Opportunities and Challenges for the Implementation of Online and Offline Learning in Social Studies Teaching Material Development Courses

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ABSTRACT

After the Covid-19 pandemic, online learning has become so important and urgent, while offline learning has become very much needed because of its role in shaping the character of students. This article aims to discuss opportunities and challenges in the implementation of online and offline learning in the Social Studies Teaching Material Development course. This research is qualitative research with a case study approach. Data collection techniques use data triangulation, namely data from interviews, observations, and reflection sheets. The results show that online learning offers flexibility of time and place, accessibility to various digital learning resources, and the ability to document course materials more easily. However, the challenges faced include limited technology infrastructure, internet connectivity problems, and lack of face-to-face interaction that can reduce the quality of discussion and understanding of the material. On the other hand, offline learning provides more effective in-person interaction to build social and communication skills, as well as providing opportunities for hands-on practice. The main challenge in offline learning is the limited time and space, energy, and costs incurred due to the distance between the learning space and the residence of students. The study concluded that a combination of these two methods, known as blended learning, can be an optimal solution to overcome the shortcomings of each method. The application of a blended learning model can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of learning in the Social Studies Teaching Material Development course by utilizing the advantages of both approaches. Therefore the results of this research are valuable insights for lecturers, students, and higher education managers in developing learning strategies that are adaptive and responsive to the challenges of the times.

Keywords: *online learning, offline learning, social studies teaching materials development, blended learning*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the development of information and communication technology has brought significant changes in the world of education, including changes in education at the university level (Kainama & Latuserimala, 2022). The application of advanced technology in the learning process has opened up opportunities to increase accessibility, flexibility, and effectiveness in education (Kusumandaru & Rahmawati, 2022; Redhana, 2019). One tangible manifestation of increased accessibility, this flexibility is the application of online learning

(online) which is increasingly widespread. However, offline or face-to-face learning still has an important role in building direct interaction between lecturers and students, which is considered essential for the development of social and communication skills (Afrianto, 2018; Burhanuddin, 2021; Ekayogi, 2023).

After the COVID-19 pandemic that hit the world in early 2020, it has accelerated the adoption of online learning in various educational institutions, including in Indonesia (Chuaphun & Samanchuen, 2024; Erita et al., 2022). Online learning is the main solution to maintain the continuity of the educational process amid limited physical mobility during Covid-19. On the other hand, offline learning which has become a traditional method also faces challenges to adapt to this new situation. The Social Studies Teaching Material Development course, as part of the education study program in universities, is inseparable from this dynamic (Nursyifa, 2019; Purbasari et al., 2019; Sutrisna et al., 2020).

The implementation of online and offline learning in the Social Studies Teaching Material Development course presents various opportunities and challenges. Based on research by Saskia, Arna (et al, 2022) using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method concluded that Blended Learning learning has several advantages, including increasing learning motivation and student learning outcomes (Safitri & Saskia, 2022). Therefore, it is very important to research more about the opportunities and challenges of online learning that allow flexibility of time and place, facilitate access to various digital learning resources, and allow efficient documentation of course materials. Based on research by Zhao, Yu (2021) which states that learners in high schools have basic digital competencies that allow them to improve the quality of education after Covid-19 (Zhao et al., 2021). Based on this research, online learning should not have several advantages. However, behind the advantages possessed by online learning, several challenges arise, including limited technological infrastructure, uneven internet connectivity, and limited direct interaction that can affect the quality of learning (Nasrullah & Rahman, 2023). So based on the advantages and disadvantages explained in several studies, it is necessary to further investigate the opportunities and challenges of online learning in Social Studies Courses (Sawiji et al., 2013).

In contrast, offline learning offers advantages in terms of more intensive face-to-face interaction, allows for more in-depth discussions, and provides opportunities for hands-on practice. However, this method also faces challenges such as limited space and time, as well as health risks that must be considered, especially in a pandemic situation (Subiyantoro, 2023). Therefore, it is important to conduct further studies on opportunities and challenges in offline learning in Social Studies Courses. If in the previous research, the research was carried out based on the SLR method, and was carried out in high schools, this research used qualitative methods with a case study approach in the Social Studies Course (Rahmah, 2021).

This study aims to identify and analyze opportunities and challenges faced in the implementation of online and offline learning in the Social Studies Teaching Material Development course. By understanding these two aspects, it is hoped that optimal solutions can be found to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process, as well as provide recommendations for the development of learning models that are more adaptive and responsive to the needs of the times.

METHODS

This research uses the case study method to examine opportunities and challenges in the implementation of online and offline learning in the Social Studies Teaching Material Development course in universities. Case studies are chosen because they allow in-depth analysis of phenomena occurring in real contexts, providing a comprehensive understanding of complex learning dynamics (Waruwu, 2023). The data collection technique in this study uses triangulation techniques with three main techniques in data collection, namely observation,

interviews, and reflection sheets. Each of these techniques has an important role to play in uncovering different aspects of the online and offline learning process. In the observation technique, observation is carried out to obtain direct data about the learning process, both online and offline. These observations include: Observing interactions between lecturers and students, material delivery methods, and the use of media and technology in the learning process; Observing the physical condition of classrooms in offline learning and digital platforms used in online learning; Observing the level of student participation and involvement in discussions, practicum activities, and assignments given. Furthermore, interviews were conducted to get direct views and experiences from various parties involved in the learning process. This interview is an interview with lecturers to explore lecturers' experiences in teaching Social Studies Teaching Material Development courses both online and offline, including the challenges faced and strategies used; Interviews with students to gain students' perspectives on the effectiveness of online and offline learning, the obstacles faced, and their preferences for both methods; Interviews with administrative authorities to identify administrative and technical support available to support online and offline learning. Furthermore, the reflection sheet distribution technique is used as an instrument to get written feedback from students about their experiences during the course. This reflection sheet includes: Reflection on online learning to get students' impressions and experiences regarding ease of access, quality of material, interaction with lecturers and classmates, and technical obstacles faced. Then offline learning reflection aims to explore student experiences in face-to-face learning, including direct interaction, discussion effectiveness, and practicum activities. And finally, a comparison of the two methods to find out students' views on the advantages and disadvantages of each method, as well as their recommendations for future improvement.

Then the next step is to perform data analysis. The data obtained from observations, interviews, and reflection sheets were analyzed qualitatively with the following steps by Miles and Huberman (Nirtha et al., 2023). 1) Data reduction, summarizing, and simplifying the data obtained to focus on important aspects relevant to the research objectives. 2) Data categorization, group data based on specific themes or categories, such as technical aspects, interactions, learning effectiveness, and constraints encountered. 3) Data interpretation, analyze relationships between different categories and themes to understand patterns, trends, and meanings from the collected data. 4) Data presentation, presenting analysis results in descriptive and interpretive form to describe opportunities and challenges in the implementation of online and offline learning in the Social Studies Teaching Material Development course.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines the opportunities and challenges in the implementation of online and offline learning in the Social Studies Teaching Material Development course through data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and reflection sheets. The results of the study were divided into several parts based on the data collection techniques used.

Results
Online and Offline Learning Observation

The results of observations in online learning include learning activities, learning environments, and student participation. In learning activities, it shows that online learning shows flexibility in terms of time and place, allowing students to access lecture materials anytime and from anywhere. However, observations show that interactions between lecturers and students tend to be less intensive than offline learning. Some students have difficulty understanding the material due to limitations in non-verbal communication. While in the

Learning Environment, it shows that digital platforms such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) are used to upload materials, assignments, and discussion forums. However, technical problems such as unstable internet connections often interfere with smooth learning. The latter is student participation, at varying levels of participation in online discussions. Students who have good internet access and adequate devices tend to be more active, while those who experience technical problems are often left behind (Rahayu et al., 2022). In line with research conducted by Ming Tang, Yuk et al (2021) which stated that when implementing online learning, it is necessary to consider several factors and facility readiness. So that student achievement is maintained (Tang et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, in offline learning, there are several components studied including learning activities, learning environments, and student participation as follows: Offline learning activities show more intensive face-to-face interaction, allowing lecturers to provide more detailed explanations and directly handle student questions. Class discussions are more lively and effective in aiding the understanding of the material. Furthermore, the learning environment shows that a conducive classroom atmosphere supports a focused and structured learning process. The last is student participation, where students are more actively participating in class discussions and activities. Direct interaction with lecturers and classmates helps clarify the concepts taught. Based on research conducted by Hanip, Rival et al (2023) which states that there are no significant obstacles in implementing the experience-based learning model in lectures on basic social studies concepts in the elementary school teacher education department face-to-face (Rival Hanip; Eva Nirtha; Wahyudiono, 2018)

Interview

Interview results with lecturers regarding online learning, RH lecturers mentioned that online learning allows them to use a variety of digital media and rich online learning resources. However, the biggest challenge is maintaining student motivation and engagement. Lecturers also face difficulties in assessing students' understanding directly. For offline learning, lecturers find it easier to manage classes and facilitate face-to-face discussions. However, limited time and space as well as the need to comply with health protocols are significant obstacles. Thus, online and offline learning have their own weaknesses and advantages (Dini et al., 2023).

Next, the results of interviews with students. In online learning, MR students appreciate the flexibility and accessibility of online learning. However, they also complain of a lack of direct interaction and frequent technical difficulties. Some students feel less motivated and have difficulty managing study time independently. While in offline learning, MR students do prefer direct interaction that helps them better understand the material. They feel more engaged and motivated. However, they also acknowledge health risks and limited classroom capacity as challenges. Based on research by Ekayogi et al (2023) should indeed need blended learning so that learning loss does not occur (Ekayogi, 2023).

Then an interview with the campus administration, by Mr. RR stated that the administration stated that infrastructure support and training for online learning needed to be improved. They also stressed the importance of flexibility in scheduling and classroom utilization to ensure the safety and health of all parties.

Reflection Sheet on Online and Offline Learning

The results of online learning reflections on ST students note that online learning provides easy access to lecture materials and recordings that can be reviewed. However, they also state that the lack of in-person interaction reduces the effectiveness of learning and gives rise to feelings of isolation. Meanwhile, the results of reflection on offline learning from FG students feel that offline learning is more effective in helping them understand the material and

complete practicum assignments. Direct interaction with faculty and classmates increases engagement and motivation.

Discussion

Based on observations, interviews and reflection sheets, the comparison of the two learning methods is as follows: Based on the results of interviews and reflection sheets, students identify the advantages and disadvantages of each method. They recommend a combination of both methods (blended learning) as the optimal solution, taking advantage of the flexibility of online learning and in-person interaction in offline learning (Salim et al., 2023). This research reveals various opportunities and challenges faced in the implementation of online and offline learning in the Social Studies Teaching Material Development course. Through data analysis obtained from observations, interviews, and reflection sheets, several main themes emerged that deserve further discussion including the flexibility and accessibility of online learning. One of the main advantages of online learning is the flexibility of time and place it offers (Chuaphun & Samanchuen, 2024; Tafano & Saputra, 2021; Wardana et al., 2022; Zhang, 2020). Students can access course materials anytime and from anywhere, which is especially helpful for those with limited time or location. In addition, the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) and other digital platforms facilitates access to a rich and diverse range of learning resources. However, observations show that not all students have equal access to technology and a stable internet connection, resulting in inequality in participation and understanding of the material. Offline learning, offline learning, although less flexible than online, still has good accessibility in terms of direct interaction and use of campus facilities. Face-to-face interaction facilitates more in-depth discussions and allows lecturers to provide additional explanations in person, which is often difficult to do in an online setting. However, in a pandemic situation, limited classroom capacity and the need to maintain physical distancing are significant challenges. Then the next is related to the quality of learning. The quality of online learning in fact can vary depending on the ability of lecturers to utilize the right technology and teaching methods. Lecturers who are skilled in using various digital media can present material in an interesting and interactive way (Kennedy et al., 2016; Tafano & Saputra, 2021; Wardana et al., 2022; Zhang, 2020). However, interviews with lecturers show that assessing students' understanding directly and providing rapid feedback can be challenging in online learning. Meanwhile, in offline learning, the quality of offline learning is considered higher in terms of material understanding and student engagement. Face-to-face interaction allows lecturers to provide more in-depth explanations and handle student questions directly. Practicums and hands-on activities conducted in offline settings are also more effective in teaching practical skills. However, limited time for each class session and the risk of spreading disease in a pandemic situation are challenges that must be carefully managed in line with research conducted by Zhao, Yu et al (2021) which states that all things need to be considered when you want to carry out offline and online learning (Zhao et al., 2021). Likewise, research by Saskia, Arna (2022) states that blended learning can increase student motivation and learning outcomes (Safitri & Saskia, 2022). Then a combination of methods (Blended Learning) based on the results of research, a combination of online and offline learning or blended learning emerged as a potential solution to overcome the shortcomings of each method(Bygstad et al., 2022). Blended learning enables leveraging the flexibility and accessibility of online learning while maintaining the quality of interaction and engagement offered by offline learning. Students in their reflection also recommend this approach as a way to get the best benefit from both methods (Burhanuddin, 2021; Cardenas-Navia & Fitzgerald, 2019; Ekayogi, 2023).

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CONCLUSION

The discussion of the results of this study shows that both online and offline learning have their own advantages and challenges in the context of the Social Studies Teaching Material Development course. Online learning offers flexibility and access to a variety of digital resources, but faces barriers in student interaction and motivation. In contrast, offline learning provides more intensive and effective in-person interaction for material understanding, building social and communication skills, as well as providing opportunities for hands-on practice. However, online learning has the challenges faced include limited technology infrastructure, internet connectivity problems, and lack of face-to-face interaction that can reduce the quality of discussion and understanding of the material. Meanwhile, the main challenge in offline learning is the limited time and space, energy and costs incurred due to the distance between the learning space and the residence of students. Therefore, the combination of both methods in the form of blended learning can be an effective strategy to optimize the learning process. The implementation of blended learning requires careful planning and adequate infrastructure support to ensure that all students have equal access and can actively participate. Thus, the results of this study provide valuable insights for lecturers, students, and higher education managers in developing learning strategies that are adaptive and responsive to the challenges of the times. For the future researcher, this research is able to use the result of this research as a reference and source of information that can enrich further research.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors in writing this research did not have any conflict of interest in any form or with any party. This research was written genuinely to be used as intended.

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