Students' Engagement and Learning Motivation in Synchronous and Asynchronous Open Distance Learning (ODL) Activities

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Abstract: Students' engagement plays a vital role in achieving meaningful learning. Students must ensure that they are engaged in any learning activities required by the courses they undertake. The learning activities ranged between synchronous and asynchronous activities. In this study, the students were evaluated based on these ODL activities. The learning activities also came from the students' motivation to learn, which contributed to their engagement. To further investigate the level of engagement and to investigate the influences of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in open distance learning (ODL), a survey instrument in the form of a Google Form was sent to 67 students from three classes for the purposes of investigating the students' engagement in ODL and the influences of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in ODL. The study utilised a survey research design employing a quantitative approach. The descriptive analysis showed a higher level of engagement in ODL compared to a slightly lower percentage of students in favour of the face-to-face approach. In addition to that, the results also showed that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations influenced the students' engagement in ODL. It is shown that the students desired both motivations in learning, which contributed to their engagement in ODL. The finding can be useful for future research in relation to e-learning, learning motivations, and engagements in the online teaching and learning approach. It can also be used for the betterment of students' engagement and learning motivations in ODL.

Keywords: Students' Engagement, Learning Motivation, Open Distance Learning (ODL), Synchronous Activities, Asynchronous Activities

1. Introduction

The existence and wave of Pandemic COVID-19 have changed the way students learn. Since early 2020, the world has been shaken by the pandemic, which has not excluded the education system, and many educators around the world have found themselves uncertain in making decisions about their teaching styles. Similarly, the students, whether they are ready or not, must adapt to the digital emergence in the classroom, so this situation requires a strong determination to learn. As the students get used to the traditional way of teaching and the physical meetings with the lecturers, some may find it difficult to follow the teaching styles through an online approach that leads to poor engagement in learning activities. In addition, students need to be familiar with both online and offline learning activities that are known as synchronous and asynchronous activities. Lecturers will mostly ask the students to do both activities due to the time constraint during online sessions, where some tasks could not be implemented following the class hour. The imbalance in fulfilling both tasks was also related to motivation in learning, as the students had the motivation to go through online learning either due to their intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. This is also supported by Mansour, Fatmi, and Jelloul's (2021) study, which shows students are probably driven by both motivations, as these are very important in stimulating their interests in learning and will help them succeed in the study.

Additionally, going through the ODL is not the biggest issue, as the implementation of the ODL allowed students to progressively continue with teaching and learning (Md Saidi, Sharip, Abd Rahim, Zulkifli, and Md Zain, 2021). Nevertheless, as the students come from diverse home environments and learning styles, instructors need to deliver their teaching while balancing both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities (Perveen, 2016). On another note, learning engagement is crucial, as the students are supposed to develop their own responsibility in learning, which will drive them to feel content and achieve self-satisfaction in learning. This is further explained by Messias, Morgado, and Barbas (2015), who investigated the level of engagement, the quality of interaction, and collaboration among students, as well as the instructors need to dig deeper specifically in the e-learning context. According to Hasanov, Antoniou, Suleymanov, and Garayev (2021), as

the students worked amidst different dimensions of behavioural, cognitive, and emotional engagements, it was deeply important to attain the engagement and to maximise it, as today's generations demand more than what instructors want to achieve in teaching but most significantly to cater to the students' choice of learning, in which the current phenomenon has transformed more to the digital education.

Significantly, it is further approved that engagements could possibly come from many directions (Martin and Bolliger, 2018); however, students may be guided by the extrinsic motivation that they can guarantee to get all sorts of achievements if they work harder, as they can see the purpose of learning engagement. In addition to that, as motivation is fundamental to learning (Sri Minda, 2020), students may begin the early step in learning through intrinsic motivation as they have the desire, interest, and determination to succeed in their study. It is also beneficial for the learning institutions and the instructors to dig deeper into learning engagements that require cooperation and high demand from both students and instructors. Hence, as the engagements in synchronous and asynchronous learning activities could possibly come from both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, this study aims to investigate the following research objectives:

Objectives
1. To investigate the students' engagement in synchronous and asynchronous learning activities
2. To investigate the students' learning motivation in ODL

Research Questions
1. What is the students' level of engagement in synchronous learning activities?
2. What is the students' level of engagement in asynchronous learning activities?
3. How does the students' intrinsic learning motivation influence engagement in ODL?
4. How does the students' extrinsic learning motivation influence engagement in ODL?

Scope and Limitation of Study
Generally, this study will only focus on investigating the levels of students' engagement in both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities which have been implemented through open distance learning (ODL). This learning mode has started and been conducted since the outbreak of COVID-19 Pandemic. This study is limited to semester two Diploma students who had gone through fourteen weeks of ODL and undertook the English course namely Integrated Language Skills II (ELC 151). Additionally, the study is limited to the semester two Diploma students from two faculties namely Faculty of Information Management and Faculty of Business Management at University Technology MARA (UiTM).

2. Literature Review
2.1 Open Distance Learning (ODL)
Open distance learning has been introduced in UiTM in March 2020 since the Pandemic COVID-19 hit the world thus forced the education system to switch the teaching and learning from physical platform to online platform. This teaching approach is vital as to fulfill the needs to continue the delivering of teaching and learning and also is seen as the ultimate approach to curb the spread of Covid-19 (Mazlan, Wan Ismail, Norwahi and Mohd Zolkapli, 2020). Other than that, students were trained to learn independently regardless of their readiness to adapt with the emerging situation. This has also forced the lecturers to follow the guidelines and the circular given by the university as to immerse into the flexible mode of teaching delivery and learning (Mazlan et al., 2020).

Furthermore, online learning has been defined as a web-based learning and a distance approach via internet coverage to connect teaching and learning between the educators and the learners. It is further described as a hybrid and blended approaches where these combined both online and face to face teaching approaches. Overall, it can be summarized as a teaching technique that uses the internet connection in implementation of teaching and learning. At UiTM, online learning is not foreign as it has been utilized since 2005 when the university introduced i-learn portal as the main learning management system. Additionally, blended learning (BL) came along and was introduced in 2011 and since then the i-learn portal has officially become the main LMS in supporting the execution of blended learning.

In relation to ODL development at UiTM, lecturers and students have been embarked into blended learning (BL) since 1990 (Ramly, Mohd Yunus, Yusof, Abdul Rahman, Aziz Fadzillah and Md Sarif, 2019). Since then, blended learning namely (BL) has become an online teaching and learning approach where the students can communicate with the lecturers in any teaching and learning platforms such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams and Ufuture as these are the options that most UiTM lecturers prefer for conducting the class

(Md Saidi, Sharip, Abd Rahim, Zulkifli and Md Zain, 2020). Ramly et al. (2019) added that through BL students are supposed to have a better chance of completing the task given during and after formal class session and the lecturers as well would have an opportunity to give instruction, delivering course content and teaching materials and evaluating the assessments during and after class session. Similarly, students will be getting feedbacks right after completing the tasks given. Even though, BL instructions demand extra time and effort somehow or rather both lecturers and students would use this approach so that the limited time accommodated in the classroom could be done through BL.

2.2 Students' Engagement in Open Distance Learning (ODL)

Investigating students' engagement in open distance learning (ODL) is crucial because during the online and offline sessions, students could be anywhere and the main things that they need to possess are the device and the internet connection. It is also important to trail their interests in learning activities to keep them positively motivated in learning. The emergence of Pandemic Covid-19 has drastically changed the way students learn. As 2019 approached the year-end, people around the globe were shaken with the waves of Covid-19 and at the beginning of 2020, the education system witnessed the change and is waking-up to adapt with the new chapter from traditional teaching approach to online teaching approach. At the beginning, students were reported to not be able to adapt with online teaching approach where the problem mostly rooted from maintaining interest in the course, least opportunity to communicate and collaborate with peers and keeping themselves motivated along the course-timeline (Hollister, Nair, Hill-Lindsay and Chukoskie, 2022). It is also further found that the abrupt changes to online teaching and learning had also challenged the readiness of digital competency among instructors and students (Fabriz, Mendzheritskaya and Stehle, 2021). Similarly, according to Md Saidi, Sharip, Abd Rahim, Zulkifli and Md Zain (2020) the Malaysia education system was not excluded in this scenario where the Ministry of Higher Education has instructed all learning institutions to conduct teaching and learning to the online method. This is to ensure that students are not left behind in learning and can progressively learn at anywhere and anytime (Md Saidi et al., 2020).

One of the main concerns in online teaching mode is to get the students engage in ODL activities where the students may find themselves difficult to bond with peers, the feeling of isolated and insufficient supports from digital devices (Md Nawi, Mohd Yusof, Kamaludin and Sain (2021) thus contribute to the disengagement among students (Hollister, Nair, Hill-Lindsay and Chukoskie, 2022). Students on the other hand tend to express dissatisfaction on ODL where the attendance rate dropped out and the lower interests in class participation and decreased achievements in assessments (Hollister et al., 2022). Despite all that, engagement will be absent when the rapport and collaboration do not exist during ODL. A study conducted by Martin and Bolliger (2018) found that engagement will occur in an online environment if there is cooperation and affiliation between instructors and students thus contributing to the improvement in the learning process. If these issues are not well addressed, students will continuously display their passiveness in learning and the instructor will ultimately become the center of knowledge (Qader and Arslan, 2019) as the students will be reluctant to actively learn the courses they undertake.

Moreover, engagement is defined as "the student's psychological investment in and effort directed toward learning, understanding or mastering the knowledge, skills or crafts that academic work is intended to promote" (Newmann, Wehlage and Lamborn, 1992, p.12). This means that engagement will be acquired when the students have the determination, resilience, endeavor, and effort toward learning to succeed in comprehending and also completing the tasks given. It is also supported by Md Nawi, Mohd Yusof, Kamaludin and Sain (2021) learning engagement is the contributing factor to succeed in any learning platform that will drive towards active learning. In another study conducted by Hollister, Nair, Hill-Lindsay and Chukoskie, (2022) indicated a variety of engagement tools such as Wordwall, Quizzess, Polls, breakout rooms and other interactive tools that enhanced students' interactive learning. Hence, despite all the engagement tools that would assist the students and stimulate their active thinking while learning in an online mode, engagement is still matters the most as the students need to be fully engaged among peers, with the instructors and together with course-content that could enhance students' understanding and perceptions (Martin et al., 2018).

2.3 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations

Motivation should be gauged, stimulated, reinforced, and sustained throughout the teaching-learning process (Mansour, Fatmi and Jelloul 2021). Intrinsic motivation comes from the inner side of an individual based on their true interest, self-fulfilment, enjoyment and curiosity toward a topic or courses that they undertake (Mansour et al., 2021). Meanwhile the extrinsic motivation could possibly come from the desire to gain achievement such as better grades and also to avoid punishment (Gustiani, Ardiansyah and Simanjuntak, 2021). Both motivations will initiate the passion in learning and at the very same time students will obtain great accomplishment in their study (El-Seoud, Islam, Eddin, Seddiek, El-khouly and Nosseir (2014). This is also

supported by Md Nawi, Mohd Yusof, Kamaludin and Sain (2021) that students need to devour self-determination and motivation to keep their pace in learning smoothly.

In the field of education, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations have been widely explored thus with the growth of online learning (Mansour, Fatmi and Jelloul, 2021) ever since the emergence of Covid-19 though the online method is apparently not a new dimension in teaching and learning. As discussed above that students are usually agitated with many constraints for instance lack readiness to embrace technology, ineffective time management, communication-barrier and other various difficulty in going through ODL, these show that how engaging students in learning and sustaining them to keep motivating themselves must be put into continuous action (Sri Minda, 2020).

Given the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations as the ultimate challenge for the instructor and students to be developed consistently, these motivations will not be able to occur on their own if the students are not encouraged, stimulated and reinforced so that they could see the purpose of learning in an online mode (Gustiani, Ardiansyah and Simanjuntak, 2021). Similarly, students need to be taught on how to develop and enhance their intrinsic motivation as this could be the first step engaging in an online environment. Having said that a study conducted by Gustiani et al. (2022) showed that students will be getting sufficient intrinsic motivation if they feel content through the interesting learning activities thus this contributes to the extrinsic motivation when the students realize the benefits that they will obtain based on their achievement. However, the researchers added that there is some propensity that the students might experience amotivation where they do not have the desire to learn and are unwilling to continue with online learning as they do not see the purpose of doing that.

Nevertheless, in most studies by Gustiani et al., (2022), Sri Minda (2020), Mansour et al., (2021) and Kew, Petsansri, Ratanaolarn and Tasir (2018) showed that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations give an impact to get students engage in online learning. Without continuous encouragement from the instructor and the students themselves, the motivation levels will be decreased hence disengagement will be taking the place as the students do not see the value of participating in online learning activities. In this regard, El-Seoud, Islam, Eddin, Seddiek, El-khouly and Nosseir (2014) and Kew et al., (2018) urged the need to not overlook on the importance of developing motivations as these contribute to succeed in the learning process.

2.4 Learning Management System (LMS)

For two-year of the implementation of Open Distance Learning (ODL) in UiTM, the lecturers are given an opportunity of choosing a preferred teaching platform. Even since Ufuture has been introduced in 2014, many lecturers have used this platform at a very minimum usage. In addition to that, in the early year of 2020 the lecturers used other teaching platforms such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Padlet, Edmodo and so forth (Md Saidi, Sharip, Abd Rahim, Zulkifli and Md Zain, 2021). The choice was dependent on the students' internet connection and the learning experience. The lecturers as well must be alert on their digital skills when choosing for the teaching platform. In relation to this, the respondents must fully utilize the teaching and learning platform as it will help them to learn better.

Furthermore, for the purpose of this study the researchers used Microsoft Teams as their teaching platform. This teaching platform contented with all the assessments and the tasks assigned to the students on the semester the study was conducted. Despite all that, Microsoft Teams is also used for the online meeting and every session is recorded for the students to refer to. Students can view the teaching video multiple times depending on their understanding. Md Saidi et al. (2021) agreed that the online video conferencing is very much helpful where the students can get the benefits through reviewing the teaching video. In addition, students can also easily communicate with the lecturer in the chat room specifically for their class.

Additionally, when the instructors focus on only one type of teaching platform and the choice must be based on the usability and applicability of the teaching platform, it will be much easier to conduct the online class, to assign tasks and to execute the assessments to the students. This is also supported by Md Saidi et al. (2021) that by utilizing a suitable LMS platform, it will be easier for the instructors to monitor the students' progress and performance in learning. For instance, through Microsoft Teams students would be able to view the teaching video and this is also supported by Hollister et al. (2022) in their study that somehow students prefer to view the teaching video over the online meet session as they can pause and play the teaching video for multiple times. This will help them to better understand complex topics in the course.

2.5 Synchronous Learning Activities

At the higher learning institution, both synchronous, asynchronous and blended learning are crucial as to meet the expectation of the success of online learning. Synchronous learning is the activity that is executed within the class-hour. The students are bound to the class-hour that requires them to submit the tasks given within the stipulated time. There are times when the instructor does not conduct an online meet session however

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the class-hour is replaced with the offline session in a way that students need to do work assigned to them following the time-scheduled. Even at some point the synchronous learning activity is more approachable compared to asynchronous learning activities however some other constraints such as poor internet coverage and dysfunctional of device used may ruin the synchronous learning activities. Xie, Liu, Bhairma and Shim (2018) added that the instructors must not overlook the matter of communication tools in online learning mode as the incorrect choice will jeopardize the interaction between both parties thus leading to the disengagement in ODL. Furthermore, Xie et al. (2018) stated that the interactive learning activities do play a major role to give the positive impacts on learning outcomes, contentment, and engagement in online learning.

Given the sudden impact on online environment during the era of Pandemic Covid-19 that has challenged the students in keeping them motivated through synchronous and asynchronous learning activities, Fabriz, Mendzheritskaya and Stehle (2021) it was reported in their study that students predominantly can easily adapt themselves in synchronous learning activities as they felt easy to communicate and collaborate with peers and instantly get the feedbacks from their instructors. On another note, a similar study conducted by these researchers showed that instructors indicated the need for both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. This implies the probability of the instructors to balance both learning activities, however more interactive synchronous learning activities need to be relooked for a matter of getting balanced progress from female and male students (Misbah, Fatima, Abid and Ayesha, 2017).

Han (2013) cited in Misbah et al., (2017) explained that the utilization of video conferencing at higher level seemed to show positive learning progress in a way that students did not feel the distance between them and the instructors. This leads to the engagement through collaborations with peers and this also contributes to the self-sufficiency in a course they learned (Misbah et al., 2017). Additionally, in a study conducted by Xie et al. (2018) where students mostly were in favor of synchronous learning activities because of the usage as such the utilizing of webcam and live interaction through fixed timetables which is very similar to the physical classroom. Nevertheless, like other learning approaches, synchronous learning activities generally have its disadvantages which Xie et al., (2018) have addressed in their study that both learning activities provided the advantages and disadvantages and it is very important to the instructors to choose which approach that is suitable to the students.

2.6 Asynchronous Learning Activities
On the contrary, asynchronous learning activities come along in online learning to provide a balanced online learning experience. Asynchronous learning is implemented to lessen the load in synchronous activities where mostly will be conducted following the class-hour (Fernandez, Ramesh and Raja Manivannan, 2022). The learning activities will mostly involve video recording, webinar, podcasts and worksheets. Fernandez et al. (2022) explained that to ensure the effectiveness of online learning, students need to complete both learning activities for better enhancement in learning. Md Saidi et al. (2021) added that providing video recording students can fully view past class recordings in a situation when they are having poor internet connection and when they need further understanding on the topics they learned.

Moreover, a case study conducted by Perveen (2016) out of the popularity gained by synchronous learning activities which have been reported by many studies, the researcher found out that the asynchronous learning activities are quite beneficial especially to the second language learners in contrast with synchronous learning activities. This is due to some limitations through synchronous learning activities such as the demand of student-teacher presence and instant feedback from the instructors. This resulted in the switch-mode of asynchronous learning activities where the students were not burdened by its flexible learning mode in a form of teaching video, audio-slides, and handouts (Perveen, 2016).

As supported by Xie et al., (2018) to overcome the constraints in e-learning environment it is advisable for the instructors to adopt both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities as these two able to assist students to feel the engagement through synchronous activities and can work independently through asynchronous activities. This is also supported by Fernandez et al., (2022) as to stimulate students' self-fulfilment and self-contentment in learning, they need to be motivated to go through both learning activities. Perveen (2016) added that to cater multiple intelligence and different learning styles of students, they need to be exposed and encouraged in experiencing both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. The researcher further stated that the e-learning environment is no longer a new dimension in teaching and learning therefore continuous efforts must be made to both learning activities to provide a comprehensive and interactive learning.

3. Methodology
In this study, a quantitative descriptive research design was employed to investigate the levels of students' engagement in synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. It is also used to investigate students' intrinsic and extrinsic learning motivations influences in engagement in ODL. Sixty-seven semester

two Diploma students were involved in this study and an online questionnaire through Google Form was sent to these students to yield the responses. Furthermore, a convenient sampling method was used to select the participants who went through the ODL learning mode for fourteen weeks. These fourteen weeks comprises one semester at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). This sampling method was chosen based on the criteria of the respondents such as their interest in participating in this study and their availability.

3.1 Data Collection Method
This study was conducted among semester-two diploma students. The questionnaire was adapted from Mansour, Fatmi, and Jelloul (2021). Sixty-seven questionnaires were distributed to the three classes from three different programmes. The students are given an online questionnaire through a Google form. The section of the questionnaire is divided into four sections: demographic data, the students' engagement in synchronous learning activities, the students' engagement in asynchronous learning activities, the students' intrinsic motivation in ODL, and the students' extrinsic motivation in ODL.

3.2 Data Collection Analysis
After four days, the data from sixty-seven questionnaires was collected. SPSS version 22 was used to analyse the data. Based on the data, researchers investigated the mean, median, and standard deviation. The first session is the analysis based on the demographic data collected from the sixty-seven respondents. The five-point Likert scale is used, ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). The questionnaire contained 28 items divided into four categories: demographic information, students' engagement in synchronous learning activities, students' engagement in asynchronous learning activities, students' intrinsic motivation in ODL activities, and students' extrinsic motivation in ODL activities.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1 Result of Demographic Analysis

Gender	
Female	76.1% (n=51)
Male	23.9% (n=16)
Age	
18 - 19	83.6% (n=56)
20 - 22	16.4% (n=11)
Groups	
N5IM110	37.3% (n=25)
N5BA119	31.3% (n=21)
N5BA111	31.3% (n-21)

Figure 1 Demographic Data

The tables show that out of 67 respondents of this study derived from 76.1% female students and 23.9 male students from three programs at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) namely the Faculty of Information Management (IM110) comprises 37.3% (n=25) students, the Faculty of Business Management (Banking) and (Business Management) which both comprise 31.3% (n=21). Furthermore, the age of the respondents ranged from 18 – 19-year-old which comprises 83.6% (n=56) and the remaining respondents ranged from 20 – 22-year-old which comprises 16.4% (n=11).

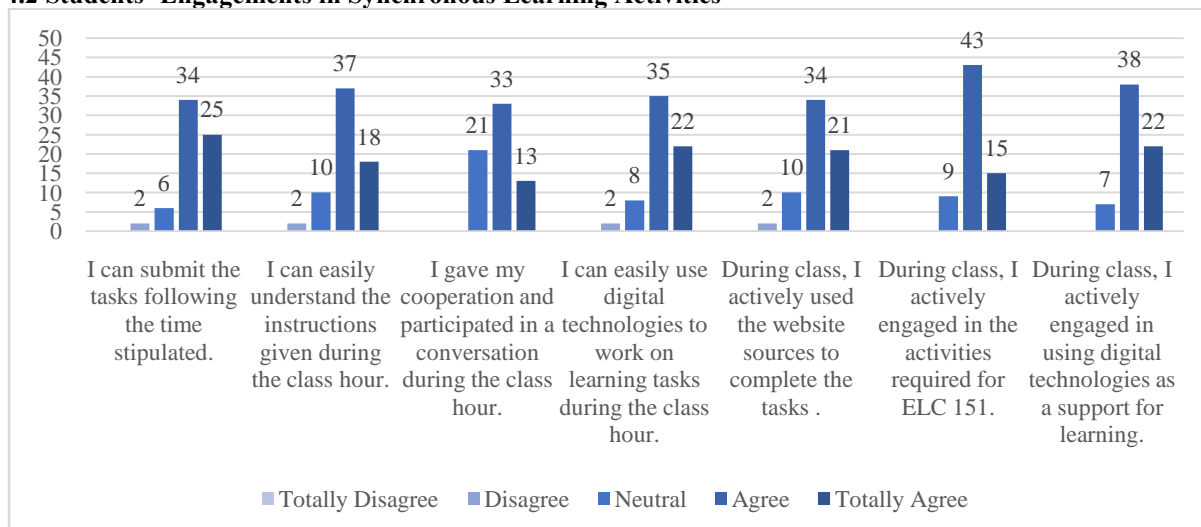**4.2 Students' Engagements in Synchronous Learning Activities**

Figure 2 Students' Engagement in Synchronous Learning Activities

Based on the graph, the result shows that the students were able to actively be engaged in the synchronous learning activities where they can follow the instructions given within the time stipulated for the tasks assigned to them. Moreover, they were engaged in the utilisation of the technologies, such as by actively using digital technologies for learning support. They also showed their cooperation by actively engaging in and participating in a conversation during the class hour. This finding is also supported by a study conducted by Misbah et al. (2017), which found that a synchronous learning setting was able to enhance group discussion through effective group control that was done during live class activity.

The result of this study has confirmed the finding by Fabriz et al. (2021), where it was reported that in synchronous learning settings, students were more actively engaged in the interaction with peers and received greater support for their needs compared to asynchronous settings. A similar finding has also been discussed by Fernandez et al. (2022): as synchronous activities allow the students and the instructor to interact in real-time collaboration, it requires a devotion of time to stimulate the participation of students during online learning.

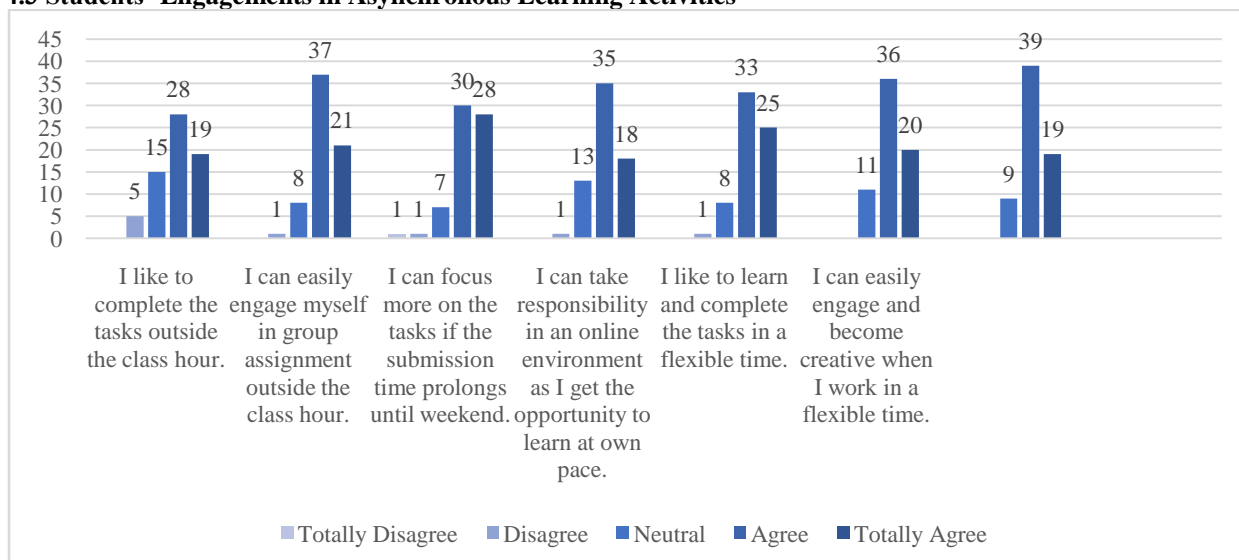**4.3 Students' Engagements in Asynchronous Learning Activities**

Figure 3 Students' Engagements in Asynchronous Learning Activities

Based on the graph, the result shows that most students preferred to work at their own pace and were able to complete the task given in a flexible time that was outside the class hour. The students further agree that they can concentrate more on the tasks given when they are given time until the weekend for the submission.

Fernandez et al.s (2022) study further supported that the execution of asynchronous activities was to allow better opportunity for the students to learn in their comfort zone, which can reduce the dependency on the instructors. On another note, students would be able to learn through a variety of teaching and learning platforms, such as pre-recorded sessions, social media, websites, YouTube, and so forth. The researchers further added that, regardless of being less connected with the instructors and peers, the asynchronous activities are still cost-effective because the students will get access to the course contents without paying more for the physical materials.

Hence, based on the findings from previous studies conducted by Perveen (2016) and Xie et al. (2019), it is suggested that the combination of both asynchronous and synchronous learning activities be conducted to align with the students' needs, which include a lack of internet coverage, and to maximise the use of live interaction and collaboration during synchronous learning activities. Moreover, Misbah et al. (2017) suggest that the course outline should be adaptable and designed to meet the requirements of online learning, which would cater to the students' need to learn effectively. This is also supported by Fernandez's (2022) assertion that the learning experiences must come from both synchronous and asynchronous activities, thus providing a practical and balanced approach to teaching and learning.

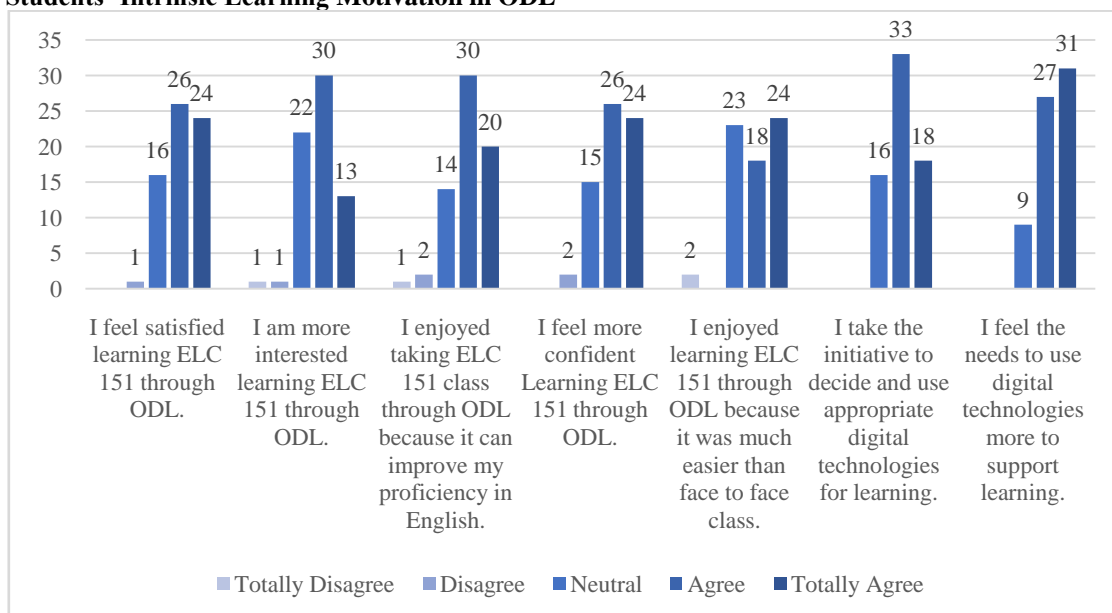### 4.4 Students' Intrinsic Learning Motivation in ODL

Figure 4 Students' Intrinsic Learning Motivation in ODL

The results show that the students had the intrinsic motivation for ODL approaches, which mostly agreed that they had the interest and confidence to learn ELC 151 English through ODL, and they also got enjoyment from it as it was much easier than the face-to-face class. Furthermore, they have the initiative to choose on their own the appropriate digital technologies for learning, as they felt that these digital technologies provided more support for learning. A similar finding is also found in a case study conducted by Mese and Sevilen (2021), where the researchers studied factors affecting the learning motivations of second language learners (L2). One of the factors was the learning activities that were found relevant and meaningful to them and that reported the higher levels of engagement in the online class. They further suggested that the instructional designers and instructors must provide sufficient guidelines to assist the students in learning independently, as the online approach demands more of the students' motivation to learn.

In addition, Almusharraf, Bailey, and Hatcher (2021) reported in their study of intrinsic motivation for both synchronous and asynchronous writing practises that there were some writing activities that worked well during asynchronous activities that allowed them to review the lessons over again, and this was very useful for those who showed less performance and were able to reduce making mistakes among peers. Furthermore, they added that the intrinsic motivation worked effectively during the speaking synchronous activities, where students mostly had the opportunity to be facilitated by their instructors, and these activities increased the collaboration and learning with their peers. As a result, their study indicated that as the intrinsic motivation had positive impacts on learning, it was crucial to design the course content to be more productive, engaging, and interactive as to stimulate learning opportunities among L2 learners.

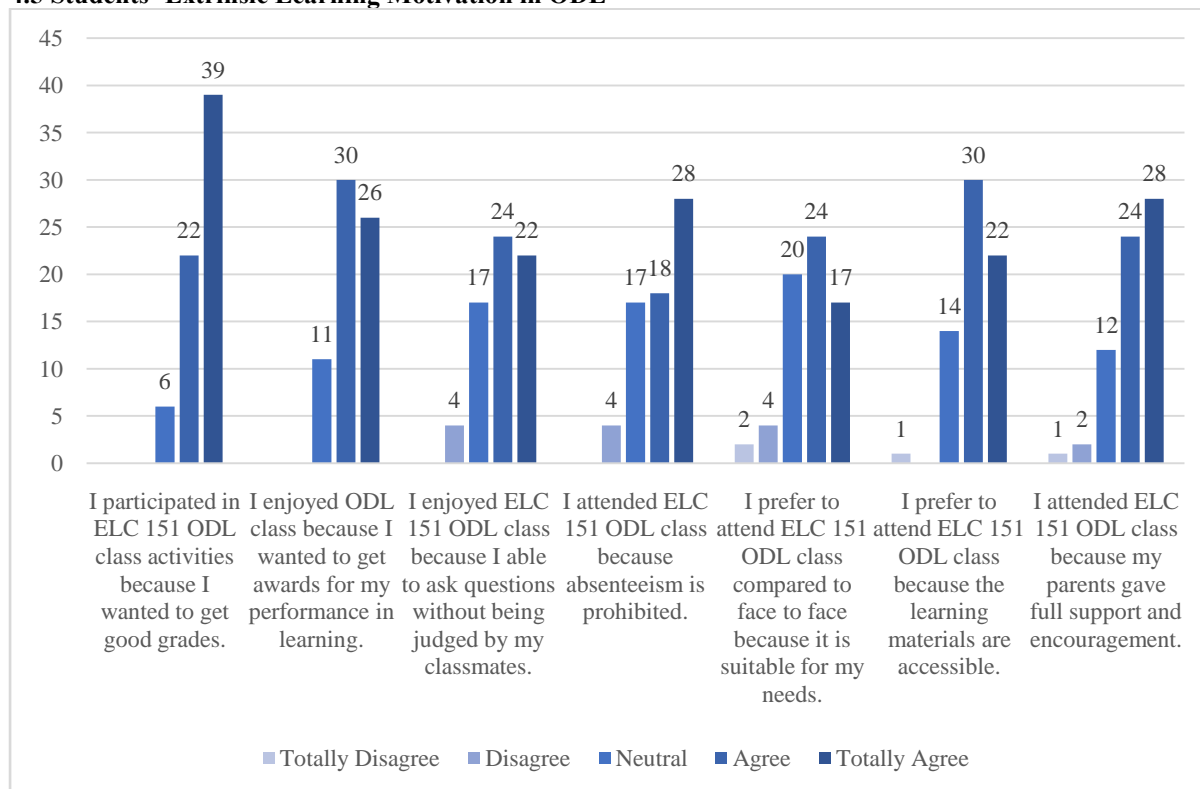**4.5 Students' Extrinsic Learning Motivation in ODL**

Figure 5 Students' Extrinsic Learning Motivation in ODL

Based on the data presented, it shows that the students mostly totally agree that they participated in ODL due to the desire to get good grades and awards for their learning performance. They are also extrinsically motivated due to their parents' full support and encouragement, which drove them to succeed learning online. Despite getting moral support, the students realised that they were prohibited from being absent without absolute reasons, thus contributing to their attitude of being responsible for their own learning. The result also showed that they felt the ODL class was more suitable for their needs as they could freely ask questions without being judged by their peers. In a study conducted by Mansour et al. (2021), it was reported that the students were very concerned about the grades and appraisals as they were aware that they were being evaluated based on their efforts and progress in learning. They were also concerned about their participation in the class activity that has been part of the course evaluation. Performance in learning is important and satisfying when the students obtain good grades, thus contributing to the strong impact of extrinsic motivation on students' learning performance.

Furthermore, as the extrinsic motivation primarily comes from good grades, awards, and appraisal, students were seen to become more disciplined and responsible for their own learning. This is supported by Sri Minda (2020), as when the conventional way of teaching at the university level is particularly in the face-to-face classroom, the online platform gives opportunity for students to operate learning predominantly at their own pace, and the students will be extensively motivated to show more effort to attain the grades that they desire. The researcher further added that at some point, students who were less satisfied with their performance during physical classes will be extrinsically motivated to excel during ODL as they perceive learning to be flexible, and this motivation drives them to take action on purpose.

5. Conclusion

This study intends to investigate the students' engagements with synchronous and asynchronous open distance learning (ODL), mainly at UiTM. Furthermore, the study also intends to investigate the influence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations on students' engagement in ODL. Based on the findings discussed above, there were differences in how students perceived their engagement in both learning activities, as both activities have their advantages and disadvantages. However, to ensure the smooth sailing of online learning, the instructors must employ both synchronous and asynchronous teaching activities to create balanced learning activities. Students, on the other hand, will benefit from getting themselves involved in both learning activities

as they discover that both will help them progress well in online learning. Moreover, the similar situation with the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations where students are primarily reported in many studies indicates that both motivations will drive them to achieve the desired results in their study, and these motivations arrive precisely on the tasks and assessments implemented in the courses they undertake. In summary, ODL and any other online learning specifically at the higher levels have given the students an opportunity to excel in their studies, and through great encouragement and motivation in both asynchronous and synchronous teaching and learning activities, undoubtedly, they will improve the students' development in online learning, thus becoming a gate opener for the higher institutions to design more technologically advanced course outlines that are pertinent to the students' needs.

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