One Year Reflection of Online Learning

The Students' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Online Learning amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic in a University

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ABSTRACT

This research explores higher education students' perceptions related to the effectiveness of online learning amidst pandemics to get a better understanding of online classroom implementation in the learning and teaching practice. Understanding this issue is important because online learning is generally a new thing for students in Indonesia; thus, the exploration of students' perceptions would be the key to unpack the challenges in an online classroom context faced by the students. To investigate the issue, a case study was employed. This methodology allowed the researchers to delve into the problems by interviewing students using semi-structured interviews in a higher education institution. In this study, 6 students from different study programs agreed to participate and become the interviewees. To explore this topic, this research employed a model of predictors for effective online learning. Based on the analysis of the findings, most of the students believed that online learning was less effective compared to offline learning. The reasons are due to the inefficiency of learning tools, less interaction between teachers and students, teachers' lack of attention to students' workload and deadlines, disruptions coming from their home environment, and the challenges of managing time to join online classroom which led to the inflexibility of learning. The findings imply that there is a need to improve the learning management system and learning policy for both teachers and students to create a better learning atmosphere. Therefore, this study proposes that stakeholders should reconceptualize the teaching strategies and policies for the future of online learning.

1 INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread globally and has forced all educational institutions to conduct online learning [1]. However, moving the classroom from offline to online does not always work. Many institutions in many countries are not yet ready to respond to the pandemic. Due to some important factors that hinder learning, such as insufficient preparation of Internet infrastructure and insufficient preparation of teachers for online teaching, the unprecedented impact has affected all education in the world, including Indonesia.

In Indonesia, the government has done its best to minimize the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indonesian education. In March 2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture issued an important policy requiring all educational institutions to use online platforms. All schools and universities are not allowed to hold meetings in classrooms to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Not only in the teaching process, the Ministry of Education and Culture also stopped the national examination that year. All these measures are taken to promote social distancing and prevent the collapse of the national health system during a pandemic. By promoting social distancing from all societies, people have a greater chance of avoiding the virus [2]. Consequently, because face-to-face learning is prohibited, teachers and students should adapt to their teaching and learning strategies to make the learning meaningful.

To understand this phenomenon, many Indonesian researchers have been attracted to analyze potential problems in Indonesian online teaching practices. Most survey results indicate that teachers and students are working hard to make the learning process in online classrooms well-executed [5, 7]. According to their findings, some factors have become challenges that teachers need to overcome. In addition, other Indonesian researchers have also investigated online learning in Indonesia and discovered some challenging factors that hinder the learning process. The challenging factors are whether teachers are ready to use technology to teach students online, whether students are ready to learn on online platforms, and infrastructure is ready to meet the online and teaching-learning process [3-10].

As discussed in the previous paragraph, online learning seems to have become the focus of discussions among Indonesian researchers during the Indonesian pandemic. This is because online learning is relatively new to many teachers and students in Indonesia [11, 12]. Despite many studies conducted by Indonesian researchers, most studies on online learning in Indonesia mainly discuss the challenges faced by teachers and students. To better understand