Theme: Fostering Life Long Learning

Empowering a Web2.0 Blended ODL Community Learning in Supporting Retired Senior Citizens' Practical Lifelong knowledge Sharing and Learning Programmes through Community Activities Centres

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the commissioning of a Web 2.0 digital technology infrastructure into blended mode lifelong knowledge sharing platform for youth and women in community learning in upgrading knowledge sharing; livelihood lifelong learning and building human capital among retired senior citizens in community learning activities centre. A mixed-method research design was implemented including survey, interviews and observation in this study. The five dimensions of enhancing a Web2.0 innovative blended ODL digital LMS platform namely demographic factor; community youth and women learning culture; digital facilities; blended community LMS environment and learners' efficacy were examined. Finding shows there are significant differences among factors stated that will upgrade the potential of Retired Senior Citizens (RSC) expertise, livelihood knowledge and experiences sharing to be relevance and competitive in building human capital in the community. The use of a Web2.0 blended digital platform is beneficial in sharing of knowledge and skills among RSC and the community. This model could be used as framework of practice for life skills in community development. It could be implemented for all the RSC in sharing life skills and contribute to the worldwide improvement of human capital

Keywords: Blended mode; Open and Distance Learning; Retired Senior Citizen **(RSC)**; Lifelong knowledge

Introduction

There are approximately a million RSC in Malaysia (2020); they comprised of government employees of all ranks served in public services until the age of mandatory retirement at 60 years old. They will received a sums of money as gratuity based on their duration of service, approximately half millions ringgit or more a day after retirement. Further a monthly pension of 60 percent of their last drawn pay until their passing. The advance in medical science, human life span is much longer, average retirees could live up for another twenty or thirty years. Therefore their willingness to share their expertise and hands on knowledge in the community learning not only will benefit them to past time, hobby and an act of social obligation towards community learning. Their selflessness contributions to society gain much praise in upgrading human capital among youth and women in the community.

The upgrading and utilization of livelong livelihood digital technology in developing Malaysia's human capital has leaped forward with continuous sharing of expertise knowledge by RSC in the Malaysian communities is the way forward and beyond. Youth and women in the community need in upgrading their livelihood knowledge. They may have had possess only secondary and diploma qualification for their daily living. Their disparity could be guided by RSC with expertise and hands-on livelihood experiences. Not only among RSC but digitize the Malaysian community to fulfill the government's vision of building the country's human capital, digital and electronic society. On the other hand, we should also identify the different goals of today's society and the latest sophisticated digital technologies that are harnessed for information processing. Wellington (2001) surveyed that ICT at home is growing faster than its use in education setting. Digital facilities at home best suit the present digital platform of transmitting educational knowledge and social networking among the household usage. Advancement in digital technologies such as the Internet, intranet, mobile technology enhance applications in the community learning process has prompted the development of BLL digital community learning in the andragogical process.

Review of Literature

Joint efforts of the Ministry of Rural Development, local corporations and state government with Retiree RSC group can sponsor a Web 2.0 digital ODL management system in the community centres, it enable youth and women to access livelong livelihood knowledge through a Blended Learning (BL) process with guidance from the group of knowledgeable RSC. They possess expertise, hands-on and up-to-date training knowledge from all disciplines during their tenure as public servant that needed most in the society. Youth and women in the community will have a chance to access and acquire livelihood and technical knowledge. This formed the foundation of a collaborative and lifelong learning culture among rural community. A well-planned and well-wired Web 2.0BL platform is far more important for human capital development in developing countries rather than suggestion from scholars in the developing nations that social media should be used as platform for transmitting knowledge. Manca and Ranieri (2013) have shown that pedagogical affordances of Facebook have only been partially implemented and that there are still many obstacles that may prevent a full adoption of Facebook as a learning environment, what's more on mobile learning application like whatsApp; zoom etc.

The commissioning of RSC blended digital platforms in community centres is value-added knowledge dissemination and sharing tool. It would be beneficial to form a countrywide regional Blended Lifelong Livelihood (BLL) in supporting the transformation of youth and women human capital development. It has huge benefit in enriching and fulfilling life (Marjan Laal, 2012).

Rarely any researches been conduct on the enhancement of RSC digital technology for community youth and women BLL collaborative learning that enable the accessibility to transmit RSC expertise and hands-on knowledge for social transformation and the development of community youth and women as to bridge the digital divide of citizens between the urban and rural communities' knowledge disparity. Indeed, collaborative digital RSC BL environment can be used widely either for educational, livelihood or training purposes when both the government sector, private sector and RSC association team up for human capital development in the country. Therefore the enhancement of RSCBL platform connected to all communities' centres is in fact an effective way of utilizing digital technology for the RSC further social networking and contributions towards the enrichment of communities but for youth and women in acquiring the much needed livelihood knowledge and its contents.

Hybrid and BL is one of the terminologies that are often described in association with Open and Distant Learning in today's digital era. BL has recently become somewhat of a buzzword in both corporate as well as academic settings and was identified by the American Society for Training and Development as one of the top ten trends to emerge in the knowledge delivery industry (Graham, 2004; Rooney, 2003). Graham, Allen and Ure (2003) stated that BL is usually found in three delivery modes of learning, firstly combining online and F2F instruction, secondly combining instructional methods and thirdly combining instructional modalities or delivery media. The first definition reflects more accurately on the historical emergence of BL systems as compared to the latter two that were much debated about since BL was so broadly defined that there encompass virtually all types of learning systems that involve multiple instructional methods and delivery media (Graham et al., 2003 in Graham, 2004). Pannen and Riyanti (2008, p.186) also defined 'blended/hybrid' course as the course that blends online and F2F delivery. Substantial proportion of learning content is delivered online, typically uses online discussions and has some F2F meetings. Examples of commonly used tools in BL platforms are Web 2.0 tools that are the new wave of innovation in teaching and learning that allow learners to do collaborative learning with enhanced motivation. A study by Alan (2010) highlighted that Middle East countries have made substantial investments in web-based learning and concluded that students were motivated by Web2.0 tools. Blog is an example of Web 2.0 tool where learners download resources from various websites, give feedback to instructors' contents, prepare digital portfolios, and share their ideas. Even an online questionnaire/test/quiz using third party tools such as Zoom application can be developed. The integration of blogs in the traditional teaching and learning process requires teacher's preparation and planning so that applicable and timely activities could be given to learners (Amold Nicholas, 2010).

The creation of a Web2.0 digital BL environment in the community centres throughout the country, will in turn create a regional RSC collaborative community BLL sharing management system to connect and be wired throughout the country, it will be a cost effective move in the dissemination of expertise and livelihood knowledge. This enable those to be centered into one place based in community vicinity for networking but also for friendship, racial integration, religious tolerance and knowledge acquisition.

Therefore the community Web 2.0 digital platform is aiming at the realization of the support for RSC to disseminate their expertise, experiences and livelihood knowledge in creating an advanced learning society.

The preferred Web 2.0 RSC community BLL learning for community youth and women would be to combine both the electronic-enabled learning system and traditional F2F guidance and tutoring learning methodology as they maybe comprise of those not technology savvy youth and women learners. RSC who is savvy in digital technology could guide them personally in community centre as Young (2001) suggested that collaborative e- learning works best within a blended training solution which incorporates traditional methods as well as technology-led learning. It is a method of providing a consistent level of skills within a team of delegates prior to them participating in an instructor-led session so they can get the most out of the training from the instructors' time and knowledge. Eisinger (2000) also mentioned that by combining traditional learning characteristics with the unique environment available on-line, elements that emerge would differentiate excellent e learning, namely the sharing of expertise, knowledge and livelihood knowledge through BL environment in community centre in upgrading of knowledge capital for societal development in Malaysia.

RSC who are seniors and learned person in the society are well respected by the community. Therefore their trustworthiness is guaranteed in dissemination of expertise and livelihood knowledge even though a series of benchmarks to ensure the BLL community youth and women learning quality should present. Evaluating program effectiveness includes a documented technology plan, with password protection, encryptions, back-up system and reliable delivery, established standards for learning development, design and delivery, good facilitation of interactive and feedback. All these would enable them to achieve excellence in acquiring the much needed societal knowledge that lead to the progressiveness of developing human capital in Malaysia. On the other hand, Rajasingham (1996) also noted that effective, cost-efficient instruction that can match the needs for expertise and livelihood skills related to technological change, delivered interactively, at the convenience of the youth and women learners. The learners, no matter where their physical location would be, should be able to interact with their RSC instructors and other peers. the information technology, new ways of learning and guidance as further providing alternatives to youth and women learners.

The effectiveness in the management of RSCBL platform that needs to have certain quality and supervision from the Ministry of Rural Development in terms of elements of quality control and assurance system. They should produce resource learning materials and monitor correspondence of learning activities. Thus the sheer newness of digital community learning brings pressure on evaluation to yield information about its effectiveness as a learning solution especially the youth and women without digital technology. What's more on the awareness of the constraints burden on the RSC in terms of time consuming management tasks that must be attended to in order for any technology-support learning to occur (Collis, Gervedink & Nijhuis, 2000). Therefore preliminary digital technology usages need to guide the youth and women in community the proper ways to use the sophisticated digital technology to create and enhance a BL environment.

Computer literacy and mobile applications are the basic knowledge for the youth and women in community to master but it takes time, only then the networking and dissemination of social, expertise and livelihood knowledge will be introduced to them. Research has proven that digital BL has added advantages towards an effective teaching and learning process and learning flexibility.

RSCBL is easily accessible tools in promoting lifelong learners' positive attitude and motivation for borderless learning (BOL) in increasingly globalized world is an imperative move. Lifelong learners have to be prepared to learn cross-cultural or interdisciplinary knowledge across the national border or boundary, not only mastering their own language, but also in other international languages. BOL is part of the ongoing convergence of two archetypal learning environments resembling blended learning (BL), first the traditional F2F learning environment; and secondly the distributed learning environments that have begun to grow and expand in exponential ways as new digital technologies have expanded the possibilities for distributed communication and interaction using different media and method combinations to address the needs of different audiences (Graham, 2004). Research showed that the constructivist problem-solving curriculum through shared cognition guided by adults as More Knowledgeable Others (Larkin, 2002) and capable peers in a learning community was found to be effective by instructor

or researchers. In the advent of digital era with the emergence of ODL mode that promote Education for All. It can be more effective if facilitated through BL platforms that include both digital and non-digital (F2F or conventional) settings. The study by Crawford, Krajcik & Marx (1999) revealed that Community of Practice (CoP) (anchored on socio-cultural framework) with desirable environment could provide opportunities for learners who are motivated to engage collaboratively in solving contextual problems when faced with scenarios. In the CoP possibly facilitated through digital platforms, learners and stakeholders are connected for various reasons to interpret, reflect, and negotiate meaning in an open process through meaningful interactions in the community (Wenger, 2000).

Research Objective

Objectives of this study are:-

1. Determine ways of achieving an effective management and empowering of a Web 2.0 Blended Learning in supporting RSC livelong livelihood knowledge sharing and learning programmes for youth and women in community.

2. Determine further ways of achieving excellence in dissemination of RSC expertise and knowledge sharing in the community centre and further develop into a regional collaborative RSCBLL environment in delivering quality lifelong learning to youth and women and bridging the digital divide between urban and rural communities.

3. RSC could utilize their remaining life in sharing their practical lifelong expertise and life experience through BL community centre to upgrade rural learned society.

4. Determine the creation of RSCBLL learning programmes in community

Research Framework

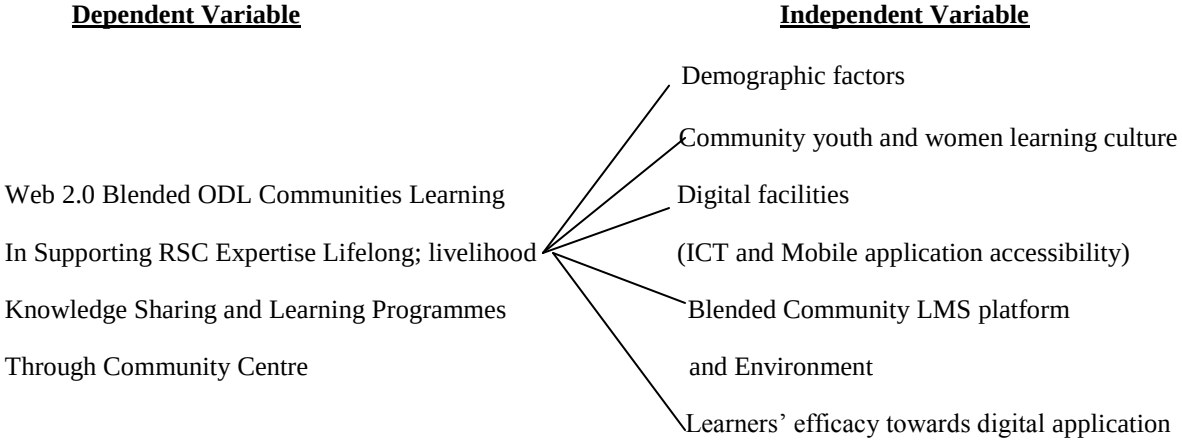

***Figure 1*: Theoretical Framework, anchored on constructivist and social-cultural framework**

Research Methodology

A set of questionnaire was given to a total of 300 respondents from RSC from various disciplines randomly selected from various states in Malaysia. Part one of questionnaire focus on respondents' demographical data. Part two on dependent and independent variables. Non-parametric and parametric statistical tests were used to analyze the data.

Findings

Reliability of instruments:

Cronbach Alpha statistic was found to be 0.960. Therefore the reliability of the questionnaire was acceptable.

Descriptive Statistics

***Table 1*: Summary of Respondents' Characteristics**

SUBJECT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1. Gender		
Male	260	87
Female	40	13
2. Race		
Malay	120	40
Chinese	130	44
Indian	50	16
3. Academic Achievement		
Post Graduate	60	20
Graduate	190	63
Diploma	50	17
4. Working Experience		
15-29 years	80	27
>30 years	220	73
5. Experience in using Internet		
1 - 5 years	50	17
6 - 10 years	190	63
>11 years	60	20

Table 1.1 and 1.2 summarize the respondents' characteristics. There are 260 male (87%) 40 female (13%), RSC from various disciplinary backgrounds from 4 states in Malaysia. Table 1.2 shows the respondents comprised of 120 Malay (40%) 130 Chinese (44%) and 50 Indian (16%). Table 1.3 shows that 20% of the respondents possess post graduate degree, 63% possess first degree and 1% respondents possess diploma education. Table 1.4 shows 27% of them have between 15 to 29 years of working experiences, 73% have more than 30 years of work experience. Table 1.5 shows that 17% of the respondents have between 1 to 5 years of experiences in using digital technology, 63% respondents have between 6 to 10 years and 20% of respondents have more than 11 years in using digital technology before their retirement from public sectors

Statistics and Discussion

***Table 2:* Data Analysis by Pearson Correlation Tests**

Correlation test between	r	p value	N
1. RSC academic achievement and community centres BLL digital infrastructure provided	0.734	< 0.001	300
2. RSC working experiences and the extent of using digital technology for expertise and lifelong livelihood sharing	0.583	<0.001	300

3. Web 2.0 community BLL learning platform and learners' commitment in learning	0.695	<0.001	300
4. Learning culture and practice of youth and women in community and the digital technology provision in the community centres	0.749	<0.001	300
5.RSC expertise, livelihood content provision and learners' efficacy	0.735	<0.001	300

Note: α= 0.01; r = Correlation coefficient; N= Total respondents

Table 2.1 shows there are a strong positive relationship between RSC academic achievement and community centres BLL digital facility provided. Each community centre digital technology platform surveyed has provided with twenty work-stations and a server as learning facility to community youth and women learners who followed BLL programs conducted by RSC as facilitator in the online and F2F schedule process. Youth and women in the community are encouraged to use internet facility for networking with their respective RSC. They are encouraged to attend F2F discussion and feedback classes in the weekend by using BL methodology on RSC expertise and livelihood knowledge and past experiences.

Table 2.2 shows youth and women are able to acquire livelihood knowledge better when RSC are incorporating the uses of digital technology and blended guidance and learning in their instructions. However, RSC who can only guide and advice based on their expertise discipline and work experience, they may face limitations in the lifelong learning process as the software and hardware provided were limited and may not suit the download of their expertise knowledge. They may also encounter the problem of being unable to facilitate youth and women in the community with their scientific and technical expertise because not all the community Centre's unit of workstation can access to the specific scientific expertise and livelihood experience electronically. The only means is through the use of their own write up guidance materials for learning and individual consultations. This affects their learning process.

Table 2.3 shows there are strong relationship between RSC blended ODL community learning platform and youth and women in community's commitment in learning. Even though RSC committed in providing and maintaining the learning contents of their expertise both F2F or downloaded and constantly upgrade in improvement in the portal which is always ready for the learners to access from time to time. But it may not cater for every youth and women in the community to learn. Youth and women from different background and standard of acceptance knowledge may be different. Therefore both parties must be committed in dissemination of expertise and livelihood knowledge and learn, and then knowledge transfer would be completed. They could share life experiences or success stories from the tenure as government service before retire. As Pauleen et.al (2004) state that experiential learning-based and team-based assignments which make extensive use of ICT with real life setting could be the best solution in achieving total learning experience by combining theory and practice for learners' application in their daily life.

Table 2.4 shows that there is a strong relationship between the learning culture and environment of RSC BL initiative in community centre. The survey by Jelfs and Richardson (2013) shown that nearly all learners in the society and country had access to a computer and the Internet, through mobile sets but youth in community were more likely to have access to other technologies than older ones. Youth may have more positive attitudes to digital technology than the women in the community. Older learners were more likely than younger learner to adopt deep and strategic approaches to learn and less likely to adopt a surface approach to learn. In addition, regardless of their ages, youth and women in community who had more positive attitudes towards digital technology were more committed.

Table 2.5 shows there is a strong relationship between RSC expertise, livelihood content provision and learners' efficacy. RSC may possess their fields of expertise either technically or livelihood experiences but not all the youth and women in the community need it. An agrarian nation slowly turn to industrial nature need certain kind of expertise knowledge whereas if they are urban community, they need different kind of expertise knowledge. If the RSC expertise is too technical in nature, then youth

and women efficacy in acquiring that knowledge may not be successful. Therefore RSC who disseminate their expertise, lifelong livelihood knowledge must be compatible to youth and women in community's need.

Discussion

The five dimensions of RSC blended community youth and women BLL learning environment, namely demographic; community youth and women LL learning culture and environment, digital technology facilities and technology accessibility; BLL digital community LMS platform and environment; and the learners' efficacy in acquiring expertise livelihood lifelong knowledge and the using of digital technology has constituted to the success of the programme. Each one of them is equally important in the development and transforming the youth and women into knowledgeable society. RSC administering skills of the digital learning platform are not only managing the whole community centre as an organization as a whole but also other units in the community learning centre. As long as the communities centres as a public blended digital online and distance LL learning facility in the country could see the need and initiate personal requirements for the well-being of the society then it will carry out the much needed social responsibility towards the Malaysian community.

RSC functions as guide in the community centres must followed the general guidelines provided by the ministry or local authority, appropriate practice procedures. Committed RSC as BLL digital learning guide will yield the success of the expertise, livelihood lifelong experience, youth and women will inculcate a successful learning process. Successful implementation of the RSC digital enhanced BLL sharing and learning application needs to be compelling to the targeted audience by offering the learner a resource that seems to be appealing, valuable and productive to their goals and aspirations (Henri, 2001). Therefore, the commitment from RSC who entrusted to in-charge must work extra hard to transform youth and women in the community into a knowledgeable society. RSC could play their roles by helping everybody in the community, including gaining more insightful views of current reality. This is also in-line with a popular emerging view of leaders as coaches, mentors, guides or facilitators. Therefore a strong and well-respected leadership with a clearly defined task would get the best result by fairly directive (Lucey, 1995).

RSC who not only need to be digital platform administer; guide and instructors also need to carry out the implementation stages in the youth and women blended collaborative learning system. They must fully utilize the digital technology to share their expertise to the youth and women in the community as well as offering innovative programs (Gunasekaran; McNeil and Shaul, 2002).

Therefore knowledge gained by youth and women empowers them to know more and learn faster with less cost and to harness the power of information and knowledge which can result in greater productivity and harmony in knowledge based society. Therefore a well-equipped RSC regional Web 2.0 Blended ODL LMS digital platform will suit best in delivering the most needed expertise; technical livelihood knowledge in transforming youth and women in community in human capital building for Malaysia.

Conclusion and Recommendations

An effective and well manage RSC BLL LMS in the regional collaborative lifelong learning community centre for youth and women need RSC full commitment. Speaking in the same vein, Buttner (2000) maintains that media supported distance learning are concentrated in setting-up interactive communication between the instructor and the learner. Moreover, it is regarded not as a substation of service with a new technique but as a completely new beginning using new media. Furthermore, the digital facilities in the community learning centre needs to be scrutinized to determine the maximum usage by the society with local governmental financial support from time to time in upgrading and maintaining.

Broadband facilities should be free and borne by the government. In fact there are disburse through the Ministry of telecommunication and multimedia through the telecommunication and Multimedia Corporation whereby corporate social responsibility is one of their priority and agenda for the benefit of the citizen of the country.

Youth and women in community who wish to upgrade themselves in the knowledge economy have to be given opportunities for them to be prepared prior to register to use the given facility under the tutelage of in the regional BLL community learning centres.

Generally the findings of this study show the significant in contributing to the upgrading of skills among youth and women in community with the RSC expertise; technical and livelihood knowledge from that are relevant and competitive. The implication is that the use of a BL platform through community centres connected via a common main frame server could be beneficial to youth and women in the community and lifelong learners who wish to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Such model can be used as framework of practice for life skills development (Ng, KT. et al. 2013) as advocated in SEAMEO of the South East Asian countries and African region of the sub Saharan and the South-South region of the developing and under-develop countries.

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