

BLENDLEARNING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO LIMITED FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING AT STMIK PRINGSEWU

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze how the application of blended learning applied at STMIK Pringsewu as an alternative to face-to-face learning was limited and to find out the advantages and disadvantages of the application of blended learning. This research is a qualitative descriptive study that describes the existing phenomena without adding any treatment. Data collection techniques used are interviews, observation, documentation, and triangulation. The results of this study can be concluded that STMIK Pringsewu applies blended learning as an alternative to limited face-to-face learning. Which combines face-to-face and online learning with the help of media such as zoom meetings, google class, google meet, LMS, youtube, and WA groups. The learning compositions are 75/25, 50/50, or 25/75. The advantages of applying blended learning include increasing student learning independence, learning motivation, and more flexible learning. While the weakness is the disconnection of the internet connection when learning online, students rely more on the internet for opinions, and miscommunication between face-to-face and online learning schedules, but only a little occurs.

Keyword: blended learning, alternative, limited face-to-face learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of information technology has a positive impact in various fields of human life, one of which is education. The existence of information technology provides convenience in the learning system both in formal and non-formal education. Information technology has begun to be introduced from early childhood education to college in formal education. The existence of information technology makes learning more flexible because it can be accessed anywhere and anytime. Due to the demands of an increasingly sophisticated and modern era, the education system must adapt to technological developments.

One of the uses of information technology in learning is to allow the application of blended learning. Although blended learning is not new, the term has been widely introduced in learning English at least since 2007 when Salman and Barrett published the eponymous teacher resource book. Even though time is widely used, it is still difficult to define with different interpretations and terminology. Whittaker (in Hockly, 2018) defines blended learning as a combination of face-to-face teaching with computer technology or what is known as a combination of offline and online learning.

According to Bonk (in Tayebinik & Puteh, 2013), there are three general definitions of blended learning: a combination of teaching modalities or delivery media, a combination of learning methods, and online and face-to-face teaching. However, the most widely accepted of the three definitions is the third one. Hrastinski (2019) stated that blended learning is teaching or learning that is carried out face-to-face and online.

Bended learning has three learning components: online learning, face-to-face learning, and independent learning. Online learning utilizes internet technology as a learning resource and is web-based to access learning materials and allow learning interactions to occur anywhere and anytime. Face-to-face learning has the characteristics of a planned, place-oriented one. It allows for social interaction between teachers and students by using various methods to realize active and exciting learning. Finally, the form of activity in blended learning is independent learning. Students or students can independently access learning information online with the help of the internet, and the role of the teacher here is as a facilitator. With independent learning, students learn to be responsible for making decisions to take control of their own learning needs with the help of a facilitator (Istiningsih & Hasbullah, 2015).

The composition of blended learning that is often used is 50/50, which means 50% of learning is done face-to-face and 50% online, 75/25 which means 75% of learning is done face-to-face and 25% online, and 25/75 which means 25% of learning is done face-to-face and 75% online. Consideration of the composition of blended learning depends on the competencies goals, learning objectives, student characteristics, face-to-face learning interactions, strategies in online learning or a combination, characteristics of the location students, characteristics and abilities teachers, and the available resources to support the implementation of the learning process (Idris, 2018). Then the successful implementation of blended learning requires alignment between institutional, faculty, and student goals and having reliable and robust infrastructure available to support faculty and students (Moskal, Dziuban, & Hartman, 2013).

he advantages of applying blended learning include: 1) Learning is more effective and efficient; 2) Students are free to study subject matter independently by utilizing the materials available online; 3) Learning occurs independently and conventionally, both of which have advantages that can complement each other; 4) Improve accessibility; 5) Students can have discussions with teachers or other students outside of face-to-face hours; 6) Teachers can add enrichment materials through internet facilities; 7) Learning activities carried out by students outside of face-to-face hours can be managed and controlled correctly by the teacher; 8) Teachers can administer quizzes, provide feedback, and utilize test results effectively; 9) The teacher can ask students to read the material or take a test before learning; 10) Students can share files or data with other students; 11) Expanding the range of learning/training; 12) Ease of implementation; 13) Cost efficiency; 14) Optimal results; 15) Adjusting various learning needs; and 16) Increasing the attractiveness of learning (Husamah, 2014).

Blended learning is a combination that combines face-to-face learning and online learning by utilizing information technology. By applying blended learning in learning, teachers, lecturers, and students do not stutter about the development of information technology. The development of information technology in education was so beneficial when the covid-19 pandemic emerged and developed so rapidly in various parts of the world that face-to-face learning had to be reduced or even eliminated and replaced with online learning. When the spread of Covid-19 began to subside and the administration of vaccines began, the government began to allow face-to-face learning on a limited basis. Therefore, blended learning helps the learning process, especially at STMIK Pringsewu.

The purpose of this study was to analyze how the application of blended learning applied at STMIK Pringsewu as an alternative to face-to-face learning was limited and to find out the advantages and disadvantages of the application of blended learning. The results of this study are expected to provide benefits for readers on how to describe the application of

blended learning and its benefits so that it can be used as an alternative in limited face-to-face learning considering the increasing number of variants of the covid-19 virus.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This research is qualitative descriptive research. This research describes data or information without manipulation or special treatment. So the task of the researcher in this study is to describe and analyze the application of blended learning at STMIK Pringsewu as it is without any special treatment.

The data in the study were collected through interviews, observation, documentation, and triangulation.

1. Interviews in this study were conducted by asking questions to lecturers and students. Interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth data regarding the implementation of blended learning at STMIK Pringsewu.
2. Observations in this study were carried out by direct observation of blended learning at STMIK Pringsewu.
3. Documentation in this study is to take pictures in photos in face-to-face and online lessons.
4. Triangulation in this study is used to prove the truth or validity of the research results.

Data analysis techniques in this research include the following steps:

1. Data reduction by summarizing, choosing the main and important things, and discarding what is unnecessary, reduced data can be more easily presented.
2. Data display with narrative text.
3. Conclusion Drawing/verification.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Blended learning is a mixed learning activity that combines face-to-face and online learning. Blended learning has been introduced since computer-based learning, but not all schools or colleges can apply it. Several conditions must be met: adequate learning infrastructure, both in universities and students.

In Indonesia, blended learning was introduced in several universities before the COVID-19 pandemic, one of which was at STMIK Pringsewu. At first, STMIK Pringsewu issued a policy to conduct mixed learning with a composition of 75/25. This means that the allocation of meeting time for one semester consists of 75% or 12 meetings are held face-to-face, and 25% or four meetings are conducted online with the help of google classroom, youtube, and LMS developed by the campus. However, Google Classroom is most widely used as an online learning medium because it has several features assignments, grading, communication, time-cost, archive course, mobile applications, and privacy (Wicaksono & Rachmadyanti, 2017).

The results of this blended learning turned out to be quite effective in making lecturers and students not stutter about the development of information technology as a learning suggestion. Besides that, students also learned to study independently. Even in some project assignments, students are more enthusiastic and confident. So that blended learning is maintained to be applied at STMIK Pringsewu.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government issued a policy to limit distance so that all teaching and learning activities were carried out entirely online. However, during the pandemic covid-19, it turned out that more and more online learning media were becoming known by lecturers and students. These media, such as zoom meetings, google meet, are even supported by the existence of WA groups as a means of communication between lecturers and students.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began to subside in the odd semester of the 2021/2022 academic year, the campus issued a policy to carry out blended learning again as an alternative to limited face-to-face learning. The blended learning meeting time allocation composition is left as the class manager to the lecturer. In this case, the application of blended learning is increasingly varied. There are 75/25, 50/50, even 25/75, and the online learning media used are also increasingly varied, ranging from zoom meetings, google classes, google meet, youtube channel, WA group, and LMS.

Face-to-face learning during limited face-to-face learning is also effective for creating better emotional relationships and communication between lecturers and students than fully online learning. Furthermore, because in this case, the lecturers and students become more acquainted and understand each other, even students also have the opportunity to discuss directly to explore subjects.

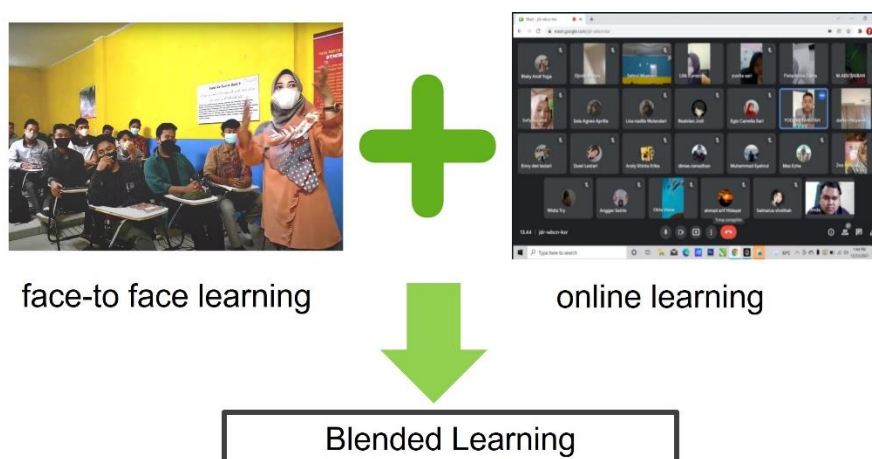


Figure 1. Illustration of blended learning

The application of blended learning at STMIK Pringsewu provides several benefits, including making students more independent, increasing learning motivation, and making learning time more flexible. Like the results of research conducted by Syarif (2012), blended learning can shift teacher-centred learning to student-centred learning so that students are more active in learning. The nature of blended learning is that it complements face-to-face and online learning. In online learning, the interaction between teachers and students is limited and when learning is mixed with face-to-face, teachers function as educators to provide direct motivation to students. So that in blended learning the activities of students in the class become varied, and the information obtained by students is more varied from various sources. Therefore, in the study results, it was found that blended learning can significantly increase students' learning motivation which can also indirectly improve student learning outcomes. It shows that the application of blended learning can increase learning effectiveness. The results of research conducted by Abdullah (2018) that blended learning has a high impact on results compared to online learning only or face-to-face only. Because blended learning combines or mixes conventional learning with learning online learning by developing various learning media. Blended learning is an alternative solution to overcome the weaknesses of online learning and face-to-face learning to produce an influential, efficient and fun learning series for students without throwing away old learning theories. Furthermore, according to Wardani, Toenlioë, & Wedi (2018)), the application of blended learning helps students accommodate their respective learning styles and helps teachers increase the attractiveness of learning with students ready to compete in the digital era in the 21st era.

In addition to having advantages, blended learning in its application also has weaknesses. Weaknesses found in this study include 1) internet connection disconnection

when online learning occurs; 2) students sometimes prefer to express their opinions from accessing the internet rather than the results of their thoughts, and 3) sometimes there is miscommunication between face-to-face and online learning schedules, but only a little occurs.

Blended learning is a sign of substantial change in higher education and will impact the school and training industry. Blended learning, because of its flexibility, allows us to maximize the many positive functions of education, and the future of blended learning should encourage us about the changes to come (Dziuban, Graham, Moskal, Norberg, & Sicilia, 2018).

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that STMIK Pringsewu applies blended learning as an alternative to limited face-to-face learning. It combines face-to-face and online learning with the help of media such as zoom meetings, google class, google meet, LMS, youtube, and WA groups. The learning composition is 75/25, 50/50, or 25/75, depending on the lecturer. The advantages of implementing blended learning include increasing student learning independence, increasing motivation, and learning flexibility. While the weakness is that the internet connection is disconnected during online learning, students rely more on the internet for opinions, and sometimes there is little miscommunication between face-to-face and online learning.

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