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SERVICE-LEARNING (SL):
A CASE STUDY OF CHALLENGES FACED BY LEARNERS AT A PRIVATE HIGHER
LEARNING

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DECLARATION

I declare that the material contained in this paper is the end result of my own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the bibliography and references to ALL sources be they printed, electronic or personal.

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APPROVAL FORM

This research paper attached here to, entitled Service-Learning (SL): A Case Study Of Challenges Faced By Learners At A Private Higher Learning prepared and submitted by Elaine Soo Jia Xuan, Lee Chia Suen, Leong Chai Yan, and Lin Fan Hui in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Communication (Hons) Public Relations is hereby accepted.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
SL	<i>Service-learning</i>
UTAR	<i>Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman</i>
ELT	<i>Experiential Learning Theory</i>
ESL	<i>E-service-learning</i>
SDG	<i>Sustainability Development Goals</i>

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STUDENT DECLARATION FORM
Department of Public Relations
Academic Honesty Regarding Final Year Projects

The following are examples of academic dishonesty extracted from “Student Handbook” that are more applicable to final year projects.

- plagiarism, i.e., the failure to properly acknowledge the use of another person’s work;
- submission for assessment of material that is not the student’s own work;
- collusion, i.e., obtaining assistance in doing work which is meant to be solely the student’s own work;
- use of fabricated data claimed to be obtained by experimental work, or data copied or obtained by unfair means;

It is important that the student reads the Student Handbook and understands the seriousness of academic dishonesty. The student should pay particular attention on how to avoid plagiarism.

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I have read the student handbook and I understand the meaning of academic dishonesty, in particular plagiarism and collusion. I declare that the work submitted for the final year project does not involve academic dishonesty. I give permission for my final year project work to be electronically scanned and if found to involve academic dishonesty, I am aware of the consequences as stated in the Student Handbook.

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ABSTRACT

This study is committed to filling in the gaps in our knowledge of the challenges that stand in the implementation of service-learning (SL) for students at private universities. By recognizing challenges that exist, the research intended to increase the quality of service-learning and improve student engagement and learning outcomes. The findings of the research contributed to the field of SL by providing valuable insights that can inform decision-making and drive positive change within the education system, ultimately improving the quality of SL and student learning outcomes at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). Hence, this research explored the concept of service-learning among Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) learners and identified the challenges they faced. The findings revealed three aspects of SL, including experiential learning, academic requirement, and community service while the students faced obstacles including time constraints, miscommunication, personal issues, lack of support, and competition throughout the SL implementation. The implications of the study call for increasing student, faculty, and administrative awareness of SL at UTAR, resolve the obstacles learners encounter when participating in SL activities, develop policies that promote and support SL in higher education institutions, and informing the development of service-learning theories and concepts. The study was limited by the inability to interview community members involved in service-learning programs and the exclusion of UTAR educators from the interview process.

KEYWORDS: service-learning, aspects of service-learning, experiential learning theory, service-learning challenges, qualitative research

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

The phrase “*service learning*” (SL) was first introduced by Robert Sigmon (1979) in the late 1960s to describe regional development activities in the United States (US). Robert Sigmon has described SL as a method of teaching and learning centered on mutual benefit. According to Sigmon, SL is achieved only when both parties contribute and receive the service equally. However, the emphasis in this area has shifted throughout the years toward producing a standardized, accepted definition and best practices for integrating service and education (Giles, Jr. & Eyler, 1994; Kendall, 1990).

Throughout the years, SL has been interpreted by various definitions. For example, based on Yob (2014), SL is a kind of experiential learning. It is defined as a type of learning that focuses more on the effectiveness and practicality among the students to improve the student's cognitive skills to create a more effective democratic society. Meanwhile, research from Al-Khasawneh & Hammad (2015) has claimed that this learning process can also enrich the learning environment and allow the students to have contact with the actual problems in the community in order to help in finding out their interest in their future career.

Based on Waldner et al. (2012), SL as an educational approach to incorporating community service into the educational course emerged in the 1970s. The field has established the activities through developing a set of criteria based on research, which has been used to educate practitioners and advocate for policies that support the expansion of SL.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is defined as the collaboration of at least two groups of people who are different in geographic proximity, special interests, or similar situations to affect their well-being (Heirali et al., 2021). According to the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (Generator School Network, 2013), SL is "a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities."

A successful community engagement activity can bring a positive impact on human society and be able to solve the real demand from real society. Since the 1980s, community engagement has started to apply by universities and colleges to the place where they have located (Chile & Black, 2015).

Since the higher education level is applying this community engagement into the teaching framework, community engagement is considered able to improve the performance of the students. Thus, the SL has been developed from the community engagement by the scholars because they found differences between these two teaching plans, and SL is better for the students. This is because SL is more focused on the student's knowledge and experience than on fulfilling the community's needs (Mamat et al., 2018).

Malaysia Higher Education System

Tertiary education is defined as the education that takes part at the colleges or universities level by the Cambridge dictionary. Besides, tertiary education in Malaysia also can be categorized into two parts which is the undergraduate and graduate program. As the data shown in the Scholaro Database, most undergraduate programs take up to three to four years,

and the graduate program usually takes up to one to two years to complete the whole program (Scholaro database, 2008).

According to the same source, we can find that in Malaysia, we have more than hundreds of institutions, including both public and private institutions. The difference between the universities and the colleges is the universities usually have a bigger portion of students compared to the colleges (Schlegel et al., 2022).

Development of Service-Learning in education system in Malaysia

According to the Department of Higher Education Malaysia (2019), Service Learning Malaysia - University for Society (or SULAM) makes deliberate attempts to engage students in organized, purposeful learning in relation to service experiences. The community service experience will serve as a platform for both academic and civic learning.

E-SULAM has been implemented as an online community interaction that liberates SL from location-based or geographical restrictions in assisting the community in resolving social and technological problems that contribute to the development of online communities. Accordingly, E-SULAM developed a crowdsourcing platform to improve a community's socioeconomic standing and online marketing course in which undergraduates developed marketing materials for a local community.

1.2 Problem statement

Service learning (SL) is a well-known approach in higher education that blends community service and academic study. It provides students with the opportunity to participate in

important, real-world activities that enrich their education while also encouraging social responsibility (Eyler & Giles, 1999). However, while service learning has grown in popularity as an educational technique, there is growing concern that students may not fully grasp the concept of service learning and may experience a variety of problems during the SL process.

It is apparent that SL allows students to apply ideas and concepts to real-world situations, and it is one of the most effective methods to prepare children for their future, even though research indicates that the real-life learning environment may cause anxiety (Maimoona Salam et al., 2019; Schoenherr, 2015). This atmosphere is crucial for professional preparation which allows students rehearse real-world problem-solving (Guo, 2016).

Prior research showed that various institutions in Malaysia have independent challenges based on SL. According to Eby (1998) and Yusof et al. (2020), the main problem identified by the students' experiences is the absence of a connection between what they have learned in the classroom and what must be applied in a practical setting. Based on the statements of the students in Yusof et al. (2020), it appears that they lack cognitive autonomy, particularly in the context of service-learning projects. The students express a heavy reliance on their lecturers for guidance, with some stating that they have no knowledge or experience to carry out the project independently. The students also display a lack of confidence in their decision-making and evaluative judgment abilities, constantly seeking guidance and modeling from their lecturers. Furthermore, from the study, some students expressed apprehension about taking independent decisions without consultation with their lecturers, which is contrary to the expected outcomes of service learning. It seems that the students

require clear and concise guidelines to carry out the project independently and may need additional training or experience in community work or volunteering.

Moreover, according to the finding by Janius et al. (2020); Ziegert and McGoldrick (2008), the lack of guidelines and resources is a significant challenge that may hinder the successful implementation of service learning projects in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Also, in the study conducted by Ziegert and McGoldrick (2008), researcher highlighted the perspectives of the instructors is the concern concern when carrying out service learning. Students and lecturers have emphasized the need for systematic guidelines and increased access to resources and references to ensure the effective implementation of these projects. The absence of such guidelines and resources may lead to confusion, inconsistent implementation, and reduced community interest. Therefore, it is crucial for the university to address this challenge by developing clear guidelines, providing access to resources and references, and encouraging lecturers to integrate service learning programs into the student curriculum. Such efforts can help promote a culture of service learning and community engagement in the university and beyond.

In the other study of Ashikin et al. (2021), Janius et al. (2020), and Malaysian Ministry of Education (2015), researchers identifies one of the challenges that students may face when starting the project is, a lack of funding or financial support. Without financial support, students may struggle to purchase the necessary equipment or supplies. The lack of funding may also limit the scope of the project, preventing students from realizing their full potential and impact on their communities. According from the study by Janius et al. (2020), the issue of budget is a significant challenge faced by students and groups conducting service learning projects in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. As mentioned by the respondents,

students are often part-time or full-time with limited financial resources, making it difficult to secure the necessary funds for their projects. Additionally, disagreements among group members regarding the allocation and use of the budget can cause further challenges. The approval process for the budget may also delay the project's implementation.

Bialka and Havlik (2016) found that SL helps relate classroom theory to real-world experience. In light of the numerous studies on the positive effects of SL, it is important to go beyond studying about developing SL strategies and assessing the quality of SL experiences that affect primarily learners, academics, faculty members, universities, and communities when such efforts are successful to improve higher education strategies on undergraduates' learning outcomes, assessment, curriculum design, and community development. Despite the positive impact of service-learning on student learning outcomes, learners in private higher education institutions face various challenges when participating in service-learning activities.

Thus, this research aim to investigate students' perspectives on the concept and the challenges can that will influence the student learning outcome, as it is believed that this will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the SL in Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). Moreover, the SL structure is abandoned as they think that it is time consuming while transitioning from traditional head-to-head SL to virtual platforms might be difficult and frightening for many educators who view online education as an obstacle (Waldner, 2012; Waldner et al., 2022). Thus, the university did not put an emphasis on SL, in which, these difficulties need the current investigation to fill the research vacuum. The findings will provide valuable insights that can inform decision-making and encourage positive change within the education system, ultimately enhancing the quality of SL and student learning outcomes at UTAR. While various definitions of service learning exist, the research adopts the definition proposed by Bringle and Hatcher (1995) as it has been cited frequently in other

research and scholarly works, indicating that it has had a significant impact on the way that service learning is understood and practised.

1.3 Research Objectives and Research Questions

Research Objectives

- To explore the concept of service-learning among Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) learners
- To identify the challenges faced by learners in service-learning

Research Questions

- What is service-learning in UTAR?
- What are the challenges faced by learners in service-learning?

1.4 Research Significance

This study is essential in that it provides an extensive understanding of the concepts and issues that students in private higher education institutions face when participating in service-learning (SL) activities. There is evidence that service-learning, which combines classroom learning with service initiatives, improves students' academic achievement. Despite the benefits, students at private institutions of higher learning may face challenges when

engaging in SL. This work contributes significantly to the field of SL by improving awareness of the challenges of SL in academic settings by focusing on Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). This research has far-reaching practical implications, as we explore strategies to improve the quality of SL and student involvement, thereby enhancing learning outcomes. Our findings can help guide policy and promote positive change in the education system, resulting in better SL implementation and student participation. As a result, the administrator at UTAR can use these insights to improve education and learning outcomes for both students and lecturers, hence improving the quality and efficacy of SL activities. This study is crucial in addressing a critical gap in understanding the problems of SL activities, and the findings will influence decision-making and support positive change, hence improving the quality of SL and student learning outcomes at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.

1.5 Thesis outline

This research journal included five chapters in total. Chapter 1 is the introduction, which consists of a few elements: the problem statement, research question, research objective, and the research significance. The problem statement has stated the research gap of the SL and the reason why the researchers should make improvements in these gaps. Through this research, the existing curriculum will be improvised on understanding SL for UTAR students, educators, and UTAR itself.

Chapter 2 will discuss what is required for the topic of study. This chapter will include the literature that helps provide a conceptual framework and foundation of topic

studies. The main topic covered in this chapter is the method of literature search, SL, UTAR, and the theoretical framework.

Comprehensive details on the study's design and methodology may be covered in Chapter 3. This section will provide an in-depth explanation of the research's methodology, including its research design, methods, and instruments for collecting and analyzing the data. Ethical considerations will also be reviewed to increase the credit from the respondent to the research. At the same time, the researcher will use rigour to prove the validity and reliability of the data. Lastly, the interview protocol framework will be demonstrated as the last main topic in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 would present the results of the data analysis that was conducted in this study. It would start with an introduction that explains the purpose of the chapter and the research questions that were being addressed. The chapter would be divided into three sections that correspond to the three objectives of the study which is to explore the concept of service-learning among Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) learners and also to identify the challenges faced by learners in service-learning. It would include an overview of the themes and patterns that emerged from the data, along with relevant transcript collected from focus group interview.

In the last chapter, a conclusion to the thesis will be summarized with the main findings and comparing the findings with existing literature on service-learning to see how they align or differ. The chapter would be divided into few sections, such as research overview, implication, limitation, recommendation and conclusion. This section also provides suggestions for future research that could be applied to improve service-learning experiences for learners in higher education.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

An academic literature review is a contextualized research paper that shows knowledge and understanding of the relevant academic literature. It involves evaluating the information critically. It is both a method for reviewing the relevant material and a form of writing (Institute For Academic Development, 2022). A literature review is a written argument that presents arguments from previous research to support a thesis position. Provides a contextual and historical overview of current knowledge on the topic, as well as a logical argument to support its conclusions.

The purpose of a literature review is to organize and conduct systematic research on a certain subject. In this chapter, the researcher will review the overview and development of service-learning (SL), in the Malaysia context, SL and SL in UTAR, and SL practice among UTAR's students. This chapter also explores the theoretical framework of this study which is ELT.

2.1 Methods of Literature Search

In the literature review, researchers have summarized recent studies on SL, UTAR, and ELT. Researchers have consulted a variety of sources, including journals, websites, SDG reports, e-books, press releases, and online newsletters.

The online research relied on the library search engines of UTAR and google scholar. Researchers separately researched keyword combinations to enhance output. The search was restricted to English-language materials only, according to figure 1.0 below

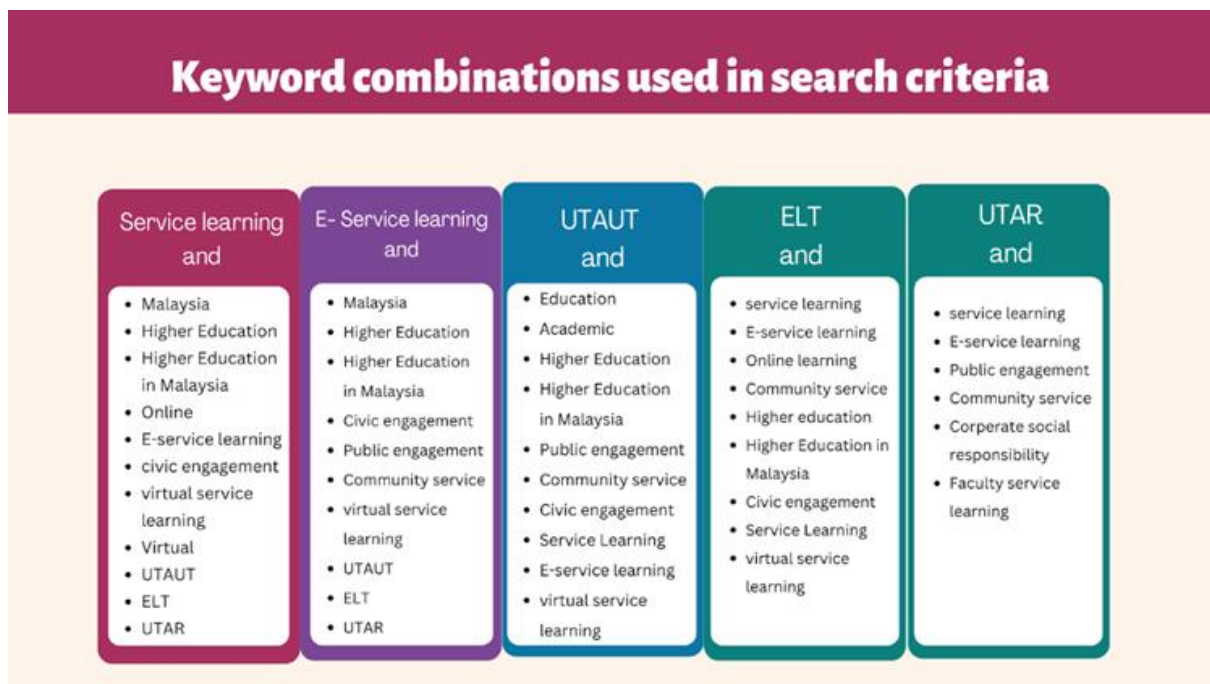


Figure 1.0: Keyword combinations used in search criteria

The researchers applied a cross-searching method, searching for service-learning-related keywords such as in online learning journals, and other related phrases listed above in SL journals. The sources used for the study are mostly from the year 2017 to 2022. This is because online and ESL are considered faster-paced fields. In short, researchers picked the main materials, which the focused journal search provided, and analysed them thoroughly in order to write the literature review.

2.2 Service learning

2.2.1 Overview of Service Learning (SL)

By looking in-depth at SL, the community service concept will typically come to mind as well. However, some scholars have argued that there is a significant difference between both practices, although the outcomes may occasionally be equivalent while some individuals use the phrase interchangeably (Skinner & Chapman, 1999). As stated by Youniss & Yates (1997), community service refers to the act of students volunteering and devoting their time and effort to enhance the lives of their communities. Skinner & Chapman's (1999) definition of community service is also in relation to the definition, which claims that it can be a volunteer or mandatory work in the community that is not required by a school's curriculum and does not have clear educational goals.

Meanwhile, as believed by various researchers, SL is a more in-depth kind of practice that integrates community service and learning through assessing academic needs in the community practically. It is designed to focus on the SL requirements and the educational objectives while the learners also require to evaluate themselves and reflective thinking before, during, and after the experiential learning activity (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995; Jones et al., 2001; Seifer, 1998).

A study by Furco & Billig (2002) also acknowledged that SL has a course-based relationship where it will develop well-defined educational goals in order to assist students in generating input as well as the theoretical framework and the time for evaluation. Mamat et al. (2018) also mentioned that the SL focuses more on the experience and learning gained by the service provider than the requirement of the community.

Thus, it can be summarized that SL is able to promote assessment and students' reflective thinking toward their educational experiences in the actual world, especially through implementing what they have studied conceptually. Research from Al-Khasawneh & Hammad (2015) has also claimed that this type of learning process is also able to enrich the learning environment and allow the students to have contact with the actual problems in the community in order to help in finding out their interest in their future career.

By investigating SL in the context of Malaysia, SL has been specified as one of the priority strategies in The Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (as shown as Appendix B). As quoted by the former Minister of Education (MOE) (as shown as Appendix c), YB Dr. Maszlee Bin Malik declared that the educational framework, course, and future of MOE should take into account the demands and problems of the community while education is the foundation of a university for social change. Likewise, according to the Malaysian Ministry of Education (2015), they define SL as an experiential learning process that requires students to put the knowledge they have gained in class to fulfill the demand of the communities class in a real-world context through a cycle of action and reflection.

2.2.2 History of Service Learning (SL)

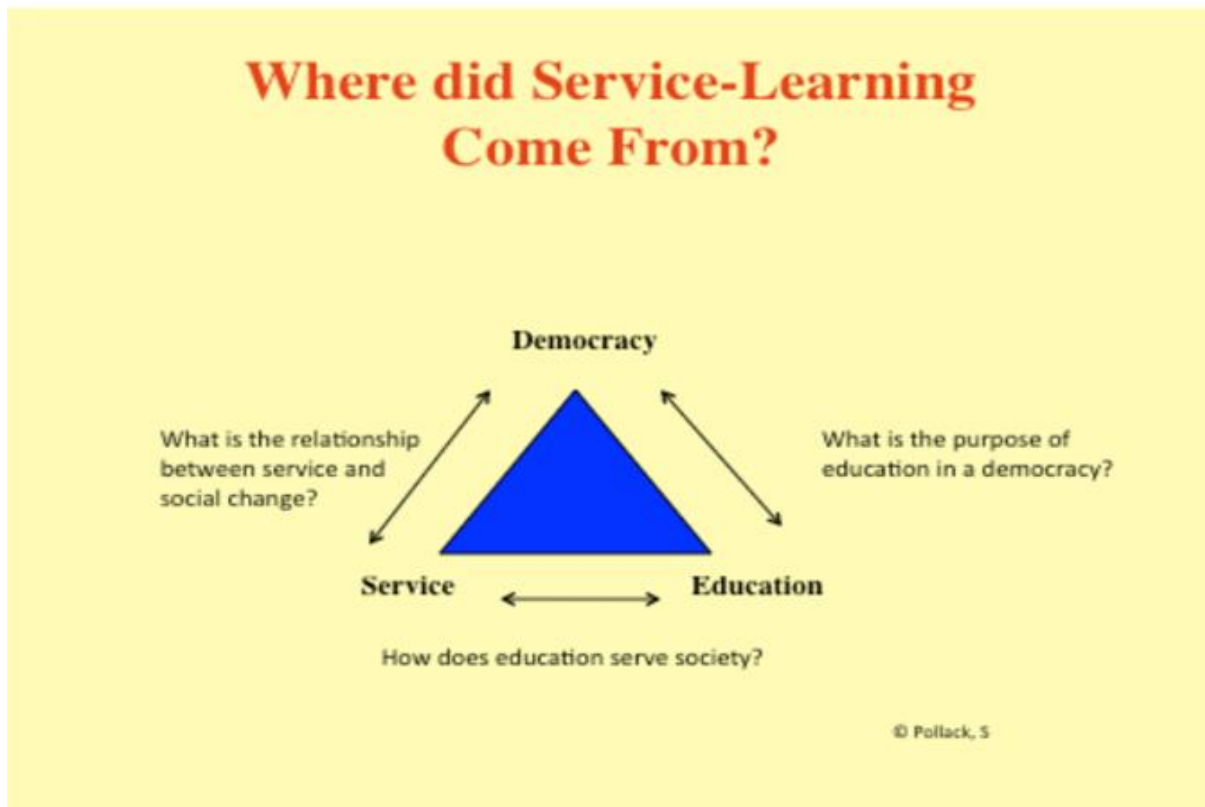


Figure 2.0: Where did SL Come From?

Sources: Pollack (1999)

According to the study by (Berea College, 2017; Janice, 2009; Steven, 2009; Barnes, 2016; Yorio & Ye, 2012), researchers have concluded that there are few elements when we study the topic of SL. The first element in SL is the collaboration between the students and the communities. This is because the SL should be a mutual benefit to the students and the communities in terms of experiences and knowledge gained. For the communities, the true demand has been fulfilled by the service provider. Also, with educational field-based

experiences, SL courses have the ability to go beyond traditional student teaching. (Barnes, 2016).

The second element should be the application of the knowledge learned and critical thinking skills when practicing SL activities. Although SL places a greater emphasis on the student's actual experiences and learning, academic knowledge is still very necessary. The appropriate use of academic knowledge also can help in linking what the students learn from school to what they are practicing during the SL process.

The third element stated in the resources for SL is the deeper understanding of the course material and social involvement as a result of reflection and evaluation. The reflection will be affected by the first two elements together. Students will be able to develop and comprehend academic information better as a result of their insightful reflection while engaging in SL activities. The deeper the understanding, the better they will understand the civil issue and their career goal when practicing SL. In SL, reflection is frequently seen as the link between theory and practice, assisting students in connecting their classroom learning to their experiences in the field and fostering deeper, more sophisticated understandings of both academic subjects and social issues (Ash & Clayton, 2004; Barnes & Smagorinsky, 2016; Brookfield, 1996; Mitchell, 2008).

In short, the incorporation of SL into teacher education courses with the chance to debate various, sometimes at odds, educational and instructional philosophies (Barnes, 2016; Hallman & Burdick, 2011; Mitchell, 2008). In this study, researchers explored SL because it can enhance online learning and provide students with realistic workplace experiences.

2.2.2 Fundamental Elements of Service-Learning (SL)

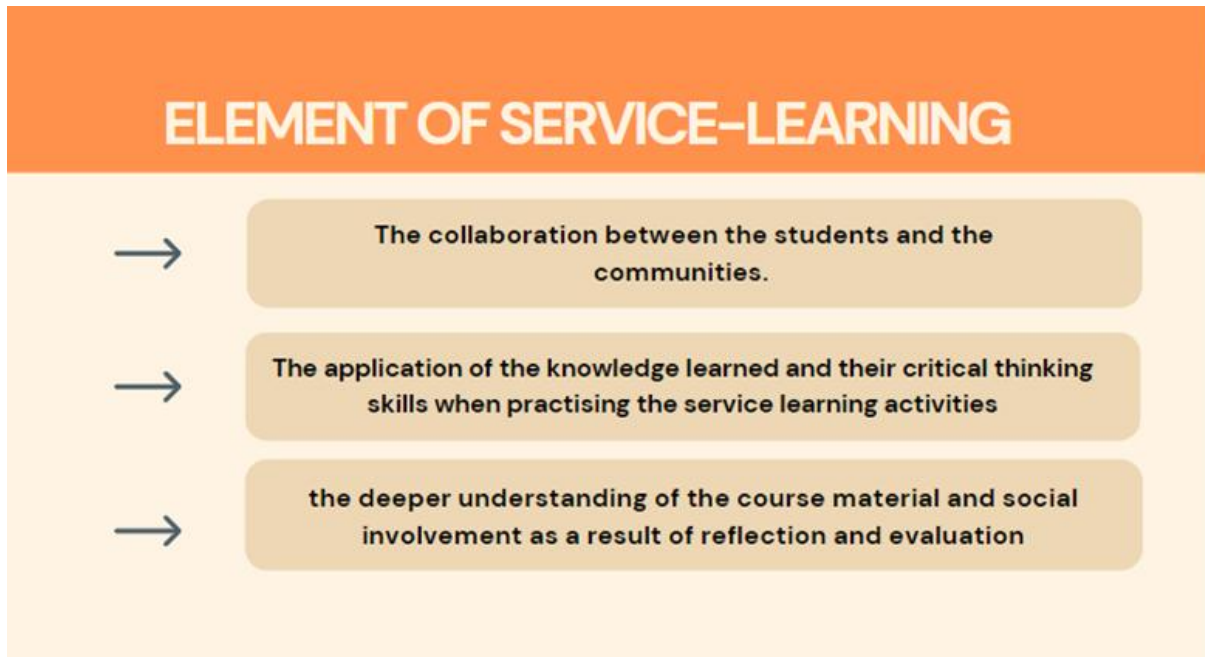


Figure 2.1: Element of SL

According to the study by (Berea College, 2017; Janice, 2009; Steven, 2009; Barnes, 2016; Yorio & Ye, 2012), researchers have concluded that there are few elements when we study the topic of SL. The first element in SL is the collaboration between the students and the communities. This is because the SL should be a mutual benefit to the students and the communities in terms of experiences and knowledge gained. For the communities, the true demand has been fulfilled by the service provider. Also, with educational field-based experiences, SL courses have the ability to go beyond traditional student teaching. (Barnes, 2016).

The second element should be the application of the knowledge learned and critical thinking skills when practicing SL activities. Although SL places a greater emphasis on the student's actual experiences and learning, academic knowledge is still very necessary. The

appropriate use of academic knowledge also can help in linking what the students learn from school to what they are practicing during the SL process.

The third element stated in the resources for SL is the deeper understanding of the course material and social involvement as a result of reflection and evaluation. The reflection will be affected by the first two elements together. Students will be able to develop and comprehend academic information better as a result of their insightful reflection while engaging in SL activities. The deeper the understanding, the better they will understand the civil issue and their career goal when practicing SL. In SL, reflection is frequently seen as the link between theory and practice, assisting students in connecting their classroom learning to their experiences in the field and fostering deeper, more sophisticated understandings of both academic subjects and social issues (Ash & Clayton, 2004; Barnes & Smagorinsky, 2016; Brookfield, 1996; Mitchell, 2008).

In short, the incorporation of SL into teacher education courses with the chance to debate various, sometimes at odds, educational and instructional philosophies (Barnes, 2016; Hallman & Burdick, 2011; Mitchell, 2008). In this study, researchers explored SL because it can enhance online learning and provide students with realistic workplace experiences.

To develop interview questions for this study, the researcher will need to consider the key elements of SL highlighted in the literature review. The first element is collaboration between students and communities. Questions could be designed to explore the nature of this collaboration, such as asking community partners about their experiences working with students and the benefits they have seen from SL partnerships. Students could also be asked about their experiences collaborating with community partners and how they feel this has enhanced their learning.

The second element is the application of knowledge and critical thinking skills in SL activities. Questions could be designed to explore how students are integrating academic knowledge with their practical experiences in SL. For example, students could be asked to reflect on how their coursework has prepared them for SL activities and how they are applying this knowledge in their work with community partners.

The third element is reflection and evaluation. Questions could be designed to explore how students are reflecting on their SL experiences and what they are learning from these experiences. Students could be asked about their reflection processes, such as how they are documenting their experiences and what they are learning from these reflections. They could also be asked about the impact that SL is having on their understanding of course material and social issues.

In terms of the conceptual framework, the key aspects or components of the study could include:

- the nature of collaboration between students and community partners in SL;
- the application of knowledge and critical thinking skills in SL activities;
- the role of reflection in enhancing learning and understanding of course material and social issues;
- the potential for SL to enhance learning process and provide students with realistic workplace experiences.

These components could be used to guide the development of interview questions and to frame the analysis of data collected from interviews and other sources.

2.2.3 Outcomes of Service-Learning (SL)

2.2.3.1 Positive outcome

SL entails course assignments that allow students to apply classroom-learned information and abilities to initiatives that benefit the community. In addition, some research has shown favourable effects on academics (Astin & Sax, 1998), the ability to utilize the material in practical situations (Richard, 1996), and the enhancement of critique as well as other academic skills (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Richard, 1996).

SL has brought many changes to society and has begun to improve the quality of the students by applying this learning process. Students who are taking part in the SL have successfully improved their understanding of theoretical learning by applying their knowledge to the actual society to solve the problems encountered (Stetten et al., 2019).

1. Improving Soft Skills

Soft skills are behavioural and interpersonal abilities that relate to the effectiveness with which an individual interacts with others and manages various situations. The high unemployment rate among university graduates has been ascribed to their lack of soft skills (Maharam et al., 2019).

Throughout the SL process, students' soft skills can be effectively improved. According to the study by Astin & Sax (1998), SL can increase personal effectiveness and leadership. Also, the study by Maharam et al. (2019) stated that many students had acknowledged that the development of their personality, behaviour, sense of self, worth, belief, and drive in the SL had many good effects on their lives.

Research from Nabors et al. (2018) has declared that high school students who participated in the SL program were interested in continuing similar programs in the future as a result of its success in developing their leadership and problem-solving abilities. As a consequence, students' soft skills can be enhanced through the SL program.

2. Develop Real-World Experience

Except for soft skills development, SL also can let the students know more facts about the real world. They will be able to have the actual experience and be able to provide them with real-world evidence for what they have done before for human society in the future when they are working (Al-Khasawneh & Hammad, 2015).

According to Wolff and Tinney (2006), students will be able to gain practical experience related to the academic courses that they are studying. A sense of purpose will begin to emerge inside them, which will help them to develop better awareness and enable them to show empathy and respect for others in order to earn others' respect in society.

In addition, higher educational institutions have started to notice a stronger connection between what they teach to the students and what exists in real-world applications. SL has been viewed as a successful dropout prevention method by a number of universities all around the world. It positively expands the interaction between colleges and the surrounding community (Levkoe et al., 2018).

3. Enhance Community Relationships

The SL initiatives help strengthen communal bonds (Driscoll et al., 1996; Waldner et al., 2012). SL involves service that forms community ties and fosters healthy relationships, meets certain needs of the community, and ideally benefits both community members and learners

(Gray et al., 1998; Weiler et al., 2013). Research made by Ammon et al. (2002) has shown that there is a connection between strong community partnerships and long-term program viability.

Furthermore, in terms of community, the benefits are abundant. The students can share their enthusiasm and creativity across the community by solving public problems. The majority of those who have participated in SL were successful in establishing a positive relationship with the community. Thanks to this new generation of conscientious and seasoned citizens, citizens will become tomorrow's civic leaders (Rinaldo et al., 2019; Murshidi, 2020).

2.2.3.2 Negative outcome

SL is a learning process that can have a huge impact on the learner and is able to change their characteristics critically, but there are still limitations that will stop the process of SL.

1. Limitations Which Affect Experience

One of the limitations is that students are not familiar with the concept of SL, and even the community today is still very confused about what SL actually means (Al-Khasawneh & Hammad, 2015). Thus, they will lose their direction while processing the SL and causing the incompleteness of the job.

Another limitation that was found in the past study by Webb (2017) also stated that one of the possible limitations while doing the SL is the safety issue. This is because SL is usually done outside the campus area, and most of them will involve the communities, so the

university will not be able to ensure the safety of all students. Therefore, a survey of SL locations needs to be conducted by the university before any activity can take place.

The difference in the capability of students also is one of the limitations. One research from Dienhart et al. (2016) has mentioned that when students are carrying out SL activities, some of them feel controlled so much, and extreme stress leads to their future intention to take part in SL as a volunteer has become weaker.

2. Potential To Harm Communities

SL has a number of constraints imposed by its very nature. Students must adhere to timetables determined by the university's academic calendar, sports activities, academics, transit availability, and their numerous personal obligations (Eby, 1998). Safety and liability factors affect their capabilities. When incorporating SL into a course, activities must align with course goals. Many students have limited exposure to the topics involved in their volunteer activity and limited experience engaging with persons who are different from themselves. Many of them are professionals in their fields of study but not in community service or intercultural relations.

SL has the potential to harm individuals psychologically, especially the youngsters with whom students work. Because students are transient, relationships are transient (Eby, 1998). It may be a casual relationship for a student, but it may be very remarkable to a kid or young adult in the program. Breaking the bond at the end of an SL project can be stressful and exacerbate the disintegration already characteristic of disadvantaged communities. Students may express ethnocentrism and racism in negative ways.

3. Teaches False Understanding Of Response To Need

According to Aronoff and McKnight (1996), help is frequently presented as a reflection of an individual's definition of need. A third party whose service satisfies the need is the answer to the problem. This magnifies the importance of the individual serving, diminishes the value of the person who receives service, and disregards community sources such as friends, relatives, and civic leaders (Eby, 1998). This disregards the economic, political, and social variables responsible for driving demand.

This notion of responsiveness allows service to be personalised to the skills, timelines, preferences, and educational objectives of SL students instead of actual service needs. The definition of needs is based on what students have to provide. Frequently, community resources are disregarded, SL perpetuates the notion that people in need lack the resources to tackle their own issues. It conveys to communities that they, too, are defective and that the solutions to their problems must come from elsewhere. Typically, SL programmes are geared more on the students' needs than those of communities. (Eby, 1998). SL is frequently ameliorative rather than aimed at altering social systems. It applies band-aids to issues with deep roots and provides students with an insufficient notion of service.

2.2.4 Theoretical Framework In Service-Learning (SL)

The theory of SL is developed well based on the early twentieth researchers who study human learning and development theories and the four philosophers such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, David A. Kolb, and Ernest Boyer, by applying it in the education field (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Furco, A, 1996).

In keeping with Seifer (1998), the purpose of SL is to fulfill the demands and address the challenges of the community. Dewey (1933, 1986) stated that education can come from more than just classroom learning, which includes SL activities. Dewey provided principles according to what kinds of experiences could serve as learning opportunities, and the researcher believed that learning experiences should be engaging, purposeful, relevant, and long-lasting so that participants could work through and internalize the material. Likewise, Kolb's (1984) development of the idea of *experiential learning theory* also built on Dewey's by placing greater focus on the learner-environment relationship and the iterative nature of the learning process. As a form of experiential learning, SL projects have found their way into a growing number of university-level curriculums (Giles & Eyler, 1994).

2.2.5 Development of Service-Learning (SL)

2.2.5.1 Western countries

To illustrate the report from Corporation for National and Community Service (2008), the National and Community Service Act of 1990 established Serve America, currently known as Learn and Serve America, formed in order to educate and promote SL in Kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12), higher education, and nonprofit organizations across the United States (US). In addition, SL was officially recognized as a strategy for achieving the goals of government educational funding in the 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Based on the report, only 15% of secondary schools had community service activities integrated into the curriculum in 1979, but after two years of implementation, 32% of all K-12 public schools and 46% of all secondary schools engaged in SL. In recent studies, SL has also been widely embraced in western countries such as Brazil,

Spain, South Africa, and the UK (Gakh, 2017; Leal Filho et al., 2018). As a result, the evolution of SL in developed countries is in positive growth.

2.2.5.2 Asian country

Despite the fact that SL chiefly origin from western countries, it is still frequently implemented as a pedagogy in Asia's community and education fields, particularly following the academic conference "Service-Learning in Asia: Creating networks and curriculum in higher education" was conducted at the International Christian University in Japan in 2002, resulting in a link between several Asian Higher Education institutions. The concept of SL has matured to some extent in Asia and has the potential to play a significant role in higher education institutions in guiding and involving youngsters to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to make socially sensible choices at every stage of their development as future leaders of society (Xing & Ma, 2010).

The study by Chan et al. (2009) declared that a growing number of students at Asia's top universities and colleges had prompted the establishment of SL centers or courses throughout the year. For instance, Lingnan University was the pioneer in establishing a campus-wide Office of Service-Learning (OSL) by aligning with its motto, "Education for Service," which is reflected in OSL's commitment to a student-centered, holistic approach to education. From 2006-2009, more than a thousand Lingnan students from fields as diverse as the social sciences, business, and arts took part in one of Lingnan's three central SL programs: the Lingnan Community Care Program (LCCP), Lingnan Service-Learning Evaluation Program (LSLEP) or the Lingnan Healthcare Program (LHCP).

To give yet another illustration by Kam Ming et al. (2003) the Youth Expedition Project, organized by the Singapore International Foundation, sent nearly 12,000 students on SL missions around India, Southeast Asia and China for a five-year period (2000-2005). Meanwhile, the community-based instruction program of Hong Kong Baptist University has collaborated with over a hundred local services organizations to carry out over a thousand SL initiatives in Hong Kong and beyond (Powers, 2010). Additionally, 86 out of 146 higher education institutions in Taiwan have made SL an integrated aspect of their curriculum (Yen & Yang, 2010). As a consequence, it is inevitable that SL in Asia has matured, and its place in the Asian academic establishment is now secured.

2.2.5.3 Malaysia

Malaysia is a country in Southeast Asia that also embraces SL by looking in the study from Mamat et al. (2019) the implementation of SL in public universities such as , Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

By investigating SL in the context of Malaysia, although the application is still in the infancy stage, Malaysia has started to implement this type of learning method into higher education since 1977 and applied it to the undergraduate program (Mamat et al., 2019). According to Ahmat & Abdullah (1979), the University of Science, Malaysia (USM) began implementing SL in 1977 with a program entitled "Rancangan-Perkhidmatan Bersama Desa" (Learning-Service Plan with the Rural Community) while since the 1980s, the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in Kelantan have conducted the project named Community and Family Case-Study Programme (Rogayah & Hashim, 1990). Also, throughout the year, the Universiti Malaysia Kelantan and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia have developed a

community SL program while, and in 2009, the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) also introduced community service programs (Amran & Ishak, 2017; Salleh et al., 2018); Yu & Zakaria, 2012).

Likewise, the ministry of higher education also has its own definition for the SL. According to the Malaysian Ministry of Education (2015), they define SL as an experiential learning process that equires learners to acquire what they have actually learned to fulfill the demand of the communities class in a real-world context by taking diverse actions. Throughout the years, the Minister of Education of Malaysia officially launched Service Learning Malaysia (SULAM) in 2019 with the concept of "University for Society" by sustaining the community's rural livelihoods in parallel with the university and other organizations. The SULAM secretariat was founded by Malaysia's Department of Higher Education and public universities, which led to a growth of SL activities throughout the country (Amran & Che Daud, 2022).

Since the emergence of Covid-19 and the proliferation of open learning courses in Malaysia, most institutions have offered and actively developed various forms of online learning (Kamal et al., 2020; Salleh et al., 2020; Razami & Ibrahim, 2021). Based on the study from Yusuf (2020), the findings were uncovered by claiming that online platforms continue to struggle with a low achievement rate since students rarely engage in real communication with one another while learning. As a result, local universities' educators have been using online platforms for hybrid and integrated teaching with smaller class sizes to increase student engagement (Kalsom Masrom et al., 2019; Low et al., 2021; Sharif et al., 2021).

E-sulam's components include the Instructional component, the Service component, or both, which are done online. The partners for online community service initiatives may be local, national, or even international. Depending on the intended learning results of the SULAM course, the course may be offered entirely online or partially on-site and partially online. Structured reflection and conversation using asynchronous online blogs or text conversations and synchronous audio or video conferencing. Community members can be reached through the Internet or in-person (Department of Higher Education Malaysia, 2019).

Through analyzing the practices of ESL in various countries, the similarity that we can obtain is that ESL brings a positive outcome to educators, learners, and the community.

In short, according to research from western countries, Asia countries, and Malaysia, researchers conclude that students who participated in SL experience are able to achieve course learning outcomes it is relevant to the course they are currently enrolled in and able to help them in meeting course goals.

2.3 UTAR (Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman)

UTAR is widely recognized as one of the nation's most rapidly expanding private universities, seeing unprecedented expansion in every area of operation since its establishment. With campuses in Kampar, Perak, and Bandar Sungai Long, Selangor, the university's total enrollment has grown from 411 students in its first year of operation on 13 August 2002 to more than 21,000 students now.

For nearly 20 years, UTAR has always centered on its belief in improving the standard of living of the community and fostering a sense of well-being by implementing various projects such as volunteer programs, awareness campaigns, and financial aid

(Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, 2021). By investigating the institution's philosophy, the expansion over time has defined strategic directions necessary to take UTAR to an unprecedented level by engaging educators and learners in community service with the goal of generating shared value for the business to achieve greater and longer-term results. In becoming a truly global university with a profound societal influence in the pursuit of excellent education (Introduction - Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, n.d.). In this study, UTAR has been selected as the subject due to the fact that UTAR is the one and only non-profit institution of higher learning private university in Malaysia.

UTAR has received a myriad of achievements, particularly in corporate social responsibility (CSR), for example, the CSR Excellence Award for Corporate Social Responsibility at the Sin Chew Business Excellence Award (SCBEA) 2017/2018. In recent years, UTAR has also ranked to be the World's Most Sustainable University in UI GreenMetric World University Rankings in 2019 and 2021 respectively. In a similar vein, UTAR introduced the UTAR Community and Voluntary Engagement Programme (UTAR CARE Programme) on 12 January 2021. There are nine faculty, three institutes, six programs, and four centers for studies in UTAR. As a matter of fact, there are several courses among UTAR's faculty or programs offered that require students to conduct community service.

2.3.2 UTAR Perspective on Service-Learning (SL)

2.3.2.1 UTAR Past Community Service

UTAR is a non-profit institution that embodies the idea of an institution created by and for the public. UTAR is devoted to delivering inexpensive, high-quality education to

individuals of all ethnicities, beliefs, and nations. All across the years, the following social service programs have been done on a global and national scale, which include:

(1) Scholarship for Students from ASEAN Countries Sharing Sessions:

UTAR offers scholarships to meritorious students from ASEAN nations in order to meet their financial and education needs. The scholarship provides undergraduate and postgraduate fees in Malaysia for the duration of the grant. In Cambodia, Indonesia, and Myanmar, information was disseminated through seminars, graduation, trips, and educational expos.

(2) Future Collaboration for Underprivileged Women Group:

Discussion regarding the provision of academic options for talented young African girls and women from underprivileged communities.

(3) Malaysia Mental Literacy Movement (MMLM) Workshops:

Through MMLM, UTAR organizes workshops, conferences, debates, and contests to promote the development of mental literacy such as memory skills, critical thinking, and creativity, among Malaysians. MMLM implements Mental Literacy projects in rural and destitute areas administered by the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA), as well as in underprivileged/disadvantaged communities.

(4) STEM Talks and Workshops:

Instruct the youngsters on the significance of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and its effects on a person's experience, on community, and on national growth. These activities were held at secondary schools in Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Perak, Penang, Putrajaya, Selangor, Sarawak, and Sabah.

(5) UTAR New Village Community Project

Since 2009, UTAR has implemented the UTAR New Village Community Project. In addition to formal education in a campus setting, the University seeks to build community spirit among its students by engaging them in volunteer community service. Students who engage in voluntary work gain a deeper understanding of the communities in which they live and acquire experiences that make them more modest and empathetic.

The Department of Soft Skills Competence (DSSC) implemented the "WE CARE, WE ACT" New Village Community Service program to provide students with opportunities to communicate, collaborate, and interact with different innovative village communities from outside cities in an effort to bring about positive social change. In these villages, students collaborate with students from different educational institutions to do research. UTAR collaborated with students and faculty from Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris in Tanjung Malim to teach locals about trash disposal and with students from the National University of Singapore to assess the community's requirements and assets in these new communities. This New Village Project has motivated institutions both locally and internationally to join in collaborative endeavours.

Among the events are health campaigns, English and IT lessons, waste recycling campaigns and programs, campus security efforts, university inspirational camps, and school/village beautifying initiatives. Students are afforded the chance to develop their leadership and communication abilities, as well as their inventiveness and resourcefulness in problem-solving while serving as integral members of the community. DSSC collaborates with the many faculties and student organizations to rigorously organize all of the program's activities that will benefit the new village communities (*Department of Soft Skills Competency*, n.d.).

UTAR started its community service before the Movement Control Order (MCO), which requires everyone to communicate virtually. By investigating UTAR's efforts in community service, particularly the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS), they have conducted more than 40 projects since 2017 by organizing events such as talks, workshops, and projects (*Centre for Foundation Studies: Kampar Campus - UTAR*, n.d.). Moreover, students who are majoring in Bachelor of Public Relations are also embarking on the UAMP course, Corporate social responsibility, by conducting the CSR projects, which started in 2019 and has become a significant annual event for UTAR.

The Department of Management and Accountancy of the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS) Kampar organized two programs with a concern for the community: the "It's Book O'clock" reading project and a visit to the Kampar elderly folks' home. On July 8, 2017, at Sekolah Kebangsaan Kampar, 27 standard one children participated in a reading project designed to instill reading habits in primary school students and to encourage the active participation of UTAR students in extracurricular activities for more holistic development. Fourteen professors and seven students from UTAR were there to facilitate the event. The

project began with a reading and comprehension assignment in which students read a variety of stories and then answered comprehension questions. In a listening game, participants were also expected to identify words from the provided newspapers, putting their listening skills to the test. The final activity, which was designed to assist the children extend their vocabulary, required them to cut from the provided newspaper words beginning with an alphabet announced by the facilitator.

On July 17, 2021, the UTAR Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS) of Kampar Campus hosted a online conderece titled "Selecting the Right Technological Tools for Effective e-Learning" via Zoom. The objective was to facilitate learners, lecturers, and parents to participate more successfully in the e-learning environment by enhancing their understanding of technology. The webinar was participated by 308 people, including students, UTAR staff, and members of the general public. On November 11, 2018, the UTAR Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS) of Kampar Campus organized a day where students spent the afternoon playing games with children from Pertubuhan Pengurusan Pusat Jagaan 1 Malaysia. Moreover, CFS organized a series of talks such as -Adolescent Sexual Relations - Threats & Risks and Hollywood Science Geeks to educate the younger generation. There are nearly 350 participants in SMK Seri Keledang, Menglembu, and Perak.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns over the past two years have had a significant impact on economic activity, resulting in the closure of several firms and the loss of employment for their staff. As part of the Kampar community, six academics from the UTAR Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS) of Kampar Campus developed "The Hope Project." The project was performed under the direction of Suraiza Samsudin by collecting cash from UTAR employees. The funds were then utilized to purchase food and essentials for

those in need in the Kampar region. The group was able to raise a total of RM1,890. The collecting period began on August 11, 2021, and ended on August 31, 2021.

Despite of Kampar campus, an online campaign called "Voices with Hope" was held on March 27, 2021, by 43 students majoring in Bachelor of Corporate Communication (Honours) (CC) by executing a sustainability campaign using Facebook Live, to raise awareness about sexual violence and eliminate common misconceptions among Malaysian women for fulfilling their UJMC3034 Event Planning and Management II course. The campaign was also held by the UTAR Student Representative Council in conjunction with the Perak Women for Women (PWW).

Likewise, the Department of Soft Skills Competency (DSSC) of Sungai Long used Google Meet to host a virtual motivational campaign on November 13, 2021, as part of the "We Care We Act" program. The primary goal of the virtual campaign was to educate and inform first- and elementary students at SJKC Chung Hua Mantin and SJKC Kuo Min Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, about the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 6: Access to Clean Water and Basic Sanitation for all. The primary objective of the online campaign was to also grant individuals an opportunity to voice their opinions and get involved in water conservation and proper sanitation.

2.3.2.2 UTAR established service-learning project

I Culture Kampar, UTAR New Village community program is one of the established community projects in Universities Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) organized by DSSC. In essence, I-Culture Berhad is a business model that attempts to capitalize on the attraction of

historic districts by showcasing their unique traditions in the hopes of stimulating tourism and fostering growth in the area's economy was founded by Dr. Wong Wun Bin, who is also a Deputy Dean of Institute of Chinese Studies and his partner in August of 2019. This business was formed due to the fact that they noticed that Kampar Old Town gradually lost its popularity among the younger generation.

Hence, with the objective of developing commercial opportunities for those who are interested in history and culture, as well as increasing employment prospects for people who share this passion, I-Culture has been formed by serving Kampar old town as a base of operations due to the fact that it is a town with a lot of potential for redevelopment.

2.3.3 John Dewey's Philosophy of Education

2.3.3.1 John Dewey

John Dewey was born in Burlington, Vermont on October 20, 1859. He graduated from the University of Vermont in 1879 with his bachelor's degree. He worked as a high school teacher in Oil City, Pennsylvania, and at an elementary school in the small town of Charlotte, Vermont. Dewey received his Ph.D. from the School of Arts & Sciences at Johns Hopkins University after he studied under George Sylvester Morris, Charles Sanders Peirce, Herbert Baxter Adams, and G. Stanley Hall (Talebi, 2015).

According to Ilica (2016), his research career begins with the volume "Psychology" (1887), followed by other volumes: "Applied psychology. An introduction into the Principles and Practice of Education." (1889), "My pedagogic creed" (1897), "School and Society" (1900), "School and the child" (1906), "Moral Principles in Education" (1909), "The School of tomorrow" (1915), "Democracy and education. An Introduction into the Philosophy of

Education” (1916). He is a key proponent of universal pedagogy and is regarded as one of the most influential educational thinkers.

2.3.3.2 Dewey’s Philosophy of Education

John Dewey's educational philosophy reflects a collaborative relationship between people and the environment (Ye & Shih, 2021). Dewey's ideas reflect the effects of a newly industrialised colonised society confronted with the problems and ramifications of two World Wars. Marx's theory of social struggle and class conflict influenced Dewey greatly. According to Marx's theory of conflict, society is stratified and layered, with different classes competing with one another. In social analysis, Marx emphasises the importance of class structure and relations. Habermas' ideas, which are in the Kantian tradition and emphasise the role of education in transforming the world into a more humane, just, and egalitarian society, inspired Dewey (Sikandar, 2015).

According to Ye and Shih (2021), before World War I, Dewey's educational philosophy emphasized the individualized and socialized development of learners, the importance of parenting, and the encouragement of diverse and creative educational interventions. Although Dewey's views did not change much after the First World War, Dewey thought about the relationship between education and social life, enabled teachers to fulfill their social responsibilities, and addressed various social issues. We brought it into the classroom to inspire kids and help them develop habits that create exploration experiences. Her research shows that democratic education enables children to participate in the problem-solving process, and that continuous use of real-world social problems improves children's democratic education and increases the effectiveness of children's education. It concludes that quality depends on the teacher's commitment to social responsibility.

His writings on democracy and education express his belief in education as a means of social reform. He saw education as a means to help the democratic process by correcting economic problems and achieving political goals that lead to social progress. As a result, education is the culmination of Dewey's political thought. The creation of a society in which commons such as knowledge and social intelligence are equitably distributed to all members of that society (Berding, 1997).

The establishment of progressive schools in the 18th century was an attempt to liberate the traditional school system and, more importantly, to promote the intellectual growth of children. Dewey, on the other hand, criticized these progressive schools on the grounds that freedom alone was not the solution. The needs, structure, and order of learning must be based on a clear theory of experience, not simply on the whim of teachers and students. On the other hand, Rousseau, and later Pestalozzi, Froebel, and other educational theorists believed that if children needed to eat and grow themselves, they would naturally bear flowers and fruits.

Dewey clearly states in *Democracy and Education* (1916) that teaching methodology leads to teaching purpose. Because teaching and learning are educational, so the subject matter should be planned effectively. "The subject matter of the learner is not... identical with the formulated, crystallised, and systematised subject matter of the adult," he states emphatically (p. 190). Materials alone do not guarantee learning and development. Rather, teachers should plan and relate lesson materials to their students, taking into account their students' needs, desires, interests, and cognitive development, as demonstrated in "How We Think".

Dewey's main concern was the discrepancy between children's experiences and the concepts imposed upon them. Dewey is also critical of progressive education that imposes concepts such as free speech and the right to free movement. Deeply impressed by the vision of a liberal, free society, Dewey recognized the urgent need for liberty and equality, and liberation from social bondage, to liberate individuals and societies from power structures.

2.4 David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)

The theoretical underpinnings of this work are applicable to experiential learning theory (ELT) developed from the work of John Dewey and Kurt Lewin. A central concept of ELT emphasizes the importance of the learner's experience as a contribution to knowledge construction (Kolb, 1984). The experiential learning cycle developed by Kolb (1981, 1984) provides a strong theoretical and practical framework for SL efforts. The model has been influenced by notables of interdisciplinary thinkers, including educational philosopher John Dewey, developmental psychologist Jean Piaget, and social psychologist Kurt Lewin.

Experiential learning theory emphasizes that a learner's previous experiences, such as technology use and teaching style, are important for learning effectiveness. This is because learners' previous experiences lead to reflections that can be applied in new contexts to guide learning activities (Chen et al., 2011). Furthermore, ELTs view learning as a process carried out under the stimulus of the learner's own direct experience or in response to external observations, and knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. In that case, previous experiences not only guide a person, but also influence the formation of attitudes, desires and intentions (Kolb, 2014).

2.4.1 Kolb's Four Stages of Learning

According to Kolb (1984), effective learners require four types of learning abilities: concrete experience (CE), reflective observation (RO), abstract conceptualizations (AC), and active experimentation (AE).

Concrete Experience (CE) is when a learner actively participates in an activity (Jenkins & Healey, 2000). Individuals in this mode must focus on the present moment and rely on their intuitive and affective reactions to the situation (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988). Learners, for example, must be able to participate in the new experience fully, openly, and without bias. (Sheehan & Kearns, 1995).

Reflective Observation (RO) is the conscious reflection of learners on their experiences, which is called reflective observation (Jenkins & Healey, 2000). RO require a deliberate and open-minded approach to learning situations, a willingness to patiently consider many alternatives (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988). For example, learners should be able to observe and reflect on these experiences from different perspectives (Sheehan & Kearns, 1995).

Abstract Conceptualization (AC) is a situation in which the learner is presented with/or attempts to conceptualize a theory or model of what is (to be) observed (Jenkins & Healey, 2000). AC have to logical thinking and rational evaluation to bring about ideas that integrate observations into logically sound theories (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988). Learners, for example, must be able to develop concepts that incorporate their observations into sound theories (Sheehan & Kearns, 1995).

Active Experimentation (AE) is when a learner attempts to plan how to test a model or theory, or how to prepare for future experiences (Jenkins & Healey, 2000). In learning, AE emphasizes action, participation, and risk-taking, with an emphasis on practical testing of previously generated concepts (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988). For example, learners should be able to apply these theories to make decisions and solve problems (Sheehan & Kearns, 1995).

Kurt's (2022) diagram shows four types of learning skills and how learners progress through experiential learning cycles.

Experiences are transformed into concepts through reflection and serve as a guide for active experimentation and selection of new experiences. According to Kolb (1984), the learner can begin the learning cycle in any of her four modes, but learning must be done in a continuous spiral. Knowledge is constructed as a result of the creative tension between the four modes, exposing learners to all aspects of learning: experience, reflect, think and act.

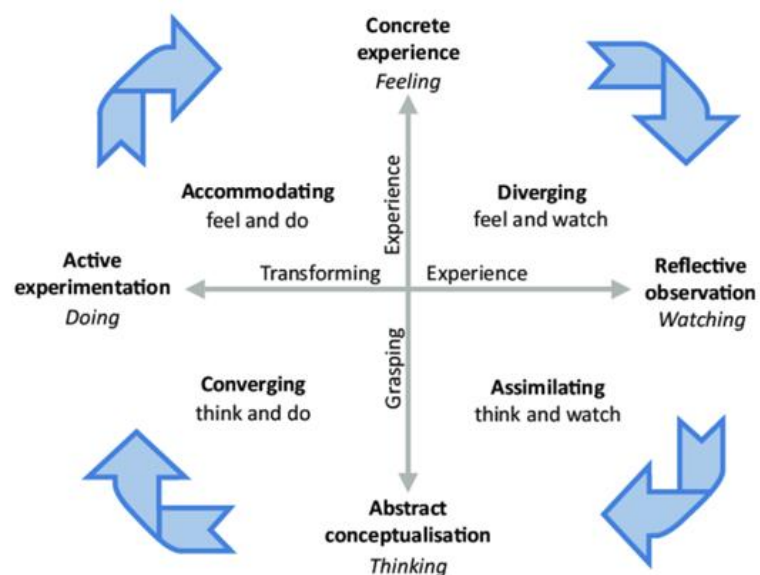


Figure 3.0: Four modes, exposing learners to all aspects of learning

Sources: Kurt (2022)

2.4.2 Kolb's Learning Styles

The figure above by Kurt (2022) identifies four dominant learning styles that are associated with these modes. Converging (AC and AE focus); Diverging (CE and RO focus); Assimilating (AC and RO focus); and Accommodating (CE and AE focus) are the four learning styles (Lee et al., 2016).

Converging is interested in how concepts and theories can be put into practise. This type of learner excels at problem solving, making decisions, and putting ideas into practise. Diverging is interested in observation and information gathering. A learner who strongly prefers this subject is imaginative and aware of meanings and values. They are people-oriented and enjoy socialising. Assimilation is interested in theoretical model presentation and development. This type of learner with this tendency are more interested in ideas and abstract concepts than in people. Accommodating is looking for hands-on experience. This type of learner enjoys doing things, following through on plans, and using the trial-and-error method (Lee et al., 2016).

2.4.3 Historical Background of Experiential Learning Theory

The mid-19th century experiential learning movement in the United States represented an attempt to move from a formal, abstract education, in which teachers presented information and expected students to apply the knowledge later, toward a more experiential-based approach. At the time, experimental science, applied research, and clinical experience was introduced to the university campus. Cooperative education, referring to various types of off-campus experiences, was introduced in the early 20th century as a complement to classroom

instruction. At this time, *Experience and Education* were published by John Dewey, which argued for experiential learning (Lewis & Williams, 1994).

Dewey emphasized that developing new knowledge or transforming oneself by learning to take on new roles was more important than simply learning how to do something. For him, experiential learning was a cycle of 'try' and 'experience' that involved noticing problems, getting ideas, trying out answers, experiencing results, and confirming or changing previous beliefs. This process not only cognitively reframes an individual's experience but can lead to important personal learning, such as the elimination of prejudices. This continuous creation of meaning over time leads to experiential learning. (Lewis & Williams, 1994).

Lewis & Williams (1994) also stated that one of the most influential works linking theory to actual practice is David Kolb's 1984 book on experiential learning. According to Kolb et al. (2001), "experiential learning" emphasizes the central role that experience plays in the learning process that distinguishes ELT from other learning theories. Thus, the term "experiential" is used to distinguish ELT between cognitive learning theories, which emphasize behavioral learning theories, and cognition over emotion, which denies the role of subjective experience in the learning process.

Another reason for the term "experiential" theory is that it has intellectual roots in Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget's experiential works. When Dewey's philosophical pragmatism, Lewin's social psychology, and Piaget's cognitive developmental genetic epistemology are combined, a new perspective on learning and development emerges (Kolb, 1984).

Kolb defines learning as the process by which knowledge is created by transforming experience. True learning is described as a four-pan process in his model. Learners have concrete experiences that they then reflect on from various angles. Learners work on abstract conceptualizations based on reflective observations and develop generalizations or principles that incorporate observations into theory. Learners then use these generalizations as a guide for additional activities known as active experimentation. This activity tests what you have learned in a more complex situation. This leads to a series of new tangible experiences and new rounds of learning at higher levels. Kolb theorizes that this process makes learning more complex, turning the learning cycle into an increasingly complex learning spiral. (Lewis & Williams, 1994).

Kolb suggests two opposing methods of grasping or absorbing information (CE versus AC) as well as two opposing methods of processing or transforming that information (RO versus AE). A learning style is the combination of preferred methods of transforming information and grasping; however, Kolb sees all learning styles as imperfect forms of information processing. For learning, learning that completely changes one's understanding, to occur, the learner must go through all four stages of the cycle. According to Kolb, unrealized learning is unreflected experience (Lewis & Williams, 1994).

2.4.4 Applications of Experiential Learning Theory in the Past Research

Below are some of the past researches that applied the theory of experiential learning.

I. Applying Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle for Laboratory Education

Based on Kolb's experiential learning theory, this paper describes a laboratory education model. The method was employed to teach the undergraduate process control laboratory at

Loughborough University's Chemical Engineering Department in the United Kingdom, and it was applied using advanced teaching technologies and a combination of remote, virtual, and hands-on laboratory sessions. An argument was proposed and verified that poor laboratory learning is due to insufficient activation of the perceptual dimension of the Kolb cycle, and a pedagogical explanation is provided. In terms of learning outcomes, the quantitative analysis revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group. In addition to the hands-on session, the proposed model includes pre- and post-lab tests, as well as virtual laboratory sessions, all of which are linked to Kolb's cycle to facilitate constructivist learning. The first laboratory education model based on Kolb's experiential learning theory is presented in this paper (Abdulwahed & Nagy, 2009).

Statistical evidence for the paper was provided through an application-based teaching experiment that combined pre-lab and post-lab testing with a three-dimensional laboratory (combined application of hands-on, virtual, and remote experiments). In particular, the introduction of virtual labs during the pre-lab preparation phase greatly improved students' conceptual understanding during hands-on lab sessions. It also aided in lowering students' cognitive load (Abdulwahed & Nagy, 2009).

According to the study from Abdulwahed & Nagy (2009), results show that designing engineering laboratory education based on well-developed educational theories leads to improved learning outcomes. Based on educational experiments, a new laboratory training model was introduced. Its educational foundation lies in Kolb's theory of experiential learning. An algorithm for implementing Kolb's cycle has been proposed, which makes use of the hands-on lab's virtual and remote modes, as well as the addition of new lab activities.

II. Higher Education Students' Attitudes Towards Experiential Learning in International Business

A previous study by Chavan (2011) used qualitative and quantitative analysis to present a teaching model based on experiential learning in large "International Business" units. A preliminary analysis of 92 student evaluations found that experiential learning was effective in allowing students to investigate the relationship between theory and practice. By participating in the experiential activities in this unit, students will be able to complete the four phases of Kolb's Inventory of Learning Styles (KLSI) including the components of experience, abstract conceptualization, critical reflection, and active experimentation. The respondents were adamant that the experiential learning activities assisted them in learning (cognitive) and that they enjoyed joining in the activity (Affective).

The process of developing and implementing experiential activities and reflective questionnaires, testing knowledge through assignments and tests, validates Kolb's four-stage learning cycle in which 'direct or concrete experience' is the basis for 'observation and reflection'. Implementing these experiential activities tests Kolb's model and provides students with a real-world, real-time experience in a classroom setting. Kolb's learning approach, in their experience, can be created and employed in large classes. By easily integrating elements of reflection into lectures, students and teachers gain confidence in applying theory. Kolb's theory provides essential insight and practical applications to academics and students from all disciplines (Chavan, 2011).

III. Application Effect of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory in Clinical Nursing Teaching of Traditional Chinese Medicine

According to Chen et al. (2022), the study aims to evaluate interventions but does not employ randomization. In 2020 and 2021, 80 clinical nurses from a class-III grade-A general hospital were joined as research subjects. The control group's subjects received training in "theory explanation, clinical practice, summary, and Q&A, [and] centralized examination." Subjects in the experimental group were divided into two groups based on Kolb's experiential learning style. Based on Kolb's experiential learning cycle, the training followed a "problem-exploration-practice-exploration-theory-explanation-summary-centralized examination" structure, with the training taking place in the hospital's Conference Room 1. The training period will last from February to August 2020 and 2021.

The effectiveness of experiential learning theory application was assessed by analyzing course evaluation questionnaires and final exam results. The application of Kolb's experiential learning theory to TCM clinical nursing training can make TCM nursing clinical practice more "scientific," the training more effective, and it allows students to provide more play for subjective initiative (Chen et al., 2022).

2.4.5 Conceptual framework

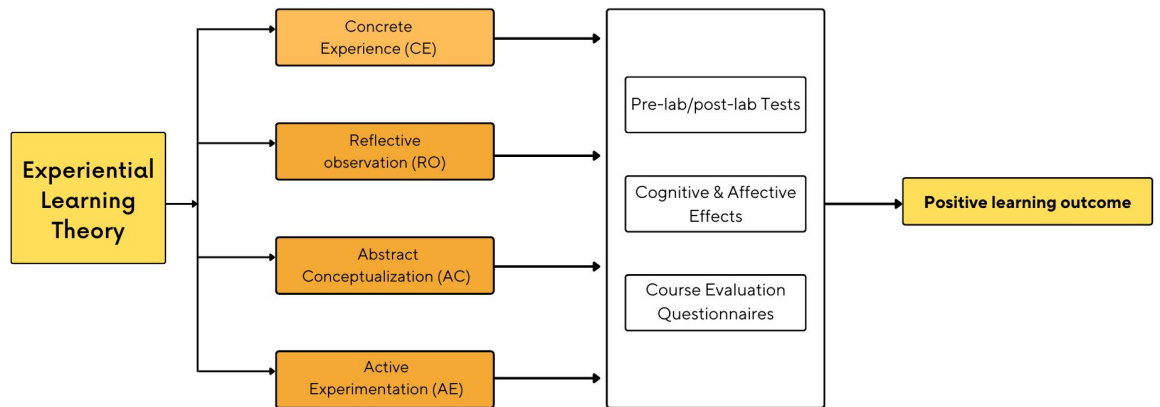


Figure 3.1: Impact of Experiential Learning Theory

2.5 Chapter Summary

2.5.1 Gaps in The Service-Learning Literature

One of the first gaps is that no studies have discussed community impacts. According to the past study from Schwehm et al. (2017), future research should survey service providers/community partners to see if there are any similarities in outcomes between those who provide on-site and those who provide online service opportunities. Faulconer (2020) also states that no studies included in the study measured or discussed the effects on community partners in the short or long term while according to Bukas Marcus et al. (2020), the field of ESL is still understudied.

The second gap is a lack of research on how community partners can benefit from ESL. According to a previous study by Schwehm et al. (2017), there is little research on students who participate in ESL, but none on community partners can benefit from ESL. Furthermore, there was little evidence in the existing literature of benefits to the institution or community partners (Faulconer, 2020). Investigating and analyzing the experiences of ESL

community partners may result in more opportunities for the growing online student population (Schwehm et al. (2017).

Additionally, while Schwehm et al. (2017)'s study has several limitations, such as a relatively small sample size and respondents drawn from a single institution, it lays the groundwork for a more comprehensive study comparing the learning outcomes of students participating in on-site or online service. According to McGorry (2012), there are also limitations, such as having students at a single academic institution and having only one quantitative assessment tool. Future research with more institutions and other samples may provide a complete picture of online versus traditional SL experiences. Wong and Lau (2021) stated that although the study was well-controlled for many confounding variables, the sample size was relatively small when making comparisons. They also focused on a single course from a single institution. The study's generalizability was limited by these constraints. A similar research design should be used for larger-scale research with different types of courses. Soria and Weiner (2013) stated in their study that research usually focuses on a single institution and presents a single case study.

In addition, a previous study by McGorry (2012) pointed out that future research to more thoroughly explore the potential of online SL should consider the following: In this study, the traditional SL vehicle for the full online experience was used, so to explore the possibility of developing tools that specifically address issues related to the fully online learning experience, such as technical support, which may require further research. SL using online service components can present technology and communication challenges (Sun & Yang, 2015). This can cause anxiety (Sun & Yang, 2015). Impacts can be reduced by carefully implementing training, communication platforms, and open troubleshooting.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a research topic addressed by obtaining the data using appropriate methods, analyzing and interpreting the data, and generating conclusions based on those analyses. Generally, a research technique is a framework for conducting a study (Mohajan, 2018).

This chapter covers the research framework, unit of analysis, sample method, data analysis, sampling procedure, ethical issues, rigour, and the interview protocol of the qualitative research method to conduct and analyze our study. The following headings are used to present information about the methodologies and procedures that were used to perform the study include, research framework, research instrument, data analysis procedures and data collection, sampling procedures , ethical considerations, validity and reliability in qualitative method, rigour, interview protocol framework.

In summary, this chapter is able to provide a clear idea of the alternative we use in order to explore the concept of SL in UTAR by addressing the familiar level of SL among learners in UTAR.

3.1 Research design

In order to investigate the criteria of SL framework in UTAR, we need to conduct an in-depth analysis of qualitative researchers, according to several reports (Flick, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

To scrutinize the research problem, the qualitative research approach will be adopted and presented to execute and interpret the research topic. This method represents an alternative to determining the collection because it is a systematic acquisition, organization,

and analysis of textual data acquired from dialogue or observation (Hamilton & Finley, 2019). The main purpose of this study is to identify the factors faced by learners in accepting and adopting SL.

Additionally, there is a wide range of research methods that fall under qualitative research because they do not depend on numerical measurement or statistical analysis, and they require a smaller number of respondents to draw conclusions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). By taking it as an illustration, most researchers about SL have utilized qualitative methods to acquire their data due to the necessity of addressing a relevant problem and developing a theory to contribute to knowledge gaps (Waldner et al., 2010; Schmidt, 2021; Marcus et al., 2021; Musa et al., 2021). In this study, the data will be acquired from the learners in UTAR by assessing their understanding, experience, and challenges during their implementation of SL.

Research questions have been set according to the conceptual framework of students' experience, SL, and outcome. For instance, by investigating interviewees' understanding of SL, their experience in SL practices, factors that influence the project outcome, factors that influence the SL adoption, impact on the experiential learning among learners in SL, and their perception to encourage UTAR in embracing SL.

The type of qualitative instruments such as document analysis, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews will be employed to acquire the answer from respondents related to SL. This study relied on primary data by interviewing UTAR learners in UTAR by conducting interviews with open-ended questions for approximately 60-90 minutes. The sampling used was purposive sampling to collect data from the selected UTAR learners who are experienced in the SL field. The learners who are familiar with SL were asked to interpret

the challenges encountered in SL in the past. On top of that, secondary data will be used for developing interview questions by examining the question's quality and ensuring the interview flow. With this, the interactive interview portion facilitated both individual and group learning via reflective inquiry and descriptive and interpretative analysis.

Likewise, the information will be collected and subjected to thematic analysis and coding during collection and analysis. This study approach was also established to ensure that multiple datasets could be used to better understand and evaluate campus SL. It is essential to construct a clear overview of SL on campus through the use of sampling, and the data acquired may help convey the overall concept in learners' intentions in adopting SL.

3.2 Qualitative research method

Qualitative been engaged because it is able to gain a more refined and comprehensive understanding of the research question by having a conversation with respondents directly, paying close attention to their encounters, identifying variables that are not easily derived, and acquiring knowledge about the contexts in which they explain about the answer (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Husbands et al., 2020).

Qualitative studies let researchers come to their own conclusions through participant observation, unstructured interviews, and direct observation and make use of record descriptions (Cohen et al., 2017). Moreover, by referring to past studies, there are research related to experiential learning theory rely on qualitative research techniques for data collection (Bartels & Wagenaar, 2017; Chan, 2012). Hence, a purely qualitative method has been utilized in this study which aims to develop the SL concept in UTAR.

In this research, the quantitative method is not adopted because it is difficult to track shifts in opinion amongst a specified population. Moreover, the answers obtained in numerical by missing out on more overarching themes or unplanned insights that may be useful for the research (Rahman, 2016; Queirós et al., 2017). Thus, it is inapplicable as this study aims to explore the SL framework by asking the respondents their opinion about challenges, factors, and other questions related to SL within the UTAR.

In contrast, utilizing the qualitative method can justify and encourage the respondents to generate their own opinion in a more open manner by allowing more flexibility. Eventually, the qualitative research approach has been used instead of the quantitative method because it allows for the collection of a variety of data through participant interviews as opposed to relying just on one data source, such as questionnaires or instruments utilized by other researchers.

In short, qualitative research methods are the most suitable method for exploring the concept of SL towards UTAR learners by asking respondents about their understanding of SL, the challenges faced by learners in SL through addressing their past experience in implementing SL, and their perception by examining the relationship between the usage of technology and its influence on SL practice among learners in UTAR.

3.3 Research instrument

A research instrument is an essential part of research and is adopted as a tool to collect data in order to make the researcher's task easier (Birmingham & Wilkinson, 2003). According to (Sofaer, 1999), the three predominant methods of conducting qualitative research are

interviews and document analysis. In this study, the data will be collected and recorded through interviews and observation of the respondents.

3.3.1 Document analysis

In document analysis, the researcher reads and analyses documents to provide context and significance for an evaluation (Bowen, 2009). Similarly, to how interview transcripts are analyzed, the scholar acknowledged that document analysis involves coding content into themes.

As an illustration, earlier research that produced results comparable to our study employed document analysis techniques that explored the faculty perceptions and experiences of SL (Arellano & Jones, 2018). Hence, it can be claimed that documents are useful for placing one's research within the context of its subject or field by providing background information and broad coverage of data such as data that can no longer be observed, information that informants may have forgotten, and a record of change and development may all be found in documents (Bowen, 2009). The UTAR SDG Report and the news that can be found on the UTAR website were some of the examples in the paper that was reviewed (*Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman*, n.d.). As a primary or secondary source of information gathering, document analysis has many useful applications in the realms of study. It is a helpful and advantageous technique for many sorts of research since documents can be a rich source of additional research data.

As referred to Appendix A, the UTAR SDG Report will be used together with the news that can be obtained through searches via the official UTAR website from 2017-2022 and will serve as the primary source material for our investigation (*UTAR News*, n.d.).

Therefore, through the analysis done, it will be essential to identify the criteria to set for our interviewees in terms of their faculty, courses taken or project implemented.

According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is also one way to make sure your research is both essential and holistic because it can reveal gaps, such as the time when SL started to be implemented in UTAR through exploring the news or reports from the university's official website. Therefore, not only the responses from the educators and learners but the information obtained from various documents also serve as the data for this study by looking through the framework of SL.

3.3.1 Focus group

A focus group can be defined as "a set of people selected and gathered by researchers to discuss and remark on, from an individual perspective, the topic that is the subject of the research" (Mishra, 2016). The key to the effectiveness of this approach to research is placing more emphasis on the unpredicted results of an interactive conversation among the participants.

There are a total of 9 students in UTAR with SL experience who will be selected as the participants in our focus group. The learners will be distributed into three groups (three people in a group) and be interviewed group-by-group on the day decided by interviewers and interviewees after discussion. During the interview, the learners will discuss the interview questions, such as their experience and their main challenges when implementing the SL project. There will be three people in a group because all the members are able to share their perceptions by preventing the lack of involvement from participants. Besides, the students have a more flexible time so they are able to deliver their maximum insight when

discussing the interview question asked from their previous experience of SL, for instance. Thus, by comparing to the one-to-one interviews, data can be collected much more quickly and simultaneously.

Hence, this method has been adopted in this study because it is more effective to interact with the respondents face-to-face, which can have valuable implications, such as their potential for the elaboration of factors or outcomes.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures and data collection

According to Hillier (2022), like any other scientific discipline, data analysis requires a methodical, step-by-step procedure. Each step involves distinct abilities and knowledge. To gain relevant insights, it is necessary to comprehend the process as a whole. A framework is crucial for developing outcomes that can withstand scrutiny.

3.4.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a straightforward way of conducting hermeneutic content analysis, which is from a group of analyses that are designed for non-numerical data (Roberts et al., 2019). It provides a unique insight into the experiences of individuals in a way that quantitative methodologies cannot. Hence, in this study, the thematic analysis will be utilized to evaluate and review data from interview transcripts.

According to Ayre and McCaffery (2022), to make the best use of qualitative studies, researchers must carefully assess which analytic method will meet their study objectives most effectively. Researchers must make thoughtful and well-reasoned decisions to balance the level of analysis with the need to produce timely and applicable results. The six stages below comprise Braun and Clarke's (2006) theme analysis methodology.

Step 1: Familiarize and understand the data

According to Raufelder et al. (2016), to become familiar with the data, it was necessary to manually transcribe the interview transcripts. After collecting the data, researchers acquire devoted and thoroughly familiar with the data by first transcribing the data, then repeating the process of reading transcripts, and finally noting down the initial ideas during the introductory phrase.

Step 2: Generating initial code

Next, the data set was applied using beginning codes. After the researcher has reviewed and become acquainted with the data and has developed an initial list of thoughts about what is in the data and what is intriguing about the data, researchers must first code the whole dataset, sort the codes, and extract any essential data for subsequent studies.

Step 3: Browse for themes.

In the third step, codes with comparable contents were clustered together. Researchers are now beginning to analyze the codes and evaluate how many codes can combine to generate an overall theme. Researchers may employ visual representations, such as tables or mind maps, to assist in categorizing the various codes into themes.

Step 4: Review themes

The fourth step consisted of examining and refining the primary themes, as well as finding subthemes. In this phase researchers are required to examine highlighted topics in greater depth. Researchers must decide if the themes are pertinent to the code extraction and the full dataset, as well as whether researchers provide answers to research questions. During this

phase, themes are often polished, and a thematic map depicting the links between themes and subthemes is created.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

Researchers must give succinct and effective titles for themes and definitions that communicate the essence of each topic in order for the reader to have a quick understanding of the subject matter. In this phase, revisions and refinements were made to the subthemes. After defining and refining the themes that will be presented in the study, researchers then analyse the data inside them.

Step 6: Write the report

Phase six starts, when you have a collection of completely developed ideas, and includes the report's final analysis and writing. Through analytical narratives and data extraction, researchers were required to compose a concluding report that persuades readers of the advantages and validity of the study and connects it to research questions and prior literature. The data will be studied inductively due to the lack of empirical research that may give a viable framework for data interpretation (Raufelder et al., 2016).

Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data for different fields which can be applied in the different research and many different datasets in order to solve the research questions. According to the study of Crowe et al.(2015), thematic analysis goes a step further by analyzing the links and meanings within the categories in order to identify themes.

Thematic analysis relies mostly on inductive methods to uncover latent meanings. Inductive method is an inductive strategy that implies that the recognised themes have a

strong connection with the data itself (Patton, 1990). Thematic analysis approach will be used for analyzing the interviews of this study and analyzing documents to provide context and significance for an evaluation (Braun & Clarke, 2006, Raufelder et al., 2016). The audio version of the output will be transcribed and every detail will be checked for accuracy in order to provide precise data. The useful output will be grouped into different themes and sub-themes, enabling the researcher to go through the conclusion.

3.4.2 Coding

A definition of coding as a technique for data organisation and similarity is provided in research from Auerbach and Bordeaux Silverstein (2004). It involves accumulating information, categorising it, and arranging it in a cohesive manner. Each number will correspond to a component of the study's overall theme. During the document analysis phase of coding, predefined codes will be applied in order to get a head start on the rest of the data. A code is a system for categorising and rearranging discovered information. Additionally, the researchers can synthesise and summarise the data through the coding process. As a result, coding is now fundamental to the analysis's development.

Data coding is the process of generating codes based on observable data. In qualitative research, data are collected using either observations, interviews, or questionnaires. In our research, coding is used to interpret themes and concepts derived from interview transcript data (Given, 2008). The objective of data coding is to extract the substance and significance of the data provided by respondents. The data coder extracts preliminary codes from observable data, which are then filtered and modified to provide more exact, succinct, and accurate codes. According to the Tobacco Control Evaluation Center (2016), Coding guides you in how your data should be organized and coded and gives you the basic structure

for your coding scheme, and generates the code according to the coding frame for each research question.

Moreover, according to Kelle (2004), coding can be performed manually or by means of software. “N VIVO” a qualitative and mixed-methods research software tool will be used in this study. It is utilized specifically for the analysis of unstructured text, audio, video, and image data, such as (but not limited to) interviews, focus groups, surveys, social media, and journal articles. The significant advantage of the software is that it enables researchers to organize obtained data findings more efficiently (Puks,2016).

3.4.3 Unit of Analysis

Deciding the unit of analysis is a crucial decision since it guides the development of codes and the coding procedure. The main intention of analysis in your study is the unit (Margaret & Paul, 2015). For instance, individuals, groups, artifacts (books, reports, news), and social interactions which participate in SL could be a unit of analysis in the study. The unit of analysis is determined by the analysis the researcher conducts. In this study, the respondent for the interview is the learner of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) who have experience involved in SL.

Moreover, the UTAR SDG Report and the news available on the UTAR website will serve as the key sources for our study. By comparing the stated aims and learning outcomes of the course to the SL criteria, students will act as the data for this study by analyzing the efficacy of SL by measuring the execution of a prior SL project at UTAR.

Essentially, this research will focus on collecting the information and past experience of learners that participate in SL programs in UTAR.

3.5 Sampling Method/Sampling Procedures

Sampling is a technique of selecting samples from a given population to estimate and predict the population's outcome and uncover unknown information fragments (Trachoma, 2006). The goal of our data collection was to highlight the specific and particular rather than generalizing the data gathered (sung.2012). As we aim to focus on a small number, and the choice of participants and research sites is crucial to the research findings' overall usefulness, we used non-probability sampling to select the study's population. According to several study, to achieve the objective, A combination of purposive and snowball sampling methods was employed to select a sample of participants who took part in semi-structured interviews (Cohen et al., 2022; Vogel et al., 2010; Mason, 1996).

3.5.1 Purposive Sampling

In research, data collection is essential since the data are intended to contribute to a greater understanding of a theoretical framework (Bernard, 2006). Purposive sampling, also known as judgement sampling, is the deliberate selection of a participant based on the attributes that the individual possesses, according to Bernard (2006). It is a method that does not necessitate any underlying hypotheses or a set number of participants. In general, the researcher determines what information is needed and then seeks out individuals who have the necessary expertise or experience and are willing to provide it (Bernard, 2006).

Purposive sampling, as opposed to random selection, focuses on individuals with specific characteristics who will be able to contribute more effectively to the research at hand (Etikan, 2016). Halberstadt et al. (2019) aimed to gather significant data on the participants' experiences by implementing purposive sampling. In this study, researchers are required by

the learner who have experience participating in SL programs in UTAR. Hence, purposive sampling is preferred by researchers, in which researchers can choose and contact qualified respondents to conduct the interview.

However, according to Etikan (2016), there are some limitations to purposive sampling, such as the non-random selection of participants, or the researcher's subjectivity and prejudice in selecting the topics of the study. This makes it difficult for the researcher to draw conclusions about a population. Nevertheless, purposive sampling is a prominent technique utilized by researchers due to its time- and cost-efficiency when compared to other sampling techniques.

In addition, the study's multiple methodological alternatives will make the described purposive sampling a flexible research approach that can be adapted to improve the efficacy of a survey.

3.5.2 Purposive Sampling method

Purposive sampling is a collection of non-probability sampling approaches in which units are chosen because they have the desired characteristics. In other words, purposive sampling units are selected based on the research topic. The typical case sampling will be chosen in the study when conducting the interview.

3.5.2.1 Typical Case Sampling

Typical Case Sampling is useful when a researcher is dealing with large programs; sampling can help set the bar for what is standard or "typical" (Etikan, 2016). Candidates are typically chosen based on their likelihood of behaving in the same manner as everyone else.

Participants are often selected based on their propensity to behave similarly to those who have the same features or experiences.

In this study, the UTAR students who have experience service learning have been chosen into the focus group for the interview session. Typical case sampling is suitable to apply in this study. Typical-case samples are frequently beneficial for investigating huge communities and complicated problems. The process for doing purposive sampling is rather simple. To generate a sample, a researcher only needs to eliminate individuals who do not fit a specific profile. Purposive sampling enables researchers to glean a wealth of information from collected data. This allows researchers to describe the significant impact of their findings on the general public.

In this study, which investigates students who participated in SL programs at UTAR, the respondent will choose from students who have prior experience with SL rather than learners who have no background in SL. In addition to referral techniques such as snowball sampling, researchers employed referral processes to identify these categories (Halberstadt et al., 2019; Robinson, 2014).

3.5.3 Snowball Sampling

Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling method utilised often in qualitative research to attract participants from difficult-to-reach communities (Naderifar et al., 2017; Etikan, 2016). Snowball sampling is commencing the sampling process by targeting a certain category, often a person, and then requesting that individual to enable contact with others of a similar or recognisable kind. As the research develops, individuals who have already consented to participate recommend additional potential participants, forming a referral chain

(Parker et al., 2020). This produced a significant variance and theoretical saturation (Halberstadt et al., 2019).

According to Johnson (2014), Although various versions of this approach exist, it typically comprises of two or more stages. Firstly, identifying a sample of participants with a particular characteristic x at the initial stage, followed by requesting recommendations from them for other potential respondents who may possess the same attribute x at the subsequent snowball stages. Typically, this referral procedure continues until a sufficient number of qualified respondents are discovered. Sampling continues until data saturation (Naderifar et al., 2017; Shaghghi et al., 2011).

Snowball sampling is a form of convenience sampling. When it is difficult to access participants with the desired traits, this strategy is utilised. With this strategy, existing research participants recruit new participants from among their contacts (Naderifar et al., 2017). In this study, snowball sampling will be utilised to gather appropriate samples rapidly and efficiently. Snowball sampling is a technique for identifying research participants in which one person contributes the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third subject, and so on (Vogt, 1999).

For this study, students who have undergone service learning at UTAR will be the primary requirement for the interview selection process, as per Cohen et al.'s (2022) methodology. Through a combination of purposeful and snowball sampling, the researchers will identify information-rich informants who can provide valuable insights. Following this, the interviewees will be asked to refer other participants who meet the required sample profile. This referral process will continue in a snowball-like fashion until sufficient data has been collected for analysis.

However, this sampling strategy produces biased samples when respondents with a large number of social connections are able to offer researchers with a greater proportion of other respondents with similar characteristics (Erickson, 1979; Etikan, 2016). Nevertheless, snowball sampling remains a practical and cost-effective method for reaching individuals who would otherwise be extremely difficult to locate (Naderifar et al., 2017; Priest, 2006).

3.6 Ethical Consideration

Confidentiality and privacy throughout our in-depth interview are vital in order to prevent any victimization in our study (Bell & Bryman, 2007; Mealer & Jones, 2014; Wester, 2001). Thus, we will apply an **informed consent form** while we are doing our research in order to ensure the privacy and personal data accordingly to the **Personal Data Protection Act 2010 (Act 709)** and **“POL-IPSR-R&D-004 Research Ethics & Code of Conduct** (UTAR Research Portal, 2019).

According to the procedure, we will invite all of our respondents and brief them clearly and transparently about what we will do next for the research. Most important, we will also make sure the respondent has a clear sight into the research and is willing to continue helping us by giving out their information during the research (Bhutta, 2004; Bond, 2004; Musmade et al., 2013; Zaal, 2017). The respondent also will be told that they have the right to ask questions to answer their question and reject or stop the interview section at any time if they want to do so (Wester, 2011; Zaal, 2017).

The languages and vocabulary used should be clearly understood by the participants. During the process, we will also use the appropriate attitude to continue the interview section to prevent the participants from being offended (Wester, 2011). At the same time, the

investigator for this research should be told the participants (Zaal, 2017), and this will increase the level of confidentiality during the interview process (Musmade, et al., 2013).

3.6.1 Informed Consent Form

While doing ethical research, the informed consent form is required to be prepared by researchers (Wester, 2011; Musmade et al., 2013) to ensure the human rights of the participants (Bond, 2004). During the interview section, we will inform them about their right to stop or withdraw from this interview if they feel their own right being offended, and they will not need to take any penalties if they wish to withdraw from the interview section. Simultaneously, the investigator should also brief the risk that they may need to bear if any mistake is made (Bond, 2004; Mealer& Jones, 2014; Musmade et al., 2013; Wester, 2011; Zaal, 2017).

In this study, we will apply the form which is from the UTAR Research Portal Official Website with the code "FM-IPSR-R&D-057 Volunteer Information and Consent Form" (UTAR Research Portal, 2019) to make sure confidential information from the participants for this study can be protected. This action will highly increase the possibility of the participants helping us do the research without any hesitation because they feel safe about their info. This form will include all the information about the study, such as the name of the investigator, title of research, objective, benefits, and risk that may need to be taken. For the participant, we will also record their name, identity card numbers, addresses, photos, and the research result only for the study purpose.

3.7 Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Method

Reflexivity is the gold standard for determining trustworthiness, which has been identified as one of the ways qualitative researchers ensure the rigour and quality of their work (Teh & Lek, 2018). In fact, one of the most difficult and important aspects of qualitative research is the practise of reflection.

According to Berger (2015), the credibility of the findings, as well as our comprehension of the work, are enhanced when a researcher clearly describes the contextually intersecting relationships (reflexivity) between the participants and themselves. Throughout the study, the researcher's ability to reflect on his or her own biases and decision rationale is important for rigour (Johnson et al., 2019). While conducting the interview with the participants, the entire process of the interview will be recorded using a digital audio recorder so that the researchers can engage in reflexivity to enhance this study's validity.

3.7.1 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the gold standard for determining trustworthiness, which has been identified as one of the ways qualitative researchers ensure the rigour and quality of their work (Teh & Lek, 2018). In fact, one of the most challenging and important aspects of qualitative research is the practice of reflection. Researchers engage in reflexivity when they consider how their own perspectives, experiences, and prejudices could influence the results of their studies (Bradbury-Jones, 2007). It is a significant element in qualitative research because it entails an in-depth assessment of the researcher's preconceptions, beliefs, and expectations regarding the study approach, in addition to the potential data that may have on the data collection, processing, and analysis (Narayanasamy, 2015). Researchers bring their own perspectives and experiences to the research process rather than being impartial or objective observers. Hence, to understand and control subjectivity, continuous self-reflection, such as self-

reflection activity, has been utilized throughout the whole research process, from formulating the research questions to interpreting the results in order to strengthen the validity and reliability of results (Olmos-Vega et al., 2022).

3.7.2 Rigour

According to Jootun et al. (2009), reflexivity, defined as an ongoing examination of personal involvement, contributes to the process's openness and transparency. In qualitative research, the aim of quality and rigour, as in any research paradigm, is to minimize the risk of bias while maximizing the precision and credibility of research findings. Moreover, rigour is greatest achieved through careful and deliberate planning, diligent and ongoing application of researchers' reflexivity, honest communication and open about research and research results between researchers and audiences (Johnson et al., 2020).

When open-ended, unstructured interviews with strategically chosen participants are used, validity is achieved (Cypress, 2017). Validation strategies used in qualitative research include returning results to participants to see if they consider them to be a fair representation of their experience and conducting interviews or focus groups with the same people. To measure responses to evolving analytics and incorporate new ones. Qualitative researchers ensure the reliability of retesting their analyses, primarily by recording the interviews and observations and by documenting the analytical process (Mays & Pope, 1995).

3.8 Interview Protocol Framework

3.8.1 Pilot Study

As a pilot study for this research, a focus group interview was conducted. According to Majid et al. (2017), the purpose of the pilot study was to evaluate the suitability of the research topics and to provide researchers with early insight into the research's viability. In addition, it enables researchers to get experience conducting in-depth discussion and to develop rapport with informants. Significantly, the pilot study helps researchers develop their interviewing and conversational abilities (Majid et al., 2017). According to Hundley and Teijlingen (2002), pilot studies are almost typically based on a small sample of participants. Therefore, the reliability of pilot study results may be restricted, despite the fact that they provide an estimate of the likely size of the response rate in the primary data collection.

Questions will be put to the test by the pilots, and certain flaws will be found. For instance, if there are questions that are too confusing, others couldn't be answered at this point in the project, and some are not explicit enough. The researcher noted how long it took to complete each question in the meanwhile. The pilot also afforded the researcher an excellent opportunity to practice interviewing people, and as a result, the researcher acquired confidence. Subsequently, the questions were adjusted to address the issues discovered during the pilot interviews. In addition, certain questions were reordered to ensure a logical flow, and others were merged to prevent interviewees from providing redundant responses.

A focus group interview with 3 participants was conducted as a pilot study for this research using the focus group method to evaluate its effectiveness in meeting the research objectives by addressing students' understanding of service-learning. Three students enrolled in a service-learning course at UTAR were engaged, and their willingness to participate in the focus group interview was considered. The interview questions have been developed based on the research questions and objectives. At the same time, we have identified the target

population of respondents depending on the selection criteria for samples and developed the interview protocol. After confirming the questions, we started to recruit the respondents through Whatsapp and email and developed a script for the moderator by creating the necessary materials and forms needed for the focus group discussion. Before conducting the interview, we also sent a reminder for the respondents and gathered them in a comfortable and suitable location on the actual interview day by conducting the pilot focus group interview.

During the interview day, all members set up the equipment needed, such as Microsoft teams and several phones for recording purposes and distributed the interview protocol and volunteer consent form to the respondents. The focus group interview took place in the campus meeting room and lasted an hour. The discussion was moderated using an interview protocol that included questions regarding the participants' objectives for joining the service-learning programme, their experiences there, and their opinions of how it affected their personal and academic growth. An audio recording of the focus group interview was made for transcription and analysis.

Focus group interview data were reviewed, transcribed, and analyzed using NVivo 12 to identify significant themes and patterns among the participants' perspectives and experiences. Meanwhile, the analysis of the collected data revealed numerous fundamental themes in the service-learning programme participants' experiences, as they remarked that their motivation to enhance the community and acquire real-world experience related to their studies had encouraged them to participate in the programme.

From the finding for first research question, three aspects of service learning were identified by the learners, which included experiential learning, practical course, and addressing real-world community issues. Participants felt that service learning allowed them to learn practically outside of the classroom, engage with the community, and provide a platform to address real-world community issues. The study also revealed that service learning was considered a practical course that required planning and execution to serve the community. However, there were differences in the perception of service learning across faculties, with some faculties offering more opportunities for community service than others. Hence, the findings suggest that service learning can be a valuable educational experience that allows students to engage with the community and learn through practical experiences.

To explore on the second research question, the participants from CSR poses challenges such as time consuming and communication especially while waiting for stakeholder replies, liaising with them, and dealing with conflicts arising from members with different opinions and expectations. However, participants have learned valuable skills in communication and teamwork building, and have benefitted from mentorship guidance. In summary, service learning has contributed to their academic and personal growth, and instilled a sense of civic participation and service for others.

There are some changes have been update after conducting the pilot study in order to improve our interview questions so that our focus group participants would have a better understanding of our questions and be able to answer them appropriately. The changes have been made to make the words more understandable to our participants, such as the word "hinder" in one of our questions. It will be easier for the participants to understand the meaning of the question if the word "block" is replaced, and the moderator will also help

define the word to the participants if they encounter problems with our question during the interview session. Also, we discovered that some questions are very similar and should be changed and combined into one, such as the prompt and probe questions. By combining the questions into one, the participants could have answered the question appropriately, preventing duplicate answers. As a result, the questions that are quite similar must be changed so that they do not confuse the participants and we do not receive repeating answers from them.

3.8.2 Data Collection

However, there are a variety of research methods that might serve as appropriate data collection tools (Dikko, 2016). The researcher selected the qualitative interview because, in the case of studies, particularly where knowledge and perceptions form part of the points of interest. The questionnaire, which involves the retrieval of information through directed dialogues with survey participants, plays a crucial role in data collection (Dikko, 2016). Based on the suggestion of the expert, we focus on a small group of students and ask 10 questions. Majid et al. (2017) suggested that audio recorders should be used to record the interviews. The interviewer should initiate the session with a chat that introduces the research topic in a generic sense (Jacob & Furgerson, 2015). According to Jacob and Furgerson (2015), a strong rapport with the interviewees is necessary for obtaining a better reaction from the session.

The participant in the interview will be reached through email. After obtaining the participant's consent, she is given the written informed consent form and spoken instructions in order to engage in the interview (Majid et al., 2017). The interview took place in a quiet, deserted room at about noon (Majid et al., 2017). Before moving on to the specific questions,

the interviewer asked general and demographic questions of the respondents. The interview lasted about 50-90 minutes. All interviews were digitally recorded with an audio recorder so that responses could be reviewed during the data analysis process. Before the recording of the interview session, permission was requested from all participants and recorded on the Informed Consent Form.

3.8.3 Data Analysis

After then, the interviewer will go back through the audio recording by playing it three times to confirm that all of the questions and answers were accurate. During the interview, certain notes will be taken down on anything that may be used for the interview as well as anything that did not go very well during the interview.

In order to reduce the likelihood of errors, the audio recording will first listen to, then transcribed, and finally, read aloud twice. After that, a piece of software known as N VIVO will be used to code the transcript. The coding is carried out with the assistance of a piece of software known as N VIVO. The initials, codes, and themes are determined based on the questions asked in the interviews, the research topics, and the conceptual framework (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

After the identification of the initial codes and theme, the whole interview transcript will be reviewed without coding. Each term from the participant's answer will be filtered to ensure that only pertinent phrases are included as significant codes. The codes are then highlighted with N VIVO and arranged as a cluster with particular themes representing the cluster. Following this, the transcript is categorized into categories, with some codes ranging from a single-word response to a few phrases.

3.9 Conclusion

The topic will be discussed in this chapter, including the qualitative research method, case study, and the unit of analysis. The reason that we apply qualitative study is that this can get more understanding of the research question by directly communicating with the respondent. The learners from UTAR will be our targeted interviewees in our study sample. We will collect primary data for collecting data and secondary data for developing interview questions. Besides, Rigour standard also will be used in this study to help us in analyzing the data to determine the reliability and validity of data. We will also be giving out the informed consent form to the respondent in order to achieve ethical consideration. At last, we will also do our best to take responsibility as ethical researchers to protect all confidential information and any personal data from leakage to any platform.

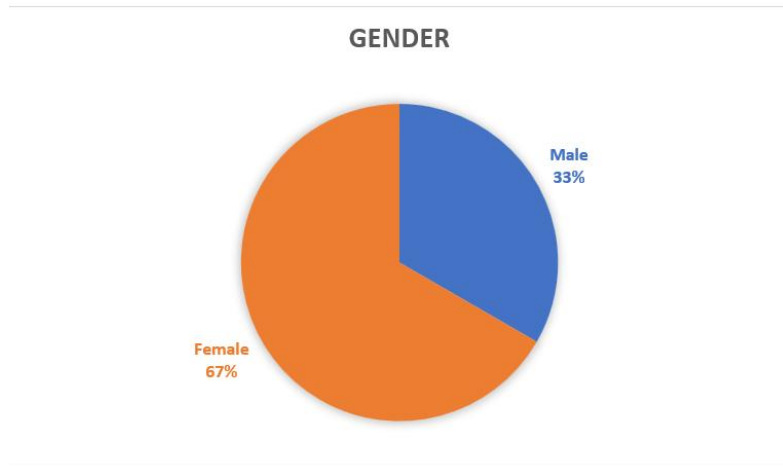
CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS

The study aims to explore the concept of SL among Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) learners and identify the challenges learners faced in SL at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). Nine students from different faculty and programme were interviewed in a focus group, and their answers were evaluated thematically. In this chapter, we detail the procedures we used to analyse the data, provide the results we obtained, and discuss their elements in light of our research questions. Hence, learners' perspectives and experiences on SL implementation, the barriers they encountered, and their recommendations for improving current SL in UTAR are all covered in this research. The following are examples of relevant research questions:

- What is service-learning in Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)?
- What are the challenges faced by learners in service-learning?

This chapter will also include the purpose of this study, the research results, the data analysis, and a review of the instruments used during the research process. The results of this study will be obtained from the physical focus group interview with learners, document analysis, and observations.

Participants in our study are undergraduates at UTAR who are at least 21 years old and there are 67% female while 33% of them are male. All of the participants come from Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FAS) and they are undertaking Public Relations programme. Additionally, they are also from different Malaysian states, including Perak, Johor, Sarawak, Pahang, and Selangor



Graph 4.1: Gender of participants

4.1 Transcribing Procedure (NVivo 12 Pro)

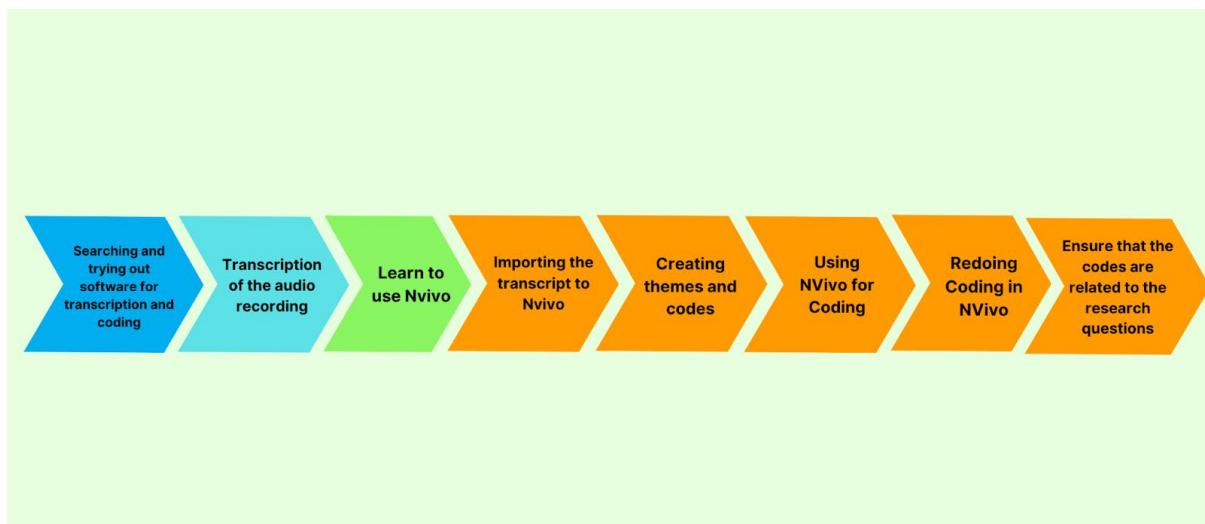


Table 4.1: Transcribing procedure

Step 1: Searching and trying out software for transcription and coding

As researchers, at the early stage after we collected the data through focus groups, we faced several challenges while searching for suitable software for transcription and coding. We tried using Microsoft Teams, but the transcript function was not generating clear sentences,

and the audio recording was blurry. We also tried using Transcribe website, but it only offered a 7-day trial period and could only generate 1-minute audio previews. Nvivo10 was another option, but it required payment and access to a lab.

Eventually, we settled on Descript software, which although not producing entirely accurate transcripts, was more accurate than other transcription software we tried. However, we still needed to transcribe the audio recording manually, and each account could only convert one hour of audio, so we used different accounts to transcribe it. Overall, manual transcription was the most effective method, and we completed it successfully.

Step 2: Transcription of the audio recording

Once we had settled on Descript software for the preliminary draft transcription, we transferred the transcript to Google Docs to continue manually transcribing it. This was necessary because while the software did provide audio playback, it was quite laggy to use. We found that it was more efficient to listen to the audio recording and amend the transcript manually. This process was used consistently throughout all the focus group interviews and pilot studies. We ensured that we were thorough and accurate in the manual transcribing to maintain the integrity of the data. This step was crucial to ensure that we had high-quality data for analysis, which would ultimately help us draw meaningful conclusions for our research.

Besides, as researchers, we understand the importance of accurately transcribing recorded interview audio. Transcription is a critical task that requires attention to detail, patience, and skill. When transcribing, we aim to capture the spoken words and nonverbal cues of the interviewee in a way that reflects the nuances of the conversation. To achieve this, we typically listen to the audio multiple times, taking care to note any unfamiliar terms or phrases that may require additional research. We also strive to maintain a consistent format, using appropriate punctuation and labeling speakers when necessary. Ultimately, our goal is to produce a clear and comprehensive transcript that can be used for analysis and reference. A well-executed transcription allows us to analyze the data in a more organized and efficient manner and ultimately leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the interview content.

Step 3: Learn to use Nvivo

The first step in learning to use Nvivo was for us to download and install the software on our computers. Next, we searched for Nvivo tutorial videos on YouTube and other online platforms to learn the basic functions of the software, such as how to create a new project, node, and folder, as well as how to import data. However, we soon discovered that the software required a license, which meant we needed to pay for it. After consulting with our advisor, we learned that the campus provided access to Nvivo software at the language lab.

From there, we began booking lab time and started exploring Nvivo 12 Pro. We practiced using Nvivo with sample projects to become familiar with the features and tools. It was important for us to get hands-on experience with the software to understand its full capabilities and learn how to use it effectively for our research. Additionally, we sought guidance from experienced users and took advantage of the various resources and support available through the software's official website. With continued practice and learning, we were able to master the software and use it to conduct a thorough and insightful analysis of our data.

Step 4: Importing the transcript to Nvivo

After completing all the manual transcriptions, we carefully reviewed and double-checked each transcript to minimize errors. In addition, we wanted to ensure the accuracy of the transcribed data in order to maintain the validity and reliability of our research findings. Therefore, two methods were used to confirm the accuracy of the transcript. Firstly, the transcribed data was sent back to the participants through the email collected from them to review and confirm the accuracy of the content. Secondly, the participants were asked to verify the accuracy of the transcript during the physical focus group interview to ensure that the data collected is as accurate as possible. Once we were confident in the accuracy of the transcripts, we downloaded them from Google Docs to a Word document, which we could import into Nvivo. This was a critical step in our research, as it allowed us to begin coding and organizing the data.

We followed a specific procedure to import our Word document transcript into the Nvivo software. Firstly, we opened the Nvivo application and selected the "File" option. Next, we clicked on "Add File" and selected the transcript Word document that we wanted to import. Once we had done this, the transcript was successfully imported into Nvivo and ready to be processed in the next steps, which included creating themes and coding the data. By following this procedure, we were able to efficiently and accurately import our transcript into Nvivo for further analysis.

In Nvivo, we created nodes based on our research questions and began coding the transcripts by assigning relevant themes and categories to specific nodes. The nodes are tools in Nvivo used to categorize and organize data during the qualitative data analysis process. Nodes can be thought of as tags or labels that are applied to different pieces of data. This process helped us to identify patterns, themes, and trends within the data and enabled us to draw meaningful conclusions. Additionally, Nvivo allowed us to conduct various analyses and visualizations to explore the data further. Overall, importing the transcript to Nvivo was a crucial step in our research, as it allowed us to conduct a rigorous analysis of the data and gain insights that would have been difficult to obtain using manual methods alone.

Step 5: Creating themes and codes

Creating themes and codes is a crucial step in analyzing the data collected from focus group interviews. To begin, we read through the transcript and identified any recurring patterns, words, or phrases. These recurring patterns helped us create codes and themes that accurately reflected the data. It's important to make sure the codes and themes are relevant and consistent throughout the transcript.

Once we have created the themes and codes, the next step is to apply them to the transcript. To do this, we highlight the relevant sections of the transcript and assign the relevant theme or code. It's important to be consistent and accurate when assigning codes to the data. This process can be time-consuming and challenging, but it's essential for accurate analysis of the data. Additionally, using Nvivo software makes this process easier as it allows for efficient and organized coding of the data. Through this process, we were able to gain a

deeper understanding of the data and uncover important insights that will be useful in our research.

Step 6: Using NVivo for Coding

As researchers, we have utilized Nvivo for coding our qualitative data, allowing us to identify and organize key themes and patterns in the data. To begin the coding process, we first imported the transcription of the focus group interview into Nvivo. Next, we created nodes or categories that reflected the research question or topics of the interview. These nodes allowed us to categorize and group data based on themes that emerged from the data. Once nodes were created, we began coding the transcription by selecting or highlighting relevant sentences and dragging them to the specific node created to add them as its content or reference. We then reviewed the coding to ensure that it accurately reflected the research question, making any necessary adjustments along the way.

Finally, we utilized the coding to generate reports, visualizations, and other outputs, providing us with a deeper understanding of the data and helping us to draw conclusions based on our research question. By using Nvivo for coding, we are able to streamline our analysis process and gain valuable insights from our qualitative data.

Step 7: Redoing Coding in NVivo

As researchers using NVivo for data coding, we may encounter instances where we have coded incorrectly or missed a crucial theme during the coding process. At times, it may be due to our lack of familiarity with the software, and we may find ourselves struggling to bring the data to the correct nodes. In such cases, we prefer to redo the coding to generate accurate and valid data. Although it can be time-consuming and challenging, it is crucial to ensure the accuracy and validity of the data.

Once we have completed the recoding process, we review the coding to ensure that it accurately reflects the research question. This step is necessary to avoid any further errors or

inconsistencies and to ensure that the final analysis is reliable and valid. In conclusion, the process of redoing coding in NVivo is a vital step in our research, as it helps us to correct any mistakes and ensure the accuracy of our findings.

Step 8: Ensure that the codes are related to the research questions

Before creating any nodes or codes, we review our research questions to ensure that we have a clear understanding of what we are looking for in the data. We then use these research questions to create codes and nodes that reflect the key themes and concepts that we are interested in exploring.

Once we have created our codes, we begin the coding process by carefully reviewing the data and assigning relevant passages or sentences to the appropriate codes. As we do this, we ask ourselves whether the passages we are coding are related to our research questions and whether they reflect the key themes and concepts that we are interested in exploring.

When we find that some codes are not directly related to our research questions, we revise or refine them to better reflect our research interests. Similarly, when we find that some passages or sentences are not being adequately captured by our codes, we create new codes or adjust existing ones to ensure that all relevant data is being accurately coded.

Overall, ensuring that our codes are related to our research questions requires a careful and ongoing review process. By regularly reviewing and refining our codes in light of our research questions, we can be confident that our analysis is accurate, insightful, and grounded in the key themes and concepts that we are interested in exploring.

4.2 Data Saturation

Reaching a data saturation is a point in qualitative research where the new data collected begins to repeat what has already been identified, indicating that further data collection would not yield any new insights (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Saunders et al., 2018). By conducting five

focus group interviews, this study was able to collect sufficient data to answer the research questions and reach data saturation.

In the case of focus groups, data saturation is often achieved when there is no new information or themes emerging from the discussions (Saunders et al., 2018). This means that the topics discussed have been thoroughly explored, and further discussions are unlikely to generate new or meaningful data. In other words, saturation is reached when collecting additional data is no longer necessary because the researcher has obtained enough data to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon (Francis et al., 2010; Hennink & Kaiser, 2021). Typically, researchers use various strategies to determine if data saturation has been reached. For instance, they may use coding and analysis techniques to identify recurring themes and patterns in the data or compare the findings across multiple focus groups to see if the same themes are emerging (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

In this study, data saturation point was reached after conducting five focus groups. This indicates that the participants from focus group one to focus group 5 had shared their experiences and opinions on the research topic to the point where new information or themes were no longer being introduced. After I analyzed the data from each interviewed focus group, I realized that the themes and codes generated from the data became repetitive, which means that the research questions had been sufficiently explored and answered.

Therefore, there was no need to conduct further focus groups because further data collection would not have provided any new insights or added value to the study, and the study was concluded based on the data collected from the five focus group interviews. Thus, the decision to stop conducting focus group interviews was based on reaching data saturation and ensuring the research findings were comprehensive and sufficient to address the research questions.

4.3 Documents Analysis

In this research, the collection of information is carried out for triangulation such as by collecting and analyzing the information found on the UTAR website, such as UTAR News, the UTAR faculty and course, SDG Report, the programme structure, syllabus and the final

reflection report that the students completed and submitted in 2022, member checking. These documents were gathered and examined while pseudonyms were used instead of real names throughout data processing to protect privacy. Similarly, we used member checking by sending the documents gathered regarding the project described by participants as well as the interview transcript for evaluation. As the previous researcher indicated, this procedure can ensure that all participants validate their interview transcripts to verify the accuracy of their reflections and increase the reliability of the findings (Goldblatt et al., 2011; Varpio et al., 2017).

In the case of the previous CSR students at UTAR, self-journaling (see Appendix G) was used to maintain objectivity and avoid potential biases while analyzing the data collected from focus group interviews with previous students (Kennedy, 2016). We have recorded our personal values and beliefs related to the importance of SL and social responsibility, as well as any feedback or insights gathered from the focus group interviews. This allowed the us to use our own personal values as a guide while maintaining objectivity in their analysis.

After accumulating data from several sources, we contrasted the results to assess whether they were coherent or if there were any inconsistencies and examined the causes of differences to gain a more in-depth comprehension of the research topic if there are disparities in order to increase the saturation and present a more holistic overview of the research topic (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Hence, it can facilitate a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives.

4.3.1 Document analysis procedure

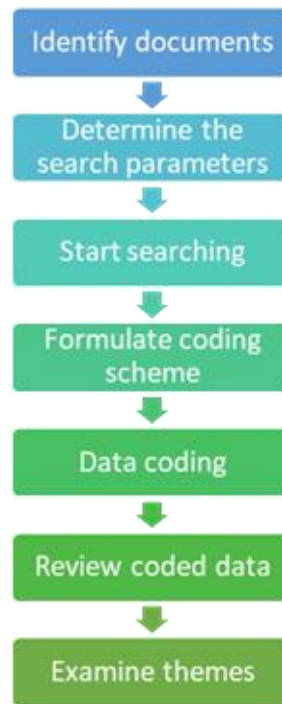


Table 4.2: UTAR Programme structures review procedure

To review all the programme structures in UTAR in order to look for courses related to SL using document analysis, a systematic process has been involved. To start, the researcher has identified the documents that contain information on the programme structure of the university such as programme structure, student handbooks, and course catalog. This is due to the documents are usually accessible via the university's website or the appropriate office or department. Secondly, the researcher has determined the search parameters to locate suitable SL programmes such as searching keywords like "community service," "service-learning," "civic engagement," "social responsibility," and "personal responsibility".

Start with a Google search to find relevant articles that help to find possible courses and extract the relevant data. After searching for all the relevant documents, formulate a coding scheme that accurately represents the dominant ideas covered in each of the SL programmes such as including elements like course name, course description, institution, and final project for SL. The recognised courses can also be coded according to the coding

scheme using techniques like highlighting and assigning characteristics. Lastly, examine the themes and patterns in the coded data to obtain insight into the university's SL course structure after you're done coding and have verified the accuracy and authenticity of the coded data.

4.3.2 Service-learning Programme Description in UTAR

4.3.2.1 *UAMP3084 Corporate Social Responsibility*

Based on the programme structure, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is an credit-bearing course and academic requirement for all students who enrolled in Public Relations only in the last two years (Year2Trimester3 or Year3Trimester1/2/3) of university life. There is no CSR course founded from 9 different faculty in UTAR after went through all 131 programme structures. One of the most significant components that should not be ignored is the course syllabus, which is a document that covers the objectives, requirements, credit earned, grading scale, and course learning outcome for a particular academic course that is generally issued to students at the beginning of the course. Through the syllabus, this course provides an overview of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its function in the current challenging competitive business environment. Hence, it can be comprehended that students will obtain knowledge of CSR's concept through a multi-perspective analysis of an organisation's corporate social responsibility, including its trends, obstacles, opportunities, and challenges.

The course's stated objective is for students to be able to analyse corporate social responsibility in terms of current issues and coordinate CSR initiatives on behalf of the company. Thus, most of the interviewer mentioned their understanding of SL by relating to experiential learning, which also means the course offered them hands-on field experience on dealing with and giving back to the community through conducting a practical event. Besides, they also have the chance to examine how corporations around the world are practising their commitment to CSR as most of the application of knowledge has been integrated to let them plan, execute and evaluate by themselves with the monitoring of advisors.

Based on the course description, CSR is able to enhance one's cognitive skills, communication skills, leadership, autonomy and responsibilities, personal Skills (Life-long learning) and the ethics and professionalism of a learner. Hence, the majority of the course students' responses can be categorised as personal growth because they reflect transferrable academic skills applicable in various contexts.

4.3.2.2 MPU34032 Community Project

Community Project, which is also known as MPU programme, is an elective course offered by UTAR in the structure of the student's curriculum. Based on the syllabus, it is a course where students will get a deeper grasp of civic consciousness and social responsibility via the activities and project. By participating in a community project, students will be able to get experience using soft skills and develop networks that will serve them well throughout their lives.

This course's ultimate objective is to help students become more civically engaged and responsible by encouraging them to teach others what they've learned and give back to their communities. The community service initiatives allow students to practise their interpersonal skills while also putting their understanding of how to learn independently to the test. Additionally, the course learning outcome has stated that it allows learners to understand the difficulties and proper etiquette of interacting with people from different cultures and traditions by demonstrating interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities in real-world contexts. Lastly, learners are able to establish social responsibility project and learn to keep learning throughout your life by taking part in service activities.

In conclusion, the documents selected contain a wealth of information that can be used to gain insights and able to address the learners' understanding of SL. Most of the documents can be easily accessed and available online, which makes them credible because it was generated by the institution itself. Hence, it is suitable to use for data triangulation as multiple sources of data have been collected to validate the findings.

4.3.3 UTAR Website

4.3.3.1 UTAR 2021 SDG Report

UTAR's long-term goals are in line with the United Nations' worldwide Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to eliminate extreme poverty, safeguard the planet, and promote prosperity for all. The University has expanded greatly over the years, and its strategic goals for the next decade are outlined in the 10-Year Strategic Plan (2013-2022), which aims to define the strategic directions essential to propel the University to greater heights in support of quality education and to prepare youths to be future responsible leaders and citizens in order to meet the nation's human resource needs. They believe that youth can be educated to become productive members of society and enablers of peace, tolerance, and respect for diverse communities; supporters and implementers of green practises to ensure sustainability; and contributors to the community's economic and social welfare in an effort to eradicate poverty.

UTAR has been committed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) since its beginnings, and as such, it has developed high-quality programmes that reflect their goals, implemented good governance, broadened its partnerships and student bodies, used effective teaching and learning pedagogy, conducted original research, published widely, and increased its community outreach. Hence, the university has always worked to improve the world and the diversity of awards it has received demonstrates the breadth of its impact, which encompasses fields such as community engagement, green technology, medical aid, economic growth, intercultural understanding, and scholarship finance. Two notable awards are the Sin Chew Business Excellence Award 2017 in the CSR Excellence Award category and the Sin Chew Education Awards (SCEA) 2018/2019 for Outstanding Educational Institutions in the Private Universities/Colleges Category. UTAR is the 84th most sustainable university in the world, according to the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings 2021.

4.3.4 UTAR News

4.3.4.1 Tiada Kuman Tiada Jangkitan

Based on the news obtained from UTAR's website on 2nd of April, 2022, this is a CSR project completed by ten students from Bachelor of Communication (Honours) Public Relations (PR) which took place in Kampung Baru Mambang Diawan. run in tandem with Majlis Daerah Kampar (MDKpr). The objective of this project was to raise awareness of environmental cleanliness and dengue issues in the area with the ultimate goal of reducing the prevalence of the mosquito-borne disease and bringing about an overall improvement in the quality of life there. The session was attended by a total of 26 student volunteers, including the organising committee and 10 MDKpr employees.

4.3.4.2 Keep Your Eyes Open at Air Terjun Batu Berangkai

This CSR Project was implemented on 10th April 2022 and was in line with SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being). The goal of the project is to warn locals in Kampar and tourists of potential dangers near the waterfall. The organizing committees have made three banners about the drowning problem in Air Terjun Batu Berangkai to serve as a warning in order to prepare the public about the impending threats. A total of thirty-seven UTAR students, together with the project partners and sponsors.

4.3.4.3 Lets Shine For Hope

The students from UTAR Public Relations Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative opened a reading corner at the Persatuan Pusat Jagaan Kasih Sayang Kampar on 9th of April, 2022. The event was attended by the Head of Department of Public Relations of the UTAR as well as the initiator of the charity sales. The committee included ten students with the same purpose of raising awareness of the centre and renovating its infrastructure so that the children who live there can enhance their quality of life. The reading room was also constructed to improve the educational ambience of the centre and to pique the children's interest in learning. Before the event, the organizing committee collaborated with the charity

sales initiator by collecting old goods, hiring charity shoppers, and selling things. At last, the group was able to raise nearly RM6,000 for the centre by selling donated used products.

The aspects of SL must account for how students perceive and understand the meaning behind it based on their knowledge in schools. Looking in-depth, it must account for how learners perceive and understand the SL elements. Hence, the documents and articles were drawn from the roughly 40 documents in total, including news articles as well as the UTAR website (UTAR News, SDG Report, Undergraduate programmes, Faculty of Art and Social Science, Bachelor of Communication (Honours) Public Relations, Programme structure) by putting them into context before coding them when discussing the research question by addressing the programme structure and course syllabus as well. Alongside document analysis, interviews answer played an significant role in the analysis and were searched and used for triangulation

The articles were selected if they met the following criteria (a) articles or documents published on the UTAR Website, (b) the topic and article of SL being addressed, (c) the programme structure, (d) the course syllabus. Documents that addressed SL or corporate social responsibility (CSR) included intent to define or describe SL methods for learners. Two researchers examined each article and abstract independently to decide whether the documents fulfilled the study criteria. Where there was a dispute, all researchers will read the documents in full about whether it should be included in the study until it reaches a consensus.

4.4 Findings

4.4.1 Aspects of SL in UTAR

RQ1: What is service-learning at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)?

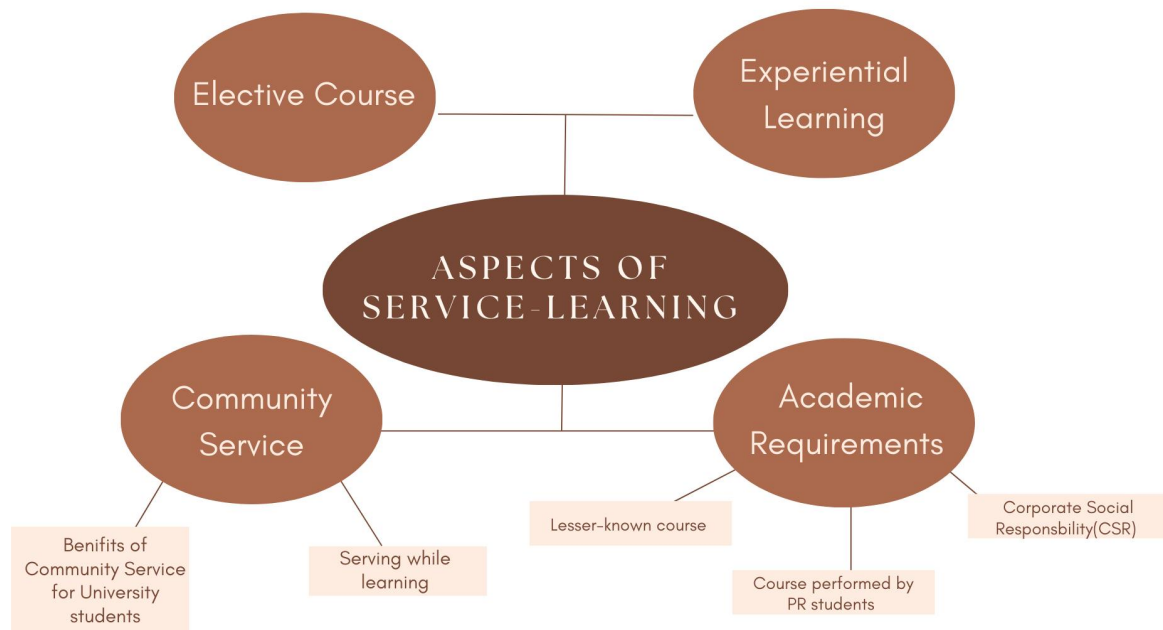


Table 4.3: Aspects of SL in UTAR

From the analysis of data obtained from the learners, three themes were identified as the aspects of SL, including experiential learning, academic requirement, and community service.

4.4.1.1 Experiential learning

Experiential learning. The term “experiential learning” refers to a kind of education that places emphasis on gaining knowledge via personal experience and observation. By participating in activities that put what learners have learned into practice, they can better understand the concepts they're studying and become more proficient in their chosen fields. The participants has described their understanding of SL, and the majority of them have remarked that SL refers to learning outside of the classroom, which they can emotionally and practically experience. Students can also participate in various service activities that address real-world community issues. The students of CSR also stated that the course allows students to study practically instead of theoretically.

"Service-Learning is that the university combines teaching materials with community service. It's like letting the students to learn their knowledge and experience them, develop them by organizing events that can meet the community needs."

"What we learn in lecture and tutorial class, the textbook skills and all those knowledges will be implemented into a hands-on, event or hands on experience. Which what we call what I understand it as service learning."

"In my understanding, I think service learning is more on experiential learning. where student can learn and develop through active participation in organized services and that meet the needs of the community."

"Service-learning will let students practically feel the real world and feel the society instead of daily learning on the theoretical knowledge in the classroom."

The participants in this transcript have shared their understanding of SL as a form of experiential learning that combines classroom knowledge with real-world community service. They see SL as an opportunity to gain practical experience, learn through active participation, and develop skills by organizing events that meet community needs. The participants' comments also highlight the importance of practical, hands-on learning opportunities that complement traditional classroom instruction.

"In my understanding, I think service learning is more on experiential learning. where student can learn and develop through active participation in organized services and that meet the needs of the community."

Specifically, the words and phrases related to the study include "experiential learning," "community service," "organized services," "meet the needs of the community,"

"practically feel the real world," and "develop through active participation." These statements highlight the importance of SL as a means of connecting theoretical learning with real-world experience, promoting community engagement and social responsibility, and fostering personal and professional development among university students.

These participant perspectives to gain insights into how SL is understood and experienced by students. Researcher can also explore how SL can be designed and implemented to effectively support student learning and engagement while addressing community needs.

4.4.1.2 Academic requirement

Academic requirement. “Academic requirements” means qualifications that must be met before a student can enrol and complete a degree programme. One participant of CSR highlighted that SL in UTAR is about CSR and Community Project (MPU Programme). She added that CSR is a core course, while the community project is an elective course offered by UTAR in the structure of the student's curriculum. The majority of the participant in CSR highlighted that public relations students have more opportunities to implement SL, as students can engage in courses related to community service. This is due to the fact that according to their understanding, SL-related courses such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) will only be required by Public Relations students. One of the CSR students also revealed that she thinks CSR is a lesser-known course as students from other courses do not have sufficient information about CSR projects.

“Other faculties also have the MPU program to let students choose courses related to community service”

“UTAR did focus on service learning, but one of the issues I found out is just very least platform to reach this service learning. For example, just PR will go to CSR, but for Aiesec, we can only experience it when we are in the club. Let’s say I am an advertising student, I might not have the chance to conduct the service learning.”

"It also provides various kinds of opportunities for many of our students to join the workshop, such as STEM talk, and also, everyone has provided a new village community project as well."

The CSR and community project participant's transcripts highlight the aspect of academic requirements related to SL in UTAR. The participants discussed how SL is integrated into the academic curriculum through courses such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Community Project, which are part of the MPU program at UTAR. The participants also highlighted that public relations students have more opportunities to engage in SL activities because of the courses related to community service offered to them. However, there was a concern raised by one participant that SL opportunities are not accessible to students from other faculties or courses.

"I think service learning in UTAR is just a course to educate students to conduct the activities or events to help and serve the community within one semester, and then it is a practical course where we need to do everything practically, we need to plan what we are going to do in order to serve the community before executing the activity."

The participant also points out that there are limited opportunities for students from other courses to conduct SL. The transcript highlights the words "course," "educate," "community," "semester," "MPU program," "platform," "opportunities," and "Corporate Social Responsibility," which are all related to the study's focus on SL in UTAR.

4.4.1.3 Community service

Community service. "Community service" means volunteer work done by people or organisations to enhance local conditions. It entails helping those in need by contributing one's time as well as resources to worthy causes like charities and public service projects.

Meanwhile, the community may be a service recipient, a project partner, or a stakeholder involved in the project's outcomes. The CSR students have claimed that their understanding of SL is highly related to the community by integrating community service into academic courses. Most of the answers obtained also included “serving, benefit, helping or gives back to the community”.

"I think service-learning is a course to educate students to conduct activities or events to help and serve the community."

"SL normally provides a series of activities which address real community needs."

"It is an academically relevant service, or any activity that represents human or community needs into a course"

"It provides the opportunity for students to apply those theories learned in class in a practical setting which address real community needs."

"I think service-learning is helping the community and do good thing to the society. In addition, to study at the classroom, we can go out of the classroom and do some activities that benefit to the community."

The participants in the study provided various definitions and understandings of SL, but they all agreed that it involves serving and giving back to the community. The participants emphasized that SL provides an opportunity for students to apply what they have learned in class to address real community needs. They also noted that SL involves an interpersonal approach and is not just a learning opportunity, but a chance for students to physically do something for the community.

"Based on my understanding for the service learning, I think is interpersonal approach for the university students to have, and it's not only a learning opportunity, but also let the

student have the chance to like practically, and physically to do something for the community."

"Service learning is a process where we provide the service to the community and then during the progress of preparing all the service, we are learning at the same time. So it was we learn a new thing and then we give back to the community at the same time."

The CSR participants also pointed out that SL is an academically relevant service and can be integrated into academic courses, like the Corporate Social Responsibility course, to benefit the community.

"So, throughout the process, me and my team members can carry out our project successfully by conducting the service like the CSR project. So, it makes positive contributions in the campus and in the local communities."

Overall, the highlighted words that relate to the study are "help and serve the community", "real community needs", "academically relevant service", "practical setting which address real community needs", "benefit to the community", "physically do something for the community", "provide the service to the community", "learn a new thing and then give back to the community", and "positive contributions in the campus and in the local communities". These words demonstrate the participants' understanding of SL as a course that involves practical activities that aim to address real community needs, and which provides opportunities for students to apply theoretical knowledge learned in class. Additionally, the participants recognize the importance of SL as a way to contribute to the community and make a positive impact in both the campus and the local communities.

4.4.2 Challenges Faced By Learners In Service-Learning

RQ2: What are the challenges faced by learners in service-learning?

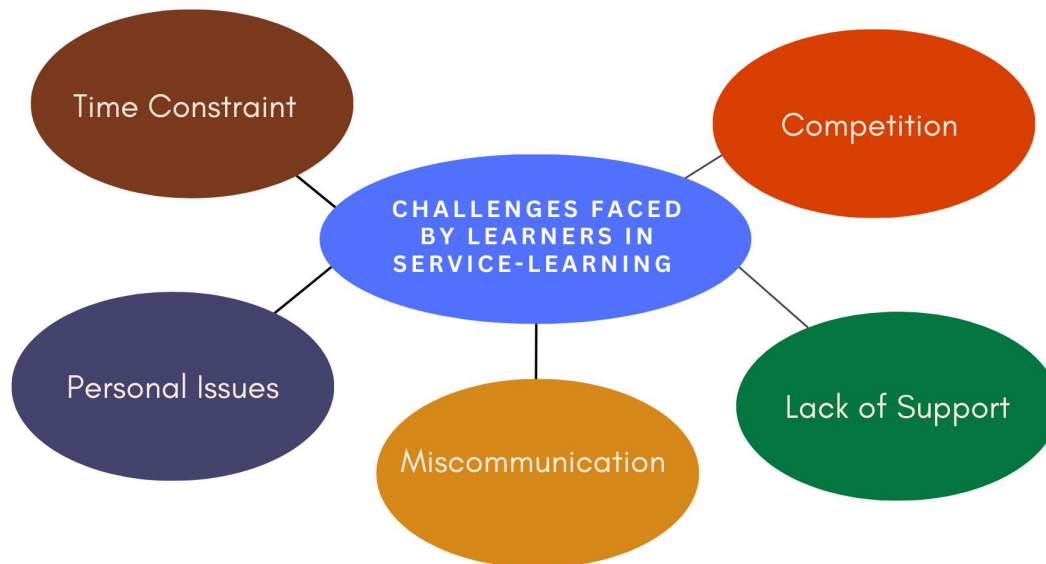


Table 4.4: Challenges faced by learners in service-learning

Challenges. “Challenges” means problems or difficulties that people face when attempting to do something. They may have physical, mental, emotional, or financial issues that make it difficult for them to achieve your objectives. Overcoming challenges requires them to persevere even when things are difficult, which can help them learn new skills and gain confidence. However, challenges can be stressful and difficult to deal with, and it is critical that people ask for help when they need it.

SL courses provide students with opportunities to participate in hands-on, real-world activities that address community needs. These courses provide students with an exceptional opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to real-world situations. However, as with any new experience, students enrolled in SL courses encountered challenges. SL provides an opportunity for students to reflect critically upon their service experiences. The participants found the programme challenging and exciting as several challenges and conflicts occurred during the project execution, such as the miscommunication, personal issues, lack of emotional support, time constraints, and competition.

4.4.2.1 Time Constraints

Time constraint is a common challenge faced by learners during the planning and execution stages of SL projects. Many students have to juggle their SL projects with their academic coursework and other responsibilities, which can make it difficult to find sufficient time to devote to their service projects. Additionally, some SL projects have strict timelines, leaving little room for flexibility. This can create a sense of rush and pressure. As a result, this leads to difficulties in coordinating and managing the project, as well as in managing team dynamics.

One of the primary issues that arise from time constraints is the lack of time for warm-up and preparation. Learners often have to jump straight into the project without sufficient time to prepare, which can lead to confusion and misunderstandings. In addition, the rush to complete the project can make it difficult to engage stakeholders effectively. Learners may struggle to secure the necessary support and resources they need to complete their projects, which can impact the overall quality of the project.

Furthermore, stakeholders themselves may be impacted by time constraints, leading to postponements or rescheduling of meetings, which can disrupt the preparation process. This can cause learners to feel frustrated and discouraged, as their progress is delayed. Overall, the lack of time can be a major challenge for learners, making it difficult to manage the project effectively and achieve the desired outcomes.

“There was insufficient time for us to limber up in the position that we had previously held.

Thus, everything transpired simultaneously in a period of extreme urgency.”

“In a limited time, must reach out to numerous stakeholders and manage many other things.”

“I couldn't rest because we had to finish everything quickly.”

“Do an event with around 10 individuals only on a tight timeframe.”

4.4.2.2 Personal Issues

Personal obstacles can have a significant impact on a learner's ability to participate fully in a SL project. These obstacles could include some issues, such as health problems, family issues, financial difficulties, or personal relationship problems. These challenges can cause stress and anxiety, which can negatively affect a learner's motivation and effort in the project. During the interviewing session, participants had to talk about their personal issues which might be a challenge during the planning and executing SL, such as difficulties in working with others, and unable to adapt because of personal previous experience.

In addition to personal obstacles, students also faced challenges related to the demands of the SL project itself. For example, students found themselves struggling to balance their academic workload with the demands of the project, which often required significant time and effort. Some students also found it difficult to work collaboratively with others, particularly when there were differences in opinion or personality clashes.

“Personal issues and difficulties in working with others, specifically a micromanaging supervisor, affected their motivation and ability to put effort into the project, which hindered the learning process.”

“I have not worked with this person before, so maybe she didn't know that I can do my work without people telling me, this was my biggest hurdle.”

4.4.2.3 Lack of Support

The lack of support is another challenge that learners face during the SL planning and executing stage. Learners may find themselves in situations where they require emotional support from their team members, but they do not receive it. In such cases, learners may feel unsupported and overwhelmed, which can affect their motivation and performance. For

instance, one learner mentioned that her role as director required emotional support from team members, but she did not receive this support. As a result, she felt limited in expressing her thoughts and ideas, which made the experience difficult for her.

Similarly, learners face challenges in expressing themselves due to a lack of emotional support. When learners do not feel supported by their team members, they find it difficult to express their thoughts and ideas freely. This lack of expression can hinder the learning process, as learners unable to contribute fully to the project. Additionally, learners may feel isolated and disconnected from their team members, which can lead to a negative experience.

Furthermore, the lack of emotional support can also impact the overall team dynamic. When learners feel unsupported or undervalued, it can create tension and conflict within the team. This can lead to a breakdown in communication and collaboration, which can ultimately hinder the success of the project.

“I believe that as director requires a great deal of emotional support from team members. I think that I did not receive this level of support throughout the execution and planning phases. Thus, it was a very difficult route for me.”

“I believe that the freedom of expressing my thoughts and the freedom of giving ideas based on everyone's perception were not particularly enjoyable due to this restriction.”

4.4.2.4 Miscommunication

Communication is an essential aspect of any team project, and SL courses are no exception. However, according to learners, miscommunication can arise due to various reasons, including the failure to voice out problems, and different opinions and conflicts. Miscommunication among team members and advisors can have detrimental effects on the outcome of a SL project, the learning experience, and even the emotional well-being of the participants.

One of the significant challenges of miscommunication among team members is the failure to voice out problems. Often, team members are reluctant to speak up when they encounter difficulties, fearing that they may be perceived as weak or incompetent. This reluctance to voice out problems can result in misunderstandings, backstabbing, and even project failure. When team members fail to communicate effectively, they are likely to work on different assumptions, leading to confusion, wasted efforts, and different opinions. The failure to communicate effectively can also lead to a lack of trust among team members. When team members fail to voice out problems or communicate effectively, they may begin to doubt each other's abilities and intentions. This lack of trust can create a negative atmosphere, making it difficult for team members to work together effectively. In the absence of trust, team members may also become reluctant to share their ideas, further exacerbating the communication problem.

“I believe that individuals don't want to express themselves because they have a negative attitude towards you, disagree with your viewpoint, and don't wish to offend you.”

“Making derogatory remarks behind your back.”

“Yes, they do not want this, but they do not wish to express it.”

The next significant challenge among team members in SL project is the differing opinions between group members and advisor during the planning and executing stages of SL courses which can have significant impacts on the overall success of the project. It can be challenging to navigate different perspectives and ideas, particularly when working with individuals who may have vastly different backgrounds and experiences.

One approach that some learners have found helpful is to combine their ideas and come up with a plan that incorporates everyone's suggestions. This can involve a process of negotiation and compromise, where group members work together to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each idea and develop a new approach that builds on the best aspects of each. However, this process can also be time-consuming and may require significant effort to

build consensus among group members. Learners may need to be willing to be flexible and open-minded in order to make progress toward a shared goal.

“We came up with a few schemes, and then implemented them. We excluded whatever items the advisor possessed. Then, we attempted to improvise the new idea by combining elements that could work from the previous concept. Yeah. I would say that this is akin to complementing each other's ideas.”

“The problem is that everyone has various thoughts and opinions. Then, during the planning phase, we must ensure that everyone has the same goals.”

“Initially we have differing opinions with our instructor.”

4.4.2.5 Competition

Another significant challenge that learners faced during SL is the competition and comparison between groups, which creates stress. The pressure to be better than other groups can be overwhelming and add unnecessary stress to the already challenging process. As mentioned by one of the participants, executing a CSR project is not a simple task, and the pressure to outperform other groups can make it even more daunting.

Participants of SL projects are usually organized into groups to work on a project together. During this process, they are expected to collaborate, communicate, and cooperate with each other to achieve their common goals. However, this teamwork can sometimes be undermined by competition and comparison between groups. As one of the participants stated, comparing groups could lead to pressure for each group to outperform the others. This competition mindset can result in a lack of cooperation and collaboration within the group, which can negatively affect the project's outcome and the individual's learning experience.

Moreover, comparing one's progress with other groups can lead to feelings of inferiority or superiority, which can cause stress and anxiety. One of the participants mentioned that they will experience tension when developing a solution or any other means

of resolving the issue. This pressure can cause learners to focus more on achieving their project's outcome rather than focusing on the learning experience, which is the primary objective of SL.

The stress and pressure created by competition and comparison between groups can also lead to a negative impact on learners' mental and emotional well-being. Learners may feel overwhelmed, anxious, and stressed, which can lead to burnout and reduced motivation to complete the project. As a result, the quality of the project may be compromised, and the learners may not fully benefit from the SL experience.

"So, this will also create stress for us each of the groups to be better than the other group."

"It will be stressful for us to come up with a method or solution to the problem."

"I believe that during that time we will have eight groups, and we will compare ourselves to the other groups."

4.5 Results

Figure 4.5 shows the kappa value generated from our study findings using Nvivo 12 Pro. In the table provided, the kappa value for each code are presented. The values range from 0.6587 to 0.9638, which indicate a range of agreement between two coders, coder A and coder B. According to Table 4.7, the average kappa value across all codes is 0.8038, which indicates a substantial agreement between the two coders.

In Table 4.7, the average kappa value for each Focus Group 1 (FG1), Focus Group 2 (FG2), and Focus Group 3 (FG3) are 0.7399, 0.7327, and 0.9388 respectively. Each focus group's average kappa value is counted in the way of, as refer to Table 2.1, the total of kappa values of RQ1, and RQ2 of each focus group, and divided by two. For example, FG1's average kappa value is 0.7399, it is counted in the way of, $(0.6587+0.8211) \div 2 = 0.7399$.

Next, in Table 2.2, for the total average kappa value is counted in the way of sum of the average kappa value of each focus group, and divided by three, which is $(0.7399+0.7327+0.9388) \div 3 = 0.8038$.

Code	File	File Folder	File Size	Kappa	Agreement (%)
RQ1 What is	FG1	Files	61051 chars	0.6587	98.91
RQ1 What is	FG2	Files	63867 chars	0.7167	98.71
RQ1 What is	FG3	Files	47901 chars	0.9137	99.61
RQ2 What ar	FG1	Files	61051 chars	0.8211	99.21
RQ2 What ar	FG2	Files	63867 chars	0.7484	99.68
RQ2 What ar	FG3	Files	47901 chars	0.9638	99.95

Table 4.5: Kappa Value generated from Nvivo Software

AVERAGE KAPPA	
FOCUS GROUP 1	0.7399
FOCUS GROUP 2	0.7327
FOCUS GROUP 3	0.9388
TOTAL AVERAGE KAPPA	0.8038

Table 4.6: Total Average Kappa Value

Cohen's Kappa	Interpretation
0	No agreement
0.10 - 0.20	Slight agreement
0.21 - 0.40	Fair agreement
0.41 - 0.60	Moderate agreement
0.61 - 0.80	Substantial agreement
0.81 - 0.99	Near perfect agreement
1	Perfect agreement

Table 4.7: Cohen's Kappa Value

The kappa value for each code is important to consider as it indicates the level of agreement specifically for that code. For example, based on Figure 4.5, a kappa value of 0.6587 for the code *What is service-learning in UTAR* of Focus Group 1 shows that there was only substantial agreement between the two coders for this code, whereas a kappa value of 0.9638 for the code *What are the challenges faced by learners in service-learning?* of Focus Group 3 shows that there was a near perfect agreement between the two coders for this code.

Based on the Kappa values provided, Figure 4.5 it appears that there is substantial agreement among the coders for the first research question, *What is service-learning at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)?* for all three focus groups. A Kappa value of 0.6587 for focus group one suggests substantial agreement, while values of 0.7167 and 0.9137 for focus groups two and three, respectively, indicate substantial to almost perfect agreement. The Kappa values show that there is a relatively high level of agreement among the coders for the first research question in all three focus groups, which provides some confidence in the reliability of the coding for this question.

Next, based on research question two, the Kappa values provided, it appears that there is substantial to almost perfect agreement among the coders for the second research question, *What are the challenges faced by learners in service-learning?* for all three focus groups. A Kappa value of 0.8211 for focus group one suggests substantial agreement, while values of 0.7484 and 0.9638 for focus groups two and three, respectively, indicate substantial to almost perfect agreement. Overall, the Kappa values for research question two suggest that the coders were generally consistent in their categorization of the data across all focus groups.

In summary, based on the Kappa values for each focus group and research question, the Kappa values indicate moderate to substantial agreement among coders for the first research question, *What is service-learning at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)?* for all three focus groups, and substantial to almost perfect agreement for the second research question, *What are the challenges faced by learners in service-learning?* for all three focus groups. Overall, the high Kappa values provide confidence in the reliability of the coding for both research questions.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

The discussion section of Chapter 5 begins by summarizing the main findings from the previous chapter, which identified the aspects of SL and the challenges faced by students in this type of learning. The current study aimed to explore the concept of SL among UTAR learners and identify the challenges they faced. Subsequently, the results of the study revealed three key themes of SL, including experiential learning, academic requirement, community service and elective course. Moreover, the challenges faced by students, such as time constraints, miscommunication, personal issues, lack of support and competition. Therefore, these findings contribute to the existing literature on SL and student challenges in this context. The limitations of the study are also discussed while recommendations for future research are suggested in this chapter. In summary, the discussion provides a comprehensive analysis of the research findings and their implications for SL practices in UTAR and beyond.

5.1 Aspects of Service-Learning at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman and Challenges Faced

To answer the research questions, data was collected through focus group interviews with 9 undergraduate students who had participated in SL at UTAR. The data was analysed using thematic analysis, which revealed two main themes: (1) Aspects of SL in UTAR, (2) Challenges faced by learners in their SL experience.

Based on the data analysis, the key findings of this research revealed that SL at UTAR is an effective experiential learning strategy that combines academic requirements and community service. According to the findings, the CSR students have claimed that these were the aspects of SL in UTAR because SL at UTAR is an approach to education that integrates classroom study with substantial community involvement.

5.1.1 Aspects of Service-Learning (SL)

The study data showed that the most important aspects of SL are experiential learning, academic requirements, and community service. Our findings have aligned with previous research that has shown SL is a type of education where students can better understand the concepts they are studying and become more proficient in their chosen fields by participating in activities that put what they have learned into practice (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995).

5.1.1.1 Experiential learning

The findings of this study suggest that experiential learning is a fundamental aspect of SL at UTAR as it provides students with the opportunity to study practically instead of theoretically. As noted by previous researchers, experiential learning involves a cyclical process of learning through concrete experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2017). In the context of SL, this means that students are given the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations, reflect on their experiences, and then use this feedback to refine their approach and develop new strategies for future projects (Brundiers et al., 2010; Mooney & Edwards, 2001).

As claimed by Bringle and Hatcher (1995), SL is characterized by students' academic talents and dedication to the community developed through their participation in activities that address community needs. At UTAR, this is achieved through the integration of community service into academic coursework and the emphasis on experiential learning through both courses which are CSR and Community Project. Furthermore, according to Gatti et al. (2019), SL provides students with the opportunity to learn by doing, which is a hallmark of experiential learning. In this regard, SL courses at UTAR enable students to engage in practical, hands-on activities that allow them to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings. From this study, most students enrolled in the SL programmes because the SL in university integrates community service into the academic course, stated that SL refers to learning outside the classroom and enable students to emotionally and practically experience it. The students also highlighted that the course allows them to study practically instead of theoretically, which has also been proved in the course syllabus that combined the knowledge application to allow them to plan, execute, and assess by themselves with the monitoring of advisers, they also have the opportunity to look at how companies around the

world are implementing their commitment to CSR into practise. As a result, SL helps students to develop a deeper understanding of the course material and to build valuable skills that are essential for success in their future careers.

5.1.1.2 Academic Requirement

The integration of SL into academic programs as a credit-bearing course is becoming more common in higher education institutions worldwide (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995; Berle, 2006; Deeley, 2010; Filho et al., 2018; Molderez & Fonseca, 2018; Oates & Leavitt, 2003). Similarly, as mentioned by Coelho and Menezes (2021), the integration of SL into the university's mission and goals can help to create a culture of social responsibility and promote civic engagement among students and faculty. Thus, the academic requirements play a significant role in SL, as it refers to the qualifications that must be met before a student can enroll and complete a degree programme. The data of this study has indicated that SL at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) is an academic requirement and a credit-bearing course that aims to teach students about the plan, implementation, and evaluation of a project. In other words, UTAR students must also complete a minimum number of credit hours before graduating depending on the students' programme structure. Moreover, the credit-bearing nature of the SL course at UTAR provides students with added motivation to actively participate and engage in the programme. As suggested by previous research, credit-bearing SL programs are more likely to attract students who are committed to making a difference in their communities and who are interested in pursuing careers that incorporate social responsibility (Moely et al., 2002).

This is in line with previous research that has highlighted the importance of incorporating SL into higher education to prepare students for their roles as responsible global citizens (Boerngen & Kopsell, 2018; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Neeper & Dymond, 2020). In particular, the SL program at UTAR provides students with opportunities to engage in meaningful community service activities while also gaining practical skills and knowledge related to CSR initiatives. Through the students' participation in SL, they are able to develop a deep understanding of the complexities and challenges of designing, implementing, and

evaluating CSR initiatives, and are better equipped to address these challenges in their future professional roles.

5.1.1.3 Community Service

The aspects of SL at UTAR are deeply rooted in community service and the integration of SL into the university's broader mission of social responsibility. As noted by Bringle and Hatcher (1995), SL is a teaching and learning method that emphasizes community service and integrates it with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility.

In line with this definition, UTAR has made community service an essential component of SL programs by establishing strong connections with the community through a variety of projects. Also, the university offers relevant academic programmes, facilities, and resources, as well as active involvement in community outreach and service projects which are intended to contribute to the development of the local community. Hence, it can be seen that UTAR's SL programmes requires students to participate in community service activities, which provide them with opportunities to learn about the social and cultural context of the communities they serve. Additionally, the integration of SL into UTAR's broader mission of social responsibility is reflected in the university's strategic plan, which outlines its commitment to developing socially responsible graduates who are equipped to contribute to the betterment of society. Thus, it can be concluded that the aspects of SL in UTAR revolve around community service and the integration of SL into the university's broader mission of social responsibility.

However, some unique features of SL at UTAR have been identified such as the emphasis on local community partnerships and the integration of SL into the university's broader mission of social responsibility. Also, this is also supported by various research that SL helps learners gain experience in the field and make significant contributions to their communities through SL (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995; George-Paschal et al., 2019; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Kendall, 1990; Sigmon, 1979). Community service is another crucial element of SL, where students can help those in need by contributing their time and resources to worthy

causes like charities and public service projects. Therefore, the understanding of SL is highly related to the community by integrating community service into academic courses.

5.1.2 Challenges Faced by Learners in Service-Learning

SL is an effective way for learners to gain practical experience and develop important skills. However, successful SL experiences for students inevitably require a time commitment on the part of faculty in order to cultivate relationships with community partners, design projects that engage students in the community, provide service, meet course learning objectives, and deal with the various aspects of SL as a required course component.

In addition, it can also be challenging as learners may encounter conflicts and differing opinions that can hinder their progress. This study has found that there are a lot of challenges such as miscommunication, personal issues, lack of emotional support, time constraint, and competition while the time constraint is the most mentioned by the students. This can be supported by Yusof et al. (2020) who mentioned that learners who participated in SL projects reported facing various challenges, including conflicts and differing opinions.

5.1.2.1 Time Constraint

The challenges of this study have emerged because of the students' inexperience in coordinating with others in meetings or communication due to the packed time while other studies have also recognized these challenges (Butin, 2006; Donaldson & Daughtery, 2011; Lemieux & Allen, 2007). For instance, CSR students have stated that they are lack of time to stretch out in the position they have with sleep deprivation which lead everything happened at the same time during a time of extreme urgency. Students are often expected to balance SL projects with their regular academic workload and extra-curricular activities, leaving them with little time to devote to either. The limited time frame of some SL courses might add unnecessary stress to already stressful situations. This can be backed by the research from Harkins et al. (2018), which stated several students provided feedback that it is difficult to maintain a service commitment while balancing a full course load.

Time restrictions might make it difficult to effectively manage project administration and team dynamics and the quality of students' final projects can also suffer if they have trouble securing the guidance and materials they need to finish them. Furthermore, meeting cancellations or reschedulings due to a lack of time can be frustrating for both the instructor and the students who have been working hard to prepare for the meeting. On top of that, short-term SL programmes have been criticised for failing to provide adequate community benefit and yet meet students' educational goals (Tryon et al., 2008). This also comes to the fact that building trust is a lengthy process that benefits from both parties' past successes and their mutual investment of time and effort. When this is accomplished, it can help academic and community groups work together effectively, despite time and material limitations (Cervantes & Hinojosa, 2022).

Astin and Sax (1998) also reported that a greater commitment to SL may sometimes hinder one from giving adequate time to their studies which lead to the decrease in academic performance. Hence, this constraint is highlighted by studies of the development of SL curricula, which recommend that instructors plan their classes in such a way as to maximise student-community partner interaction as there is a correlation between the amount of contact hours and students' perceptions of their learning outcomes (Harkins et al., 2018). As a consequence, the students are lack of knowledge or abilities to complete the project, and the students are lacking time to attend meetings that have been scheduled with peers and lecturers.

5.1.2.2 Personal issues

Eyler and Giles (1999) examines the necessity to address the personal and logistical problems that students may face when participating in service projects, as well as the relevance of programme quality in SL. They have recognized that it can be challenging for students to fully engage in SL projects due to students' multiple commitments outside of school. Personal issue is one of the challenges faced by students during their participation in SL projects. The findings show that personal obstacles can have a significant impact on a learner's ability to participate fully in SL projects which can affect a learner's motivation and effort in the project. This finding is consistent with previous research that shows personal issues can

significantly affect students' academic performance and success (Kuh et al., 2008; Mahdavi et al., 2021).

Furthermore, students also faced challenges related to the demands of the SL project itself, including balancing academic workload and project demands, and working collaboratively with others (Eyler and Giles, 1999; Kuh et al., 2008; Redden & Bugg, 2022; Zhu et al., 2022), which suggests that SL projects can be demanding and challenging, requiring students to develop time-management skills, teamwork, and collaboration. As mentioned by a CSR student, not having worked with a particular person before can be questioned their ability to do their work, and this was a significant difficulty for the student to overcome.

One notable finding in this research study is the impact of micromanagement on students' motivation and ability to put effort into the project. As stated by one of the CSR students, personal problems and faced challenges working with a micromanaging supervisor, which led to a lack of motivation and effort in the project, and as a result, their ability to learn was affected. The negative impact of micromanagement on students' motivation and effort in SL projects highlights the importance of providing students with autonomy and flexibility in their work. This finding is also consistent with the SL literature, which shows that providing students with autonomy and flexibility in their work can enhance their engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes (Arnold, 2023; Eyler and Giles, 1999; Kuh et al., 2008; Yusof et al., 2020).

5.1.2.3 Lack of Support

One of the most significant challenges students have stated during the SL planning and implementation stage is a lack of support by the team members and faculty. The concept that students undergo mental stress when carrying out SL projects is supported further by Yusop & Correia (2013). In addition, the high mental and physical demands placed on students taking part in SL might lead to emotional outbursts on their side. Students require the emotional support of their teachers throughout the SL process in order to have a great experience.

According to qualitative results of Astin et al. (2000), support from faculty has such a positive influence that provides more opportunity for students to communicate about their feelings and receive emotional support from teachers. Teachers' emotional support had the greatest moderating effect on students' motivation to develop their racial awareness, academic skills such as critical thinking and writing, interpersonal skills, and leadership skills. In the study, teachers shared their observations that student reflections on learning outcomes were strongly related to personal and, at times, emotional experiences they had at their service sites, implying that students' service activities facilitated major emotional and personal growth. (p. 80-91).

The study Carson and Domangue (2013) also discovered that students who had access to emotional support and resources were better able to deal with the challenges and expectations of SL projects. Thus, the research also emphasised the importance of developing a positive team culture to promote open lines of communication and teamwork.

5.1.2.4 Miscommunication

SL courses emphasise the significance of open and honest communication lines as misunderstandings between team members and advisers can harm the success of a SL project, the quality of the learning experience, and the participants' mental and emotional health (Soukup, 1999). It is undeniably that, students can collaborate with community members to address critical problems using newly acquired skills through SL. However, teachers and pupils may encounter challenges when interacting with the community due to divergent perspectives on the problems at hand and miscommunications. Miscommunication often occur for a variety of reasons, such as differences in communication styles, cultural backgrounds, or simply differing perspectives on how to approach a particular task or problem. (Mortensen, 1997).

As noted by Morin (2009), failure to establish effective relationships with other students, lecturers, or stakeholders is also common in SL field. The students' inexperience in working with others on technical matters, their lack of knowledge or skills to finish the project, and their lack of time to schedule meetings with teammates, lecturers, or stakeholder

all contributed to the previously mentioned issues (Yusof et al., 2020). This is align with out findings that shows all the misinterpretations within teams have made the problem getting worse due to the lack of time for open discussion, which could also hinder the development of skill for the whole team.

Based on Lasater (2016) team members are more prone to work under different assumptions when communication breaks down, leading to chaos, wasted time, and opposing viewpoints while the lack of trust among team members makes it more challenging for them to work effectively together, which is exacerbated by ineffective communication. Likewise, the miscommunication can lead to a toxic atmosphere, making it harder to have productive conversations (Smith & Fredricks-Lowman, 2020). Correspondently, the group members and instructors may have trouble communicating their ideas and plans for a SL course if they disagree throughout the planning and execution phases as working with people who have vastly different experiences and perspectives might make it challenging to bridge the gap between them. Hence, miscommunication and divergent perspectives are major contributors to the inefficiency that often hinder SL projects in UTAR.

5.1.2.5 Competition

The problem of competitiveness has largely been disregarded in the literature on public relations and SL. Although early research on classroom competition focused on motivating students and getting work done (Clifford, 1972), there is no agreement on the benefits of adopting competition in the classroom (Dowell, 1975). In recent research, McCollough (2018) discovered that students provided positive feedback on SL and the usage of competitive modelling throughout all four years of education. This align with the finding of this study among learners in UTAR as it revealed a new insight that the pressure to outperform other groups can create a competition mindset, which can impact the learning experience and the project's outcome.

According to Clifford (1972), when competition and comparison become the focus, it can either improve or decrease the level of cooperation and collaboration within the group. Instead of working together to achieve a common goal, each group may become more

concerned about outperforming the other groups. This can result in an emphasis on the outcome rather than the learning experience, compromising the quality of the project and depriving students of the opportunity to learn. Besides, the pressure to perform better than other groups can create feelings of inferiority or superiority, leading to stress and anxiety. This statement can be supported by Thapa (2013) which investigated the effect of competition public student performance in the private school in Nepal. As mentioned by a CSR student, SL have create the competition mindset and create pressure for them to perform which leading to a focus on the outcome rather than the learning experience as making comparisons to the accomplishments. This is due to the fact that other groups may result in concerning feelings of superiority while this may serve as a motivation to drive students to perform better.

5.2 Research Implication

The study's findings have significant implications for both practice and policy in the SL field. The study emphasizes the significance of identifying the variables that influence student engagement and learning outcomes in SL activities. A few initiatives can be devised based on the findings to improve the quality of SL student engagement, and learning outcomes.

One of the implications of the study's findings is that it is necessary to increase student, faculty, and administrative awareness of SL at UTAR. By improving the students' comprehension of SL, participation in SL activities will be supported, and lecturers will be better equipped to guide students through these activities. In addition, administrators will be able to offer the resources essential to support the development and implementation of SL programs.

Another implication of the study's findings is the requirement to resolve the obstacles learners encounter when participating in SL activities. The study highlights several obstacles that students confront, including a lack of time, poor communication, and limited resources. Consequently, strategies such as improved communication, flexible scheduling, and increased resources should be devised to address these obstacles and encourage student participation in SL activities.

In addition, the study's findings have policy development implications in the field of SL. The findings can be used to develop policies that promote and support SL in higher education institutions. For instance, UTAR can implement policies that encourage students and faculty to engage in SL activities, such as course credit or recognition for community service work.

Lastly, the study's findings have substantial implications for the field of SL as a whole. The findings can inform the development of SL theories and concepts, especially Experiential Learning Theory (ELT). The findings of the study are consistent with ELT, which holds that learning is the consequence of direct experience (Kolb, 1984). Therefore, the research provides evidence that SL activities can enhance student learning outcomes and contribute to their personal growth.

In conclusion, the study's findings have significant implications for the development of SL programs and policies in higher education institutions. By addressing the challenges faced by learners and promoting student engagement, SL can be an effective tool to enhance student learning outcomes and contribute to their personal development.

5.3 Research Limitation

One limitation of this study is the inability to interview members of the community who were involved in the SL programs. The perspective of community partners is crucial in understanding the impact of SL on both the community and the learners involved. However, due to time and resource constraints, interviews with community partners are unable to be conducted. Therefore, future studies should prioritize including the voices and perspectives of community partners in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of SL on the community. Additionally, while efforts were made to recruit participants from diverse faculty and batches, the sample may not be fully representative of the UTAR student population.

Besides, the involvement of interviews with UTAR educators is one of the limitations of this study. Educators play a crucial role in the design, implementation, and evaluation of

SL programmes, alongside the learners' perspectives. Consequently, their input and experiences can provide valuable insight into the efficacy of SL at UTAR.

Lastly, the difficulties in recruiting participants from various faculties and courses at UTAR because qualitative research frequently involves a small number of participants, finding individuals who are willing and able to participate in the study can be difficult. Participants in SL may be constrained by factors such as time constraints, geographic location, or personal circumstances. For example, UTAR has two campuses in Sungai Long and Kampar, with faculties divided between the two campuses, limiting researchers' ability to recruit more participants from other faculties on another campus. Hence, the study might only be applicable to a particular course which is Public Relations in UTAR, which further limits how broadly the results can be applied.

5.4 Recommendations

To address the gaps in the existing literature on SL, future studies can build on the findings of this research by expanding on the research questions and refining the methodology. Firstly, researchers could consider using a mixed-methods approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data and conduct a longitudinal study to examine the long-term impact of SL on learners' academic and personal development (Fullerton et al., 2015; Simons & Cleary, 2006; Zhu et al., 2022). Payne (2000) also argues that SL students typically get more active in the community permanently after initially committing to volunteering for shorter periods of time while many existing studies on SL only have focused on short-term outcomes, such as improved academic results or immediate changes in attitudes (Furco, 1996). Therefore, conducting longitudinal studies that follow learners over an extended period to understand the long-term impact of SL on learners' academic and personal development can provide insights

into the sustained effects of SL on learners' academic performance, career development, and personal growth.

Furthermore, engaging with community partners and educators and stakeholders as it can provide a more comprehensive understanding of SL's impact on the community, leading to the development of more sustainable and impactful SL programs (George-Paschal et al., 2019; Vernon & Ward, 1999). While SL is often seen as a way to benefit communities, the actual impact on communities is not always clear. Engaging with community partners, educators and stakeholders that the students collaborated before can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of SL on them, including the benefits and challenges of collaboration with academic institutions. Such engagement can also help to develop more sustainable and impactful SL programs that meet the needs of communities. This could involve asking questions about their experiences with SL, their perceptions of its benefits and challenges, and their strategies for promoting student engagement and learning.

Besides, exploring the experience of SL project online, which is also known as E-service-learning (ESL) to provide insights into the use of innovative tools and platforms to enhance learners' engagement and learning outcomes. With the increasing use of technology in education, exploring ESL among learners can provide insights into the use of innovative tools and platforms to enhance learners' engagement, collaboration, challenges as well as the overall outcome. Additionally, using comparative studies of SL programs across different institutions can identify best practices and areas for improvement, leading to the development of more effective and impactful SL programs. While many studies have examined the impact of SL programs at a single institution, comparative studies across different institutions can identify best practices and areas for improvement (Ibrahim et al., 2020). Such studies can also help to understand the factors that contribute to the success or failure of SL programs and inform the development of more effective and impactful SL programs.

Finally, future studies can build on the findings of this research by expanding on the research questions and refining the methodology to focus on examining the impact of SL on learners who have graduated. This approach could provide a more nuanced understanding of the potential benefits and challenges of SL, which could inform the development of more inclusive and equitable SL programs as all their projects were different and everyone may

have different happening. By examining the impact of SL across diverse populations, researchers can identify factors that contribute to successful SL experiences and inform the development of effective interventions.

In sum, these recommendations offer opportunities to expand the knowledge base on SL, its implementation, and its impact on learners and communities. By addressing the gaps in the existing literature and exploring new directions, researchers can advance their understanding of SL and contribute to the development of more effective and impactful SL programs.

5.5 Conclusion

The main contribution of the study is that it fills the gap in the literature by examining the use of SL at a private university. It also highlights the understanding and challenge of SL from the student's perspectives. Through the analysis of literature and findings, the findings of the study can contribute to the development of SL programmes in private universities and to the advancement of SL research in Malaysia and beyond. However, there are also limitations associated with the implementation of SL, such as the need for better communication and collaboration between community partners and educators, as well as the need for more resources to support SL programs over time. Hence, this research provided suggestions for future studies that can fill in the gaps in the SL literature and expand the understanding of this growing field to address the limitations.

In a nutshell, the significance of this study lies in its contribution to the field of SL, which is becoming increasingly recognised as an essential pedagogy in higher education in Malaysia and around the globe. Hence, the study emphasises the significance of SL in promoting students' holistic development, enhancing their learning experiences, and fostering social responsibility.

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Appendix

Appendix A

UTAR SDG Report 2021



UTAR SDG Report 2021. Obtained from:

https://utar.edu.my/documents/UTAR_SDG_Report_2021.pdf

Appendix B

MOHE Blueprint 2015-2025

Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015 - 2025 (Higher Education) Executive Summary

1 **Build momentum and lay foundation**
(2015)

- **Developing integrated assessment methodology** by HLLs to reflect knowledge and skills (ilmu), ethics and spirituality (akhlak);
- **Introducing experiential learning, service learning and entrepreneurial immersion** into curriculum, and new **Job Creator** framework for creating/growing student businesses;
- **Launch new CEO faculty programme** for senior industry or public sector leaders to teach in public HLLs;
- **Enhancing repayment rates** on PTPTN student loans, including incentives and penalties;
- **Launching of tailored University Transformation Programmes** by pilot HLLs as role models for transformation programmes of other HLLs;
- **Codifying best practices into "playbooks"** on critical improvement areas for adoption by HLLs:
 - Enhancing governance and board effectiveness;
 - Strengthening performance management;
- **Initiating TVET enhancements** with industry-led curriculum design and delivery, upgrading of teaching staff, and portfolio of high technology and high value programmes;
- **Aligning research priorities with other ministries and agencies** and elevating a few research areas critical to economic growth where Malaysia has a competitive advantage;
- **Redesigning financing criteria** for research grants and enhancing the grant review and monitoring process;
- **Defining clear guidelines for self-accreditation and co-regulation** for private HLLs in consultation with stakeholders;
- **Reviewing enhancements to Malaysian student admissions process** (applications and matching) and end-to-end experience for international students;
- **Remodelling of the coordination body for Malaysian International Scholarships**, and introducing attractive pathways for top international students and scholars;
- **Designing "flagship" MOOCs** by HLLs in areas of distinctiveness for Malaysia, and revising the National

Blue print of MOHE from 2015 - 2025. Obtained from: <https://www.um.edu.my/docs/um-magazine/4-executive-summary-pppm-2015-2025.pdf>

Appendix C

Quote by Dr Maszlee



Quote by Dr Maszlee, the former Minister of Education. Obtained from:

<https://www.iium.edu.my/media/60247/SULAMPlaybook-eBook.pdf>

Appendix D

Interview questions (Focus group interview)

To get started, let's introduce ourselves. In your introduction please tell us who you are and a brief introduction of your educational background, specifically your service-learning experience.

Question 1:

Prompt: What do you understand about service-learning?

Question 2:

Prompt: What do you think about service-learning at UTAR?

Question 3:

Prompt: How did you get involved in service-learning at UTAR?

Probe: Tell me more about the service-learning project(s) you involved at UTAR before.

Question 4:

Prompt: Share with me your thoughts on your learning experience through service-learning at UTAR.

Probe: Could you explain how service-learning works in your learning process?

Question 5:

Prompt: What are the characteristics of service-learning that ease your learning process at UTAR?

Probe: Could you give me an example for each of the characteristics provided?

Question 6:

Prompt: What are the characteristics of service-learning that hinder your learning process at UTAR?

Probe: Could you give me an example for each of the characteristics provided?

Question 7:

Prompt: Could you explain how the service-learning at UTAR works?

Question 8:

Prompt: What are the main reasons for the implementation of service-learning at UTAR?

Probe: Which factors do you think contribute the most to the adoption/implementation of servicelearning at UTAR?

Question 9:

Prompt: Share with me about the advantages and disadvantages of the practice of service-learning at UTAR.

Probe: What else do you gain from service-learning?

Question 10:

Prompt: Is there any suggestion to improve the current practice of service-learning at UTAR?

Thank you for joining us today. I will share the findings with all of you through the email that has been given to me today.

Appendix E

Changes of interview question from pilot study

1. Question 5: What are the characteristics of service-learning that ease your learning process at UTAR

Due to we discovered that the phrase “characteristic” will lead them to think about a specific words or concepts that might not be immediately accessible to them. Therefore, the changes have been made to make the words more understandable to our participants: Under any circumstances, will service-learning ease your learning process at UTAR? We have also probing them with: “Tell me more about it” so that students can feel easily to respond more.

2. Question 6: What are the characteristics of service-learning that hinder your learning process at UTAR?

The word "hinder" is difficult to understand the meaning of the question. Hence the moderator have help to defined with the other word such as “block” is participants encounter problems with our question during the interview session. The questions has been asked in a different way: Under any circumstances, will service-learning hinder your learning process at UTAR? By probing it will: “Tell me more about it.”

Appendix F

Interview transcript sample (interview with Group 3)

Moderator: I'm Lin Fan Hui, the researcher who will be facilitating this focus group interview. The purpose of this study is to explore and investigate service-learning practices at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman Utar.

Moderator: As a new researcher in this field, I value your opinions and insights into the topic. I want to know what works and what does not. Ultimately, this research will be used to enlighten the contribution of service-learning in higher education.

Moderator: Furthermore, this research can be used as a platform to encourage higher learning institutions and educational planners to consider the teaching approach in creating a positive and genuine learning experience among the students. You were selected through a voluntary email response which has been officially sent to your email.

Moderator: Your participation in this focus group interview is completely voluntary.

Moderator: More than five focus groups involving 3 to 5 participants in each group will be arranged for the interview, and it will be administered by myself. Prior to the interview, you were sent a participant information sheet and two volunteer information and consent forms. This focus group interview will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes and will follow a designed interview protocol. Did each of you bring your consent letter?

All participants: Yes.

Moderator: Okay, does anyone have any questions?

All participants: No.

Moderator: If there are no further questions, let's get started with the first question.

Moderator: To get started, let's introduce ourselves in your introduction. Please tell us who you are and give a brief introduction of your educational background, specifically your service-learning experience.

Moderator: I'll start with Jye Yi (**Participant A**).

Participant A: I have been taking the CSR course in my year 3, year 2 Sem 3.

Moderator: Okay, how about...

Participant B: Hi, I'm Cecilia and currently studying the UTAR PR course. I am a Year 3 Sem 3 student. My service-learning experience is also in the CSR courses.

Moderator: Ohh okay.

Participant C: Hi, I'm Liew Check Wei. I'm also a PR student, and previously I also took the CSR course.

Question 1: *What do you understand about service-learning?*

Moderator: Okay, could you tell me what you understand about service learning?

Participant A: Um... In my understanding, service learning is more about experiential learning, where students can learn and develop through active participation in organized services that meet the needs of the community. It provides an opportunity for students to apply the theories learned in class in a practical setting. Service-learning activities normally address real community needs, and they provide an opportunity for students to critically

reflect upon their service experiences. From my understanding, I think effective service learning can support student learning and also community service goals.

Participant B: I think service-learning is about helping the community and doing good things for society. In addition to studying in the classroom, we can go out and do some activities that benefit the community.

Moderator: Okay.

Participant C: As they said, service learning allows students to practically experience the real world and society instead of just learning theoretical knowledge in the classroom. I think service learning is a very good platform for students to employ their skills and knowledge. So, I think it is a very good learning style for every student.

Moderator: Okay.

Question 2: What do you think about service-learning at UTAR?

Moderator: Let's move on to question two. What do you think about service learning at UTAR?

Participant A: I think UTAR is not really paying much attention to service learning because, from what I know, service-learning related courses like CSR are taken only by PR students, and other course students may not have the chance to take this CSR course. So far, I also haven't heard from my friends in UTAR from other programs that they have classes related to service learning.

Moderator: Okay.

Participant B: My opinion is different from Jye Yi (Participant A). As I know, other faculties also have the MPU program that lets students choose courses, which, if I'm not mistaken, are called community service. I think UTAR hopes to do this well.

Moderator: How do you know UTAR wants to do this well? Do they post a lot or...?

Participant B: Because not only our course has the CSR program, other faculty students are also allowed to involve themselves in the community.

Moderator: I see.

Participant C: Yes, I agree with Cecilia (Participant B). Service learning is actually a very simple thing. It could be directly or indirectly providing service. For indirectly providing service, students have a chance to communicate with people outside the school. I think that some students may attend nonprofit community service, but I don't think they attend because they sincerely want to. They just want to get the USSDC point. I think UTAR should improve more in how to let students have more sincerity when they join the event, instead of only wanting to get the point. UTAR should improve in this view.

Moderator: Do you mean that UTAR should improve not only the grading but also...

Participant C: Yes, not only the grading.

Moderator: They have to improve the curriculum.

Participant C: Yes, I think so. Many clubs and communities in UTAR attract students with the USSDC point. "Attend my event and then you will get the point." I think that's... I think, so far, this is the part that students want... Yes, I think so far in this field...

Question3:

Prompt: *How did you get involved in service-learning at UTAR?*

Probe: *Tell me more about the service-learning project(s) you involved at UTAR before.*

Moderator: So, how did you guys get involved in the service learning project at UTAR?

Participant A: I got involved in service learning at UTAR because I'm a PR student and CSR is one of my courses.

Moderator: Err, is the course you mentioned just now the Corporate Social Responsibility?

Participant A: Yes.

Moderator: Can you explain in detail about the event? The project you have done?

Participant A: Apparently, the service-learning project that I was involved in at UTAR was to improve the condition of the Persatuan Pusat Jagaan Kasih Sayang Kampar. We collected preloved items from the public that were useful for them, such as books, school bags, and stationary. Besides, we also did a charity sale and donated the money we received from the charity sale event.

Moderator: May I know how many people were involved in a group? More details about it and the duration before you prepared to execute the event.

Participant A: Erm, I already forgot.

Moderator: Oh, okay, let's move on to Cecilia (**Participant B**).

Participant B: My CSR experience is the same as Jye Yi (Participant A) because we are in the same group.

Participant C: For me, I think I still remember some of the processes. In short, during the preparation, I think CSR is a very good memory in my university life. It bonded me with my friends, and we had the chance to serve the community together. During the event, I still remember that we invited around 30 students from other practical groups to help us and assist us during the event. We picked up rubbish and cleaned the environment. I never thought picking up rubbish would be so happy.

Everyone: (laughs)

Participant C: I think this is the importance of service-learning. Students could truly feel something they have never tried before. For example, it is impossible to ask you to pick up rubbish on the floor outside the "longkang" unless you are doing something through service-learning.

Moderator: I see. What was your event about, actually?

Participant C: Actually, my event was about cleaning the community, cleaning the environment, and encouraging the villagers not to throw rubbish carelessly as it would attract mosquitoes and spread dengue.

Moderator: I know this because I read from the news that you guys also improved the quality of the library.

Participant C: Yes, that's all from our course.

Moderator: Please tell me more about the service-learning project at UTAR, such as how it was initiated until the end.

Participant C: We did research among our group and found that Mambang Diawan had the highest dengue rate within Kampar. So we decided to go there and start cleaning. We communicated with the person in charge of the kampung, and they allowed us to do so. Then we proceeded to do the cleaning service.

Moderator: How did you contact them?

Participant C: We went to visit and asked where the person in charge lived. We got his number so that we could contact him anytime.

Moderator: How was your collaboration with the stakeholders?

Participant C: At first, they maybe did not really trust us. We also collaborated with the MDKPR and sought their help, and with their assistance, the villagers started to trust us. Then they gave us the opportunity to help them.

Moderator: I see. How was your group's experience?

Participant B: At first, we didn't even know about this place in Kampar, which is Pusat Jagaan Kasih Sayang Kampar. We got connected with this persatuan through our lecturer.

Participant A: She provided us with the contact information for the person in charge.

Moderator: I see. Could you tell me which platform you used to get in touch with them?
How did you contact them in more detail?

Participant A: If I'm not mistaken, we contacted them through WhatsApp.

Moderator: Did you enjoy collaborating with them?

Participant B: The person in charge was very kind, and they also helped us a lot.

Moderator: After the project, did you stay in contact with them?

Participant A: We plan to visit them when we're free.

Participant B: They also contact us, like when it's the children's birthday party. They invited us.

Question 4:

Prompt: *Share with me your thoughts on your learning experience through service-learning at UTAR.*

Probe: *Could you explain how service-learning works in your learning process?*

Moderator: I see. Can you share your thoughts on your learning experience through this service-learning at UTAR?

Participant A: I got involved in service-learning at UTAR because I'm a PR student, and CSR is one of our courses, so... yeah.

Moderator: As a PR student, do you think that the corporate social responsibility course is related to your field?

Participant B: Yes, I think it's related. Because through the activity, we can know and understand the situation of the reality of the community. And then we can apply the things into it.

Moderator: Do you have any examples of skills that you can apply in your future? Or in this field?

Participant B: I think it can be communication skills, because we need to have meetings with our stakeholders and discuss what we want to do and what they need us to do.

Moderator: So, in what situation do you think you don't have the power to perform in that project?

Participant B: Actually, when discussing with the stakeholders, we need to fulfill their needs. For example, for the reading corner, we can do this for them. So we try our best and do the things to them because this is within our capacity.

Moderator: Then, by building the reading corner, were there any challenges during the process, like with the stakeholders or any requirements?

Participant B: They needed the SPM material because they have children around 17 years old. So, we needed to find this, and because we needed to filter out the books we collected through the Preloved Item activity, we had to filter the books to find the ones suitable for them.

Moderator: How many children are inside the Pusat Pejagaan? Did you only choose SPM books for the reading corner?

Participant B: No.

Moderator: Are there still any children's books?

Participant B: Yes, we also chose storybooks because there's a little girl around 3 years old, so we also prepared books for her.

Participant C: What do you guys do with the unused books?

Participant B: Unused books are donated to other shelters in Ipoh or another place.

Moderator: For Check Wei (Participant C), what situation do you think you cannot perform?

Participant C: We cannot perform...

Moderator: Are there any barriers?

Participant C: You mean during the service or the preparation?

Moderator: From preparation to executing. Are there any barriers like from the upper...

Participant C: I think the barriers... um... I think most probably communication, because when we want to communicate with the government, that is our... maybe that is the first time for some of us, so... this might be very... a little challenging for us.

Participant C: Yes, because without experience in communicating with the school and stakeholders, it also takes a lot of time. I think we need time to settle the barriers.

Participant C: I think if you really want to talk about the barriers, for our practical, we just need time to solve it. So, nothing is really a big deal to stop us from continuing to do our event.

Moderator: Mmm, so for Participant B and A, did you guys think that the barriers from the upper management limited your creativity in performing the project?

Participant A: Ermm... No, they didn't limit us.

Moderator: Can you elaborate on this?

Moderator: Did the project meet your learning outcome?

Participant A: Yes.

Moderator: Can you further explain?

Participant C: I have one thing to add. Because we rented equipment from the MDKPR, we had to wait for them.

Moderator: What happened?

Participant C: They were supposed to prepare the booth for us to run our opening ceremony one day before the event, but they didn't come until the next day. This made us very nervous. We were afraid we wouldn't have the canopy, and we were worried about the weather.

Moderator: So waiting for the equipment didn't limit your creativity?

Participant C: No, because during our preparation, we already knew what we wanted.

Moderator: Did the stakeholders want to continue with the project at UTAR?

Participant B: Yes, another CSR program went back to the Persatuan to help them.

Moderator: Okay. What are the characteristics of service learning that ease your learning process at UTAR? How did it help you improve?

Participant C: Sorry, can you repeat that?

Question 5:

Prompt: What are the characteristics of service-learning that ease your learning process at UTAR?

Probe: Could you give me an example for each of the characteristics provided?

Moderator: Okay, what are the characteristics of service learning that ease your learning process at UTAR?

Participant C: Mmm, like help...

Moderator: Ahh yeah.

Participant C: What did CSR help us?

Moderator: Ahh yeah.

Participant C: Help us in...

Participant B: Problem-solving skills.

Participant C: Yeah, problem-solving.

Moderator: Ahh, problem-solving. Can you further elaborate on this?

Participant C: Yeah, because our lecturer will assist us during the planning stage, so I think this is the most helpful thing. While the lecturer is leading and watching us, she also teaches us how to do what and what to do.

Participant C: Yeah, I think this is very important to have a guide, have a person to guide you.

Moderator: Mmm... then are there any elements that help you in your learning process?

Participant C: Elements, ahh. Ermm... I think the physical class is one of the most important elements. If we were going through those events online, I don't think we would have learned so many things.

Moderator: Ohh, is it the environment that influences you to...

Participant C: Yaya, environment.

Moderator: Mmm...

Participant C: Everyone can see each other physically, it's a very, very important thing.

Moderator: Mmm, then how about you guys?

Participant A: Ermm, I think the characteristic of service learning that eases my learning process at UTAR is a good lecturer who taught CSR. She will teach us all the things she knows, such as the event's protocols, and share her experiences in service learning with us. Besides, she will also lend us a hand and guide us when we meet problems during the planning or executing the service learning at PVP.

Moderator: Do you have any examples of problems that you guys faced during the service-learning process, like from the preparation?

Participant A: Emm, we faced problems because our first decision was actually to help Pei Yuan High School to give them services. But after discussions, suddenly they told us that the plan could not be implemented because of some reasons. So, our lecturer helped us by providing us with another Persatuan contact.

Moderator: Ohh, do you think that any more characteristics of service learning ease your learning process at UTAR?

Participant B: I think we can communicate very easily because we continued our program physically. If we proceeded online, someone might not reply to our message, and communication would be cut off.

Moderator: Mmmm.

Participant B: The communication will be cut off.

Moderator: Mmmm Mmmm. Is it the same as Check Wei (Participant C) said just now, like the surrounding study environment will help you in your learning process?

Participant B: Yeah.

Participant C: Yes.

Moderator: Are there any more characteristics?

Participant C: More characteristics. Let me think. Mmmm. I think the relationship is also one of the most important elements because without a good relationship, maybe some people cannot cooperate so well.

Moderator: Mmmm.

Participant C: Yeah. So mmm....

Moderator: Did you have any experience during the preparation with your teammates or anything?

Participant C: I think, during the preparation stage, we played a lot and made fun of each other, which actually made everything during preparation go smoothly.

Moderator: Oh, because I heard that many of you guys also stay until midnight to do...

Participant C: Yeah, we prepare our gimmick until like two in the morning.

Moderator: How about Cecilia (Participant B) and Jye Yi (Participant A), do you stay until midnight to prepare?

Participant A & B: No.

Moderator: Is it enjoyable for you, Check Wei (Participant C)?

Participant C: Yes, as a PR student, communicating with each other is a very common thing, so it's enjoyable.

Moderator: Is it tiring for you, or do you consider it fun?

Participant C: It can be tiring at times because we spend our energy and brainstorm, but when we think back, we feel happy to have those hours.

Moderator: Can you give me more examples of the characteristics that help you in your learning process? Do you guys get any support from other parties?

Participant C: Hmm, we are doing this for free, and we didn't look for any sponsor, so most of us use our own money and pocket money.

Moderator: Oh.

Participant C: But it's just a few Ringgits, so it's still okay for us.

Moderator: Did group 7 get any support?

Participant C: Yes, we got fund support from Mr. Danial Wa and the community.

Participant B: They helped us in the charity sales.

Participant A: They cooked the food for us to sell at the market, and they also provided the items for us to sell.

Participant C: At the "Pasar" (**wet market**).

Moderator: Was it tiring, as the "Pasar" is in the morning?

Participant C: Yes, we had to wake up early.

Moderator: Did you guys earn anything from the charity sales?

Participant B: Yes, we earned some money, but I forget the amount.

Participant A: If I'm not mistaken, it's around two to three thousand.

Moderator: Was it efficient because the stakeholders supported you guys?

Participant A & B: No.

Question 6:

Prompt: What are the characteristics of service-learning that hinder your learning process at UTAR?

Probe: Could you give me an example for each of the characteristics provided?

Moderator: Erm...what are the characteristics of service learning that hinder your learning process at UTAR?

Participant C: I think, errr...the hindering thing is that everyone has different thoughts and opinions. And during the preparation stage, we must make sure that everyone has the same goals. So, during this process, some people might quarrel or keep their opinions to themselves until they cannot hold it in anymore and then explode. This is one of the things that might cause the service learning to come to a halt until one of the members causes it.

Moderator: Do you have any experience of what Check Wei said about having many thoughts and quarrels?

Participant B: I think our group has had this kind of situation.

Moderator: Can you further explain the quarrel?

Participant B: Like, ermmm...

Participant C: I think some people don't want to say that they have a bad feeling towards you or that they don't agree with your opinion. This is one very...

Moderator: Erm..

Participant C: Saying something bad behind your back.

Participant B: Yes.

Moderator: Oh, then...Can you give me more examples that hinder your learning process at UTAR?

Moderator: May I know, like Check Wei mentioned, different opinions can lead to conflicts. May I know what the different opinions were and who was involved in them?

Participant C: For my group, I think at first we had a different opinion than our lecturer because...

Moderator: Hmmmm.

Participant C: We wanted to clean the school, but our lecturer asked us...

Moderator: To persuade you to...

Participant C: Yes, not to persuade us, but to ask us what the purpose of cleaning was.

Moderator: Ahhhh.

Participant C: And then, because we didn't serve the community, we only served UTAR, UTAR would not give us any reflection.

Moderator: Hmm... Then, did you think that the lecturer's opinion was effective for you?

Participant C: At that time, we might have thought, "why is she stopping us from doing this?" But then, until today, we will think, "oh, actually serving the community is much better and a lot better than serving a community that will not give you any reflection."

Moderator: Hmm... Then, did this meet your learning objective towards CSR and your primary understanding?

Participant C: Yup, yup. If we clean the school, we will never reach our learning objective.

Moderator: Ennn. Then, may I know, for your group 7, who is the problematical one in terms of having different opinions?

Participant B: Yes. Errr, I am clearly our group member. There is no problem with the skill or what.

Moderator: Enen, like internal...

Participant B: Yaya, internal...

Moderator: Can you further elaborate on the problem and the problematic one?

Participant C: Maybe we can tell it in short like...

Participant B: Like... errr some people will like...

Participant C: They don't like this opinion...

Participant B: Yaa, they don't want this thing, but they don't want to say.

Moderator: Ennnn...

Participant B: Then, they keep the problem until the end and then...

Participant C: After they quarrel up.

Moderator: After the event, were you guys still friends?

Participant B: Um... Some people are still friends, but some people are not friends anymore.

Moderator: Do you think that despite the problem, CSR still met your learning objective?

Participant B: I think it still did because we still did the community work.

Moderator: I see.

Participant B: Yeah, we still did.

Moderator: Although the process wasn't entirely happy.

Participant B: Yeah, that's right.

Moderator: Do you have any other examples of characteristics that hindered your learning process at UTAR?

Participant B: Not really.

Participant C: No.

Participant A: I don't think so.

Question 7:

Prompt: Could you explain how the service-learning at UTAR works?

Moderator: Okay. Let's proceed. Could you explain how service learning works at UTAR in your opinion?

Participant C: Well, for me, like I mentioned earlier, for my event, we didn't have sustainability, and we didn't have fun. The school didn't provide us with money, so we had to find funding ourselves or use our own pocket money. And as for sustainability, the cleaning... the cleaning thing, we only did it once, and no one continued doing it. So I think it's quite disappointing that we couldn't sustain this thing. In Chinese, it's called "可惜".

Moderator: Disappointing?

Participant C: Yes, it's quite disappointing that we couldn't sustain it. Because if there are no rules for them, people will continue dropping rubbish everywhere.

Moderator: Okay. And for you guys?

Participant A: I think service learning in UTAR is just a course to educate students to conduct activities or events to help and serve the community within one semester. It's a practical course where we need to plan what we're going to do to serve the community before executing the activity. We need to communicate with different people, so it's different from other courses as most of the courses are theoretical based, and this is practical based.

Moderator: Okay.

Participant B: For me, I think UTAR has sustainability because, like I said before, after our group, another group went to the Persatuan for the activity, so I think they have sustainability in UTAR.

Moderator: Oh, so as a senior, do you think you will recommend your juniors to continue to do your project? Please elaborate on how and why.

Participant C: We will continue doing it. I think yes. We will tell our experience to our juniors about doing this. If they don't have any idea, they can do something like this. We will provide this as a suggestion.

Moderator: Okay.

Participant C: But one thing our lecturer did was he put our photo outside the classroom so that when students or others are waiting for someone to come out from the room, they will read the news. And they can get to know about this event. If they dare to ask, they might ask the lecturer also.

Moderator: Okay. Then what did you learn about yourself towards the project after the project implementation?

Participant C: What did we learn? Well, I think we learned how to communicate well, how to cooperate well with each other. If we didn't communicate well, conflicts would occur, and bad things might happen during or after the event. Like what Cecilia mentioned just now, some of them are not friends anymore. So I think this is one of the bad things if we don't communicate well.

Question 8:

Prompt: What are the main reasons for the implementation of service-learning at UTAR?

Probe: Which factors do you think contribute the most to the adoption/implementation of service-learning at UTAR?

Moderator: Um... okay. So, what are the main reasons for the implementation of service learning at UTAR?

Participant A: Um... I think the main reason for the implementation of service learning at UTAR is that it provides opportunities for students to serve the community and to apply what they have learned in the real world.

Moderator: Mmm-hmm.

Participant A: As well as to develop their personal and interpersonal skills. So, on the other side, when UTAR students do service learning and provide useful service in the community, it is also able to enhance their reputation and increase their exposure. Therefore, service learning provides advantages to both students and the university itself, and this is the main reason for the implementation of service learning at UTAR.

Moderator: May I know how UTAR will enhance its brand reputation?

Participant A: Oh, because when we do community service, we will be on the news.

Moderator: Oh, on the news.

Participant A: And then when people see the news, it will increase our exposure...

Moderator: Being recognized by others as well. Do you guys have any other ideas about the reason for the implementation of service learning in UTAR?

Participant C: Um, I think, like what Jye Yi said just now, this is a very good chance for UTAR to gain more reputation and could recruit more students. And other than that, I also think UTAR actually provides students with a very good opportunity and platform to learn something other than theoretical theory only.

Moderator: Mmm-hmm.

Participant C: There are many students who only have the knowledge but do not have the experience, which is not good when they go out to the public.

Moderator: Mmm-hmm.

Participant C: Yeah, actually, in the public, I think students need more practical experience for them to perform better.

Moderator: So after this CSR, do you guys think differently than before you participated in this CSR? Have you matured a bit?

Participant C: Um, I think yes. We learn from everything we do.

Moderator: Mmm-hmm.

Participant C: Yeah, even when we are talking now, we also learn something.

Moderator: Mmm-hmm.

Participant C: Of course, for the big event, we learn more than what we expected.

Moderator: Mmm-hmm. Cecilia, do you have any more reasons for the implementation of service learning in UTAR?

Participant B: Um, no.

Moderator: Um, okay.

Participant C: For me, yes. Maybe I think we become more understanding of ourselves. We know what our weaknesses and strengths are during the preparation stage, maybe.

Participant B: We also get to know that there are still many people that we need to help.

Participant C: The public, the public needs help.

Moderator: Because Check Wei, you said just now that the implementation of SL at UTAR can recruit more students, can you explain more further on this one?

Participant C: Yeah, I think because if the students are doing something very meaningful, the media might expose them in the newspaper or on the internet. I think then the reputation of UTAR will definitely improve because people will see that UTAR students are serving the community so well.

Moderator: Mmm-hmm.

Participant C: So they will have a stereotype...

Moderator: Image... ah.

Participant C: Yeah, image and the stereotype that UTAR will always serve the community like this.

Moderator: Um, okay. So do you think it is effective for UTAR to recruit more students through service learning?

Participant B & C: Yes.

Participant B: If the event is successful and well-publicized, I think it can help UTAR a lot.

Participant B: The community can see that UTAR students are doing things outside the university, and they can learn about it.

Moderator: Okay.

Participant C: Yes, then the community, when we serve them, will see that UTAR students are practical and doing many things, and they may think of sending their children to UTAR in the future.

Moderator: Do you think UTAR should organize their projects only in Perak or can they go to more distant places? Please elaborate.

Participant B: I think if we have the budget...

Moderator: Ennn.

Participant B: ...we can definitely go further away, but...

Participant C: I think for safety reasons, the university may stop students from doing this because when we are very far from the university area, the school may be very worried about safety. If something happens, the university will need to take responsibility.

Question 9:

Prompt: Share with me about the advantages and disadvantages of the practice of service-learning at UTAR.

Probe: What else do you gain from service-learning?

Moderator: Um... Can you share with me the advantages and disadvantages of the practice of service learning at UTAR?

Participant: Um... I think students... students get the...

Participant B: Chance...

Participant C: Yeah, get the chance, get the opportunity...

Moderator & Participant B: Opportunity... Um...

Participant C: Yeah, to serve the community, if not they will never get in touch with the NGOs.

Moderator: Okay... Do you have any more gains from the service learning?

Participant A: For me, I think as a student, participating in service learning can engage me in local communities and help me gain practical skills, and also allow for personal growth, as students may need to do quite a lot of things during the planning and executing of the service learning.

Moderator: Okay...

Participant A: So, besides that, service learning also gives students a different perspective on their life, the challenges faced by others, and encourages them to get involved in their community.

Moderator: Okay...

Participant A: So, service learning creates opportunities for young people to increase their involvement in serving the community, and also instills the habit of performing a service for others.

Moderator: Oh, because just now I heard that you mentioned about personal growth, may I... may I have any further elaboration for personal growth? Did you grow after the service learning?

Participant A: Yes, we learn how to communicate, which is one of the personal growth skills.

Moderator: Okay...

Participant A: Yeah.

Moderator: Is there any more...?

Participant A: And we also learn responsibility and...

Moderator: Responsibility...

Participant A: Yeah.

Moderator: May I ask how is the responsibility skill being practiced?

Participant A: Well, when we plan and execute the activities, we are all given our own tasks, and we are responsible for completing them on time.

Moderator: Okay... Then may I ask which department or position you guys are involved in, and what you guys have learned from the position you guys are in?

Participant B: I'm in the creative department, which designs the posters or something like this. What I learned is that the opportunity is not like waiting for you, you must be prepared.

Moderator: Practically?

Participant B: Prepared.

Moderator: Oh, be prepared.

Participant B: Yeah.

Moderator: How about Check Wei?

Participant C: I think for me, mine is quite different from Cecilia because for my position, it's not about waiting for the opportunity, it's like I'm from the program department and the head of the program department. So I need to prepare for other people, and then... because everyone is waiting for my program flow.

Moderator: Okay...

Participant C: Yeah, so for my position, when I do this, I know that my responsibility is higher during the planning stage.

Moderator: Okay...

Participant C: Yeah, and also during the event because people will follow what I wrote on the paper, and then they will just follow the flow.

Moderator: Okay... Did you learn the skill to build a program flow?

Participant C: Yes.

Moderator: Without looking at any format?

Participant C: Oh, if without looking at any format, I don't think I can do it so well, I might miss some important parts. So I refer to a lot of online resources and senior programs... so if you want me to do it by myself, I don't think I can, so I learn a lot during the preparation stage.

Moderator: Okay... So, after CSR, do you think you can do well in the program flow?

Participant C: Yeah, I think if you want me to do the program flow now, I can. I think I can do it already.

Moderator: Hmm, so it also considers whether it met your objective, the learning outcome, right?

Participant C: Yes.

Moderator: Ah, how about you?

Participant A: I am in the program department, and then I also need to communicate with the head of the program department to plan the activities we need to do for the Persatuan.

Moderator: Okay. Is there any advantage to the practice of service learning at UTAR? What have you gained?

Participant C: I think yes, because we need to write our reflection for our courses. So after we have done the event, we have more thoughts about it, and then we can write more. We can actually write what we have experienced. If we didn't have the event, I don't think we can write it properly. Maybe we just write it with our imagination.

Moderator: Okay.

Participant C: Yes, so I think it is a valuable experience.

Moderator: Do you think that the reflection report is also helpful in this course?

Participant C: Yes, I think so. It makes us remember what we learned during the whole event.

Moderator: Okay. How about the disadvantages of the practice of service learning? In your opinion?

Participant B: I think we use too much time.

Moderator: Use too much time... Can you elaborate more on this?

Participant C: We have to wait for every department's answers until we can proceed with our thing. We have to go through a lot of laws and spend a lot of time.

Moderator: Okay, so are there any more disadvantages of the practice?

Participant C: Some students could have difficulty communicating, and this can cause conflicts within the team.

Question 10:

Prompt: Is there any suggestion to improve the current practice of service-learning at UTAR?

Moderator: Is there any suggestion to improve the current practice of service learning at UTAR?

Participant C: Ermm...

Participant B: I think... I think we can, ermm, have more time...

Moderator: More time...

Participant B: Ermm, more practical.

Moderator: Enn enn.

Participant C: Practical...

Participant B: Enn, yaya, then no... no test.

Moderator: No test... no test.

Participant A: Enn.

Moderator: Can you further elaborate more on why more practical but no test? Do you mean that the test is not important in this course?

Participant B: Ermm, I think it's not that important. Because, ermm, for practical, we can feel it.

Moderator: Ennn.

Participant C: We can feel the emotion.

Moderator: Enn.

Participant B & Participant C: Ya.

Participant B: I think students...

Participant C: And we can touch.

Participant B: Ya. I think students who really like to do something, instead of learning the theoretical... it's very important because if the exam is forcing the student to remember...

Moderator: To study...

Participant C: Ya, to study the theory, ya.

Moderator: Are there any more suggestions to improve current CSR... err, current service learning at UTAR?

Participant C: I think UTAR could provide more equipment.

Moderator: Enn.

Participant C: Like maybe something fun, the fun...

Moderator: Enn, fun...

Participant C: Ya, I think fun is very important, one of the very important things. Even... even ermmm...

Moderator: Because, like, is it like more money, then you guys can...

Participant C: Yaya, I think.

Moderator: Can perform...

Participant C: Yaya, if students have financial support.

Participant B: Financial support.

Participant C: Ya, financial support...

Moderator: Oh, financial support.

Participant C: Then we could have done more things, ah.

Moderator: Will... will not limit your creativity.

Participant C: Yaya.

Moderator: Err, how... is there any more suggestion?

Participant B: Technology?

Participant C: Technology.

Moderator: Technology... haha.

All: Hahaha...

Moderator: Can you further elaborate on how technology helps?

Participant B: We can do the program err, like for example...

Moderator: Enen.

Participant B: Err, teach the older people how to use the computer...

Moderator: Enen.

Participant B: How to use the phone...

Moderator: Enen.

Participant B: Ah, something like this.

Participant C: Like more...

Moderator: Is there a program?

Participant C: Like become more...

Moderator: More variety?

Participant C: Ya, more variety of events instead of doing only... only what we mentioned just now.

Moderator: Then, do you think that because err because just now you guys have mentioned all... do all things in practical, do you think that technology can help you in learning the service learning?

Participant C: I think yes. Because ermm, without the technology, errr, maybe like what... what... what my... what my group does, we will have a hard time communicating with the person in charge in the kampung.

Moderator: Enn, so you guys have learned through... Okay, so thank you for joining us today.

I will share the findings with all of you through the email that has been given to me today.

Thank you.

All participants: Thank you.

Appendix G

Self-journaling sample

Focus group interview 2

Background/ Position of mederator: PR Final Year student enrolled in CSR course

Relationship with participants: Classmate

Reason: To explore the aspect of SL in the UTAR, particularly their understanding of CSR, and the challenges faced by them throughout the SL implementation

Details

Date: 01st March 2023

Participants: G, H, I

Location: Unisuites, Kampar

Time: 3pm-4:30pm

In this interview, I have retain neutrality and prevent prejudice while analysing data. To maintain transparency and accountability, I will keep a written record of all judgements and ethical considerations, and I will update my process as needed.

The three former students I interviewed today all participated in service-learning courses. Their insights and comments on their experiences were interesting which helps helped me as a student to fully see the significance of service learning. Throughout the interview, i have also acknowledge their challenges and obstacles which what i did not expect.

During the interview, the students' passion for service learning and their understanding of the value of corporate social responsibility were major themes that emerged from the group

discussion. They also talked about how they could apply what they learned in class to improve their interpersonal and problem-solving skills during their work experiences. Some students, nevertheless, complained about the inflexibility of the course and the inability to fully develop their preferred project.

The focus group additionally demonstrated the important role of students' intrinsic motivation to their level of involvement in service learning. Some students were inspired to participate by the chance to make a difference in their local community, while others were driven by the prospect of enhancing their own professional standing. In sum, the input I received from the focus group was quite beneficial and i taking into account the likelihood that my preconceptions might cloud my judgement, hence, I will reflect on the findings and how they relate to the reserach objectives.

Appendix H

Focus group interview photos

Appendix H1: Pilot Study



Appendix H2: Focus group 1



Appendix H3: Focus group 2



Appendix H4: Focus group 3

