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Profiling Users' State of Mind towards Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the users' state of mind with regard to the use of online platforms for educational purposes, specifically in the context of higher education. The purpose of this study, which employs a survey method, is to investigate how students perceive online teaching and learning in higher education and contribute to the growing collaboration between higher education researchers studying 21st-century learning concepts and Indonesian universities, which are increasingly implementing online teaching and learning. This study analyses various significant problems, including the process of online teaching and learning at universities, the difficulties of its implementation, and the users' perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of online teaching and learning. Overall, it is found that both students and lecturers prefer offline, face-to-face interaction in class rather than the online system. It is possible to state that both the lecturers and the students who have been attached to the conventional method of instruction and learning process are not prepared for the shift from offline to online learning. Even though online learning has been implemented, there is still a lack of consensus on the best practices for an effective online classroom. Further contributing to this is the institution's lack of a rigid regulatory framework.

Keywords: State of Mind, Online Teaching and Learning, Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has been a remarkable milestone for accelerating the development of several technological advancements. These improvements have led to the creation and use of several high-tech devices. "The world is in the fingertip" has become real. New tools, complex functionality, and internet connections have given people several ways to improve their creativity and communication. This also benefits education greatly. "Millennial approaches" have replaced traditional teaching and learning, which are uninteresting, uncreative, and incompatible with modern life. Recently, the phrases "classes for the 21st century" and "teaching and learning in the 21st century" are heard rather frequently in the current decade.

A class for the 21st century is one in which both students and professors are required to be flexible concerning the use of technology. As a result, the integration of technology into the classroom has become a standard and fundamental method of education. The widespread elimination of blackboards and chalks from classrooms is a clear example of this trend. In many locations, an offline class still needs a board on which to write the necessary material; however,

the board used in the class is more advanced. It is even highly typical to have teachers lecture utilising at least a simple PowerPoint presentation. They can link it to extensive materials such as videos, photographs, or even live events. This is becoming an increasingly regular practice. Students, of course, follow the same pattern for their presentations, but they use applications with a more sophisticated look.

Both teaching and learning have been approached from two different angles in 21st-century classrooms. The first option is an offline class, in which the students and the teachers physically gather together in the same room. Students engage in face-to-face engagement regardless of the tools and applications they utilise in the class. The second option is taking a class online, in which both the instructor and the students do not need to be in the same physical location to communicate directly with one another. They have access to various applications and tools, including Google Classroom, WhatsApp, or Telegram Chat, and several other tools and applications. Both of these classes may hand out assignments requiring students to use various software programmes and hardware resources.

When an online class is open for live meetings and discussion, both students and teachers need a robust internet connection to participate. This is especially true for online classrooms, which require internet connection more than traditional classes do. This is likely to contribute significantly to the occurrence of difficulties. The availability of a reliable internet connection and a level of expertise with the tools and programme are two of the many issues that frequently arise. It is predicted that technology will be able to alleviate the problem of teaching, particularly in cases where in-person class meetings are difficult or impossible to hold due to a variety of factors. However, not having either of these, particularly the connection, may make it challenging to achieve teaching aims. Therefore, this study seeks to understand online students' and teachers' perspectives. This study examined online class pros and cons. The outline will assist users contribute more information to build a fun academic environment and inform future academic regulations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section describes the theoretical foundation for 21st-century, self-directed, and online learning. It is divided into sections based on the most important topics and concerns from online higher education studies. This section examines 21st-century higher education and how the skill-based approach is integrated into university curricula. It describes autonomous learning and online teaching and learning for university students.

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY EDUCATION

Academics, universities, governments, and non-governmental organisations worldwide have debated higher education in the 21st century. Thus, the parties have spent a lot of time establishing and executing the twenty-first-century university education paradigm. The twenty-first-century educational philosophy and framework have helped universities integrate adult and lifetime learning as core educational principles.

Twenty-first education, in general, is a notion that defines “learning” as a cycle of life process. It is a term originating in the lifelong learning literature (Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, 1998). Education for the future is not only to develop certain skills but also other aspects of human development such as emotion and social. In their report for

UNESCO, (Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, 1998) presented four recommended pillars for the education of the new century. It is then well known as learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together. The education of the present and the future is set to focus on developing an identity of responsible and effective national and global citizenship in students, with all the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that this requires (David et al., 2010). Education in the twenty-first century should focus on a more holistic approach to all aspects of human development.

In terms of a practical point of view, twenty-first education is expected to support learners to acquire "Powerful Knowledge and Competence" that can be useful for their future (Young & Muller, 2013). The educational institution should be able to provide learners with a broader set of "21st-century skills" to thrive in a rapidly evolving, the technology-saturated world (Jerald, 2009). Since the inception of public education, there has been a strong emphasis on teaching the "basics," including reading, writing, and mathematics. While such skills are still critical lately, much talk focuses on teaching children 21st-century skills. In a press release, U.S. Secretary of Education (Duncan, 2009) referred to 21st-century skills as "skills that increasingly demand creativity, perseverance, and problem-solving combined with performing well as part of a team".

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, a leading advocacy organization that promotes the infusion of 21st-century skills into education, developed a framework for 21st-century learning. That framework describes students' skills, knowledge, and expertise to enter today's workforce successfully. Student outcomes include: 1) Core Subjects and 21st Century Themes; 2) Learning and Innovation Skills;3) Information, Media, and Technology Skills; 4) and Life and Career Skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). Similarly, they further recognized that in an increasingly digital world, students need skills in the following areas: 1) Creativity and Innovation; 2) Communication and Collaboration; 3) Research and Information Fluency; 4) Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making; 5) Digital Citizenship; 6) Technology Operations and Concepts. This set of knowledge, skills, and competence is blended as "capital" to be educated and trained in all levels of education – from pre-school to universities or colleges.

In the context of the implementation in higher education, the re-evaluation of the function of universities in human development has been going on for more than a decade. At the pedagogical level, *lifelong learning* as the core of twenty-first-century education has been defined as an imperative and a prerequisite for individual development—that is, for an individual's social emancipation—as well as the cultural and economic development of society as a whole. (Milic, 2013) argued that it is necessary to introduce comprehensive reforms in higher education in order to meet external and internal challenges of globalization, human development, massification, equal accessibility, and rapid modernization. The traditional idea of a university—is rooted in the belief that knowledge acquisition should be transformed into the idea of being the provider of human capital who acquires a comprehensive set of knowledge, skills, and competence.

As part of this process, universities should develop an action plan to serve as the transformation's guiding principle. The action plan contains five key goals that focus on the service-oriented scheme. The key goals are

- removing barriers to the participants in higher education
- increasing the quality and efficiency of higher education
- accelerating the process of accreditation and recognition of prior learning

- providing a satisfactory level of funding
- establishing a system of monitoring higher education

The key goals are to establish a fundamental environment in which students and instructors can engage with one another in the campus society as partners in the teaching and learning process, both independently and collaboratively.

AUTONOMOUS LEARNING

As one of the critical concepts of twenty-first-century education, autonomous learning has been fostered to develop learners' responsibility in the process of education. As (Paribakht, 1988) points out, "the key to understanding this is the concept of responsibility for learning. Concerning language learning, the learners have to learn the process of learning and to be able to manage the complex learning network of learning goals, materials, sequencing of the materials, and deciding how materials shall be used. The learners should be able to decide the tasks to be done, keep records and make evaluations in order to reach this level of being able to use knowledge and skills to "create meanings of a social kind" and to "participate in the verbal contest and verbal display" (Halliday, 1978).

Fostering learner autonomy may be defined in simple terms as helping learners to become more independent by training them to use language learning strategies effectively in their language learning process, thus taking the responsibility to control, evaluate and monitor their language learning process. (Dickinson, 1992) identifies six ways "in which the teacher can promote greater learner independence":

1. Legitimizing independence in learning by showing that we, as teachers, approve, and by encouraging the students to be more independent;
2. Convincing learners that they are capable of greater independence in learning -give them successful experiences of independent learning;
3. Giving learners opportunities to exercise their independence;
4. Helping learners to develop learning strategies so that they can exercise their independence;
5. Helping learners to become more aware of language as a system so that they can understand many of the learning techniques available and learn sufficient grammar to understand simple reference books;
6. Sharing with learners something of what we know about language learning so that they have a greater awareness of what to expect from the language learning task and how they should react to problems that erect barriers to learning.

As put forward by (Dickinson, 1992), what teachers aim to achieve through training learners on language learning strategies is to provide learners with awareness on how to learn a foreign language on their own.

ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING AT UNIVERSITY

One of the most pronounced trends in higher education over the last decade has been strong growth in distance education through online coursework (Allen & Seaman, 2010). However, while the rise of online distance education has expanded learning opportunities for all students, it is often most attractive to non-traditional students, who are more likely to have

employment, family obligations, or other burdens that make attending traditional face-to-face classes difficult (Aslanian, 2001). As a consequence, online learning has been the choice to decrease the gap in access in terms of face-to-face interaction in higher education.

However, since most college students received their primary and secondary education in a face-to-face setting, online coursework may represent an adaptation challenge for many. In an attempt to understand how readily students adapt to online coursework—that is, the extent to which students perform as well online as they do face-to-face—a large body of research has compared outcomes between online and face-to-face courses. Results have been mixed across studies, with some finding positive results for online learning and others finding negative results (e.g., see (Bernard et al., 2004); (Jaggars, 2012); (Means et al., 2010).

One potential cause for the wide variation in results across studies may lie in the different student populations and course contexts examined in each study. For example, some populations of students—for example, those with more extensive exposure to technology or those who have been taught skills in terms of time-management and self-directed learning—may adapt more readily to online learning than others (Gladieux & Swail, 1999); (Muse, 2003); (Steward et al., 2010). In addition, some academic subject areas may lend themselves to high-quality online learning experiences more readily than others (Jaggars, 2012). Thus, they may support students more effectively in their efforts to adapt. Therefore, it is essential to review the potential advantages and disadvantages of online teaching and learning in higher education, particularly concerning the context of the university in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study was designed as survey research. The survey descriptively described the natural phenomenon based on research data and findings. The survey was conducted regarding the topic and the objectives of the research, which were to analyse the users' state of mind towards online teaching and learning in higher education and to contribute to the cooperation between the study of 21st learning concept in higher education and the mushrooming occurrence of online teaching and learning in the university in Indonesia.

This study took place at the English education department, faculty of Letters and Culture, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. This study involved students and lecturers of the English education department as the users of online teaching and learning. The involvement of students and lecturers as research participants was to gather comprehensive information from students' and lecturers' perspectives of this research. This study was designed to get comprehensive and total information, so this research would be able to recommend the appropriate grand design of online teaching and learning improvement.

Research data were collected through the survey by using questionnaires. The questionnaires were a combination of close-ended and open-ended questionnaires. It was to ensure that the questionnaires cover the provided answers and the suggestions from participants regarding the area of study. The questionnaires covered the points of online teaching and learning both from students' and lecturers' perspectives. Research data were analysed in order to comprehend the insights of students' and lecturers' state of mind toward the implementation of online teaching and learning at university. The research results were fundamental to codifying the grand design of online teaching and learning improvement.

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FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Covid-19 epidemic has transformed the “conventional” approach of teaching and learning "in a room" into an online teaching and learning process. This online teaching and learning process was implemented not because of extensive planning/preparation for the online teaching and learning process design but to prevent the spread of viruses. This phenomenon must be investigated in order to have a better understanding of the users' attitudes about the deployment of online teaching and learning. This research can be used to help plan future online teaching and learning.

Respondents of this study were students and lecturers in the English Department who willingly filled up the questionnaire. The total of the students who filled in the questionnaires online was 195 students (89.9%). Meanwhile, 22 lecturers (10.1%) also participated in this survey. The 195 students are from different level. As many as 29.4% of the respondents are students of semester 3/4; and 28.4% of semester 5/6. 22.3% are the students in semester 7/8. Meanwhile, in the last position are 14.2% of students in semester 1/2 and 5.6% of students in semester 9/10. This data shows that the respondents are from various levels or semesters; it, therefore, can be helpful to get a complete view of users’ minds.

PERCEPTION OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE READINESS

This question aimed to know the readiness of the facilities used by the respondents, whether at home or the office/campus. These facilities can be computers, laptops, or smartphones connected to the internet. The survey marked 84.3% of respondents have those facilities at home. Most respondents have facilities at home to support the online teaching and learning process. This facility can guarantee that there will be no problem with the tools used in online teaching and learning. Even though 15.7% of respondents still did not have the facility to connect to the internet at home. Moreover, based on its internet connection quality, respondents stated 56.3% was *Good*, and only 10.7% stated *Excellent*. This data indicated that the internet connection could support the teaching and learning process to be held online even though 27% of respondents categorised the internet connection as *Less* and *Bad*. Meanwhile, 56.3% of respondents responded good, 31.2% less, 10.7% excellent, and the rest were terrible.

In answering question on the readiness of online learning facilities, including workplace and WIFI connection, the respondents who responded no are 74.1% and yes are 25.9%, indicating a lack of facilities preparation for the online learning. Associated with the previous question, the preparation and the quality of the facility are considered necessary. The responses are dominated by “less”, which got 54.3% and followed by “bad” with 25.2%, while “good” answers got only 17.6%. This indicates that the quality of facilities for online learning is still far from sufficient among the respondents.

PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE TEACHING SKILLS

In this section, the questions are related to the current situation of the online learning process, media used in online learning, skills in using online learning applications, and other aspects that are considered necessary in the online learning process.

In terms of current teaching and learning process situation, 91.6% confirms that currently they are applying online learning, 43.3% are assignment-based, 34% are project-based, 4.2% face to face learning, 4.2% temporarily postponed, and 20% no confirmation from

the lecturer yet. Therefore, it can be concluded that online learning is primarily used in the current teaching and learning process.

With the domination of online learning, the use of online learning application platforms is also crucial. Therefore, the question regarding an application used in the online learning process is also included in this survey, and the answer is pictured in chart 8. As shown in the chart, WhatsApp is the most used app for the learning process with 84%, followed by Google Classroom with 78.3%, Google Meet/Hangout with 69.8%, Zoom with 64.2%, E-learning SIAT UNG with 56,6%, Jitsi Meet with 21.7, and the least favourite apps Skype and Cisco Webex with 1.4% and 1.9% respectively.

Many online learning applications available make it easier for us to implement online learning. However, the capability of operating the applications is considered important, not only for the teacher but also for the students. The question regarding this can be found in the current survey. The result shows "good" dominating in almost all applications. The details are as follows. Google Classroom takes the lead with almost 130 "good", around 25 "excellent", and less than 10 "less". Google Meet in the second place with its simplicity and showing around 110 "good", less than 40 "less" and around 30 "excellent". And then Zoom takes over with around 107 "good", around 20 "less", and around 35 "excellent". WhatsApp comes below with around 90 "good", around 80 "excellent", and almost 0 "less". Next is E-learning SIAT UNG with 110 "good", around 30 "less", and 24 "excellent". Jitsi Meet is next with less than 30 "good", more than 25 "less" and around 10 "excellent". Skype is around 30 "less", around 15 "bad", and 5 "good". The last is Cisco Webex with around 30 "less", around 11 "bad" and 9 "good".

Next, 53.3% respondents have participated in online learning application training, and only 46.7% answer no, which explains that they have not participated in any training. Dealing with the respondents' participation in joining such training, the answer is various among participants. For example, there are 45% said that "reading the instruction", 34.3% said "Youtube tutorial, 30.2% said that "held by UNG", 27.8% said "friends", 9.5% said "at school", 1.8% "self-taught", and the rest is shown diverse answer.

Ability to make and edit video can be useful to create learning material or video project. 58.4% of the respondents answer that they can do editing, and 41.6% answer that they cannot As many as 13, 48.1% of respondents are "poor" in making and editing videos, 12.3% are "very poor", and only 36.8% answer "good".

QUALITY OF ONLINE ACADEMIC INTERACTION

In this section, the participants express their opinion regarding online academic interaction both for students and lecturers, which includes the learning model, teaching and learning quality, the number of assignments and several other questions.

Related to the learning model that is mainly used among the respondents there are 80.6% participants that use WhatsApp, Facebook, and other chat app platform to discuss as the learning model. There are also 78.2%, 72.5%, and 64.9% using Google classroom, Video projects, and assignment-giving through email, respectively, as the learning model. Meanwhile, there are only 17.5% that choose to watch a learning video made by the lecturer, 24.2% watch a learning video on YouTube, 34.6% use Video Call, and 46% use a Conference app for discussion. The other learning models used are discussing and downloading material online and reading learning material online, with 58.8% and 53.6%, respectively. This indicates

that discussing the learning material through WhatsApp, Facebook, and other Social media platforms is the most comfortable learning model.

Next, the number of assignments given in face-to-face learning and online learning are compared. As a result, there are 68.4% answer "more assignment", 21.7% stated "stay the same" and only 8% stated "less assignment" are given in the online learning process. In the question related to the previous question about the learning model, the responses of the lecturer, which includes answering, checking, and assessing the assignment given to the students, are the one we focus on. The response of lectures to students' assignments reflected in chart 16 is various in every learning model. There are about 150 respondents that answered "yes" in Google Classroom, around 100 in Conference discussions, 75 in Video calls, around 200 in Chatting through chat and social media applications, around 124 in a Video Project, and around 90 in reading material online, and around 110 in discussion and downloading material online.

In terms of the quality of teaching and the learning materials used in the online learning process, where 61.7% stated that the quality is "good" and only 33% stated "not-so-good". The chart also shows that less than 10% stated that the learning material is "bad", and around 0.5% stated "very good".

For the part of the question about whether the students respond fast or not, including answering and asking questions in the online learning process, there are 59.6% stated "yes," which exceeds half of the respondents, and there is only 40.6% stated "no".

The next question is about the ability of students to respond (asking and answering questions) in online learning. There are 61.8% stated "good", 34.3% stated "less", and there are about 5% stated "excellent" and "bad".

THE ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING

In order to determine the advantages of online teaching and learning, this section of questions is provided. The questions are a series of statements regarding the advantages of online teaching and learning, and the participants are expected to answer their stance whether "strongly agree", "Agree", "disagree", or "strongly disagree". Their answer will be described as follows.

Online teaching and learning are accessible anywhere and anytime. There are 57.8% agree with this statement, while 28.8% disagree. Meanwhile, the other 10.8% strongly agreed, and the rest firmly disagreed.

However, 58.5% disagree that online learning makes the learning process more interesting, and 8.5% strongly disagree, with only 30.7% agreeing that making this statement is not favourable among most respondents.

Related to the financial expenses, 50% of the respondents disagree that online learning costs less money, and 17.5% strongly disagree. Whereas 26.4% agree and the rest strongly agree. Based on the previous explanation, it can be concluded that most of the respondents disagree with the statement.

THE THREAT OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING

The last question in this survey aims to discover the obstacles encountered during the online teaching and learning process. The respondents are given several possible obstacles to choose from. They can choose one or more options available or choose "other" and write down the

obstacle if it is not listed in the options. Deal with online learning challenges, 89.6% of respondents cite "mobile data and mobile data usage" as a hindrance to online learning. 75% chose WiFi, a huge impediment. 6.1% and 9% of respondents reported "does not possess a Smartphone" and "inability to use online learning application", respectively, indicating that they are minor hurdles. The other results reveal 38.7% for "lecturers do not reply to students' questions on WhatsApp immediately", 59.4% for "out of schedule online learning", and 60.8% for "Online learning application problem" which are mild difficulties. Respondents write various hurdles under "Other" alternatives. "Sometimes instructor does not give feedback," "rarely or not understand," "problem with internet connections," "limited Smartphone features," and others are examples of online teaching and learning challenges.

DISCUSSION

The narrative provided in the study findings suggested that most respondents claimed they possessed online learning infrastructure. On the other hand, the general quality of the infrastructure is subpar. Only 10.7% of those who participated in the survey responded that they had a reliable internet connection. This suggests that the student is experiencing difficulties with their internet connection while attempting to study, which may have had an impact on the quality of their education. This is reinforced by the fact that 74.1% of respondents said they could not study online due to lack of resources on campus. It also shows that all educational processes have been conducted online, via a wide range of digital learning platforms like GMeet, Zoom Meeting, and even WhatsApp Groups. As a result, there is a discrepancy between the demand for and supply of high-quality online education infrastructure.

The survey's findings reveal that students view online education with scepticism. More than half of the students who participated in the survey found online learning boring, inefficient, and useless. Some students believe that the variety of internet tools available can be a distraction rather than an aid to their education. Moreover, the price of internet data bundles has increased, meaning that their total outlays have more than doubled. There is a consensus that the online teaching methodology is boring and uninspiring. The lack of internet connectivity that many students and lecturers have encountered exacerbates the situation. Learning results have been negatively impacted due to the aggregation of these difficulties.

It has further indicated that the diverse challenges students and lecturers encounter affect their outlook online learning. Two factors typically cause these issues. The first consideration is the readiness of the online learning infrastructure. This infrastructure's readiness comprises conditions in Indonesia, particularly in Gorontalo, with all of its deficiencies, including internet access and the high cost of internet data packages. The second factor is a lack of preparedness when switching from traditional to online programmes. The lack of preparation and transition leads to a lack of mastery of the technology and platforms employed in the online learning process. As a result, lecturers and students stumble when doing online learning.

Online education has been shown to be an effective solution to several problems, including educators' lack of physical space and time (Jaggars, 2012; Aslanian, 2001). Distance learning, which includes both online and offline components, has been adopted by many universities and colleges around the globe. In order to manage the exponential growth of learning models, especially in the digital age, this paradigm is still being advocated. During times of crisis, such as the recent pandemic, online education has allowed education stakeholders to keep studying. This highlights the many potential benefits of online education.

The above-mentioned flaws and obstacles are, nonetheless, major factors in the aforementioned negative views held by stakeholders in the learning process.

Based on these findings, it is possible to conclude that online learning should be introduced and supported in order to overcome numerous inadequacies, particularly distance and space limits. First, however, the usefulness and efficiency of online learning should be reviewed. Planning for a smooth transition to digital content and learning modules is also vital. Recognizing online learning as having its unique characteristics is also crucial. It is important to consider that it is impossible to apply the whole offline teaching methods and approaches in online classes. The adjustments are inevitable. In other words, online learning is more than simply transferring and modifying media from offline to online. Furthermore, this transformation requires significant and ideal adjustments to yield the best possible outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The findings prove that despite the various advantages online learning offers, students and lecturers have negative perceptions of online learning. Lecturers and students share the same conclusion that online learning is a detrimental factor to their education. This study's findings indicate that students and teachers value traditional face-to-face classroom interactions over their digital counterparts. It is based on the fact that online classes require more work than traditional classrooms. It is fair to argue that lecturers and students who have become accustomed to the status quo in higher education were not prepared for this transformation. There needs to be a common concept of how an effective online classroom should be run, and there is no widespread adoption of an online learning attitude.

Due to the unpreparedness of the university system, lecturers, and students, a number of different mediums have been used to disseminate course materials. Therefore, the attitude toward this has affected the quality of teaching and learning. Moreover, no fixed regulation imposed by the university also plays a vital role. As a result, it is suggested that fixed and strict regulations should be enforced. Universities should decide what platform should be used in the teaching process. The lack of ability to use the platforms can be solved by training since using the app and platforms is relatively easy, but it needs commitment to spend time more time to understand how the apps and platforms work. There should also be a similar attitude and understanding of the online teaching and learning process, which is undoubtedly totally different from the traditional teaching model.

The results of this research will allow for a more nuanced discussion of how stakeholders view the transition from the traditional system to the online one. Despite these results, the researcher is cognizant of the need for additional investigations of this topic in light of the study's many shortcomings. Larger samples and more thorough study indicators need to be used in future studies to obtain more comprehensive results.

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