

LEARNING STRATEGIES IN THE NEW NORMAL ERA WITH GENERATION Z STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the response of hybrid learning as a form of adaptation to the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak and learning strategies in the new normal era with the characteristics of Generation Z students. This research involves undergraduate students of Sociology FISIP Unpad as research subjects. Hybrid learning is a combined learning system of two types of learning, face-to face and online, which utilizes technology as its primary support. There are positive and negative impacts of the existence of a social change caused by an outbreak of the Covid-19 disease. The positive impact is that students and lecturers must be open and skilled in using technology that supports teaching and learning activities. However, there are indeed several learning models that are less effective when done online, such as problem-based learning and project based learning. The negative impact is the decrease in the process of interaction and socialization that occurs in the campus environment. The research results show that students and lecturers feel that face-to-face lectures are still the primary choice compared to online and hybrid. With the advantages possessed by the characters of Generation Z, they are adaptive in responding to social changes that occur in society. Learning strategies in the new normal era with the characteristics of Generation Z students are flexible, interactive, collaborative, and innovative learning that not only contains matter but goes directly to the field as a deepening understanding of the matter from concepts and theories presented in class.

Keywords: Social Change, Learning Models, Covid-19 pandemic, Generation Z

INTRODUCTION

Social change is a form of transition that changes the order of life in society. That is ongoing because of the dynamic nature of society and can continue to change because, in essence, humans cannot stop at a certain point throughout time, which means they will continually change. Changes can be fast or slow, small or significant. Communities play an essential role in social change during specific periods. According to Soerjono Soekanto, several factors make a social change: conscious desires and personal decisions; changing conditions that influence personal attitudes; changes and structural obstacles; external, personal, and group influences; elements that merge into one; certain events (for example, natural disasters and disease outbreaks); and the emergence of common goals. Social change forces people to make reforms that did not exist before.

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed social and cultural values that have affected people's mindsets and attitudes toward implementing health protocols such as wearing masks, washing hands with soap or hand sanitizer, not crowding, keeping a distance, and avoiding physical contact. All parties and society are feeling the impact of this pandemic. Social changes impacted several sectors during the Covid-19 pandemic, including the economic, environmental, political, and educational sectors. Because of the existing Implementation of Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) and new normal policies that limit community interaction and

mobilization, all long-running activities must readjust to policies in the new normal era.

Learning activities carried out by educational institutions must adjust to policy. All educational institutions decided to close and cancel their learning activities to prevent transmission during the PPKM period and restrict the number of students attending face-to face with a hybrid learning system. Solutions offered by educational institutions such as campuses include conducting online, face-to-face, and hybrid technical lectures tailored to the needs of the study programs and courses.

Online learning is a network-based learning system in which we use the internet network as the primary support for learning activities. Furthermore, no face-to-face meetings are required because online learning takes over the internet. Online learning is part of e-learning, which refers to the learning process that utilizes Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Before the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face learning occurred in conventional learning by directly presenting lecturers and students in class. Hybrid learning is a combined learning system of two types of learning, face-to-face and online, that utilizes technology as its primary support. A hybrid learning system is a form of adjustment to the current situation and conditions.

Students and lecturers are required to adapt to existing changes. Adaptation also requires much time because many new elements are present. If students and lecturers are used to interacting directly, then in this new learning system, they cannot be as unrestricted as before the Covid-19 pandemic. This research will conduct to learn more about the impact of learning in the new normal era of the Covid-19 pandemic on student teaching and learning activities and formulate learning strategy models that keep up generation Z's characteristics.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method to understand the impact of social change due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has implications for the technical implementation of lectures, namely the holding of online, face-to-face, and hybrid lectures. This type of research is descriptive to provide an overview of the impact of technical learning in the post-Covid-19 pandemic and see how technical learning and learning methods are appropriate to the characteristics of students in the age range in the Generation Z category in the Undergraduate Program Sociology FISIP Unpad.

The data is qualitative—data collection techniques through observation, interviews, literature studies, and documentation. Primary data sources are informants, including students of the Undergraduate Program Sociology FISIP Unpad batches of 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 with different characteristics: students who live in Jatinangor and surroundings, students who live outside Jatinangor and surroundings, and students who live outside Java Island, as well as several informants who are considered capable of providing answers to the required research questions. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are the results of literature studies, documentation, archives, mass media publications, and internet pages. The unit of analysis in this research is an institution, students of the Undergraduate Program Sociology FISIP Unpad.

The instruments used were a checklist of research documents, an audio recorder, and an image recorder. Purposive sampling using to select informants for this research who are interested in issues involving students and lecturers who follow technological developments and learning models. If the information is still lacking, the next informant will choose by snowball sampling.

This research applies validation through data triangulation techniques. According to Creswell (2015) data is validated by combining theory, methods, and research knowledge. Checking sources and information is valid evidence for researchers to justify themes consistently. In this research, data validity executes in three stages: 1) introducing in detail the focus, status, and role of the researcher, as well as the informant's position in data collection

techniques; 2) applying data triangulation by synchronizing methods and data analysis; and 3) data collection and analysis corrected by the research team.

This research applies the interactive analytical model Miles and Huberman cite in Hendriansyah (2010), including 1) data collection, intending to track and collect data from the start of the research and into the field; 2) data reduction, simplifying data into concise and clear writing; 3) data presentation, namely categorizing acquisition data into narration, charts, and tables; and 4) verification and conclusions, carried out to review existing records and sources, which can later be able to formulate the final product in the form of answers to research formulations. Research activities occur at the Undergraduate Program Sociology FISIP Unpad in October–December 2022.

RESULTS DAN DISCUSSION

Undergraduate Program Sociology FISIP Unpad officially began operating in August 2011 based on SK Mendiknas No. 131/D/O/2010 on September 1, 2010. The vision of Sociology Unpad conforms to the Unpad Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and the FISIP Unpad Strategic Plan 2020-2024, which ultimately become: a study program with a world reputation, impact on society, a provider of education in the field of sociology that has an internationally recognized commitment to excellence in development and the environment. The number of active students is currently 188. The 2019 class has 54 students, the 2020 class has 40 students, the 2021 class has 49 students, and the 2022 class has 45 students. There are 18 lecturers with several areas of expertise, including welfare development, community empowerment, coastal poverty, village development, village autonomy, healthy behavior, environmental health, environmental management, and others. Alumni of Sociology FISIP Unpad have available job prospects in government and private agencies capable of engaging in research, social analysis, community empowerment, and development consulting.

There are compulsory university courses, faculty courses, and study program courses. Examples of study program courses include social issues, introduction to sociology, environmental sociology, economic sociology, cultural sociology, popular culture, scientific writing, and field practicum courses.

The learning model in the Undergraduate Program Sociology FISIP Unpad adjusts to the student's level. Project-based learning uses by students in their final year or semester 7-8. Project-based learning is a learner-centered learning model that provides meaningful learning experiences and concepts built based on the products produced. In semester 5 and 6, sociology students use the problem-based learning model, which is a teaching model that uses real problems to teach students critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and knowledge. In semester 3-4, students use the case-based learning model, a constructivist learning approach. Problems are present in case-based learning. In semester 1-2, students study more general and introductory basic courses to follow the learning model in the following semester.

The age range for Sociology FISIP Unpad students is 19-22 years old, which categorize as "Generation Z." Generation Z is the generation with the highest proportion of the population based on the 2020 population census, which is 27.94% of the total population of Indonesia (BPS, 2021). Those who belong to this generation were born between 1997- 2012 or 10-25 years old (BPS, 2021). General characteristics of Generation Z: they are the "digital generation" because they were born in the digital age, have more use of cyberspace in everyday life, multitask, want more recognition from the social environment, are ambitious, and like new things and trends. The Generation Z character has both benefits and drawbacks. The advantages are having good intellectual abilities and being open to social change; it encourages Generation Z to be adaptive, tends to get more and faster access to information, has high motivation towards something, and multitasks. Character deficiencies generally owned by Generation Z are

individualism, lack of focus, a tendency to want instant gratification so they do not appreciate the process, and emotional maturity that tends to be unstable.

The advantages they have, encourage them to be adaptive in responding to a social change that occurs in society. One example is their ability to adapt to learning models after the Covid-19 pandemic, which has three options according to course learning outcomes. It consists of face-to-face, online, and hybrid learning models (a combination of face-to-face and online).

Generation Z often uses social media to gain knowledge by following several accounts with educational content related to sociology on Instagram, YouTube, and others. Moreover, sociology is a science that studies society, including its issues, phenomena, and problems, so social media is the right place to explore this because almost all phenomena related to society on a massive scale can be accessed quickly. However, there are still students who only use social media as a means of entertainment.

If the researchers' interviews with informants sort, the results show that almost all students prefer face-to-face learning techniques, followed by online and hybrid. According to research informants, face-to-face learning is more effective because students can directly discuss with lecturers and other students in class. Even though online media discussion activities can still work, students feel a different ambiance and adrenaline rush between learning face-to-face and online. They can focus on paying attention to the lecturer's subject within the allotted time and interact with fellow students. That meets their needs as social beings; even though some students live outside of Jatinangor and its surroundings, and even outside of Java Island, they still prefer to deliver lectures face to face, despite the energy, time, and cost involved.

The following technique that students like is online learning because, from the student side, they can accomplish other things during lecture activities even though they understand it is not recommended. After all, students are expected to concentrate on attending lectures. Even though it is carried out online, online learning techniques open up opportunities for students to do other things. Some students even admit that they are tempted to open other applications besides the media used for lectures for entertainment and some students also claim to have fallen asleep during online learning. Online exams are also considered less effective than face-to-face exams in class. The most recently chosen learning technique is hybrid. Students believe hybrid is insufficient because the lecturer appears to focus on two things. There is an imbalance in the lecturer's attention between students who attend class (face-to-face) and online.

Interviews with Head of the Sociology Undergraduate Program, Secretary of the Sociology Undergraduate Program and several lecturers also obtained a similar order. They prefer face to-face lectures in class are more effective than online class. Knowledge may be delivered by online learning, but ethics, values, and norms will not be delivered optimally. They can directly monitor existing students, which can not do when online. However, there are benefits to online learning from the effectiveness of time when lecturers must simultaneously participate in more than one activity. So, they do not need to cancel or reschedule classes; the online learning option can be an option because they can do both without sacrificing one. Hybrid is the last learning technique chosen; this is in line with what students feel the lecturer's concentration divided to coordinate students in class with those who are present online. Sometimes hybrid learning is chosen because it has a higher credit than the others. The ability of lecturers to adapt to hybrid devices is challenging. Sometimes, most generation X and generation Y lecturers request students for help preparing hybrid devices before class starts.

Lustrum-XIII and Unpad's 65th anniversary in 2022 is expected to reinforce in encouraging the implementation of a hybrid university as one of the accelerations in achieving the vision of Universitas Padjadjaran as a world-reputed university and having an impact on society. The Rector assessed that the pandemic had become a challenge for Unpad to have an even better impact on society. Unpad is determined to have more competent, adaptive, collaborative, innovative, linked, and impact-changing mindsets and ways of supporting the

nation's social and economic recovery and the transformation of higher education. The Rector said that even though the Covid-19 pandemic hit, the academic work produced by Universitas Padjadjaran academics never subsided. Unpad will continue to develop a variety of quality academic works that can be utilized by society and industry. Through close interaction and collaboration between universities and the real world, Unpad will be a spring for the nation's progress and development and contribute to Indonesia's culture and civilization.

The difference that students felt before and after the pandemic was that their enthusiasm for learning before the pandemic tended to be higher because they felt directly directed by the lecturers. In contrast, following the pandemic, students were forced to pursue learning more frequently on their own, without the control and monitoring that lecturers provided before the pandemic. Before the pandemic, they were more actively participating in organizational activities on campus. In contrast, after the pandemic, the activities and enthusiasm for taking part in organizational activities on campus differed from before the pandemic. Because they had been taking full online lectures for too long during the PPKM policy when the positive number of Covid-19 increased. Several lecturers felt the same way; they felt that before the pandemic, they could remember the students from each batch and their characteristics, but this was not the case after the pandemic. Even the study program secretary did not remember whether the student was a sociology student.

In contrast to the pre-pandemic period, it was relatively easy for lecturers and study program secretaries to remember that it was safe for sociology students, including their batch because campus interactions were frequent. The task of a lecturer is not only to provide teaching, which is like providing lecture material, quizzes, exams, and others, but there is also a role, namely educating students in terms of ethics, discipline, values, and applicable norms. Control and monitoring were lacking during the pandemic, from the PPKM period to the new normal.

The learning model for students in semester 1-2 is still general and an introduction to sociology's basic concepts and theories. Informants stated that most lectures are still conducted online because they are still limited to providing material; some require going directly to the field, but these are relatively rare. The learning model for semester 3-4 is case based learning. With this learning model, students must go out into the field to discuss case studies in the community. Students feel that this learning model is quite effective because it implements sociological concepts and theories they learned in the first semester. The learning model for semester 5-6 is problem-based learning. Students must go out into the field to map problems in research locations and plan solutions to these problems. Students who implement this learning model argue that it is at first difficult to understand what is meant by "mapping problems and planning solutions." However, when they start to go into the field, they find it exhilarating and deepen the sociological concepts and theories they have learned. They can not only theorize about things but also observe issues, phenomena, and problems in society. The learning model for final-year students is project-based learning. As an alternative research thesis, the project could be a project-based thesis. Based on the data obtained through interviews with several final-year student informants, they were confused about analyzing the problem, planning a solution, and even being required to do a project to solve the community's problems.

Nevertheless, after carrying it out, equipped with previously studied sociological concepts and theories, they believe this learning model is an exciting learning model that sharpens thinking, analysis, and social sensitivity as future sociologist candidates. Of course, this project is accompanied by field assistant lecturers divided into several courses; they also actively discuss with the supervisor and their group mates. Sociology FISIP Unpad lecturers feel the same way; even though field studies necessitate many approaches to the community and the need to arrange permits to locations for student lecture fields, this positively impacts final exams. The lecturer feels that some students can implement the learning model excellently in the field.

Almost all lecture activities are now implemented in the field, necessitating face-to-face meetings in multiple meetings, particularly after the material and concepts are presented at the first meeting and up to the midterm exams. Students also experience some obstacles related to the implemented health protocols, such as feeling stuffy when wearing a mask and several times unable to hear the lecturer's voice clearly or see the lecturer's facial expressions. Because a mask blocks it, this is not a significant obstacle because both lecturers and students have been able to handle it well so far.

CONCLUSION

Social change forces people to make reforms that did not exist before. The Covid-19 pandemic has changed social and cultural values influencing people's mindsets and attitudes toward implementing health protocols. Social changes impacted several sectors during the Covid-19 pandemic, including the economic, environmental, political, and educational sectors. Because of the existing Implementation of Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) and new normal policies that limit community interaction and mobilization, all long-running activities must readjust to the new normal policies. Learning activities carried out by educational institutions must adjust to policy. Based on the research results, Generation Z students can keep up with and adapt to the changes. General characteristics of Generation Z: they are the "digital generation" because they were born in the digital age, have more use of cyberspace in everyday life, multitask, want more recognition from the social environment, are ambitious, and like new things and trends something related to digital is familiar to Generation Z students.

The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the transformation of learning within Universitas Padjadjaran. For this reason, starting in 2021, Unpad plans to become a hybrid university. Rector Unpad explained that the Unpad learning system had rapidly transformed in the past year. From the beginning, full face-to-face learning switched in an emergency to an online system due to the pandemic, then entered the era of hybrid learning. To maximize hybrid learning techniques, institutions should review the effectiveness of hybrid learning comprehensively and periodically. Then, improve the competency of lecturers and teaching staff in implementing hybrid learning by giving them regular training through monitoring and evaluation at the faculty and university levels. Socialization and understanding of the ethics and procedures for hybrid learning for lecturers, teaching staff, and especially students so they understand what they should do when attending hybrid classes. It also needs to regularly check support devices for hybrid class facilities to ensure that the devices for the hybrid class are feasible and perform following the agreed standard operating procedures.

It can be concluded that learning strategies in the new normal with the characteristics of Generation Z students are flexible, interactive, collaborative, and innovative. That contains matter and goes directly to the field as a deepening understanding of the matter from concepts and theories presented in class. Due to the large number of lectures that require students to go to the field, it is expected that lecturers will only teach a maximum of five courses so that they can focus on providing matter and guiding students in the field. Field lectures can hone students' critical thinking skills, sharpen their analytical skills, and train them to be sensitive to social phenomena, issues, and social problems. It even honed students' abilities to arrive at the stage of being able to analyze problems, map problems, plan solutions to problems, and project implementation as an effort to solve problems in society. That keeps students from getting bored and certainly supports sociology students' ability to work in the fields of research, social analysis, community empowerment, and development consulting in the future and is in line with Unpad's goals to be able to support the nation's social and economic recovery and the transformation of higher education.

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