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## University Students' Readiness to Adapt to the Change of Learning Platform during Campus Closure

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**Abstract.** The unprecedented change of the learning platform has forced university students adapt to new ways of learning. The present survey study aimed to reveal students' readiness to adjust to such a situation. The population of the research was comprised of students of private and state universities in Lombok Island, Indonesia. A purposive sampling technique was used to select all respondents who studied through online platform. The data were gathered using an online survey questionnaire. To support the data findings from the survey, the researchers interviewed 8 participants from different participating universities. Findings of the study show that on the average the respondents had sufficient knowledge to use online information and technology, access digital literacy, and manage learning resources. The majority of the respondents had high expectations to explore the use internet literacy for their own learning. Yet, they received inadequate institutional supports. The mismatch between students' expectations and the actual provision of the institutional services has potentially demotivated students to take part in the online classes. The study also reported that respondents experienced difficulties to participate in the online learning due to bad internet connection and additional financial burdens. Such difficulties had influenced the respondents' choice of learning modes and readiness to take part in the online classes.

**Keywords.** Students' Readiness, Online Learning Platform, Campus Closure,

### 1. Background of the Study

The development of global pandemic issues has urged every university in Indonesia to shift its teaching services from face-to-face to online platforms. As such, the common practice of lecturer-based teaching activities is now moved toward student-based learning activities. Based on the Circular Letter No. 36962 of the Indonesian Minister of Education, all universities in Indonesia are required to adopt online learning to prevent the ever-increasing spread of Covid 19. Subsequently, campuses are locked down and the teaching learning activities are carried out through online platforms. This unprecedented change forces lecturers to adopt new ways of planning and implementing the teaching and learning activities. For some lecturers, the use of such an approach will presumably make the teaching and learning activities challenging and fun as they are stimulated to create new innovations in carrying out the teaching and learning activities. Thus, students can be well motivated to study more independently. For some other lecturers, however, such an approach can be problematic when they have inadequate knowledge and limited skills in running online classes. In many instances, students feel unmotivated to take

part in the online classes when lecturers fail to create meaningful interaction. They just use the online platform as depository of assignments (Adiyanto, 2021)

This condition can surely bring about potential learning problems to both students and lecturers in universities and subsequently affect the quality of teaching and learning delivery. When these people are compelled to employ online learning platforms without having adequate technological supports, they might get negative feedback from students. The common obstacles experienced by students and lecturers in such a situation are frequently related to the lack of learning facilities, poor online internet networks, and unprepared human resources to manage the learning management system (Dewi et.al, 2018). This can bring potential learning problems to both students and lecturers in universities and subsequently affect the quality of teaching and learning delivery. When both of them are forced to employ online learning platforms in spite of their unfamiliarity with such a technology, they might get frustrated in the end. A number of researchers — such as (Efriana, 2021), (Al-kumaim *et al.*, 2021) and (Scherer *et al.*, 2021) — reported similar findings pertaining to these problematic issues.

As such, in carrying out online learning, teachers or lecturers must create activities that allow students to be independent and collaborative in producing knowledge/skill outputs. According to Storz and Hoffman (2013) online learning materials should be designed properly by taking into account the learners' needs. The lecturer's job is therefore to choose appropriate materials, design learning modes, and adjust the learning tasks according to student needs. In this way, the use of online platform can be maximized to suit the learners' needs. Likewise, Schlosser, Simonson & Hudgins, (2009) state that online learning activities must be clearly structured to scaffold students to learn step by step before they independently seek and find the knowledge they need. A number of previous research studies conducted by Turvey (2008) Tsai (2010) and Alwahaishi (2020) have given similar evidence that a mismatch between students' needs and lecturers' teaching delivery can trigger the emergence of frustration and dissatisfaction among students. Subsequently, this will give students negative experiences, such as feelings of confusion, frustration and anxiety in online learning. Under such a condition, students tend to withdraw or fail to take part in the online classes (Ali Hashemi, 2021). These negative experiences will eventually make them think that there is no benefit whatsoever learning through online learning platform. When these issues are not well addressed by the teachers, learners might have difficulties to adjust themselves to the learning activities.

In contrast to the development of online learning worldwide, the current conditions of Indonesian tertiary education show that many challenges are faced by lecturers and students of teacher training institutes in utilizing online for virtual classes (Saifuddin, 2018). The challenges pertaining to online learning among Indonesian university students have been widely reported by a number of researchers. Rahiem (2021), for example, found out that the most challenging aspects of online learning faced by university students were technology barriers and high costs. In the same vein, Padmo, Ardiasih and Idrus (2020) identified that the most frequently occurring problem in online learning was internet connections. Observations have also uncovered that students lacked exposure and gained little experiences from online learning. In other places, these conditions were worsened by the poor online learning facilities (Gustiani, 2020). In addition, students' problem in adjusting to the new learning medium also added up to the above challenges. Although during the pandemic time the Government of Indonesia has encouraged tertiary institutions to use online learning devices for delivering lectures, many university lecturers still prefer to run classes in a conventional way (Adiawaty, 2020). All of these are identified as triggering factors that may prevent students from participating in online learning successfully.

The current research aims to assess students' perspectives regarding the university readiness to employ online learning platform. To account for the phenomenon investigated, the study was conducted through an online survey for university students in Lombok Island, Indonesia. The survey questions were devised to seek the answer to the following research question: *"What is the students' readiness to adapt to the change of online learning platform?"*

## **2. Research Method**

This study employed a survey method and was conducted in the midst of 2020. This survey aimed to uncover the universities' readiness to run online learning classes from the viewpoint of students as service users. The research population was comprised of students of private and public universities in Lombok. However, the researchers limited the scope only to the universities that had teacher training programs. The study involved students of different majors. These groups of students were expected to represent the total population. The data were gathered from an online survey questionnaire. A purposive sampling technique was used to select all teacher training students in Lombok Island who studied through online platform.

To collect the data, the researchers used an online survey questionnaire. The first part of the survey asked the participants to fill the demographic information, such as gender, study major, information and technology (IT) devices used, and IT skills. The second part of the survey consisted of 4 sets of options regarding the respondents' knowledge and skills in utilizing internet access and learning platform used in their classes. The third part of the survey was used to inquire the respondents' current needs, lacks and challenges regarding the implementation of online learning in their campuses. The last part of the survey dealt with the respondents' perceived readiness to study through online channel and their learning preferences. These respondents were asked to participate in the survey through Google Form. This online research instrument was used because it was the only way to get in touch with respondents. No student was allowed to come to campuses when the research was done because when the study was conducted the national lock-down policy was still applied in the country. Out of 100 students from the four universities surveyed, only 52 respondents submitted their answers.

To support the data findings from the survey, the researcher also conducted interviews with 8 students from 4 different participating universities to confirm the survey results. Samples for the interviews were taken purposively. In line with the questionnaire, the interview aimed to reveal more deeply the students' perceptions on the implementation online-based learning in their campuses. For in-depth interviews, the recording activity took approximately 30 minutes with the permission of the participants. The data obtained from the survey were analysed and presented in the form of a simple percentage calculation while the data from the interviews were transcribed in verbatim to support the result of the analysis of survey data.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### *3.1. Results*

Table 1 shows that there were more female participants than the male students participating in the study. From a total of 52 university students participated in the study, 53.85% were female whereas the rest 46.15% were male students. These respondents came from different major backgrounds. The big portion of the respondents was represented by students of Basic Education (40.38%). This was followed by English students (38.46%), Biology students (15.38%) and Communication students (6%). As regards the use of IT devices for online learning, 55.78% of the respondents used smartphone device for learning whereas the rest used laptops (28.84%) and desktop (17%). Results of interviews clarify this finding.

Most of the participants admitted that they preferred to use smartphones for online learning because it was *handy* and it could be used *to access online classes from everywhere*. The majority of participants also expressed that smartphone were more affordable than other devices.

**Table 1: Demographic Information**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Male	24	46.15
Female	28	53.85
Total	52	100
<b>Educational Background</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
English	20	38.46
Basic Education	21	40.38
Biology	8	15.38
Communication	3	5.78
Total	52	100
<b>IT Devices Used for Learning</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Desktop	8	15.38
Laptop	15	28.84
Smartphone	29	55.78
Total	52	100

The data in Table 2 below indicate that 57.69% of the respondents claimed to be adequately skilled in using online information and technology and 19.24% claimed to be highly skilled. The rest of the respondents, i.e. 23.07%, stated to be inadequately skilled. As regards the skills in assessing digital literacy, 73.08% of the respondents stated that they were adequately skilled and 3 of them or 5.77% claimed to be highly skilled. In contrast, 21.5% of the respondents stated they were inadequately skilled in assessing digital literacy. Next, 53.85% of the respondents valued themselves to be adequately skilled in managing learning resources and 9.62% stated to be highly skilled. Of the total respondents, 36.53% declared to be inadequately skilled. These responses show that there were variation of respondents' abilities in using online information and technology.

Results of the interviews confirm the survey findings. The majority of the participants stated that they were accustomed to online classes just recently. For that reason, they realized that their mastery of using a certain learning platform, like Moodle, was still novice. They felt overwhelmed as they never received any induction on how to use and assess digital resources for online learning. Thus, oftentimes these participants attended online classes only for pro-forma purposes. One of the participants asserted, "*Many of us attended the class just to fill in the attendance list. Yes, we turn on our cell-phones or laptops but we do nothing except for listening and listening to our lecturer's talk*" From the interviews, it was revealed that many of the participants' classmates felt frustrated with the learning tasks and activities run by their lecturers. In their opinion, lecturers should have developed interesting learning materials, which stimulated thinking and involved students to participate actively in their learning tasks.

**Table 2: Knowledge and skills in operating online technology for learning**

IT Operating Skills	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly skilled	10	19.24
Adequately skilled	30	57.69
Inadequately skilled	12	23.07
Total	52	100
Assessing Digital Literacy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly skilled	3	5.77
Adequately skilled	38	73.08
Inadequately skilled	11	21.15
Total	52	100
Managing Learning Resources	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly skilled	5	9.62
Adequately skilled	28	53.85
Inadequately skilled	19	36.53
Total	52	100

Table 3 summarizes the respondents' current needs, lacks and challenges. A big number of respondents, represented by 61.54%, affirmed that they needed skills to maximize the use of Google Classroom and Moodle. The rest of the respondents expressed their various needs, such as creating YouTube channel for learning (13.46%), designing blog (11.54%) and utilizing Google Form (13.46%). Pertaining to the question about students' lack in the online learning, the respondents provided a variety of responses, i.e. inadequate institutional supports (53.85%), clarity of instruction (38.46%) and lecturers' lack of IT mastery (i.e. 7.69%). As regards the issue of challenges, 38.46% of the respondents considered that the big challenge they faced was dominating lecturer-talk. This figure was followed by challenges related to the slow internet connection (23.08%), computer glitch (11.54%) and motivation (26.92%).

Results of interview highlighted the survey findings aforementioned. Most participants of the interview expressed that having good knowledge of Google Classroom or Moodle was essential for them to acquire as it would support their future teaching career. However, these participants felt that the campus support system was really poor. As a result, they had to study on their own to gain knowledge and skills in online learning. Another issue that appeared from the interview were the lecturer's lacked clarity of instruction. The participants reported that some of the lecturers never met them through Google Meet and Zoom. Also, they did not use Google Classroom or Moodle to post assignments. Instead, they just texted what the students had to write and asked them to submit their assignments through WhatsApp. In this relation, one participant commented "*Because of the absence of (clear) explanation from them (lecturers), we do not get their expectation clearly*" Furthermore other participants added, "*With such limited interaction, we were not given opportunities to ask questions for clarification*" The data informed that the lecturers did not adequately utilize the online tools and thus there was a mismatch between students' expectations and the lecturers' actual instructional performance. This condition potentially affected student poor learning outcomes. The implication for this is that the change of learning mode, from face-to-face to online platform, requires careful plans and the involvement of students as service users.

Participants also added that another challenge to their learning endeavour was a bad internet connection. They complained that frequently they could not participate in online classes

from home maximally because of this matter. One participant said, “*When I am home, I can't attend online classes... the network connection here is troublesome*”. Because of these technical reasons, many participants living in the villages had to go to another area to get internet access. These participants explained that they were often late or absent to attend online classes due to such difficult technological glitch. In the long run, when these challenges were not well addressed, participants’ motivation and participation in online classes would be declined and severely affected.

**Table 3: Respondents Identified Current Needs, Lacks and Challenges**

Needs	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Utilizing Google Classroom and Moodle	32	61.54
Creating YouTube Channel	7	13.46
Designing Blog	6	11.54
Utilizing Google Form	7	13.46
Total	52	100
Lacks	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Institutional Support System	28	53.85
Clarity of Instruction	20	38.46
Lecturers’ Mastery of IT	4	7.69
Total	52	100
Challenges	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Slow Internet Connection	12	23.08
Dominating Lecturer-talk	20	38.46
Computer Glitch	6	11.54
Motivation	14	26.92
Total	52	100

The data in Table 4 depicts the summary of respondents’ perceived readiness and preferred method of learning. A total of 40.38% respondents claimed that although they were willing but unprepared to study online. This was followed by a small percentage of respondents, 15.38%, who stated they were ready and willing to study online. In contrast, around 30.78% of the participants expressed that they were ready but unwilling. Meanwhile, a small proportion of the respondents, 13.46%, stated that they were unready and unwilling. As regards the preferred method of learning, a big percentage of respondents, represented by 63.46%, chose blended learning whereas the rest, 36.54%, chose total online method.

The majority of the participants admitted that most of students were not ready financially and technologically to take part in the distance learning. They considered that online learning forced them to spend extra expenses for video conferencing via Zoom or Google Meet.

Results of interview also revealed that the respondents preferred to study using blended learning mode because it accommodated them with real communication with their peers and lecturers

**Table 4: Respondents' Perceived Readiness and Preferred Method of Learning**

Readiness for Online Learning	Frequency	Percentage (%)
ready and willing	8	15.38
ready but unwilling	16	30.78
unready but willing	21	40.38
unready and unwilling	7	13.46
Total	52	100
Preferred Method of Learning	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Total online meeting	19	36.54
Blended learning	33	63.46
Others	0	0
Total	52	100

### 3.2. Discussion

Results of the study show that on the average the respondents had sufficient knowledge to use online information and technology, access digital literacy, and manage learning resources. The variation of participants' responses indicates that participants had differing abilities in using online information and technology. Despite such a progress, the respondents reported that they lacked motivation to take part in the online classes as the method of online learning delivery was not in their favours. They found that the lecturers' online learning classes were similar to the face-to-face ones; lecturers still dominated the talk in the virtual class meeting. Further, the majority of the respondents had high expectations to explore the use internet literacy for their own learning. Yet, they found that they received inadequate institutional supports. They felt that the learning tasks and activities set for them were not in line with their expectation. The mismatch between students' expectations and the actual provision of institutional services has potentially demotivated students to take part in the online classes. This finding supports the previous studies reported by Storz, Hoffman and Hoffman (2016), Tsai, (2010), and Turvey (2008).

The study also reported that respondents experienced difficulties to participate in the online learning due to bad internet connection and financial burdens. The majority of the participants admitted that most of students were not ready financially and technologically to take part in the distance learning. They considered that online learning forced them to spend extra expenses for video conferencing via Zoom or Google Meet. Such difficulties had affected the respondents' choice of learning modes and readiness to take part in the online classes. The study concludes that a basic and immediate need to fulfil is the provision of training for students in using digital literacy for effective online learning. The issues of online classroom engagement, teaching materials, learning approach and students' involvement found in this study are in line with research results reported by previous researchers, such as Saifuddin (2018), Gustiani (2020), Padmo, Ardiasih and Idrus (2020), Alwahaishi (2020) and Rahiem, (2021).

### 4. Conclusion

The results of this study revealed the views of service users related to the urgent needs that are expected to facilitate effective and interactive online learning. There were a number of

urgent factors that need to be dealt with by the authorities of teacher training institutes, i.e. lack of lecturers' teaching engagement; inadequate institutional supports for online learning; the need for training on the use of online learning platforms and the necessity to develop blended learning engagement that suits the need of service users. The results of this study also reveal that the low participation of students in online lectures occurred due to the mismatch between students' expectation and the lecturer's actual instructional performance. The study concludes that when developing online-based learning tasks and activities, lecturers or instructors should address students' actual needs.

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