	Feedback	Contribution to course total
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Assignment 2	-	5.00	0–100	5.00 %		-
x̄ Course total Simple weighted mean of grades.	-	-	0–100	-		-

Figure 6(a): 2 out of 13 students failed to submit their assignments
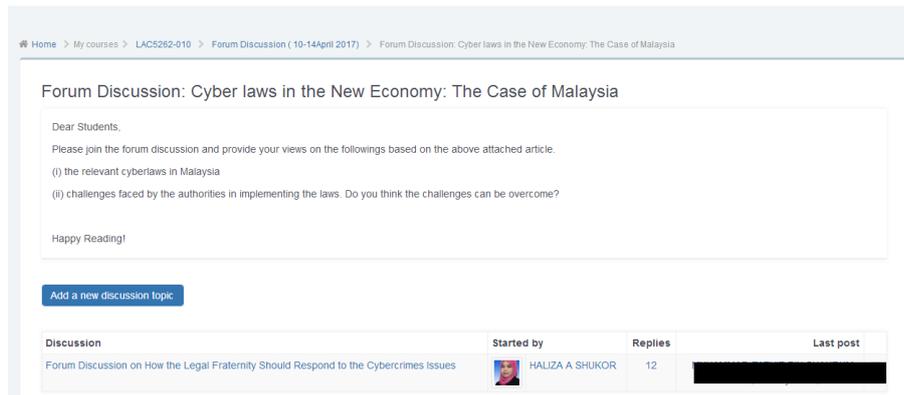
Figure 6(b): Some students did not participate in online learning discussion (only 12 out of 13 responded)

5.0 ANALYSIS ON THE USAGE OF E-LEARNING FOR CYBER LAW EDUCATION

5.1 Course Preparation

Although many would claim that e-learning could save a lot of instructors' time in teaching and learning, this is not necessarily true because preparing the learning activities and choosing the right materials for students to study online is quite a challenge. This is different than using e-learning as the platform to share learning materials and submit assignments which is less demanding.

Because students did not meet the instructor in e-learning platform, all the instructions about the activities that they have to carry out had to be very explicit to avoid confusion. Yang & Cornelious (2005) clearly pointed out the role of the instructor in preparing course for quality online learning which includes designing the online learning experiences to be engaging and interactive.

5.2 Interaction and Engagement

As I have pointed out earlier, Cyber Law is a subject where students have to critically discuss and analyze cases before a conclusion can be made. During the course, students have to discuss these cases online where they also received responses from their fellow friends. Academic

discussions online helped them to grow their thinking and widen up their views and perspectives. Compared to face-to-face discussions, students who are anxious and shy have more freedom in voicing out their opinions through e-learning (Bates & Khasawneh, 2007). Hence, blended learning presents more alternatives for students to learn efficiently.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the experience implementing blended learning for cyber law, it was found that the role of the instructors remain relevant and crucial to ensure successful learning process. The claim that using e-learning could ease teacher's burden is true but teachers have to be aware about their role in selecting course materials, giving instructions, interacting and managing e-learning as well as assessing students' performance in e-learning. E-learning can greatly benefit students' learning and based on this experience, this course aims at improving the learning activities so that students also know their changing roles and responsibilities while learning online.

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