

Capacity Building in an Effort of Improving Blended Learning-Based Teacher' Competence during Covid-19 Pandemic

Ana Nurwakhidah, Asep Dadan Suganda

Universitas Islam Raden Rabmat Malang, Indonesia

Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia

e-mail: anan.jameelah@gmail.com, asdan1122@gmail.com

Submitted: 27-03-2022

Revised: 11-04-2022

Accepted: 03-05-2022

ABSTRACT. The purpose of this study is to find out the effectiveness of implementing capacity building for teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic on the basis of blended learning. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection was obtained from informants and the behavior of people who were observed, interviewed, and documented as the primary data sources and the rest was secondary data from available document. The choice of this learning model is one of the decisions taken by considering situations and conditions that meet the learning model. However, since the teachers' competency in implementing blended learning were various in level, it is necessary to provide assistance in implementing blended learning through capacity building. Capacity building is a strategy to increase the effectiveness, responsiveness and efficiency of teachers' performance in the context of blended learning. As lecturers have the obligation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, one of which is community service, lecturers can participate in mentoring blended learning through capacity building. The result of this study is that teachers already have online classes and can manage online classes and take care of classes using blended learning.

Keywords: *Capacity building, blended learning, teacher' competence*

 <https://dx.doi.org/10.32678/tarbawi.v8i01.5944>

How to Cite Nurwakhidah, A., & Suganda, A. D. (2022). Capacity Building in an Effort of Improving Blended Learning-Based Teacher' Competence during Covid-19 Pandemic. *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 8(01), 121-128. doi:10.32678/tarbawi.v8i01.5944.

INTRODUCTION

The temporary closure of educational institutions as an effort to hold down the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the world affected millions of students, not least in Indonesia in mid-March 2020. The pandemic is an epidemic that has spread to various continents and countries, generally affecting many people. Various efforts were made to prevent the spread of the virus. One of the efforts to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 pandemic is by limiting activities that involve many people and limiting outside house activities including at schools' teaching and learning activities. The government issued a policy ordering student to study from home and teachers to work from home. Through the Ministry of Education and Culture, on March 24, 2020, the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia issued notification Number 4 of 2020 regarding the Implementation of Educational Policies during the COVID-19 emergency (Citraningsih et al., 2021; Juhji et al., 2021). Therefore, initiated from March 16, 2020 the policy was officially applied and students were studying from home since then. In this case, innovative learning really needs to be applied in blended learning to make learning activities interesting, engaging, and effective in order to achieve goals.

Capacity building in this term means improving skills, knowledge, attitudes and duties of the teaching profession, such as those related to capacity in carrying out learning programs. In developing capacity in learning, teachers need to master planning lessons, implementing quality learning processes, as well as assessing and evaluating learning outcomes which is adapted to learning needs, supported by learning tools and media in accordance with the development of technology and information. Several research results reveal the use of technology applications in learning during a pandemic, such as: zoom (Diningrum, 2019), google meet (Septantiningtyas et al., 2021), edomo, youtube, and whatsapp groups (Surani & Chaerudin, 2019). The use of technology nowadays cannot be separated from everyday life as well in the scope of education (Supardi et al., 2021). Since the human resources, in this case teachers, are an important asset in improving the quality of education, it is important for teachers to be able to adapt with educational patterns in the era of the covid -19 pandemic. The pattern in which technology takes a very vital role and inseparable form the classroom. The role of the teacher, who has been the sole provider of knowledge, has shifted somewhat. Therefore, the development of human resources is an important factor in facing the pandemic era. To have human resources quality, education and training is needed as a provision for these human resources to able to compete tightly.

Educators or teachers have very important roles and responsibilities in achieving national education goals (Juhji, 2016). The demand for teachers to improve their performance, it is none other than intended to improve the quality of national education (Supardi (2014). Educators need to develop and improve their quality, since developing human resources means effort to improve the technical, theoretical, conceptual and moral capabilities of human resources with the needs of jobs and positions through education and training. However, in reality, the professional competence of teachers is still being questioned. The teaching profession seems to be just a scientific profession and is not accompanied by the weight of the humanitarian profession. Thus, the teacher-student relationship is oftentimes seen only as a producer-consumer relationship. In addition, there are still many teachers who neglect the quality of learning by pursuing more teaching hours for the sake of fulfilling certification.

The effectiveness of teachers and educators are very complex, in addition to the quality of performance in the field of teaching, various efforts to improve academic quality and insight are also very important. The effectiveness of teachers is related to the fields of teaching, research and community service as well as a sense of responsibility to obtain the best results. So, teachers need to develop themselves to improve their abilities by which one of the efforts is through the Capacity Building approach (capacity development). This article aims to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of teacher capacity building during the blended-based COVID-19 pandemic.

METHOD

In this study, researchers chose SDI Hidayatul Mubtadi'in Kedok Turen Malang, East Java as the research setting with a focus on discussing capacity building in an effort to improve teacher's ability based on blended learning during a pandemic. Furthermore, the researchers also conducted field observations to obtain the real data. The main data collected in this study is about efforts to improve teacher skills using blended learning during the COVID-19 pandemic where descriptive information will be obtained holistically through describing words and language in certain natural contexts and by utilizing various natural methods. In addition, in this study, researchers acted as planners, implementers, data collectors, data analyzers, and reporter of research results. Given this nature, the researchers here tried to prevent subjective influences and keep the informants from being too intervened. However, the researchers also maintained a harmonious relationship in communicating with informants, to make this research run well and to guarantee the validity of the data being obtained (Sugiyono, 2010).

The type of the data obtained were in the form of words, behavior of people being observed and interviewed and additional data in the form of documents. These words and behavior of people were recorded through written notes or through video/audio recordings, photos and films. The selection of informants in this study used a purposive sampling technique, where the informants were intended to complete the data and give the accurate information as well as to cross-check the information obtained. Data collection techniques were carried out in a circular manner using three approaches, namely; 1) participant observation; 2) in-depth interviews; and 3) documentation (Sugiyono, 2011). Qualitative research data was claimed to have high objectivity if the research results have been validated and confirmed by many parties. In qualitative research, the objectivity test and the validity (dependence) test are important aspects. Objectivity is fundamental because research without being accompanied by a high level of information truth, does not rule out the possibility of research results being in vain (Sugiyono, 2011). For this reason, the researcher consulted a list of interviews question, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and observation guidelines to the school stakeholders such as: principals, teachers and students related to the topic of this research. Meanwhile, the triangulation process had been carried out by researchers starting from designing research data collection tools, going to the field, data collection processes, data analysis processes, and formulating conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

To maximize online learning activities at SDI Hidayatul Mubtadi'in, teachers must be able to properly utilize technology as a learning medium. The use of technology in learning process can be utilized to improve the quality of learning. Utilization of technology in the learning process, especially computer and internet technology, makes it easier for educators to explain learning materials that can be accessed not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom. The use of learning technology that combines activities in the classroom and outside the classroom is called blended learning. Blended learning is a part of e-learning, namely the learning process by using the technology or the internet in particular which can be accessed via computers and smartphones.

The benefits of which technology offered must be used optimally by teachers. Teachers can implement the usefulness of this technology in several approaches. First, technology can increase teacher creativity by applying several learning models according to student characteristics. This way, students will be more interested in following teaching and learning activities. Second, learning materials is not only in writing form but can also be in the form of pictures, music, videos, and other interactive media. With technology teachers can create an exciting learning atmosphere. This is very good for triggering students' understanding in learning that they will understand quickly what the teacher is saying. Third, with the existence of technology and the ease of accessing the internet, teachers can access various kinds of learning resources needed quickly.

Teachers have the responsibility to continue educating students even in emergency conditions due to the pandemic, therefore teachers need to:

1. Teachers must follow the development of science, especially in their disciplines by frequently conducting research and development studies, including their mastery of the application of learning methods in the classroom or online classroom in accordance with the development of students and their environment.
2. Upgrading knowledge and skills using information technology to support the learning process.
3. Teachers must be able to design online learning, especially during the current COVID-19 pandemic,

4. As mandated by the minister of education to implement the curriculum in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers must be able to adapt to developing needs.

Grindle stated that if capacity building is a series of strategies aimed at increasing efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of teachers, then capacity building must focus on the dimensions: human resource development, organizational strengthening, and institutional reform. In the context of human resource development, attention is paid to the procurement or provision of professional teachers and technical matters such as education and training, salary (wages), setting conditions and working environment and proper recruitment system. Capacity building is a process that takes place in a sustainable manner, not starting from the achievement of results single-handedly. Capacity building is a learning process that will continue to carry out sustainability to remain able to survive environmental changes that occur continuously.

Capacity building is not a process that starts from nothing, but starts from building on existing potential and then being processed to further improve the quality of self, groups, organizations and systems so that they can survive in an environment that is constantly changing. Capacity building is not only aimed at achieving quality improvements in one component or part of the system, but is intended for all components holistically. Since capacity building is multi-dimensional and dynamic and characterized by multi-activity and learning for all components system that leads to the contribution of the realization of joint performance (collective performance).

The factors that affect teacher performance consist of internal factors, namely: (1) knowledge or intelligence in the successful implementation of tasks; (2) he skills and abilities possessed by the teacher which can come from background training or experience; (3) talent, where the adjustment between talent and job choices can make someone work with their choices and skills; (4) talent and interests; (5) motives in carrying out a job; (6) the purposes and goals in working on something, with a desire and aspiration, the work will be done better and seriously; and (7) personality. Meanwhile, the external factors consist of: (1) family environmental factors; (2) work environment factors, pleasant conditions and situations at work can encourage a person to work optimally; (3) communication, good communication will increase effective performance; and (4) supported by the availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure to help teachers improve performance. The purpose of Capacity Building can be divided into two parts, namely: (1) generally identified with the realization of the sustainability of a system; (2) specifically aimed at realizing better performance in terms of: a) efficiency in terms of time and resources required to achieve an outcome, b) effectiveness in the form of appropriateness of effort carried out for the desired result, c) responsiveness on how to synchronize between needs and abilities for the desired purpose, and d) infected learning on individual, group, organizational and system performance.

Discussion

Blended learning is the best learning because it can combine various aspects from online learning, face-to-face activities (offline) in a structured manner, as well as real-world practice (Bersin, 2004; Graham, 2006; Kaur, 2013; Francis & Shannon, 2013; Margolis et al., 2017). The online learning system, classroom training, as well as the existence of each task have advantages and disadvantages. This blended learning approach is used to create excellence in the education sector during the COVID-19 pandemic and minimize weaknesses in the other hand. The characteristics of learning using a blended learning approach include: the learning is a mixture of several methods of delivery, learning styles, educational models, and various technology-based media; this blended learning approach is a combination of direct education (face to face), independent learning, and independent online learning; the blended learning approach is also supported by the most effective combined learning in terms of the way it is delivered, the teaching, and the learning style; and teachers and parents must have an equally important

mentoring role. Teachers who act as facilitators and motivators must be balanced with the role of the parents as supporters for the better development of their children's learning (Kaur, 2013; Suprabha & Subramonian, 2015; Van Laer & Elen, 2017; Kintu et al., 2017).

Not only the strategy of organizing and delivering teaching has an important role in the learning process, but the quality of teaching also has an equally important role since the quality of teaching can affect the learning outcome. The quality of teaching is always related to the use of teaching methods or models in accordance with the needs in achieving the expected results in certain teaching conditions. Several studies reveal the use of learning methods and learning models that have an effect on student learning outcomes (Herawati et al., 2019; Febriati et al., 2019; Muafikoh et al., 2019; Syaepudin & Juhji, 2020; Tusaroh & Juhji, 2020). Thus, in order the desired outcome to be achieved in accordance with the expectations of both students and teachers, teachers need to have a strategy of teaching organization, teaching delivery, and the right quality of teaching. Especially in this pandemic era where face-to-face learning is eliminated and the learning process is carried out online by utilizing technological developments while some students prefer face-to-face learning. This can happen for students' different learning styles.

Student with audio and visual learning styles may be successful in online learning, but students with kinesthetic learning styles may not achieve the expected results. It is because interaction among students and between students and teachers are carried out repeatedly or continuously both at school and outside school will build a good socialization spirit. To overcome these problems, it is necessary to have strategies for teaching organization, teaching delivery, and teaching quality that do exclude face-to-face learning in the classroom and can take advantage of available technological developments. That way the learning process will attract students with various learning styles and obtain the learning outcome which meet the expectations for teachers and students.

Bended learning can be used as a strategy for organizing teaching, teaching delivery, and teaching quality because blended learning can accommodate extensive technological developments in the pandemic era without having to leave face-to-face learning. In this era of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people are not aware of the new techniques being used in the world. Some teachers are not ready to change from the conventional way of teaching into teaching-based information and communication technology. Thus, before applying blended learning, several obstacles need to be eliminated, such as: the fear of losing control, the low number of student feedback and general discomfort about the impact of online learning on classroom relations should be considered; using multiple computer systems in one course can also cause new problems. Students will be frustrated if they have to spend a lot of time just to learn the system; blended learning requires time and willingness to learn new things, and blended environment also needs additional scheduling and may cause on communication challenges since there are two ways of communication modes of online and face-to-face. There are five keys to carry out a successful blended learning:

Live Event. Synchronous direct or face-to-face learning in the same time and place or the same time but different places. For certain people, this direct learning pattern become the main pattern. However, this direct learning pattern needs to be designed in such a way to achieve desired learning goals. This pattern also combines the theories of behaviorism, cognitivism and constructivism to allow the meaningful learning occurs.

Self-Paced Learning. It is a combination with independent learning which allows participants to learn anytime, anywhere by using a variety of content (teaching materials) specifically designed for independent learning, both text-based and multimedia-based. These learning materials, in the current context, can be delivered online (via the web or mobile devices in the form of: streaming audio, streaming video, and e-books) or offline (in the form of CDs, and in print).

Collaboration. Collaboration means combining cross schools' teachers and students. Thus, blended learning designers must be able to mix forms of collaboration, both collaboration between colleagues or collaboration between students and teachers through possible communication tools such as chatrooms, discussion forums, email, websites/weblogs, and mobile phones. This collaboration is indeed directed at the construction of knowledge and skills through social processes or social interaction with other people for material deepening, problem solving and project-based learning.

Assessment. The blended learning design must be able to mix a combination of assessments types, both test and non-test, or tests that are more authentic. In addition, it is also necessary to consider the mix between forms of online assessment and offline assessment as a way to provide convenience and flexibility for participants to learn to follow and conduct the research.

Performance Support Materials. To combine face-to-face and virtual classroom, pay attention to the readiness of supporting resources. Since learning materials are prepared in digital form, teachers have to make sure the learning materials can be accessed by learning participants both offline and online. Blended learning is considered very effective in carrying out and applied during the covid-19 pandemic where crowds and face to face encounter are limited. The level of effectiveness is supported by the advantages possessed by learning with a blended learning system, as follows: (1) learning materials can be delivered anytime and anywhere by utilizing the internet network system; (2) students have the flexibility to study materials or teaching materials independently by utilizing teaching materials stored online; (3) classroom discussions take place online and offline and take place both between students and teachers and among students; (4) teachers can manage and control the learning activities that students do outside of school hours; (5) teachers can ask students to review learning materials before face-to-face learning takes place by preparing supporting tasks; (6) the objectives of learning can be achieved in accordance with the set targets; and (7) learning becomes more flexible

Blended learning system not only offering advantages but also it has disadvantages as well, including: (1) teachers need to have skills in conducting e-learning; (2) teachers need to prepare more time to develop and manage e-learning system, such as developing materials, preparing assessments, conducting assessments, and answering or giving statements in forums submitted by students; (3) teachers need to prepare digital references as students' learning sources that also integrated with face-to-face learning; (4) uneven distribution of supporting facilities and infrastructure and low understanding of technology; and (5) a learning strategy is needed by the teacher to maximize the potential of blended learning.

CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 pandemic period has brought people to enter a new pattern of life called the New Normal. It emphasizes the implementation of health protocols by wearing masks, washing hands and physical distancing. The blended learning model is an effort that can reduce mass gathering activities in the same time and place in the context of physical distancing. However, blended learning does not at all reduce the essence of the learning objectives of increasing competence. Blended learning has the aim of facilitating learning by providing various learning media by taking into account the characteristics of students and the necessity of implementing health protocols. This model can also encourage participants to make the best use of online communication in developing knowledge except in areas of increasing special technical skills such as agriculture which is carried out offline or face to face. These technical skills learning are not convenient to do online since it requires students to be able to practice the theories, for example, how to operate a tractor, how to operate a transplanter, how to fly a drone etc., which prioritizes skills. Through capacity building, learning becomes efficient and effective as well as improving the ability of teachers in innovative learning based on Blended Learning. Teachers at SDI Hidayatul

Mubtadi'in who initially had difficulty implementing innovative learning using Blended Learning, after being assisted, are now able to carry out innovative learning using Blended Learning. The increase in the ability of these teachers has an impact on the learning activities presented. Students become active in learning and learning becomes fun. Students are enthusiastic in participating in learning and do not feel bored in attending Blended Learning. This activity can be an alternative to solve learning problems faced by teachers as well as an effort to improve teacher competence in learning. This activity can be continued, developed in a wider form through partnerships. From the various series of activities that have been carried out, it can be recommended that the same assistance can be disseminated to other schools/madrasahs at various levels. As for SDI Hidayatul Mubtadi'in, gradual and periodic training and mentoring activities can be carried out by the school in order to increase the capacity of teachers in implementing personal, social, and professional competencies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bersin, J. (2004). *The blended learning book: Best practices, proven methodologies, and lessons learned*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Citraningsih, D., Khilmayah, A., & Yamin, M. N. (2021). School Image Management during the Covid-19 Pandemic Era at Budi Mulia Dua Junior High School of Yogyakarta. *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 7(01), 113-122.
- Febriati, Y., Saefurohman, A., & Juhji, J. (2019). Efektivitas Penerapan Model Children Learning in Science terhadap Pemahaman Konsep IPA. *Ibtida'i: Jurnal Kependidikan Dasar*, 6(1), 29-40.
- Francis, R., & Shannon, S. J. (2013). Engaging with blended learning to improve students' learning outcomes. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, 38(4), 359-369.
- Graham, C. R. (2006). Blended learning systems. *The handbook of blended learning: Global perspectives, local designs*, 1, 3-21.
- Herawati, L., Saefurohman, A., & Juhji, J. (2019). Pengaruh metode eksperimen terhadap pemahaman konsep siswa MI pada materi sifat dan perubahan wujud benda. *Primary: Jurnal Keilmuan dan Kependidikan Dasar*, 11(1), 69-76.
- Juhji, J. (2016). Peran Urgen Guru dalam Pendidikan. *Studia Didaktika*, 10(01), 51-62.
- Juhji, J., Latar, B., Tarihoran, W. S., & Maman, M. (2021). Strengthening Islamic Education Management Through Emergency Curriculum Adaptation During the Covid-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Instruction, Technology, and Social Sciences*, 1(3), 1-7.
- Kaur, M. (2013). Blended learning-its challenges and future. *Procedia-social and behavioral sciences*, 93, 612-617.
- Kintu, M. J., Zhu, C., & Kagambe, E. (2017). Blended learning effectiveness: the relationship between student characteristics, design features and outcomes. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 14(1), 1-20.
- Margolis, A. R., Porter, A. L., & Pitterle, M. E. (2017). Best practices for use of blended learning. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 81(3).
- Muafikoh, M., Mustofa, M., Hasbullah, H., & Juhji, J. (2019, December). The Influence of Reciprocal Learning Model for Student Learning Activities in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Pipitan Walantaka Serang City. In *Proceeding of Annual International Conference on Islamic Education and Language: The Education and 4.0 Industrial Era in Islamic Perspective* (pp. 449-452).
- Septantiningtyas, N., Juhji, J., Sutarman, A., Rahman, A., & Sa'adah, N. (2021, February). Implementation of Google Meet Application in the Learning of Basic Science in the Covid-19 Pandemic Period of Student Learning Interests. In *Journal of Physics: Conference Series* (Vol. 1779, No. 1, p. 012068). IOP Publishing.
- Supardi, S. (2014). *Kinerja Guru* (Vol. 1). Rajawali Pers PT. RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Supardi, S., Juhji, J., Azkiyah, I., Muqdamien, B., Ansori, A., Kurniawan, I., & Sari, A. F. (2021). The ICT Basic Skills: Contribution to Student Social Media Utilization Activities. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 10(1), 222-229.

- Suprabha, K., & Subramonian, G. (2015). Blended Learning Approach for Enhancing Students' Learning Experiences in a Knowledge Society. *Journal of Educational Technology*, 11(4), 1-7.
- Surani, D., & Chaerudin, A. (2019). Pemanfaatan Media Whatsapp Grouping dalam Peningkatan Kemampuan Bahasa Inggris Ekonomi Mahasiswa Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis. *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 5(02), 155-172.
- Syaepudin, S., & Juhji, J. (2020). The Effect of Using Powerpoint Media on Student Learning Outcomes in the Material Adaptation of Living Things. *Pedagogi: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan*, 7(1).
- Tusaroh, A., & Juhji, J. (2020). The Effect of Role-Playing Method on Student's Confidence in Indonesian Language Subjects. *Madrosatuna: Journal of Islamic Elementary School*, 4(1), 01-07.
- Van Laer, S., & Elen, J. (2017). In search of attributes that support self-regulation in blended learning environments. *Education and Information Technologies*, 22(4), 1395-1454.