

The Trend of Using the Same Platform in Distance Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine students' tendency to use the platforms in distance learning to create joyful yet effective learning. 119 students were tested from the Department of Family Welfare Education, Universitas Negeri Jakarta. This research started from April to May 2020. Data were analyzed descriptively using survey methods and then collected through questionnaires and online interviews. The results showed that 74/119 students preferred using the same platform during learning. The consistent use of platforms makes it easier for students to access, so they focus on lecture material.

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INTRODUCTION

Since we are moving to an online class, all of us are trying to use our favorite Learning Management System. We are trying to combine our learning with synchronous learning by video conferencing like zoom. Can you imagine how our students need to move from one platform to another? with every lecturer we ask them to? Universitas Negeri Jakarta is a higher education institution that also applies distance learning protocol during the Covid-19 pandemic. All lecturers conduct online-based lectures using various platforms. One alternative form of learning that can be implemented during the Covid-19 emergency is online learning. Online learning is learning that uses internet networks with accessibility, connectivity, flexibility, and the ability to bring up various types of learning interactions (Moore et al., 2011). Research conducted by Zhang et al. (2004) shows that using the internet and multimedia technology can overhaul delivery knowledge and can be alternative learning that is carried out in traditional classrooms (Luo et al., 2017; Shi et al., 2017).

To prevent the spread of Covid-19, WHO recommends stopping activities that will impact the potential to cause mass crowds. For this reason, conventional learning that gathers many students in one room needs to be reviewed. Education must be carried out with scenarios that minimize physical contact among students and lecturers/teachers. The use of digital technology enables students and lecturers to be in different places during the learning process. E-learning is an innovation that can be utilized in the learning process, not only in the delivery of learning material but also in changes in the abilities of various competencies of students. Through e-learning, students listen to teachers' material descriptions and actively observe, do, and even demonstrate. Teaching material can be visualized in various formats to be more exciting and dynamic.

E-learning can motivate students to go further in the learning process. Through the implementation of this distance learning policy, it is hoped that the education world will

participate in supporting the government in suppressing the rate of spread of Covid-19. Education in Indonesia can still run even though our country is struggling to face Covid-19. Online learning in its implementation requires the support of mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, and laptops that can be used to access information anywhere and anytime (Han & Shin, 2016; Matsuo, 2019). The use of mobile technology has a significant contribution to education, including distance learning goals (Enright & Gard, 2016; Henderson et al., 2017). Various media can also be used to support the implementation of online learning. For example, virtual classes use Google Classroom, Edmodo, and Schoology services and instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp (Enriquez, 2014; Faramarzi et al., 2019; Iftakhar, 2016; Sicat, 2015; So, 2016). Online learning can be done through social media such as Facebook and Instagram (Aksoy et al., 2013; Baghel et al., 2018; Krutka & Carpenter, 2016).

No studies have yet looked at patterns of distance learning using the same platform or different platforms in the Department of Family Welfare Education. Based on preliminary research done on the study program of family welfare education, 45% of students stated that Google Classroom is the most joyful platform. 28% said Zoom was the most pleasant platform, while the restarted (Oktaviani et al., 2020). To keep distance learning enjoyable for students, they create coping strategies for themselves. Previous research looked at how students enjoyed distance learning using multiple platforms, but this research has not mapped students' tendencies, preferring multiple or the same platform. Using various platforms as learning media raises an interesting question: is learning more fun using one type of platform? Or is learning even more fun when using multiple platforms? This is the fundamental basis for researchers to analyze students' tendencies to learn using the same or different platforms. Will different platforms make learning much more fun? This article aims at answering this interesting question. This research is significant because it attempts to map how distance learning takes place in the Department of Family Welfare Education. Will learning become more fun if you use the same platform, or will learning become much more fun if you use different platforms? With all the existing limitations, this study seeks to map learning that is fun during this distance learning.

METHOD

This research was conducted with a survey method—data was collected through questionnaires and online interviews. The interview asks two main questions: 1) Is learning more fun through the same or different platforms? Explain your answer! Furthermore, 2) What do you think of Distance Learning? This study's population was students of the Family Welfare Education Study Program, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Negeri Jakarta. The number of samples used in this study was 119 active students who took distance learning. This research was conducted from April to May 2020, considering that distance learning only began in March 2020. The data collected was then analyzed descriptively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Profile of Respondents

The study results are based on respondents from 2017 to 2019 students from nine classes during the middle semester of 2020. They are enrolled in several classes with a total of 128 students. Of the 119 respondents, 96% are female, with a total of 125, while only 6% are male students. Most of the respondents, 41%, are class of 2019, 28% class of 2017, and 20% class of 2018.

Platform Uses

Google Classroom

Based on the total number of respondents (45%) agreed that Google Classroom is easy to use, minimal use of internet data, and the notification through email make it easy to access the assignment. Google Classroom can also make it easier for lecturers to manage creative and innovative online learning. Lecturers can easily create collaborative classes to build interactions with students. Google Classroom is also equipped with a single view feature for student assignments, class preparation, decimal grading for assessment, quizzes integrated with Google Form even do video conferencing through Google Meet. Some studies reveal that the use of Google Classroom has a positive impact on online learning. According to Ventayen et al. (2018), Google Classroom is highly recommended for higher education learning because its use is straightforward and has exclusive features according to lecturers and students (Ventayen et al. 2018). Al-Maroof & Al-Emran (2018) revealed that Google Classroom could work in a unidirectional process because it can serve all lecturers' and students' needs, such as understanding and skills in the class (Tawafak et al. 2018). One extraordinary result that can be very important for each decision-maker in higher education is that students use Google Classroom technology as one new technology platform to improve their education system (Heggart and Yoo 2018; Ramadhani et al. 2019). Shaharanee et al. (2016) also revealed that Google Classroom was one of the recommendations for active learning that can control student learning-centered well, even quite open to inquiry, discussion, and creative thinking on the part of participants students as active participants (Shaharanee et al. 2016).

Zoom Cloud Meeting

27% of the respondents agreed that Zoom Meeting makes the material easy to understand. Lecturer's expression helps them to catch the content like face to face in class. Zoom facilitates written and verbal interactions between lecturers and students. The disadvantage is that this platform's use is only effective for about 40 minutes for free; the rest of the account owners must install a premium or paid application. Zoom Meeting cannot only make video calls to one user alone but to up to 100 members. Besides video calls, users can also send text messages, share files, or share screens to make presentations like face-to-face lectures. However, Bartimore (2016) mentions that the zoom application is still in doubt about its security level in some countries; even Google prohibits its employees from using the zoom application to conduct online meetings (Bartimote-Aufflick et al. 2016). This innovative zoom cloud meeting technology allows all participants to see and hear classmates and discuss using any device, including iPhones, tablets, and computers (Barbosa and Barbosa 2019; Mohanty and Yaqub 2020). Zoom connects easily across space systems, desktops, and mobile devices to bring together various campus sites and remote participants (Mouton 2020; Sutterlin 2018).

WhatsApp

9% of the respondents agreed that WhatsApp is very familiar and has minimal use of internet data and minimal storage usage, yet a straightforward platform used daily. Besides sending and receiving messages to and from individuals or groups, WhatsApp includes various functions, such as text messages, attached images, audio files, video files, and links to web addresses. The simple operation scheme makes the program accessible to people of different ages and backgrounds (Gon and Rawekar 2017; Sayan 2016; Wijaya 2018). According to Kustijono and Zuhri (2018), WhatsApp is significant in helping students learn. This study implies that students should encourage WhatsApp usage, and institutions should provide internet facilities as a top priority in today's education. WhatsApp enables communication with anyone with a Smartphone who has an active internet connection and has installed the application. The general use cost is also meager (Kustijono and Zuhri 2018).

While the rest of the students answered, various platforms such as Edmodo (5%), Quizizz (5%), Slido (5%), Schoology (2%), Seesaw, and Google Meet (1%) based on Table I.

Table I. Platform Variations Used by Students

Platform	Total Students	Preferences		
		Using Same Platform	the Different	Using Different Platform
Google Classroom	54	38		16
Zoom	33	15		18
WhatsApp	11	9		2
Edmodo	6	3		3
Quizizz	5	3		2
Slido	5	5		0
Schoology	3	0		3
Seesaw	1	1		0
Google Meet	1	0		1
Total Samples	119	74		45

Discussion

Platform Variations

Based on the study results, there are five platforms that students want to use without being interchanged: Google Classroom, WhatsApp, Quizizz, Slido, and Seesaw. From these five platforms, when students are asked to use Learning Management Systems such as Google Classroom and Seesaw, or simple platforms like WhatsApp, Quiz, and Slido, students have comfort in their use. This is consistent with a study by Dagger et al. (2009), which states that the Learning Management System has dominated for at least the past two decades. The convenience provided by LMS can make learning easy and well organized (Dagger et al. 2007).

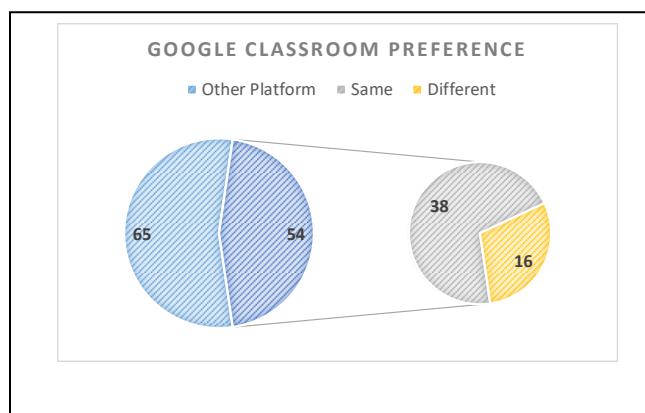


Figure 1. Google Classroom Preference

Based on Fig.1., only 16 out of 54 students chose Google Classroom as a fun platform for learning to switch platforms. While the remaining 38 prefer to use Google Classroom as an entertaining platform for learning and tend not to want to change with other platforms. The tendency to use the same platform can be viewed from several factors. One of them is the ease of use, full-featured, and efficient internet data packages.

Besides, Google Classroom is one of the asynchronous platforms, so the student has unlimited time to access the material and reduce the cost. Cost is the primary reason for adopting an asynchronous platform (Watts 2016). The platform's usability evaluation shows that Google Classroom is extremely useful in understandability, attractiveness, and operability. Asynchronous interaction has been the traditional method for engaging students

in their distance education courses, but as technology has evolved, synchronous media have become popular among educators.

Several factors influence educators to continue to use the asynchronous platform during distance learning. An asynchronous platform allows students to place themselves in 2 positions—the first as viewers and the second as commenters. The view of students as viewers describes students who only listen to the teacher's material asynchronously. In comparison, the view of students as commenters describes students who provide feedback to the teacher. The teacher must manage the class, so there is no bias between the two. There is no quiet distance learning and only one direction, nor does distance learning dominated by active students not directed. Both must be combined to achieve enjoyable learning (Chiu and Hew 2018).

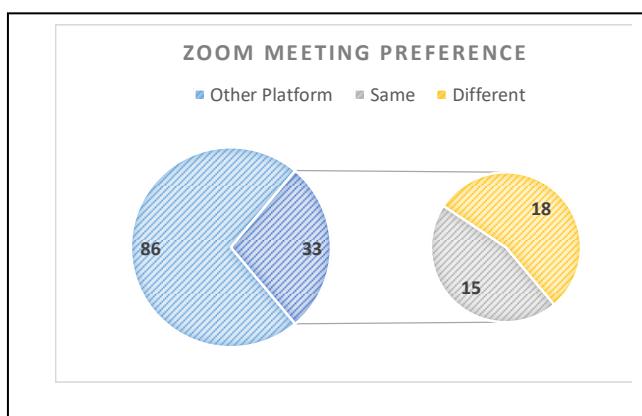


Figure 2. Zoom Cloud Meeting Preference

To compare the result of Google Classroom preference, Zoom Meeting is chosen for comparison. Based on Fig. 2. 18 out of 33 students chose to combine Zoom Meeting with another platform during distance learning. Since Zoom Meeting is an asynchronous platform, students must spend money on internet data, especially if they do not have Wi-Fi at home. It also suggests campus provide internet data to students to support distance learning Covid-19 pandemic.

Based on Table 1. Three platforms tend to be used if combined with other platforms, namely Zoom, Schoology, and Google Meet. At the same time, Edmodo tends to be stable. Mostly, the use of platform variations is needed on synchronous platforms.

Several things must be considered in learning to use synchronous platforms, including audio quality, video quality, number of disconnections, and connection types. The connection required also varies depending on the function of the synchronous platform. For example, audio and video require a perfect connection, while sharing documents requires a moderate connection (Fita et al. 2016).

Finally, it is essential to note that student-to-student and student-to-teacher interactions are critical to learning. Peer instruction is now considered fundamental for learning and a complementary technique to traditional approaches based on teacher-student interaction. Peer instruction can also be achieved with an asynchronous platform such as Zoom Meeting. Since workgroups can be configured so that students interact among themselves to accomplish a specific task specified by the lecturer and leveraging the existing pods such as chat, blackboard, file sharing, and audio/video conferencing among students distributed in several workgroups within the same Zoom Meeting.

Student's Satisfaction and Enjoyment of Distance Learning

With this kind of distance learning, 48% of students said that distance learning was fun, 40% felt unpleasant, and the remaining 5% felt that distance learning was very uncomfortable.

We can conclude that distance learning is currently the best solution during the Covid-19 pandemic. Various platforms can be utilized for collaborative remote work. Students greatly appreciate variations in platform usage, but using a consistent platform can help students focus more on improving their knowledge and learning mood. However, there are still many adjustments that must be made during this pandemic. Both students and teachers need new methodologies and adaptations. Therefore, further studies must be conducted to optimize the use of more appropriate platforms to make learning more enjoyable.

Most respondents (74 out of 119) during distance learning prefer to use the same platform. Because platforms are consistent, it is simple to access students, saves mobile storage memory, prevents confusion if they need to transfer platforms, and eliminates the need for them to become used to new features on the new platform. The lecture material is the main focus. However, 45 out of 119 students believe learning on a different platform would be more enjoyable. Platform variations give students new information and experiences, fostering a unique environment and eradicating boredom. Each platform has various features that make learning enjoyable depending on the material the lecturer wants to cover.

Additionally, diverse platforms offer various communication channels and services to help student learning. Besides, there are differences in individual trends in platform selection. The research implications for platform variations on teachers' synchronous and asynchronous distance education are discussed.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, pupils preferred using the same platform for learning. Students may access information more quickly, mobile storage memory is saved, switching platforms does not cause confusion, and there is no need for them to become used to new features on the new platform, allowing them to concentrate on the lecture subject. Each platform has unique components that make studying enjoyable depending on the lecturer's intended message. Forty-eight percent of students reported that this type of distance learning was enjoyable, 40 percent reported that it was unpleasant, and the remaining 5 percent reported that it was excruciating. According to the study, different platforms will occupy them when bored, but the same platform will not.

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