THE PERSPECTIVE

OF STUDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY TOWARDS EDUCATION POLICY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC[1]

PERSPEKTIF MAHASISWA UNIVERSITAS TERHADAP KEBIJAKAN PENDIDIKAN SELAMA PANDEMI COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

During the covid-19 pandemic spread Indonesia, educational system has been fluctuated. The face-to-face learning method soon is changed into the distance learning with the help of digital tools such as computer and internet. At the beginning, the compatible method was difficult to decide by the educational practitioners, particularly in Banda Aceh. However, the policy maker at higher education level especially at Syiah Kuala University has decided to use the mix method by implementing both classroom and online learning activity. In this study, the data were obtained through google form via social media such as WhatsApp. The participants who are in the 2nd and 4th semester were chosen in order to give their towards the new learning system. The results of this qualitative study indicated that most students (89.6%) agreed to the education policy. They (80%) also stated that they feel pleasure to learn with the mix methods in this semester. On the other hand, if the students could be able to choose without considering the side effects owing to the current pandemic situation, 51.8% of them preferred the face-to-face activity to online class.

Keywords: Covid-19, Online Learning, University Student, Education, Policy

ABSTRAK

Saat pandemi COVID-19 yang melanda Indonesia, sistem pendidikan berfluktuasi. Metode pembelajaran tatap muka segera diubah menjadi pembelajaran jarak jauh dengan bantuan perangkat digital seperti komputer dan internet. Pada awalnya para praktisi pendidikan khususnya yang ada di Banda Aceh kesulitan menentukan metode yang tepat. Namun para pembuat kebijakan, khususnya di tingkat perguruan tinggi, Universitas Syiah Kuala menetapkan arahan untuk metode campuran; kelas dan kegiatan belajar online. Dalam penelitian ini data diperoleh melalui *google form* melalui media sosial seperti WhatsApp. Peserta semester 2 dan 4 dipilih untuk memberikan suara pada sistem pembelajaran yang baru. Hasil penelitian kualitatif ini menunjukkan bahwa

sebagian besar siswa (89,6%) setuju dengan kebijakan pendidikan. Mereka (80%) juga menyatakan senang belajar dengan metode campuran pada semester ini. Di sisi lain, jika siswa dapat memilih tanpa mempertimbangkan efek samping dari situasi saat ini, 51,8% dari mereka akan lebih memilih aktivitas tatap muka daripada kelas online.

Kata Kunci: *Covid-19, Pembelajaran Online, Mahasiswa, Pendidikan, Kebijakan.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of 2020 the covid-19 has spred all over Indonesia, people must comply health protocols such as washing hands with soap, wearing mask, social distancing. Meanwhile, Indonesian law has arranged some regulation before this serious health problem attack this large country. Based on Indonesian Constitution about criminal threats for those who gather during the Covid-19 pandemic, at least there are two articles. Firstly, article 14 (1) of the constitution number 4 of 1984, stated that concerning outbreaks of infectious diseases, obstructing the implementation of the countermeasures, shall be punished by imprisonment for one year. Additionally, article 93 of the constitution number 6 of 2018 about concerning health quarantine, stated that every person who does not comply with the administration of health quarantine or obstructs health administration and quarantine, resulting in a public health emergency will be sentenced to 1 year imprisonment and/or a maximum fine of Rp. 100,000,000.

Though education policy in higher level such as university and college can be implemented independently, both lecturer and student interaction in the class is still essential. Since March 2020 when the covid-19 pandemic spread in Indonesia, most educational stakeholders attempted to undergo several alternative education systems. The one and the best way to reduce the virus is to stop face-to-face teaching learning activities and make them into the distance learning system in which students and instructor meet on the screen via the electronic media and learning application. However, this predicament was debated by many educational practitioners as the developing country like Indonesia is not capable to face it yet. Moreover, in this case, primary students are the hardest group to do it.

Nowadays, learning activities for all level of education seem attractive with the e-learning. Electronic learning or well known as e-learning is a process of teaching and learning by using electronic media which can be applied anytime and anywhere by the digital tools (Arkorful and Abaidoo, 2014). Moreover, e-learning web applications such as google classroom, google meet, moodle, edmodo, zoom, webex and so on has been applied during the instruction. Additionally, Abed (2018) enlisted the benefits of e-learning, which some of them are easy to access for teacher, increasing the possibility of communication between students and school, sense of equality and contributing to support the students' different views.

During the implementation of the distance learning, at least there are some problems occurred between student and

the instructor in the process of teaching and learning. Efriana (2020) found various problems for students, teacher and parents during the distance learning. Her findings showed main problems during the online class including the students' understanding of learning material, teacher's capability of technology used, and the limitation control during the instruction. On the other hand, Abuhammad (2020) stated those barriers during the distance learning including personal barriers, technical barriers, logistical barriers, and financial barriers. In Philipines, Baticulon, et.al. (2021) conducted their study on 3670 medical students quantitatively regarding the online learning barriers in the higher education level. Their results indicated that though the majority of the students use smartphone for their daily, less than half respondents (41%) are qualified for this learning system. Meanwhile, Coman, et.al (2020) revealed their research findings on hundreds Romanian university students that the institution were not well-organized for this system during the pandemic.

At the beginning of the pandemic, most people must do their activities at their home. All students in Indonesia start to learn via internet without attending any classes at school. However, people recently have done some activities outside their house with health protocol properly. For students, especially in Aceh, learning at school has been done with certain schedule. The regulation occurred after 10 months Covid-19 outbreak. Without erasing the

online class, teacher and students can meet at school in the certain time. Not only at schools, but also at college and universities, they created online and offline learning method since this semester, which is called as hybrid method. In the other words, they arranged the schedule for online and face-to-face learning process. In fact, previously Zainuddin and Keumala (2018) proffered blended method for higher education institution in Indonesia. They agreed that learning not only can be done at the classroom but also on the screen through online with the digital media.

Jeffrey, Milne and Suddaby (2014) on their study of teachers' experience of blended learning (online and classroom components) stated that classroom activities were more meaningful than online class. Most teachers presented great teaching strategies in classroom. However, they felt awkward during the online class. On the other hand, Lalima and Dangwal (2017) explained that blended learning need to be adopted. They belived this system is benificial if it is organized proprely. Additionally, this approach can be a soulution for education system, particularly in India.

Based on the official letter signed in December 2020 by the head of Syiah Kuala University, Aceh, learning activities in the classroom are applied with the specific requirement involving the students entrance year with the health protocol firmly. Only the students in 2019 and 2020 entrance year are allowed to study in the classroom with the certain regulations. Definitely,

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several barriers are appeared during this policy as the previous semester went with the different system.

To deal with, the implementation of teaching-learning activities in university was investigated. The students opinions during face-to-face learning and online started in this semester were explored and presented in this study. In the other words, their views of this policy were inquired.

RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative approach was employed in this study as the students' opinions on the policy of the educational system were obtained unlimitedly. The data from the respondents who are the students in Syiah Kuala University were gained through google form. The participants (n=29) are the active students from various major in the 2019-2020 academic year. The 16 open-ended questions were applied including general information, students' voice during the educational instruction and the situation on the university.

The participants in the range of year are 18-21 come from various districts such as Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar, Lhokseumawe, East Aceh and West Aceh. As they are studying in the university located in Banda Aceh, surely they stayed in Banda Aceh or surrounding it. Before started the new semester, they were required to arrive at least two weeks.

The research instrument written on google form was sent via the social media such as WhatsApp group. The participants may use their laptop or mobile phone to response the questions. The data collection then was analyzed and presented descriptively. The really open-ended questions were employed in this study. As Popping (2015) stated that the really open-ended questions are usually specific then answer the main issue of the research.

B. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
1. **Students' Voice on the Learning System**

Since the regulation declared by the head of Syiah Kuala University about the hybrid learning method; face-to-face and online learning system implemented this year, this issue becomes speculation. In this study, the results presented the policy of the learning system based on the students' views.

Table 1
Students' View of Online and Offline Learning (Mix Method)

Answer	Total	Percentage
Agree	26	89.6%
Disagree	3	10.4%

According to the data obtained on March 2021, the table 1 showed that 89.6% of the students agreed to the university policy during the covid-19 pandemic. The students couldn't agree more to the rule. Meanwhile, 10.4% of them objected to this wisdom because it is less effective to do the online learning. It is also stated that the best learning way is to do in the traditional pedagogical approach though they understand well this occurs owing to

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the situation.

Table 2
Students' Preferences of Online, Offline and Online and Offline Learning (Mix Method)

Answer	Total	Percentage
Online	2	89.6%
Offline	15	51.8%
Mix Method	12	41.4%

The question of the students' preferences on this system was also required through the instrument. Table 2 indicated that 15 students (51.8%) preferred the learning in the classroom, while 12 students (41.4%) like these blend methods better than in the classroom for all meetings. The minority (6.8%) stated that they preferred the online class. Laili and Nashir (2021) found students' preferences on learning during covid-19 pandemic. Their study was indicated that more than 90% preferred learning in classroom. As online learning is a must during the pandemic situation, they stated that learning media, supporting tools and also internet's stability were the ensential factors to support the effective online instruction.

Table 3
Students' Views of University ability to Implement Online Classes for All Courses

Answer	Total	Percentage
Able	4	14.0%
Disable	25	86.0%

The following question shown on table 3 is about the students' opinions on the capability of learning online for all courses. The data indicated 86% of them stated that online learning cannot be done for all courses, while 14% said it can be done online. In this case, the students who study on the practicum thought that the practical learning which needs laboratory and other tools cannot be done via online. In addition, with the specified amount for each laboratory and other protocols, the face-to-face learning works properly.
A quantitave study on 274 students from Madura's colleges revealed several difficulties during online learning. Those are technical problems and facilities, and human resources. Owing to these obstacles, the students voiced that this online learning system is not benificial. The majority responses were stated that they were burdened with assignment, also hard to understand the lessons

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through e-learning since it is limited. Meanwhile, other questions of their reasons on preferrence of online learning

showed that 162 students preffered online learning because it is easier to conduct (Febrianto, 2020).

Table 4
Students' Oppinions of the Study during this Semester

Answer	Total	Percentage
Like	24	80.0%
Dislike	4	16.6%
Moderate	1	3.4%

Additionally, the next issue presented on table 4 is about the students' feeling of this new learning scheme. The results expressed that 80% of the students like this new learning system. Meanwhile, 16.6% voiced dislike and 3.4% said indifferent. Fatoni et.al. (2020) stated several advantages of online learning system during covid-19 pandemic. Based on the data analysed from students of 5 private universities, they found that online learning generally was comfortable as they can learn the subjects unlimited by time and

place. However, during the online instruction, most students complained of network instability. This response leads the students to feel unclear interaction and reducing concentrations. Furthermore, in Rumania, Coman et.al (2020) found the results of their study that the online learning was not prepared totally by the institutions. They found that disadvantages of online instruction were more dominant.

Table 5
Online or offline learning schedule has been arranged correctly

Answer	Total	Percentage
Agree	27	93.3%
Disagree	2	6.8%

During the hybrid method, the schedule of learning online or face-to-face should be cleared before the class starts. In this question, the students were asked about the arrangement of

the learning schedule. The results on table 5 showed 93.3% of the students stated that the learning schedule has been clear. It means that it is well understood whether the students need to go online or go campus.

Table 6
Learning for this semester is better than last semester

Answer	Total	Percentage
Yes	22	89.8%
No	1	3.4%
Similar	1	3.4%

| Fair | 1 | 3.4% |

Next question of the questionnaire is whether this semester's lecture is better than last semester's lecture or not. The findings expressed that 22 students (89.8%) voiced that this lecturing system is better than last semester. Most of the students' reasons are seen excited as they can meet each other directly. One of them gave the reason as the

lecturing in the classroom makes her/him more understand of the material presented. It is added that the methods used in the classroom are various and better than in the distance lecturing. Meanwhile, a student complained the offline lecturing because of the tasks. She/he stated that the task and assignment is added.

Table 7
Learning for this semester appropriates with students' expectation

Answer	Total	Percentage
Yes	16	55.2%
No	9	31%
Few	1	3.4%
Fair	3	10.4%

Last but not least, it was questioned about their expectation to the lecturing. The findings presented on table 7 showed that 55.2% said that this learning system is like they hope. The majority of the science students admitted that they do the practicum without restraint at the laboratory, though the non-laboratory subjects are doing through the mix methods. While 10.4% mentioned as moderate, 31% of the students gave their opposition on this issue. Since this semester, the students on disagree response confessed that the best lecturing is like they have learnt since years ago; in the

classroom. They looked forward having the face-to-face lecturing for all courses they took.

2. The Students' Views on Education Administration

Even though the health protocol has been prepared before the class, the students' views on the classroom situation during lecturing were also required. Based on the regulation, it was questioned whether the classroom is arranged in a sitting position with a minimum distance of one and a half meters between people.

Table 8
Students' Learning Rooms are arranged in a sitting position with a minimum distance of 1.5 (one point five) meters between students

Answer	Total	Percentage
Agree	29	100%

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Table 9

Students' classroom/laboratory/seminar room is limited in capacity

Answer	Total	Percentage
Agree	29	100%

Based on the table 8 and table 9, most students agree with the issues. The findings indicated that 100% of the students answered yes to the use of rooms in the university. In addition, the capacity of any room and laboratory is limited. Both lecturer and students are allowed to share the room in the certain number.

Table 10

The access to enter and exit the lecture/laboratory building is seperate and given clear directions

Answer	Total	Percentage
Yes	26	86%
No	3	14%

Table 10 indicated other issue, whether the 'in' and 'out' access of the lecturer or laboratory building which is separated and given clear directions was questioned to the participants. Unlike the previous answers with whole agreements, the answers varied. Table 10 indicated that it is 25 students (86%) wrote 'yes' and the others typed 'no' in the response of this question. Though little of them responded 'no', the majority said 'yes' which means that the direction is available in the university.

The students also voiced several suggestions on the university policy of learning instruction for the next semester, especially if the pandemic will not be finished. The majority of students stated that the online instructional which has been designed by the university can be continued. With the hybrid system, they agreed that the learning was conducted in classroom with certain conditions and on screen. Meanwhile, without giving detailed reason, a student responded that online learning should be performed. Other responses are indicated the boredom of online learning. They hoped that face-to-face instruction can be implemented soon. On the other hand, a practicability was showed on the respondent. It was written that if the teaching-learning method is online, it should include all courses, on the contrary, if it is possible to have teaching-learning process in classroom it should be for all courses.

From the previous data presented, it indicated that generally the students agree to the policy determined by the university. Though they hoped they are able to learn in the classroom, they realized the situation. Both online and face-to-face learning system is the right

choice during covid-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSION

During the covid-19 outbreak expended the world, many departments and services are becalmed. It also happened on the education system, in which students cannot attend the classroom and meet their teacher and other students like usual. Then the learning method changes to be online teaching-learning process. Though they cannot study together at the school, the online class should be consistent with the schedule.

In the end of last year, 2020, Syiah Kuala University decided to hold mix method (hybrid) learning process; online and offline. Despite it is definitely accomplished with the health protocol it becomes argued. To investigate this issue, the students enrolled to the 2nd and 4th semester were required several questions. The results showed that the majority of them (80%) agreed to the education policy. Furthermore, it was revealed that the lecturing of this semester is much better (89.8%). Their enthusiastic can be recognized by the response of their agreement on this learning system (89.6%). Therefore, the mix method applied on this semester is the acceptable rule for the university students in Banda Aceh.

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