



Problems of Blended Learning in The Pandemic Covid-19: Psychological Overview

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Introduction

Corona Virus Disease-19 or Covid-19 is an infectious disease pandemic first spread in Wuhan, China at the end of 2019. The corona virus pandemic with the SARS-CoV-2 genetic type then spread to all countries in the world, and had an impact on various sectors such as economy, social, culture, education, poverty, unemployment, and others. The education sector is one of the important elements affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Changes in the learning system service are conducted to prevent students from being exposed to the Corona virus. These changes are regulated by the Ministry of Education and Culture (*Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*) or *Kemendikbud* so that they can be integrated and implemented nationally by all levels of education including elementary and secondary schools, up to the tertiary school level.

In terms of education, Ministry of Education and Culture or *Kemendikbud* issued a regulatory policy containing about the learning process during the Covid-19 pandemic. Among these policies including the online learning process, where learning is carried out using internet or technology-based media. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia based this regulation on the reference to health protocols to avoid crowds to prevent the increasingly massive spread of the Corona virus. The problems then emerged along with the implementation of this online learning. Among the inhibiting factors are limited access, such as the availability of a network of cellular operators that is evenly distributed throughout Indonesia, the availability of Android devices or smartphones for all students, the

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availability of quota or internet data packages, the readiness of the government budget to organize online learning through infrastructure, and others.

On the other hand, the online learning policy also has a positive impact on the experience and comfort felt by teachers and students alike. The advantage of online learning is that it is not constrained by certain geographic areas, as long as an area can be accessed via the internet network that is where online learning can continue. Students who live far away from the school enjoy the online learning; the distance where students live far from school can be cut by the efficiency of online learning. The main function of online learning is to facilitate learning facilities for teachers and students, therefore this function must remember the ultimate goal of learning, namely the level of understanding and changes in students' positive attitudes from the material presented by the teacher. The first problem, how can online learning be carried out with the absorption level of student material? How are changes in post-learning cognition, affection, and conation behavior of students conveyed by teachers through online learning?

Based on this phenomenon, it is necessary to conduct a study of face-to-face conventional learning as a comparison to online learning, whether face-to-face learning is more effective in achieving the goal of building students' understanding of the material content provided by the teacher. Conventional learning or classical learning that is carried out face to face certainly has advantages and disadvantages on several sides that are reviewed comprehensively. Conventional learning has the value of benefits for carrying out the learning process in an integral and comprehensive manner, including direct interaction with students (face to face) so that it makes it easier for teachers to provide feedback to all students, besides that learning can be easily carried out in two directions, both for the teacher and for the students, so that the level of student absorption of the material that is provided can be received well.

Conventional learning also has a deficiency value that can be viewed from several sides, including limited geographic distance or area, especially for students who live far away from school, students cannot fully record the material described by the teacher in class, in contrast to online learning, students can easily download material using internet media so that all material can be read in full. Based on

the results of a comprehensive study of the learning phenomenon, a learning method is needed that can join, combine, fuse, and integrate online and conventional learning models together into one learning model that can be implemented as a whole, which is called the blended learning method.

In general, it can be concluded that in blended learning, the learning process takes place using six combination models, namely: face-to-face, electronic media, text, audio, video, and multimedia and web-based. The self-learning portion of learning using the web has the same composition as the face-to-face process. The primary focus of the Blended Learning is the students. The students must be independent at certain times and be responsible for their learning. Blended Learning atmosphere will require students to play a more active role in their learning. Students make designs and look for material with their own efforts and initiatives. Blended Learning does not mean replacing conventional learning models in the classroom, but strengthening this learning model through the development of educational technology [9].

The purpose of this study was to conduct a psychological review of the problems of blended learning, which was carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic. Comprehensively reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of the blended learning method, seeing the opportunities and challenges faced by both teachers and students in implementing blended learning in the field, and finding appropriate alternative solutions to these problems based on psychological reviews, especially in terms of the psychology of learning.

Discussion

Learning as a process of “coming to know” seeks that everyone involved in learning needs to mean, interpret, and communicate based on the information or knowledge they have (who are in their community). Questions can be intended as a form of interpretation communication, namely interpretation which is communicated in the form of questions [3].

Blended learning requires feedback as a reference for teachers to assess students' understanding of the material provided; therefore the method of “questions” can be used as a measuring tool so that students can provide feedback on material content so that learning is two-way in nature. The feedback process occurs when the teacher

actively communicates and asks questions to students. Obstacles that occur during the learning process such as students who are embarrassed to ask the teacher, or students are afraid that if they ask the wrong question the teacher will scold and give low score, things like this should be realized and overcome by the teacher from the start, through constructive communication, the teacher provide motivation so that learning is two-way in nature so that students will not hesitate to provide feedback to the teacher.

As the most important learning tool in electronic learning that connects to the internet (online), the development of blended learning, and the use of web technology is required for face-to-face learning, file storage, discussion, monitoring and so on. With the-based learning model, it is blended learning expected that the portion of the independent learning period will be more than face-to-face, both electronic learning that is not connected to the internet (offline) and electronic learning that is connected to the internet (online).

In blended learning, students do not only access teaching materials, but also carry out several activities: 1) Interacting, either through electronic mail (e-mail), chat, or discussion forums. Students can ask questions and opinions about a matter either with the teacher or with their friends. 2) Doing assignments. Students will get assignments either individually or in groups. 3) Answering practice questions. Each topic will be provided with some practice questions that students must answer. 4) Communicating with experts in other countries via the internet connection [9].

Based on the problems and challenges of blended learning in the field, it is necessary to study or review psychologically to find solutions to blended learning problems, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, which is useful for teachers and students so that blended learning can be carried out optimally and efficiently.

The first psychological review of the factors that influence blended learning is the intelligence ability of the students. Intelligence is a skill that consists of three types, namely; (1) The ability to face and adapt to new situations appropriately and effectively, (2) Knowing or using abstract concepts effectively and (3) Knowing relationships and learning them quickly. Intelligence is also the psycho-physical ability to react to stimuli or adapt to the environment in an appropriate way [7].

Intelligence has a great influence on progress and learning outcomes. In the same conditions and situations, students who have a higher level of intelligence will be more successful and thrive than students who have a low level of intelligence. However, students who have high intelligence are not necessarily successful in learning, if these students do not learn well. Conversely, students who have a moderate level of intelligence can do well in learning, if these students learn well. This is because learning is a complex process with factors that influence it, while intelligence is another factor [8].

The second psychological review of the factors that influence blended learning is the ability or competence of the teachers themselves. The teachers must formulate and consider 7 steps of educational psychology that will be implemented in the learning process. These steps include; (1) Formulating learning objectives appropriately. (2) Choosing appropriate learning strategies or methods. (3) Providing guidance or even providing counseling. (4) Facilitating and motivating students' learning. (5) Creating a conducive learning climate. (6) Interacting appropriately with students. (7) Assessing learning outcomes fairly [4].

The third psychological review is that communication between teachers and students is hampered, both verbal and non-verbal communication. Basically, in online-based learning, students have the opportunity to personally connect and interact with facilitators and tutors / teachers so that they can build trust for quality online learning. If technology limits communication opportunities, it can hurt opportunities to build trust. Communication limitations impact on the ability (or lack thereof) to build collaboration through teamwork. A disconnected learning environment, particularly virtual discussion boards, can serve as a point of connection for students located or scattered in different parts of the world, but it can also make problems unique. Plus the invisibility of facial expressions and body language makes it difficult for recipients to interpret messages accurately, especially if a student is involved in a discussion or teamwork situation. A breakdown in trust can also occur when students are placed on passive teams making regular communication failures. When this happens, students in the group cannot know the commitment and seriousness of other members to the group work [5].

The fourth psychological review is the low level of student involvement (participation) and the weak supervision of the tutor /

teacher. The transition stage of blended learning from conventional learning to online learning produces a new complexity, namely the low level of student participation (involvement) in online learning. In the conventional learning period, the level of student participation was very high due to the supervisory factor of the teacher who was very strict in monitoring student attendance directly. The teacher directly monitors student attendance and assesses their participation and activeness in the learning process in class, in online learning, the teacher find it difficult to monitor the level of students' participation (involvement) actively which makes the percentage of student attendance in online learning decrease significantly, this is due to several reasons, including the low level of teacher's digital literacy.

Online learning has special challenges, the location of separate students and teachers when implementing it causes teachers unable to supervise students' activities directly during the learning process [2]. Students' involvement in question can be seen from the results of student involvement in taking full online learning from the beginning of learning to the end of learning. The results showed that only 50% of students were fully active, 33% of students were actively involved. Meanwhile, the other 17%, students are less active and less participating in online learning [1].

The fifth psychological review is to modify the blended learning method using the psychological theory of learning behavior (behavior formation). Pavlovian's theory emphasizes the importance of the conditioning process in the formation of behavior. Basically, a response (behavior) can be generated even though it is not stimulated by natural stimuli or stimuli that naturally cause the behavior. Based on this concept, education can be directed towards modifying behavior based on artificial stimuli. This is sometimes necessary when natural stimuli cannot be present. Under normal circumstances, without being conditioned (unconditioning), a natural response will only appear when there is a natural stimulus as well. However, through the conditioning process, natural responses can arise even without a proper stimulus, or only with a stimulus created (artificial stimulus). In other words, the combination of natural stimuli with artificial stimuli occurs continuously and will cause the expected natural response [6].

There are at least two types of human behavior according to Skinner's opinion, namely: (1) Respondent behavior is behavior in

which the origin of the stimulus is known for example blinking in the sun, drooling from hunger and so on. (2) Operant behavior is behavior of unknown origin, behavior that is just done. For example standing, blowing whistles, moving hands, singing, laughing, talking etc.

Skinner realized that operant behavior arises because of a certain stimulus, but that stimulus is unknown and not important to know. The ways of habituating behavior through the habituation or conditioning process are as follows: (1) Type S conditioner or respondent conditioner which is identical to the classic Pavlov conditioner. This type emphasizes the importance of a stimulus to generate the desired response. (2) Conditioning type R (operant conditioning); synonymous with Thorndike instrumental conditioning, which is habituation that emphasizes response more. Thorndike's theory in particular can be applied in schools to design concrete learning. The operation can be in the form of several points below. (1) Schools need to have clearly defined educational goals. (2) Educational goals must be in accordance with the conditions and abilities of each child. (3) Study material is divided into small units. (4) The learning process is carried out in stages according to the material that has been broken down into small units. (5) Educational pressure is on correct or appropriate responses to stimuli, not on focusing on children's mistakes. (6) Giving rewards for good behavior (7) Wrong response must be corrected immediately so that it is not repeated. (8) Regular tests need to be provided as feedback for teachers and students for the following learning improvements. (9) Creating learning situations that are similar to real life as much as possible so that there is a transfer of learning from class to real life. (10) Good education is to provide lessons that can be used / transferred in everyday life [6].

Conclusion

Blended learning during the Covid-19 pandemic was carried out with the aim of breaking the chain of spreading the Covid-19 virus. The transition of the learning process from the classical stage to online learning poses a number of problems as well as challenges for teachers and students. Therefore, a psychological study of blended learning is needed to overcome these problems so that blended learning during the Covid-19 pandemic can be carried out optimally and efficiently.

The first psychological review of the factors that influence blended learning is the intelligence ability of students. Intelligence is a skill that consists of three types, namely; (1) The ability to face and adapt to new situations appropriately and effectively, (2) Knowing or using abstract concepts effectively and (3) Knowing relationships and learning them quickly.

The second psychological review of the factors that influence blended learning is the ability or competence of the teachers themselves. The teacher must formulate and consider 7 steps of educational psychology that will be implemented in the learning process. These steps include: (1) Formulating learning objectives appropriately; (2) Choosing an appropriate learning strategy or method; (3) Providing guidance or even providing counseling; (4) Facilitating and motivating the students' learning; (5) Creating a conducive learning climate; (6) Interacting appropriately with students; (7) Assessing learning outcomes fairly.

The third psychological review is that communication between teachers and students is hampered in both verbal and non-verbal communication. Communication limitations impact on the ability (or lack thereof) to build collaboration through teamwork. The learning environment is disconnected. Plus the invisible facial expressions and body language make it difficult for recipients to interpret messages accurately, especially if a student is involved in a discussion or teamwork situation.

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The fifth psychological review is to modify the blended learning method using the psychological theory of learning behavior (behavior formation). (1) Respondent behavior is behavior in which the origin

of the stimulus is known. (2) Operant behavior, namely behavior of unknown origin, behavior that is just done. (3) Conditioning type S or respondent conditioning which is identical to the classic Pavlov conditioner, this type emphasizes the importance of the stimulus to elicit the desired response. (4) Conditioning type R (operant conditioning); synonymous with Thorndike instrumental conditioning, which is habituation that emphasizes response more.

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