TEACHING LAW TO NON-LAW STUDENTS: THE STUDENTS EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

Law is a must subject in many courses due to its importance. However, law is perceived as a difficult subject and consume a lot of time. This subject needs to be taught in a manner acceptable to the students to attract attention and interest. During Covid-19 pandemic, all learning activities are conducted through online platform. The lecturer need to have good teaching plan in ensuring the students are able to learn and enjoy law subject. In School of Business and Economics, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Business Law (MGM 3352) is one of the law subjects offered to the students. Literature shows that non-law students are having difficulty to learn law. This paper aim to study further on this issue. The objective of this paper are to learn about the business students' experience of learning law and to study the effectiveness of the method adopted in teaching the subject. This paper adopts qualitative method in collecting data where 3 surveys and 2 short interviews were conducted. From the findings, the students admitted that law subject is difficult but they like the subject and the students agreed the activities are appropriate and have assisted the in learning and understand the subject

Keywords: *Business Law, Pedagogy, Non-Law Students*

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

The outline of this paper is to highlight the importance of the pedagogy or method adopted by lecturers in teaching law subject to non-law students. Law subject is perceived as difficult (Razak et al., 2020). This becomes a challenge to the students in learning law. It can be overcome if the correct method adopted by the lecturer (Zakuan et al., 2018). The lecturers also need to have a better understanding (Allen, 2007) and effective communication skills (Shahzad & Bashir, 2018). In this millennial era, the traditional method alone might not be suitable. Thus, electronic learning can be utilised (Zakuan et al., 2018). A various method is needed to help non-student to study law better (Richardson et al., 2009). Therefore, a lecturer who teaches law to non-law students needs to adopt creative and innovative ways to attract attention and develop students' interest.

Research Objectives

Learning law subject is not an easy task for a non-law student. The lecturer must adopt the best pedagogy to ensure the method adopts is effective to create interest for the subject. It is important to learn the students' experience in learning law to examine the effectiveness of the method used in teaching the subject. The objectives of this research are to learn about the business's students' experience in learning law and to study the effectiveness of the method adopted in teaching the subject. There are not many works of literature in Malaysia on this issue. Thus, the findings of this paper may enrich the literature on this issue and the method of teaching law subject to non-law students using the online platform.

Methodology

This research engaged the qualitative method. It involved 3 surveys which result transformed into charts. The surveys were made at 3 different times; in the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the semester. 65 students were approach and 42 agreed to join Survey 1 and 2 (similar students), and 43 students agreed to join Survey 3. Survey 1 and 2 helps to see the changes in students' opinion after learning law for 7 weeks. Survey 3 provides data for the students' opinion about their experience and the method adopted in teaching law. This research adopts short interview in collecting students' opinion. Thirteen students were interviewed at the beginning and the end of the semester. In teaching law subject to non-law, the author conducted online lecture, uploaded slides with voice at YouTube, share all materials like notes, case law, activities' questions, assignment, discussion topic at the PutraBlast (*About Cade*, n.d.), invited practising lawyer to share opinions and experience, and share information in the WhatsApp group. As for the assessment, 8 activities (formative with or without grading) and 3 summative assessments were conducted. The activities require the students to act as a lawyer, a judge, drafter and create an animation for case law.

Results

The data collected shows that students felt law subject is difficult in both surveys; at the beginning and the end of the semester. However, the students changed their opinion from "dislike" to "like" the subject after week 7. The majority of the students understand the importance of learning business law after they completed the subject; they agreed that the sharing experience session by the lecture assists them to understand law subject better, and they agree and support the teaching method applied by the lecturer, however, there is a minority of students who disagree. The data collected shows after 7 weeks of learning with the teaching and assessment method adopted; there are changes in students' opinion. The data collected further shows that the subject caught the student's attention and interest and the method adopted is appropriate in assisting the student in learning law, help the students understand the important law in life and future career, reduce the fear of learning law and equipped the student with problem-solving skills. The suitable pedagogy adopted assisted the lecture to transfer knowledge effectively and develop the interest of the student in the subject.

Findings

The findings of this research show that it is crucial to adopt the right method in teaching laws to non-law students. The teaching and assessment method need to be suitable and appropriate to attract attention and develop interest in the subject especially when the students have prejudgment on the subject. The traditional method might not be suitable for the current students. E-learning would help much in teaching law to the millennial students or mix-method since the students are handy and familiar with technologies. From the students' experience, the experience sharing session by lecture and invited speaker

help them to see the application of law in real life and subsequently develop interest in the subject.

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Author's Biography

Hanna Ambaras Khan is a senior lecturer at School of Business and Economics, Universiti Putra Malaysia. She graduated with Bachelor of Laws (LLB (Hons)), Master of Comparative Law (MCL) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) from International Islamic University Malaysia. She is an accredited mediator and active in community mediation program and training. Her area of interest includes Company Law, ADR-Mediation (include native mediation), Domestic Violence and Legal Education.