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## A study on “Student preference towards the use of Edmodo as a learning platform to create responsible learning environment”

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### Abstract

Edmodo is a free and secure educational learning network used to provide a simple way for teachers to create and manage an online classroom community as well as enables students to connect and work with their classmates teachers anywhere and anytime. The purpose of this study was to determine the student preference towards the use of information and communication technology in the form of the academic networking site-Edmodo on student engagement and responsible learning. This paper seeks to evaluate whether Edmodo is an authentic teaching strategy that should be employed by more teachers hoping to encourage a student-centered technology driven learning environment where students are actively engaged and practicing views of responsible learning. The study was conducted at a private university in Selangor district at Malaysia. The participants were 285 degree students, out of which 249 students was taken for the analysis as they fall under the Edmodo users. This research study used quantitative method and a research designed survey was administered to gather questions with answers associated with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to disagree strongly. The survey question was designed using the RASE (Resources, Activity, Support and Evaluation) model to support the student preference on using the Edmodo in the teaching and learning arena. The survey was developed using Google drive and was shared among the students through email and other sources. The result of the study shows that incorporating Edmodo encourages both student engagement and responsible learning when particular Edmodo features are employed. The result through the analysis supports that the students’ preference of using Edmodo is mainly towards for the resources, support and communication such as forum, discussions and also for online activities. Students find Edmodo a wonderful and user-friendly social learning platform that enables them to enjoy working on an online class. The results of this study may inspire teachers to reappraisal the way they conduct their classes.

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## 1. Introduction

With the invention of Web based classroom tools, a throng of new possibilities on how to use online technologies such as social networking sites for blended learning has gotten researchers finding the best possible way to capitalize on these tools. Many studies are conducted in the areas of using social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter as teaching and learning tools. Another up and coming social networking site catered especially for teaching and learning is Edmodo. Here we will take a look at the benefits of Social Networking Sites (SNS) and the advantages of Edmodo compared to other SNSs. Social Networking Sites (SNS) such as MySpace and especially Facebook have rapidly earned fame among the current generation. Being aware of the popularity of SNSs among students, instructors started to apply their instruction with SNSs to primarily enhance student's learning motivation and autonomy. Some studies concerning the application of SNSs with instruction showed that SNSs can better students' general learning performance, and strengthen their learning motivation and autonomy.

SNS is a platform which provides an easy, accessible way to connect and interact with others, share ideas and opinions and gather feedback in a fluid way. This element of interactivity is the major difference between SNSs and traditional media. SNSs allow interaction with others directly in a virtual environment. This feasibility creates a useful and enjoyable medium of communication, which keeps people engaging continuously. Edmodo which is a form of SNS is commonly called as "Facebook" for the higher education. This is because of the interface of Edmodo is somewhat similar to Facebook. The purpose of this is to create a sense of familiarity among the users of Edmodo since most students have a Facebook account and to ensure that it is user friendly. However the difference between Edmodo and other SNSs is it is a social learning platform for students, teachers and parents to collaborate, communicate, share content, access homework and view grades. The biggest advantage of Edmodo compared to other SNSs is that it has the inbuilt academic requirement for assessment such as Quiz, Assignment, Poll, etc. These features really support learning and communication between lecturers and students even when they are away from the campus. Besides that, parents can also view their children's academic progress when the parents log in. As for the teacher, they are able to get the statistics of assessment immediately therefore reducing their time taken if they had to calculate it manually.

## 2. Purpose of The Study

The main purpose of this study includes:

- To study the student preference of using Edmodo as learning platform to create responsible learning environment.
- To identify which purpose the students really preferred to use Edmodo.

## 3. Literature Review

### 3.1. Edmodo

Edmodo is a free and secure learning platform designed by Jeff O' Hara and Nick Borg in 2008 for teachers, students, parents, schools, and districts, and is available at [www.edmodo.com](http://www.edmodo.com) (Chada Kongcham, 2013). This website looks similar to Facebook, but is much more private and safe because it allows teachers to create and manage accounts and only for their students, who receive a group code and register in the group, can access and join the group; no one else can participate or spy on the group (Jarc, 2010). The site provides a simple way for teachers and students in a virtual class to connect and collaborate. Borg and O'Hara believed that a social networking geared towards the needs of students could have a profound impact on how students collaborate and learn in their world, rather than the school setting their teachers grew up in (Bruce K. Gushiken, 2013). Teachers have noted that Edmodo even strengthened the relationships between students, and led to a stronger classroom community (Mills, 2011). Students can also share content, submit homework, assignments and quizzes, receive their teachers feedback, notes and alerts as well as voting on polls (Jarc, 2010). Hence Edmodo can be seen as Learning Management System (LMS) which can facilitate teachers to set up and manage their online classes easily (Witherspoon, 2011). Edmodo was recognized by the American Association of School Librarians in 2011 as one of the top 25 websites

that fosters the qualities of innovation, creativity, active participation and collaboration (Habley, 2011) in the category entitled “Social Networking and Communication”. Edmodo has more than 6.5 million users and host online conferences called Edmodocon with thousands of attendees (Flanigan, 2011).

### *3.2. Social Networking and Education*

The use of Web-based learning technologies has increased dramatically over the past decade providing new opportunities and avenues for students to interact with their professors virtually using computer-mediated communication technologies (Li, L., & Pitts, J.P., 2009). Online communities provide an increased choice for people to choose to contact with anyone, especially those with common interests, values, beliefs or passions (Baym, 2002). Social networking sites such as “Facebook” and “MySpace” have been subject to much recent debate within the educational community. Whilst growing number of educators celebrate the potential of social networking to (re)engage learners with their studies, other fear that such applications compromise and disrupt young people’s engagement with traditional education provision. (Selwyn, N., 2009) “What impact can Web 2.0 technologies, specifically social networking sites, have inside and outside the classroom? While participation within the Facebook community has grown exponentially across college campuses (Schroeder, J., & Greenbowe, T. J., 2009) On-line social networks are also an excellent communication tool for knowledge construction based on social relations, conversation, collaboration and shared work. Therefore the networks can be used as an extension of a physical classroom to help students stay in touch with their teachers, while the teachers and educational institutions to update their knowledge and learning methodologies as well as developing collaborative working (Arroyo, 2011). The social networking can benefit the students who are shy and do not participate in class can communicate with their teachers and classmates (Miller, 2011).

### *3.3. RASE Pedagogical Model*

RASE Pedagogical model developed to support teachers to use online learning platform such as Moodle, Blackboard, etc in effective, student-centered and engaging way to achieve intended outcomes in their modules. The RASE model indicates that content Resources are not sufficient for full achievement of learning outcomes, we also need to plan Activities for students to engaged in using resources, Support to ensure that students are provided help and tools to independently solve emerging difficulties and lastly Evaluation to inform about student’s progress and serve us a learning tools to understand what else we need to do in other to ensure that learning outcomes are being achieved.

## **4. Research Methodology**

### *4.1. Population*

Population in this study is 285 students who study in diploma, degree and masters at a private university at Selangor district, Malaysia during 2013 academic year.

### *4.2. Sample size & variable*

The selected 249 samples were collected for data analysis. It is purposive samplings and collects data in the university student of hospitality and culinary arts. The Independent variable in this study will cover the personal data of the students, use of Edmodo for RASE pedagogical model and finally the dependent variable will be student preference on use of Edmodo as a learning platform to cover all components in RASE pedagogical model.

### 4.3. Research procedure and instrument

The researcher instruments used in this study was a questionnaire during the study period of university students at a private university in last quarter of the year 2013. The questionnaire was employed to investigate the student preference on use of Edmodo for resources, activities, support and evaluation as their learning platform. The online questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale asking for student preference on use of Edmodo was distributed to the student's using Google drive. The data recorded automatically by Google drive to analysis the use of Edmodo.

## 5. Data Analysis

It is a quantitative analysis that is calculated in statistical analysis program (SPSS), measuring frequency, mean and standard deviation (S.D). The student preference level towards the use of Edmodo as a learning platform to create a responsible learning environment were analyzed by using a Likert-scale questionnaire by using a rating guide as follows: 4.01- 5=Strongly Agree, 3.71-4.00=Agree, 2.71-3.70=Neutral, 1.71-2.70=Disagree, 1-1.7=Strongly Disagree. Finally, the data collected were analyzed and grouped in terms of Resources, Activity, Support and Evaluation (RASE) pedagogical model to understand which are the students preference was high.

## 6. Research Findings

The study findings were presented under the following sections:

### 6.1. Personal Information Data

Most students participated in the survey respondent were female which is 138 (47.8%) and male of 111 (38.4%) out of 249 respondents. The age group of the respondent was above 20 years for almost 164 respondents and remaining 82 under 18-20 years and 3 was 15-17 years. It was identified that the respondents were around 226 degree students, 20 diplomas and 3 Master from the survey personal information.

### 6.2. Student preference on use of Edmodo as a learning platform to create responsible learning environment through the RASE pedagogical model.

Table 1. The student preference on use of Edmodo for Resource sharing

Student preference on use of Edmodo for Resource sharing	Mean	S.D	Level
R1: It is easy to identify the study materials in the platform.	3.96	0.956	Agree
R2: I like the sharing folder option because it enables me to access my lecturer's resources (e.g. lecture notes, videos, etc.).	4.14	0.939	Strongly Agree
R3: I find the unlimited Backpack (Digital Library) option is very useful for saving data (e.g. Files, folders, etc.).	3.91	0.946	Agree
R4: Preview of the files option from the platform is useful to check before downloading.	4.08	0.943	Strongly Agree
R5: I like the "filter by posts" search option.	3.91	0.938	Agree
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.944</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Note: 4.01- 5=Strongly Agree, 3.71-4.00=Agree, 2.71-3.70=Neutral, 1.71-2.70=Disagree, 1-1.7=Strongly Disagree

The above Table 1 stated that the student preference on use of Edmodo for Resource sharing among the student, peers and teachers. The data from the questionnaire shown in Table 1 indicates that the students agreed that they could use resource sharing functions of Edmodo such as study materials, digital library, etc., quickly and easily. They also strongly agreed that they like the sharing folder option and preview of the file option, which is very easy

to access and check quickly. Among all the options in resource sharing, the student preference was towards the folder sharing option (R2) with a higher mean value of 4.14.

Table 2. The Student preference on use of Edmodo towards Activity

Student preference on use of Edmodo for Activity	Mean	S.D	Level
A1: I like to use the platform for forums / group discussions with my lecturers.	4.00	1.076	Agree
A2: I like to use the platform for forums / group discussions with my peers (student –to-student).	3.74	1.132	Agree
A3: This platform is useful for making enquiries on information (e.g. video file, slides, etc.) posted by my lecturers.	4.06	0.978	Strongly Agree
A4: This platform is useful for making enquiries on information (e.g. video file, slides, etc.) posted by my peers on project work.	3.98	1.002	Agree
A5: I like to take online quizzes using this platform because it gives me the correct answer immediately after completion.	4.08	0.995	Strongly Agree
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.97</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Note: 4.01- 5=Strongly Agree, 3.71-4.00=Agree, 2.71-3.70=Neutral, 1.71-2.70=Disagree, 1-1.7=Strongly Disagree

The data analyzed from the student preference on use of Edmodo towards Activities shown in Table 2 indicates that the student strongly agreed to use this platform for making enquiries on information posted by the lecturers. They also strongly agreed to use this platform for the discussion forum with the lecturers and agreed to use for online quizzes and information enquiries. From the analysis, it is observed that the students highly preferred to use the Edmodo for online quizzes (A5) as the mean score is 4.08, which is higher than other mean score in the stated in the Table 2.

Table 3. The Student preference on use of Edmodo towards Support

Student preference on use of Edmodo for Support	Mean	S.D	Level
S1: I find the online help desk is user friendly.	3.75	1.045	Agree
S2: Communication (e.g. alerts, postings notification, etc.) between the students and lecturers is fast.	4.14	0.991	Strongly Agree
S3: Communication (e.g. alerts, postings notification, etc.) among my peers (student-to-student) is fast.	4.02	1.076	Strongly Agree
S4: I like to make online appointments with my lecturers through this platform, because it is fast.	3.78	1.141	Agree
S5: I like the support community team feature in the platform.	3.77	1.085	Agree
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.89</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Note: 4.01- 5=Strongly Agree, 3.71-4.00=Agree, 2.71-3.70=Neutral, 1.71-2.70=Disagree, 1-1.7=Strongly Disagree

The data from the questionnaire shown in the Table 3 indicates that the student preference on use of Edmodo towards receiving Support from the lecturer and peers is quick and easy. The student strongly agreed that the communication between the student, lecturer and peers is fast and also they agree that the online help is user friendly, and the student prefers to make online appointments with the lecturer, because the communication is fast. The data from the Table 3 strongly agreed that the communication support (S2) between the student and lecturers is fast as the mean score value is 4.14 which is higher than other questionnaire in the Table.

Table 4. The Student preference on use of Edmodo towards Evaluation

<b>Student preference on use of Edmodo for Evaluation</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D</b>	<b>Level</b>
E1: I like this platform for submitting assignments (e.g. reports, portfolio, etc.) because comments from my lecturer are fast.	4.14	1.020	Strongly Agree
E2: I like this platform for submitting group assignments, because comments from my peers are fast.	3.94	1.080	Agree
E3: Use of icons by my lecturers for feedback motivates me.	3.80	1.047	Agree
E4: I like to make online appointments with my lecturers through this platform, because it is fast.	3.81	1.048	Agree
E5: I find the option of giving “Badges” to me by my lecturers is motivating.	3.84	1.022	Agree
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Note: 4.01- 5=Strongly Agree, 3.71-4.00=Agree, 2.71-3.70=Neutral, 1.71-2.70=Disagree, 1-1.7=Strongly Disagree

Table 4 stated that the student preference on use of Edmodo for Evaluation from the lecturer and peers are fast. The data from the questionnaire shown in Table 4 indicates that the students strongly agreed to use Edmodo for submitting assignments as the comments from the lecturer are fast and also they agree that the use of icons and badges by the lecturer is really motivating to perform better. They also prefer to use this platform to make online appointment with the lecturers, since the response is fast. Among all the options in support functions, the student preference was towards the assignment submission and comments from the lecturer option (E1) which has a higher mean value score of 4.14 compare to others in the Table 4.

### 6.3. Recommendation

Teachers work in a challenging, ever-changing environment. The way individuals learn has shifted over time based on research and new theories, such as multiple-intelligences, project based learning, learner-centered environment, etc. Since there is an interest on use of Edmodo as learning platform among the university students, so my recommendation to the teachers who would like to use Edmodo will really change their traditional classrooms into current scenario. So I recommend the teachers to think of using the Edmodo-RASE model as a reference to implement and create a responsible learning environment to the students.

## 7. Conclusion

This study filled some knowledge gaps in the largely unexplored Edmodo territory as a learning platform among the students at University level. Edmodo as an learning platform that has some distinct advantages over traditional classroom environment. The advantages lie in that Edmodo can foster the combined knowledge creation of a group better than individuals diaries and discussion, because Edmodo facilities sharing ideas beyond the classroom via an online platform that allows readily available access at random times to continue such discussion, online quiz, sharing folder options and mainly connection to the global experts of various disciplines. This study supports through the finding that students preference on use of Edmodo as a learning platform is strongly agreed at all levels of RASE pedagogical model and also to create an responsible learning environment through online activities carried out on their own self-paced learning styles. Assuming continuous growth of social network, Edmodo become an phenomenon that captures the university student of current generation because most of the student and also teachers shared that it is very user-friendly. The implementation of Edmodo by educators as a learning platform for the students could become a powerful medium that extends responsible learning environment beyond the classroom.

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