

*The Study of the Readiness for Entering the ASEAN Community
of Undergraduate Students*

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The Asian Conference on Asian Studies 2016
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

This study carries out to examine the comparison on the perspectives of the students in computer science programmes at Yala Rajabhat Universities and University Malaysia Kelantan on their readiness to get involved in the ASEAN community. Based on both universities as a case study, the subjects are divided into two groups, all of whom consist of 362 students, which 207 students are from Yala Rajabhat University, Thailand and the other 155 students are from University Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia. Five-scale points are used in the questionnaires as the instrument for data collection. Three areas of questions are mainly focused in the questionnaires, which include 1) the knowledge readiness, 2) the procedure skill readiness, and 3) the attitude readiness. The students' overall viewpoints on the enthusiasm regarding the ASEAN community is showed at the moderate level, whereas the university comparative analysis is, as a result, not significantly different at the .05 level.

Keywords: Readiness, ASEAN community, Students, Computer programs

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Introduction

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is established to create a mutual understanding for political and economical purposes among 10 countries, all of which include Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia. This brings all the nations not only to maintain peace, political stability, and economic prosperity, but also to create social and cultural development among each other. Education has, in addition, been hugely introduced to ASEAN as it is claimed to play a significant role in bonding the ASEAN together. This, as a result, will create such an abundance of knowledge exchanges for all the nations in the end. Therefore, current students are recommended to pay attention to the history, traditions, cultures, education, politics, and economics of their ASEAN neighbors (Sonsri, 2004). Having said that, educational cooperation among international institutes should be addressed to make a further progress of the development. This study has been, finally, conducted under the purpose on an academic cooperation to research between Yala Rajabhat University, Thailand, and University Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia, in order to make an educational connection between students from both universities who study in computer science programmes and related fields. This can bring the readiness for the ASEAN in the future.

Objective and Goal

This study aims to investigate the comparison of the undergraduate students from Yala Rajabhat University, Thailand, and University Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia, who study computer science programmes on their readiness towards the ASEAN.

Methods

In this quantitative-based research, the stratified random sampling has been used based on the related programmes of both universities. 207 subjects from Yala Rajabhat University and 155 subjects from University Malaysia Kelantan have been selected to participate in this study. Five-scale points in questionnaires have also been employed as the instrument to collect the data. The questions are focused in three areas: the knowledge readiness, the procedure skill readiness, and the attitude readiness. The descriptive data were analysed in terms of frequency, percentage, average, standard deviation (S.D.), and independent samples t-test.

Results

The primary result of the primary details of participants showed in Table 1.

Table 1: Description of the samples

Universities/Programme	Samples	Percentage
Yala Rajabhat University		
- Computer science	79	38.20
- Information technology	113	54.60
- Multimedia technology	15	7.20
Total	207	100.00
University Malaysia Kelantan		
- Digital Media	42	27.10
- Communication Design	72	46.50
- Animation and Ludology	5	3.20
- Multimedia	36	23.20
Total	155	100.00

Based on Table 1, 54.60 percent of participants of Yala Rajabhat University who answered the questionnaires are the students who studied in information technology, followed by computer science programme at 38.20 percent, and the programme in Multimedia Technology at 7.20, respectively. For University Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia, 46.50 percent is from the students in communication design, 46.50 percent from digital media, 27.10, 23.20, and 3.20 percent from programmes in multimedia, animation and ludology, correspondingly.

The analytical comparison of the undergraduate students doing science programmes in computer from both universities on their readiness toward the ASEAN community as shown in Table 2-5.

Table 2: The comparison on the knowledge readiness

Universities	Samples	\bar{X}	S.D.	t
Yala Rajabaht University	207	3.00	0.67	1.219
University Malaysia Kelantan	155	2.91	0.68	

** A value of 0.05 significance in statistics

Based on Table 2, the students from Yala Rajabhat University and University Malaysia Kelantan shows no huge difference on their perspectives towards the ASEAN general knowledge which 0.05 is described significantly in statistics.

Table 3: The comparison on the procedure skill readiness

Universities	Samples	\bar{X}	S.D.	t
Yala Rajabaht University	207	3.33	0.75	.814
University Malaysia Kelantan	155	3.26	0.79	

** A value of 0.05 significance in statistics

It can be seen that there is not great difference on the perspectives of the students in both universities on their procedure skill readiness which 0.05 is described significantly in statistics.

Table 4: The comparison on the attitude readiness

Universities	Samples	\bar{X}	S.D.	t
Yala Rajabaht University	207	3.34	0.78	.369
University Malaysia Kelantan	155	3.31	0.82	

** A value of 0.05 significance in statistics

According to Table 4 above, the difference on the perspectives on the attitude readiness of the students from both universities is not far off with a value of 0.05 significance in statistics

The analytical result in Figure 1 below shows the comparison in three areas (the knowledge readiness, the procedure skill readiness, and the attitude readiness) on their readiness towards the ASEAN community of the undergraduate students in computer science programmes from both universities.

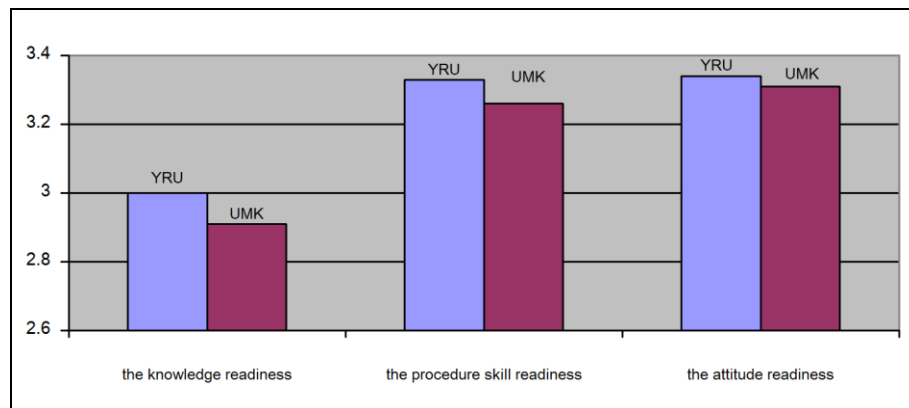


Figure 1: Students' readiness in each area towards the ASEAN community.

Table 5: Comparative summary on the readiness towards the ASEAN Community

Universities	Samples	\bar{X}	S.D.	t
Yala Rajabaht University	207	3.22	0.65	.883
University Malaysia Kelantan	155	3.16	0.67	

** A value of 0.05 significance in statistics

It can be showed that there is no vast difference on the students' perspectives towards the readiness for ASEAN community in both universities which 0.05 is given as the significance in statistics.

Participants' suggestions:

1. Projects on knowledge managements from students in each ASEAN country should be addressed to provide more academic, career skills and sport knowledge,
2. More training on ASEAN languages should be organized, and
3. Ways to advertise ASEAN information should be more given.

Conclusion and Discussion

Overall, no significant difference between the students from both universities on the knowledge of ASEAN in those three-focused questions with a value of 0.05 significance in statistics. In addition, considering each question closely, there was also any difference on those three questions with also a value of 0.05 significance in statistics.

Regarding the study, it can be explained that the participated students from both universities are Muslims which give such a correspondence from the knowledge from Office of Basic Education Commission that the majorities of people living the three border provinces of Thailand are also Muslims. And 83 percent of those use a local Malay language to communicate in their daily life. This is considered the unique characteristic on language-based focus due to Malaysian influences (Officer of the Basic Education Commission, 2010). According to the similarity of the language use and the culture of the students in both universities, it is given that this can be the main key to success in the readiness of the ASEAN connection for higher education. Such cooperation can create a number of projects made by both universities to bring academic excellence and further cooperation on art and culture.

Based on the finding above showing the perspectives of the students in both universities on their readiness towards ASEAN community is at the moderate level with a value of 0.05 significance in statistics. This can be seen that the readiness of both universities is considered 'equal' despite the fact that the scale given is showed 'moderate'. Hence, it is suggested that more projects be given to develop the needed skills to have the students ready for the coming of the ASEAN at the higher level. For instance, since English is considered a global language for communication, English practice training for students should, then, be addressed in Yala Rajabhat University along with the enhancement of their own Thai language to train their own ASEAN neighbors to create more ways for communication.

Besides, based on a close look of the consideration on each area, it is found that the students from both universities has the poorest knowledge on ASEAN compared with the study of readiness on ASEAN of the students in Phetchabun Rajabhat University (Kongterm, 2012). Thus, providing the students from both universities with more knowledge by adding more ASEAN information in curriculums or public media will be the base for creating educational cooperation between both universities and this can be the readiness of being part of the world of ASEAN in the future.

Acknowledgement

This work was supported by grants from Yala Rajabhat University and we would like to thank you Faculty of Creative Technology & Heritage for full cooperation on the greatly data collection.

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