



Students' Perspectives on Digital Communication in Online Learning During Covid-19

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Abstract. The emergence of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic has changed the learning paradigm in Indonesia which has thoroughly led the shift from traditional to digital communication. Digital communication is the process of sharing or getting information mediated by electronic device. Basically, technology has made it accessible to share information, ideas, and experiences. In line with this learning paradigm, the teaching learning process has transformed into more diverse compared to the previous learning. Hence, this study intends to examine the students' learning experiences primarily throughout Covid-19 pandemic. This is a qualitative study that explores the convenient questionnaires data. The participants are the students of Satu Nusa University of Lampung majoring in English Literature, Management, and Accounting. The research results represent that the students have a high regard and positive impact in implementing the current modern technologies. Furthermore, they are eager to maintain their new habits of applying technologies even though in the post pandemic of Covid-19.

Keywords: covid-19 pandemic · digital communication · learning paradigm · students' learning

1 Introduction

It has been two years that the worldwide deployment of coronavirus (Covid-19) is affecting to all community activities, such as economy, social and education. Many countries around the world have instituted a school closure in order to avert direct contact among students and mitigate new cases [1]. Nevertheless, closing schools or colleges is not easy since the learning process should run as usual. The authorities and colleges have to collaborate to clear up this hassle, and to accommodate high-quality timely crisis-oriented psychological services for the students [2]. It deals with how the learning process could be conducted smoothly.

This situation leads the educators to introduce virtual classes using online learning applications [3]. Teaching and learning process which can be typically completed face-to-face have turned into online studying with the help of diverse online studying applications

[4]. In line with that, technology as cell phones, laptops, and so on are wanted with the intention to aid students gaining knowledge of and support teaching learning activities. In addition, modern devices greatly accommodate distance learning between teachers and students during pandemic, even teachers are dominantly dependent on the internet access [5]. Thus, this research examines the students' perception of on-line learning during Covid19, their motives for liking and no longer liking on-line learning, the supplied online teaching material and delivery preferences, in addition to their perspectives on how to keep their on-line learning strategies.

2 Literature Review

Covid-19 pandemic has made substantial alterations in the discipline of education, especially in Indonesia. Educators and learners who used to use a lot of traditional methods in the learning process, now switched to using digital communication for the sake of continuity of learning which had been shaken during the pandemic. Digital communication is the wide region that deals with the transmission and reception of binary information throughout analog channels [6]. It empowers the Internet considering it is the primary mechanism for conveying information across the numerous media employed which include optical fiber, copper wire, and air. Now, they are increasingly familiar with the digital applications they use in the learning process.

Digital communication is a way that teachers and students can do online learning at home during the pandemic. Online learning encompasses a range of technologies such as the worldwide web, email, chat, new groups and texts, audio and video conferencing delivered over computer networks to impart education [7]. It helps the students to learn at their own pace according to their own convenience.

Online learning makes it easy for the students to be able to study wherever they are. The teachers are also easier to convey material without having to meet face to face with the learners. Distance learning, also called distance education, e-learning, and online learning, is a form of education in which the main elements include the physical separation of teachers and students during instruction, and the use of various technologies to facilitate student-teacher and student-student communication [8]. It fosters the creativity of teachers to be able to deliver learning materials as well as possible. It is the most reliable breakthrough path for the revival of education problems in Indonesia caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

There are so many benefits that teachers and students feel by doing online learning, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, where all people at that time were required to stay at home. The teaching and learning process can still be carried out properly without having to come to campus. However, it is undeniable that behind all that there are several obstacles they face. Not all students like this method, not to mention the obstacles caused by an unstable network that hinders the online learning process. Online learning has its own challenges, such as the difficulty of encouraging participation [9]; student anxiety and difficulty creating successful critical/analytical dialogue [10].

The students will have different perceptions about this issue. There will be students who are comfortable with online learning and there will also be students who prefer conventional learning methods. That is why it is important to find out the students' perspectives about online learning based on their experiences.

Related studies to this research were written by L. Švecová, G. Ostapenko, J. Veber, and V. Popov [8] with the title "Distance Learning During Covid - 19 Pandemic: Students' Perspectives". From their research, they concluded that students are satisfied with online/distance learning when: the teacher is adaptable to a new practice of e-teaching, good in digital skills and creativity to keep students engaged, and when the students are informed about education changes in time.

Then, another research entitled "Counselling Students' Perception of Online Learning during Covid-19 in Malaysia" that was written by [11]. They found that the majority of respondents (84.8%) decided that the online learning approach was essential during the pandemic. Most students liked online learning because learning can continue even during the pandemic (75.7%), it was safer to study at home than to go to campus (63.0%), and it facilitated meeting the requirements to graduate on time (44.5%). Most disliked online learning because doing group assignments online was difficult (60.3%), attending online classes was challenging (59.8%), and taking an online test was challenging (55.3%). The respondents (50.0%) also acknowledged that the most effective teaching material and delivery tool for online learning was a PowerPoint with audio (asynchronous method).

Therefore, the highest result from previous studies is that more students enjoy learning online than using conventional methods.

3 Method

This is a qualitative study that explores the convenient questionnaires data. The questionnaire was adopted from previous research questionnaires written by L. Švecová, G. Ostapenko, J. Veber, and V. Popov [8] and A. Nazilah, et. al. [11]. The participants are the students of Satu Nusa University of Lampung majoring in English Literature, Management, and Accounting with the number of participants are 31 students.

4 Result and Discussions

Covid-19 pandemic has been transformed the conditions of many sectors in the world including education since March 2020. Online learning turns into the best alternative to accomplish the learning process. Based on the mandatory in Satu Nusa University of Lampung, both students and lecturers ask to have effective interaction through digital communication. Meanwhile, it is practically interesting to recognize the facts of students' experiences during pandemic.

This study reveals some intriguing results that concern to benefits and challenging situation. It is clearly asserted in the following descriptions (Fig. 1).

The greatest number of students' responds accepts that this online learning is comfortable but difficult. This 51,6% answers report the students' comfortableness during online learning. It is surely because they enjoy online learning with several benefits, and also they face certain challenging circumstances during learning process. The second level is definitely stated uncomfortable and difficult with the number of 22,6%. Besides,

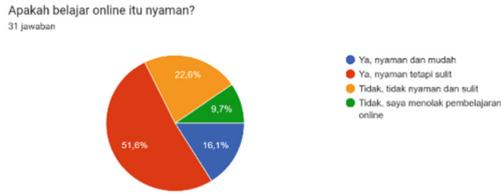


Fig. 1. Students' perspective on the convenience of online learning

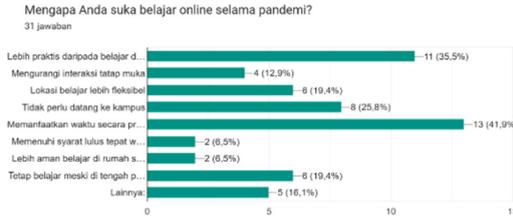


Fig. 2. Students' perspective on the interest of online learning

over 16% of Satu Nusa University students positively evaluate online learning is comfortable and easy. This third level is chiefly affected by the supporting facilities that they have such as internet access and good time managements.

Meanwhile, the rest percentage that is only 9,7% students refuse online learning environment to accomplish their learning activity during Covid-19 pandemic. The distinct reason of this condition is because they are not interested in online learning activities. In other words, these students experience boring class that can be caused by learning media and method. Consequently, offline classes is concerning to be the priority choice of students preference (Fig. 2).

The students who like online learning provide diverse reasons. The highest calculation (over 41,9%) is certainly confirmed that students can productively use their time at home during online learning. Thus, this percentage is reasonably argued that they feel better both to study and to do other activities outside of campus at the similar days. Furthermore, they can manage their time wisely, which are doing academic requirements and completing domestic prerequisites.

Each lowest number which is 6,5% relatively concern on two reasons namely fulfilling the necessity to graduate on time and having safer condition to study online than at campus. Moreover, these responds indicate lack of awareness to study in any circumstances including on digital communication like at this pandemic era. Also, this result becomes either challenging peace or opportunity that must be solved by all parties (Fig. 3).

In order to reveal the stable results, it is crucially asked to show the opposite reasons of students' interest in online learning. The number of 71% is leading to the answer of difficulty to maximally study through online classes. This percentage contains normal and reasonable information as a result of new mode in education sector. The students probably require longer time to adapt this internet learning era.



Fig. 3. Students' perspective on the interest of online learning



Fig. 4. Students' perspective on the delivering materials in online learning throughout the Covid-19 pandemic

Other interesting result refers to the lowest statistic which is having no interest in online classes. This datum is closely related to the lowest percentage from the first question which is confirming to refuse online learning (Fig. 4).

From the data obtained, the delivery of online learning materials is mostly using video as many as 15 students, then below using power point slides with audio as many as 14 students, power point slides as many as 10 students, webinars and video conferences as many as 8 students, audio as many as 5 students, and using other methods as many as 2 students.

From the 4th question of questionnaire, it can be concluded that many lecturers like to use video and power point slides with audio to deliver material in online learning. The utilization of video and powerpoint-slides with audio is considered more acceptable by students. The material presented will be easy to understand using power point slides with audio and by using video lecturers can convey the content of the material clearly and can ensure that students understand what has been conveyed and also they can interact directly through video (Fig. 5).

From the data above, the students that answer the most frequently used application for online learning is Zoom application for the highest as much as 25 students, then below that there is Google Meet as many as 22 students, 18 students answer Google Classroom application, 14 students for Whatsapp application, 4 students for Youtube, 2 students for other applications, and the lowest is Microsoft Teams as much as 1 student.

It can be concluded that the application most often used by lecturers for online teaching is the Zoom application which occupies the top position and Google Meet below it. By using Zoom and Google Meet applications where those are the applications that use video, the lecturer will more easily reach the students to be able to interact



Fig. 5. Students’ perspective on the applications used in online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic

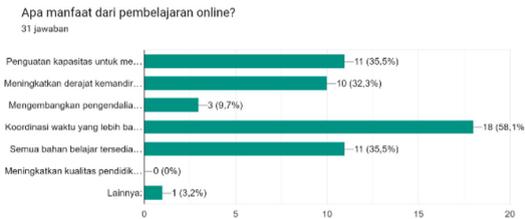


Fig. 6. Students’ perspective on the benefits of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic

and explain the material freely so that those applications become the applications that are most in demand. Then the application that is also used quite often is the Google Classroom application, there are many features that can be used in the application, lecturers can share the material, give assignments and can directly correct and give grades directly there, making it easier for students to access whenever they can (Fig. 6).

Since the students agree that they feel comfortable to have online learning, they also find its benefits. The learning process can still be carried out properly without having face-to-face interaction. In this question, they may answer more than one benefit. The most important benefits of online learning:

- Having better time coordination. It is noted by 58.1% students which mean that they possibly learn at any time or in any place with the freedom to complete assigned tasks.
- Strengthening the capacity to adopt and use of digital technologies (new digital tools) in the learning process. It is chosen by 35.5% students and it also relates to their answer on the previous questions. This online learning drives them to use digital technologies in many ways.
- All the course or study materials are available online. It is noted by 35.5% students that they can find the additional material easily from many websites.
- Increasing the degree of independence in the formation of knowledge and practical skills. It is noted by 32.3% students that their knowledge and practical skills increase. It can be assumed that they have longer time which leads them to learn or study more.



Fig. 7. Students' perspective on the difficulties of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic



Fig. 8. Students' perspective on the expectation of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic

- Developing self-control and self-education. It is chosen by 9.7% students. Since they have their own time, it can help them to manage their self.

Among other advantages are also mentioned that they can combine to work and study and they find a familiar environment (Fig. 7).

The subsequent question is the adversities faced in online studying. The students may answer more than one. Almost 61.3% students face difficulties during online learning because of the internet facilities to connect. This learning forces them to have internet access, while not all of the students have complete facilities. Although they have computer or smartphone, it will not work without internet connection. This difficulty can be divided into technical and non-technical problems. The technical problems are caused by a bad internet connection, technical interruptions in the process of learning and sound or video quality problems. The non-technical problem is caused by the difficulty in processing the information from the learning which drives to the quality of learning. Almost 25.8% students do not clearly understand the requirements of online learning. It can be assumed that both of the lecturers and students have no clear discussion before. Practically, the students can ask their lecturers about the requirements of online learning. It will help them to prepare their needs. Another answer of 22.6% shows that the students need personal contacts with the lecturers and classmates and they cannot concentrate during online learning. At last, only 6.5% of students feel bad in self-discipline (Fig. 8).

This study is carried out after two years of pandemic and they also do a blended learning. The question asks them whether they expect online learning in the future or not and the improvement of their quality of education with online learning. The result shows that 32.3% students agree with online learning in the future, but in good online teaching conditions, 25.8% students do not agree with online learning, 19.4% students have doubts about the necessity of online learning and 16.1% students agree and suggest that the quality of online education should be controlled by the university administration.

It can be concluded that more than 50% students would like to maintain the online learning as it can also improve the quality of education.

5 Conclusion

The study of students' perspective is relevant to the condition of post pandemic in which all of the students experience in both online and offline learning. This study confirms that the students are comfortable with online learning. The main reason they like online learning is that they can productively use their time at home during online learning. Unfortunately, they find the difficulty to maximally study through online classes. Since the online classes provides more media to study, most of the lecturers like to use video and power point slides with audio to deliver material in online learning. Surprisingly, it is considered more acceptable of using Zoom application for video conference.

The students of higher education play as a role model and future leader for these changes. In line with that, they find the benefit of using this digital communication, such as having better time coordination and strengthening the capacity to adopt and use of digital technologies. Even though they face the difficulty in this experience both in technical and non-technical problems, they agree that they have online learning in the future. Consequently, it will sustain a fully digital learning as well as society. Finally, this study suggests that several improvements have to be made by the university administration.

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