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ATTITUDE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT'S TOWARDS ONLINE LEARNING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

*Hendrikus Male*¹, *Erni Murniarti*², *Masda Surti Simatupang*³, *Julinda Siregar*⁴, *Hotmaulina
Sihotang*⁵, *Ronny Gunawan*⁶

^{1.2.3.4.5.6}Universitas Kristen Indonesia,^bUniversitas Indraprasta, Indonesia

¹erni.murniarti@uki.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The current situation of COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia has made all teachers and students work from home doing all the teaching and learning online. The study aims at examining the attitudes of the undergraduate students towards the online learning in which to some of the students are not accustomed to learning online. The study collected through a depth interview using Zoom application. The result show that the students tend to be bored learning from home. A number of the students prefer to have conventional teaching and learning activities. It is suggested that the teachers should vary the techniques when performing the online class.

INTRODUCTION

Due to the uncertain situation of COVID-19 pandemic, the teaching and learning activities are now fully done online for over two months. The idea of teaching and learning activities is not new way to do. What happens to the students are they get bored when everything should be done online. Many lectures also assign them to do the exercises/task or projects to work and submit online. Such situation may lead to a boredom activity when it is conducted for a long time considering its successfulness in learning may not depend on one aspects (Male, 2017). It is believed when the students have shown boredom, the result may lead to unsuccessful learning. However, the online learning in this study means the teaching and learning activities that are conducted by using some applications such as Teams, Zoom Cloud Meeting, Google Classroom and many other free applications that is used as Learning Management System (LMS). The online learning also means the use of e-learning that is accessed through internet and supported by electronic devices

(Thakkar and Joshi, 2017; Berteau, 2009; Palmer and Bray, 2001). Even though it is not new in the era of technology, the online learning can be boring. One of the reasons is that human needs physical and social interaction in the academic context. Another reason is that learners have their own learning styles; some may belong to visual, auditory or kinesthetic. This means that some learners need a direct physical explanation and interaction. As one of the solutions to overcome such situations is by combining the learning – blended learning. However, it can be done now due to the pandemic. As teachers who play important roles in teaching and learning process (Munte and Murniarti, 2018), who are now working from home, they should design the online class in a fun and easy way so it can affect its excellence (Aixia and Wang, 2011). In addition, both teachers and students have to be ready in learning online for a long time. The current situations have made the writers investigate the students' attitude towards the online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of this study is to find out whether or not the students' show boredom or have positive attitudes towards the online learning.

Over two decades, the use of internet has become increasing among the educational communities (Paris, 2004). On one hand learning online or e-learning can be very interesting for some students living in the era of technology. On the other hand, not all the students have become familiar with the online learning. Yet, the learning as social interaction might be done unconsciously (Dakhi, Murniarti, Boiliu, and Masful, 2019). So, it creates problems both with the learners and the teachers when the teachers deliver the learning or study material. Another problem is that the current situation is uncertain that no one knows when the situation of learning activities returns to a normal situation. Nobody knows when the corona virus is gone so they can meet up face to face and do social interaction in a traditional way. Learning online without having human touch can be boring. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is very interesting to find out the undergraduate students' attitude. This study attempts to investigate whether or not the students have problems with learning online during the COVID-19 pandemic and also to find out whether they enjoy learning through online e-learning compared to traditional classroom learning as well as to find out their attitudes towards the online learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, all the web-based education programs have become more popular with the new terms such as e-learning or online learning. The rapid development and innovations in technology has made the e-learning become more fun and interesting since it can combine the audio, visual, and animation effects to become a more promising platform (Shyamlee and Phil, 2012). There are three main areas in e-learning system, Newton (2003) stated that e-learning system has three main areas such as to improve the access to education and training, to develop the quality of teaching and learning, and to maintain competitiveness in higher education.

In the few past, there are a number of researchers conducted the study related to undergraduate students' attitude towards the e-learning (online learning). For examples, Sanders and Morrison-Shelter (2001) investigated the student

attitude toward web-enhanced instruction in an introductory biology course. The result of the study showed that there was an influence regarding the students' learning, they become more critical, and understand how to solve the problem. The study conducted by Faruq and Javid (2012) found out that the students realized the importance of the technology even though the use of technology was not encouraging. Another similar studies conducted such as (Knowles and Kerkman, 2007; Şen, 2013; Erarslan and Topkaya, 2017) showed that the students' attitude toward online learning was more positive in the last week than in the first week of the course. In terms of the students' engagement in online learning, a few number of researchers, Omar, Hassan, and Atan (2012) also conducted such study. The study focused on the learners' attitude towards e-mentoring and one of the results was the learners' attitude played a role in predicting e-mentoring. Other scholars (Smith, Caputi, and Rawstorne, 2000; Govindasamy, 2001; Rosenberg) also conducted similar studies. In their studies, it is found out that the students have negative attitudes towards online learning.

Online learning is learning to use technology, for example computers. The behavior or attitudes of students can be influenced by online learning by computer and even affect the attitudes and behavior of a teacher, these indicate that teacher have positive attitudes towards computer assisted instruction, and they trust their selves to use computers. These indicate that teacher and students have positive attitudes towards computer-assisted instruction, and they trust their selves to use computers (Yavuz, 2015) and students have shown moderate to highly favourable attitude towards *e-learning* (Srivara, 2020)

Behaviors or attitudes of students can vary depending on the use of the technology itself, but if viewed from the positive side one of them is that can significantly improve student achievement. Further, (Elfaki, 2019) explained the scores obtained by students in the final exam by the *e-learning* group (experimental) is statistically significantly higher than those for the traditional group, The key findings of the present study show a significant difference in learning outcomes beside positive attitudes between online and traditional learners which can be a viable alternative learning method for higher education. *E-learning* plays an important role because the learning activities and materials in e-learning influence student motivation levels and their academic performance. In particular, these materials used in e-learning can capture student attention and connect to students, which in turn boosts student confidence and makes students feel satisfied with positive reinforcements or rewards. (Kew Si Na, 2020). The computer mediated instruction are useful for students' course work. Moreover, it can be concluded that incase the students' accessibility were made easy towards online learning, then an appropriate attitude of students will be developed to its usability (Ullah, 2017).

Attitude on e-learning for enhancing active learning of pre-service teachers, overall positive learners' attitude about e-learning for enhancing active learning was in the highest level starting from the aspect of E-learning, Curiosity and Carefulness, respectively. When considering each item of E-learning aspect, we found different means, Happiness in studying with

electronics media was in the highest level, followed by E-learning enabling more self-additional study (Robroo, 2019).

That e-learning is offering a precious opportunities for higher education the institutions (Heis) to a considerable amount of students who wish in pursuing their education regardless of their, spatial, Economical, and social barriers. Teachers have to adopt strategies to change the negative attitudes towards e-learning by introducing further e-learning courses in lower study years and promote students to use the internet In their education and communication with their teachers and their colleagues (Zabadi, 2016)

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research technique has been used in this study. A depth interview was used to collect the data. The participants of the study were only focus to students who come from rural area of Indonesia taking their undergraduate degree majoring in English. They are now sitting in semester 2 of English Education Department. In order to accommodate the interview, the writers used Zoom application to interview the participants. So it is done through online interview which last for 20 minutes each. The present study was a qualitative research that was conducted only on certain undergraduate students who come from rural area.

Procedure

Before conducting the interview, the participants were asked to fill the consent form for their participation in this study. 4 students were willing to participate in this study. The writers explained to them that the study was only for academic purpose and their personal information would be kept confidential. The interview lasted for 15 minutes each. The data collected was transcribed, categorized and analyzed based on the questions interviewed. In analyzing the data, Conversation Analysis (CA) was used to categorize the strategies.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The following is the result of the interview that was categorized based on the questions interviewed:

The first question was to find out the participants' opinion about online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I have to stay at home during the pandemic. And about my opinion with online learning is not OK. I mean I have some problem with online learning for example the new application. I need time to adjust myself. (AY, Male, age 17)

To me, I am really afraid about the pandemic. I always learn and follow my teachers to do online class. I don't want to go out. (NH, Female, age 17)

I am scared of the Corona virus, that's why I stay at home. In my opinion online learning is sometimes fun, but sometimes it's also boring. Because online learning is not very effective. Many obstacles occur such as poor signal, so the lessons conveyed are not very clear. (Vn, Female, age 17)

About the COVID-19 pandemic, of course I am scared. And I think about the online learning is just like one type of distance learning that we can learn from wherever we are for example like we are currently to learn from home, or maybe from restaurant/café, or wherever that place but the important thing is we can comfort and got serious in learning in that place) by using our laptop or mobile phones with good internet connection and the app for study. (Kz, Female, age 19)

It is obvious all the three participants stated that they were afraid of covid-19 pandemic. They seemed to understand the danger of the virus. In terms of online learning, 50% (2 participants) stated they have no problems with the online learning. One of them even enjoyed learning online. However, the rest of them stated that they have difficulties and not really familiar with the online learning. This is something new to them.

The next question was to find out whether or not, they have difficulties on using the LMS. The following are the excerpts of the participants:

I don't find any difficulties in learning to use the LMS application because so far, I can use the application and I'm used to using it. (Vn, Female, age 17)

I think, I'm not. Because, it's not a difficult thing to use it. But, maybe when the first time I use these all applications I get a little bit difficult and little confused to use it. but I can handle it because, I can asking a questions to my friend about this app or I learned it by myself. And now I can use it properly. (Kz, Female, age 17)

No, because I have understood to use this applications (AY, Male, age 17)

I think it is not difficult, because now is the age of technology and can understand the subject matter provided through the application. (NR, Female, age 17)

All the participants stated that they do not find any difficulties on using the LMS. Only an interviewee found it difficult in the beginning, but in the end she could handle it.

Next question was regarding the enjoyment of doing online learning. The following is the experts:

Yes, I do, because if we don't take advantage of their applications, we can't learn as usual and can't follow the discussion there. (AY, Male, age 17)

Sometimes I enjoy it but sometimes I don't. Nearly a month or more we do online learning with technology without interacting directly, sometimes it's boring for me. (Vn, Female, 17)

Yes, I really enjoy it. Because I can do it, just by using my mobile phones in my comfort bed in bedroom, and of course, I can do online learning while relaxing enjoying my favorite food and drinks. [laughing] (Kz, Female, age 17)

Yes, I enjoy because besides being able to learn through online, I can also do other activities as well. (NR, Female, age 17)

The majority of the participants said that they enjoyed doing online learning. One of the participants said that sometimes she enjoyed but sometimes she did not enjoy doing online class. She further stated that without direct interaction, it would make her feel bored.

The next question was to know how about the online classroom activities and to find out whether or not they could manage about their time during the online learning. The following is their experts:

I think it was good, even though we can't meet face to face, but we can still do learning between lecturers and students. Yes I can. I usually make a plan about my activities, so I must finish all of my activities well. (AY, Male, age 17)

in my opinion online classroom activities are not going well. There are some teachers who only give assignments without explanation every week. So far I can manage my time for online learning. (Vn, female, age 17)

I think the online classroom activities is actually when the teacher and students are generally separated by location, in real time and meeting at the same time or a synchronously time. And I can accept this class well, as long as I have a good internet connection and with my comfortable space. Yes, I can manage my time properly. (Kz, female, age 17)

I think I can understand the material better and I can do everything when there are online class activities. About the time, yes, I can. (NR, female, age 17)

The majority of the participants stated that they could do the online classroom activities well. Whereas only a participant stated that it didn't run well and the teachers lacked of explanation about the material given to them. Concerning the time management, all of the participants stated they could manage their time allocation well.

Next question is related to their preferences on learning online or traditional way. The following is the excerpts:

Traditional way, because as a human, we have to socialized and I think if we do the learning in a traditional way, we can free to express all off things when we learn. (AY, Male, age 17)

I prefer the traditional way. Because there is direct social interaction. Well, because the situation is not safe, this time we learn online.

(Vn, female, age 17)

I like to do them both actually. Because I like to stay at home, but I also like to meet and play with my friends, meet people in out there, go somewhere with my relatives and certainly met my lecturer to teach me in the classroom. So I really like those two things (Kz, female, age 17)

Doing the activities online. (NR, female, age 17)

From the interview result, it is clear that most of the participants preferred to have traditional learning activities to online learning. This one of the participants said if she wanted to have a direct social interaction. Similarly, the only male participant said he could even express all things freely when traditional learning is done. Another female participant said that she preferred online learning class. And the rest female participant said she preferred to have both online and traditional learning.

Next last question interviewed was regarding their overall opinion or suggestion of online learning during the pandemic. The following is the excerpts:

I am afraid of the situation right now. I hope the virus is gone soon so I can go to campus again and play with my friends. The internet cost is expensive I can't afford to buy sometimes (AY, Male, age 17)

It is a very difficult time for all of us. Hopefully, it ends soon I mean the COVID ends soon. I'm bored to stay at home all day long. I want to hang out with my friends. Besides, I have to pay for the internet.

(Vn, female, age 17)

I enjoy stay at home and study at home but as a human I want to go out and play too, I hope COVID 19 ended soon (Kz, female, age 17)

I hope I can go to campus meet my friends soon and about the virus....the corona, I hope it can go away forever... yes forever. (NR, female, age 17)

The majority of the students showed that they all expected that COVID-19 may end very soon so that they may have their regular activities back to normal situation. Two participants mentioned that the cost of internet tend to be expensive therefore they could afford to purchase the internet package.

To sum, based on the interview result, it can be assumed that the majority of the students showed partly positive attitude towards the current online learning. Besides there is no direct physical interaction in learning process that most of them tend to be easily unexcited in terms of all the interactions and learning process are done online. However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, they had no other choice to experience the learning process. Regardless of their readiness in learning online and their complaint of

expensive internet cost, the result also showed that they need to learn like in a normal situation where they can interact each other freely.

CONCLUSION

The result of the study has showed that most of the students preferred to have traditional learning instead of online learning. Regardless of their learning preferences, students are supposed to be accommodated with learning strategies (Male, 2018) As they mentioned they would have direct interaction and socialize with other classmates and the teacher face to face. However due to the current situation of COVID-19 pandemic, they have to learn from home. They all expected to have the situation back to normal where they can learn at campus and have normal social interactions with others. It is suggested that the teachers are to design an efficient online learning material for teaching, learning resources for the students in order to meet the needs of the students and also to avoid monotonous and boredom while learning online. It is also suggested that in order to utilize a better online learning, the teachers should provide and design the course or learning material to be more effective and efficient in the hope that the teaching and learning activities may give mutual benefit so that the students' achievement may get better result.

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