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Students Response to Hybrid Learning in Higher Education

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Abstract: *Hybrid learning has emerged as a significant strategy in higher education, combining face-to-face learning with technology. Theoretical discussions on hybrid learning involve an understanding of contemporary learning concepts, such as constructivism, active learning, and humanistic approaches. The integration of technology in the learning process is seen as a key element for creating a holistic and student-centered learning experience. Instructional design principles, motivation theories, and understanding online learning concepts are also important in understanding the dynamics of hybrid learning. This research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach which purpose is to analyze students' response to hybrid learning in higher education. The students in this research are the first semester students at Widya Karya Catholic University who are taking an English subject. Hopefully that this research gives a significant contribution to the development of pedagogical thinking and the practical application of hybrid learning in higher education institutions.*

Key words: *higher education, hybrid learning, learning theory*

INTRODUCTION

IT is the abbreviation of information and communication technology. Many aspects of human life are affected by these changes, including education, economics, politics, social, culture, and others. The development of information technology encourages various innovations in learning in the world of education. As an alternative to conventional learning approaches, this innovative learning model emerged. E-learning is an educational system that uses electronics to support learning using internet media (Mutia & Leonard, 2013).

There are many different definitions for e-learning. The use of new multimedia and internet technologies to improve the quality of education by facilitating access to a wide network and enabling distance learning. Web-based learning is another term for this learning technology (Fernando et al., 2005). According to Cisco (in Yazdi, 2012), the philosophy of e-learning is as follows: First, e-learning is the dissemination of information, communication, education and training online. Second, e-learning provides a set of tools that can increase the value of conventional learning, such as conventional learning models, textbook studies, CD-ROMs, and computer-based training, thereby responding to the challenges of developing globalization. Third, e-learning does not allow students to follow conventional education. Fourth, depending on the type of material and method of delivery, student capacities vary greatly. Students will have better capacity if there is better alignment between content and delivery tools and learning styles, which in turn will produce better results. Noesgaard and

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Rikke stated that research has shown that e-learning has become more effective in recent years, largely due to advances in information technology in learning. However, e-learning cannot be separated from conventional learning (Noesgaard & Rikke, 2015).

Teachers can use e-learning as a learning medium or system. This e-learning course is web-based, which makes learning more interactive. This online learning has no access restrictions. This teaching and learning activity is more flexible in terms of time. Students have the freedom to choose when they want to study. Students have plenty of time to expand their knowledge. The world of education is experiencing a shift from traditional or conventional models to modern or digital models. Thanks to the existence of the internet. E-learning, like general learning, cannot function fully without face-to-face interaction. With this e-learning learning model, a face-to-face learning process is still needed (Wahono, 2003).

Hybrid learning, also known as blended learning, refers to combining e-learning (electronic learning) based learning approaches with face-to-face or conventional learning approaches. In the world of education, this technique has only recently been used. The following is a summary of hybrid learning and how it can be used in the world of education. According to Lynn et al. (2014) hybrid or mixed learning is a combination of internet-based learning approaches, also known as electronic learning, with face-to-face or conventional learning approaches.

According to Ana Sutisna, hybrid is a learning method that combines two or more learning approaches and methods to achieve learning goals (Sutisna, 2016). According to Thorne (Sutisna, 2003), the difference is between conventional learning, where educators and students meet directly, and online learning, which can be accessed anytime and anywhere. Virtual meetings between teachers and students are another type of hybrid learning. Where they can be in different places, but can still interact with each other, ask, answer, and give each other criticism.

Hybrid learning or blended learning is a learning model that is easy to be implemented. This learning model combines conventional or synchronous learning processes with internet-based or asynchronous learning processes. Because this learning model is a combined learning model, this learning is called hybrid learning (Krisna, 2024). Therefore, hybrid learning is defined as blended learning or a combination of face-to-face and non-face-to-face learning, also known as online learning. The integrated learning approach then comes from a combination of these two models. The goals of e-learning include effective and efficient learning that combines face-to-face and online learning through technology (Horn & Staker, 2015). Universities in America, England and Australia initially used habit-based

learning. Today, the goal is to provide students with the opportunity to learn independently, sustainably, and develop lifelong learning. This will make the learning process more efficient, interesting and efficient (Gultom et al., 2022). The implementation of hybrid learning reflects a strategic response to the evolving educational landscape, recognizing the diverse learning needs and preferences of contemporary students in higher education environments (Rosenberg, 2001).

Hybrid learning in higher education has been discussed in various studies. In their research, Helsa et al. (2023) focuses on how the implementation of hybrid-based learning impacts learning in higher education. Studies show that using hybrid learning has benefits. This research also states that hybrid learning has the potential to increase students' flexibility to adapt to the material they study, improve their cognitive abilities, improve their communication skills, increase their discipline, improve their mathematical representations, and increase their motivation to learn. Students can experience language learning in person and online, which provides a better learning experience. Additionally, students have the ability to repeat what they have learned whenever and wherever they want.

Hybrid learning has emerged as an important phenomenon in the higher education sector. This method creates a dynamic learning environment by utilizing the strengths inherent in both approaches (Hendrayati, 2016). The combination of traditional face-to-face teaching with technology-mediated components contributes to a multifaceted pedagogical approach. This integration aims to capitalize on the benefits of direct interaction between educators and students while taking advantage of the flexibility and accessibility provided by technology tools. The implementation of hybrid learning reflects a strategic response to the evolving educational landscape, recognizing the diverse learning needs and preferences of contemporary students in higher education environments (Abdelrahman, 2016).

Although educational literature recognizes the advantages and dynamics of hybrid learning, a deep understanding of student interactions with this method remains an important need (Jusoff, 2009). In this context, descriptive research is considered a relevant approach to provide a holistic picture of how students engage and respond to this learning approach. Recognizing the complex nuances of hybrid learning requires exploring the diverse ways students perceive and interact with this multifaceted learning environment. Descriptive studies allow for a comprehensive examination of the intricacies involved, highlighting the varied responses and experiences of students as they navigate the complexities of hybrid learning (Kaye, 2003).

This research uses a descriptive approach with the aim of comprehensively describing student responses to the implementation of hybrid learning in the academic context of higher education. With a lens focused on detailed depiction, this research seeks to provide deeper insight into the interactions between students and hybrid learning. By emphasizing the holistic picture, this research aims to capture the complex dynamics and nuances inherent in students' experiences in hybrid learning environments. This approach plays an important role in revealing various aspects of how students engage and respond to the combination of traditional and technological elements in the learning process, thereby contributing to a different understanding of the dynamics of hybrid learning (Mutia, 2013).

In this research, the emphasis on students' response toward hybrid learning is very important. Understanding how students conceptualize these approaches, the extent to which technology integration is used in teaching, and their responses to these learning approaches is an integral component of descriptive analysis. This study was conducted to investigate the students' understanding and reactions to a hybrid learning model, explaining the complex dynamics of their engagement with a combination of traditional and technological aspects. This exploration is critical to uncovering the complexities of hybrid learning and contributing to a comprehensive descriptive analysis of students' experiences and perceptions within this educational framework (Rahayu et al., 2022).

Apart from providing a comprehensive picture, this research also aims to achieve several main objectives which focus on students' response to hybrid learning in the higher education environment. By exploring students' perceptions and knowledge, this research will provide a clear picture of the extent of their response to this learning approach. It is also hoped that this research can contribute to our understanding of the implementation of hybrid learning in higher education environments, open up space for improving learning design, and provide guidance for policy makers in optimizing the use of technology in the educational process (Nurlaili et al., 2021).

This research targets the population of first semester students at Widya Karya Catholic University who take English subject. Of course, this English subject applies hybrid learning as its learning method. Sample selection was carried out purposively, taking into account variations in study programs. The goal of this sampling was to encompass diversity in hybrid learning contexts, allowing the research to depict more representative student understanding and responses. In purposive sampling, the research will select students who have diverse experiences and perspectives on hybrid learning, so that the research results can reflect the diversity in the academic environment. By gaining views from various study

programs and semester levels, it is hoped that this research can provide a holistic picture of how students from various academic backgrounds respond to and understand the use of hybrid learning in their learning experiences. This is expected to provide a more substantial contribution to the generalization of the results of this research to a wider population.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research will apply a qualitative descriptive approach, a research method that aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being observed (Rusandi, 2021). In an effort to understand in depth student interactions with hybrid learning, interview or discussion methods will be used. Students who take part in hybrid learning will be grouped into several groups. This group is divided based on the study program taken by the student. There are eight study programs, namely Food Technology, Agribusiness, Law, Management, Accounting, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Information Systems. Each group will discuss and then answers the questions asked by the lecturer.

The next stage is filling in the answers to the poll questions given by the lecturer to each group. Each group will only represent respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8. Respondent 1 is the answer from students in the food technology study program. Respondent 2 was an answer from an agribusiness study program student. Respondent 3 was an answer from a law study program student. Respondent 4 was an answer from a management study program student. Respondent 5 was an answer from an accounting study program student. Respondent 6 was an answer from a civil engineering study program student. Respondent 7 was an answer from a mechanical engineering study program student. The last one is respondent 8, namely the answer from students of the information systems study program. The answers given by each group are of course answers based on group discussions that have been carried out when discussing answer after answer to the survey questions given to them by the lecturer. It is hoped that this will provide direct insight into their response to this learning method in the academic context of higher education.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings of this research show that students who participate in hybrid learning in a higher education context show a number of varied responses to this learning method. Data collected from students was obtained based on several survey questions regarding student responses to hybrid learning. The questions are:

1. What is your group's level of satisfaction with the hybrid learning experience you have experienced?
2. To what extent does your group feel engaged and active in hybrid learning, both during face-to-face and online sessions?
3. What is your group's opinion regarding the availability and accessibility of learning resources during the implementation of hybrid learning?
4. Does your group feel motivated to participate in hybrid learning?
5. According to your group, has hybrid learning improved your ability to understand and master the learning material?

Question 1

Table 1. The group's level of satisfaction with the hybrid learning experience

Informant	The group's level of satisfaction with the hybrid learning experience			
	Not satisfied	Quite satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
1st informant	-	-	√	-
2nd informant	-	-	√	-
3rd informant	-	√	-	-
4th informant	-	-	√	-
5th informant	-	-	√	-
6th informant	-	-	√	-
7th informant	-	-	√	-
8th informant	-	-	√	-

The group's overall satisfaction with the hybrid learning experience was assessed based on responses from eight informants. The majority of participants expressed positive sentiments with the highest level of satisfaction being in the "Satisfied" category. Informants 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 all expressed their satisfaction with the hybrid learning approach as indicated by a check mark (√) in their respective columns. Informant 3 also reported his satisfaction, although at a lower level, namely in the "Quite Satisfied" category. Interestingly, none of the informants explicitly stated "Very Satisfied", and none expressed dissatisfaction with the hybrid learning experience. This data shows that the hybrid learning model is generally well received by informants, and highlights a noteworthy level of satisfaction. However, it is important to consider other potential factors influencing their response, such as their engagement with hybrid learning. Further qualitative exploration could provide deeper insight into the specific aspects of the hybrid learning experience that contribute to the reported levels of satisfaction.

Question 2

Table 2. The group's engagement in hybrid learning

Informant	The group's engagement in hybrid learning			
	Not active	Quite active	Active	Very active
1st informant	-	-	√	-
2nd informant	-	-	√	-
3rd informant	-	√	-	-
4th informant	-	-	√	-
5th informant	-	-	-	√
6th informant	-	-	√	-
7th informant	-	-	√	-
8th informant	-	-	√	-

Group engagement in the hybrid learning environment was evaluated based on responses obtained from eight informants. The majority of participants showed a prominent level of activity, especially those in the “Active” category. Informants 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 indicated their involvement by ticking (√) in the column in the "Active" category. Interestingly, Informant 5, although not categorized as “Active,” marked their level of engagement as “Very Active,” indicating increased engagement in the hybrid learning experience. In contrast, Informant 3 stated slightly lower involvement so he gave his response in the "Quite Active" category. The absence of informants in the "Inactive" category indicates that all groups of informants gave their involvement in the positive category towards hybrid learning. It is important to explore other factors that influence reported levels of engagement, such as the availability and accessibility of learning resources in hybrid learning. Further investigation and qualitative analysis could provide valuable insight into the specific aspects of hybrid learning environments that contribute to varying levels of participant engagement.

Question 3

Table 3. The group's availability and accessibility of learning resources

Informant	The group's availability and accessibility of learning resources			
	Less accessible	Quite accessible	Accessible	Very accessible
1st informant	-	-	-	√
2nd informant	-	-	-	√
3rd informant	-	-	√	-
4th informant	-	-	-	√
5th informant	-	-	-	√
6th informant	-	-	√	-
7th informant	-	-	√	-
8th informant	-	-	-	√

The group assessment of the availability and accessibility of learning resources in the context of hybrid learning was obtained from responses given by eight informants. The majority of participants perceived the learning resources as "Very Accessible", namely by informants 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8. They expressed their agreement by ticking (√) in the column in the "Very Accessible" category. Although informants 3, 6, and 7 did not categorize resources as "Very Easy to Access," they marked their answers in the "Accessible" category, which shows a positive perception of the availability of learning resources. Interestingly, none of the informants expressed dissatisfaction with the accessibility of learning resources because there was no mark in the "Less Accessible" column. This collective perception underscores the group's overall satisfaction with the availability and accessibility of learning materials in the hybrid learning environment. However, to gain a comprehensive understanding, it would be beneficial to explore the specific types of resources that are considered accessible, as well as potential areas of improvement in the provision of learning materials to enhance the overall hybrid learning experience. The next table will provide data about the group's motivation for participating in hybrid learning.

Question 4

Table 4. The group's motivation to take part in hybrid learning

Informant	The group's motivation to take part in hybrid learning			
	Less motivated	Quite motivated	Motivated	Very motivated
1st informant	-	-	√	-
2nd informant	-	-	√	-
3rd informant	-	-	√	-
4th informant	-	-	√	-
5th informant	-	-	√	-
6th informant	-	-	√	-
7th informant	-	-	√	-
8th informant	-	-	√	-

Evaluation of the group's motivation for participating in hybrid learning was obtained from the responses of eight informants. The majority of participants stated that their level of motivation was high, as evidenced by giving a tick (√) in the "Motivated" column to all informants. Notably, there was no indication of "Moderately Motivated" or even "Less Motivated" participants, indicating a collective enthusiasm for engaging in hybrid learning experiences. The uniformity of responses highlights the positive and consistent level of motivation within the group, emphasizing a strong commitment to the hybrid learning model. However, to gain deeper insight into the factors influencing motivation, further qualitative

exploration may be beneficial. Exploring individual perspectives regarding aspects of hybrid learning that contribute to motivation can provide valuable information for educators and institutions seeking to increase and maintain student engagement in blended learning environments. Overall, the group's high motivation indicates a good inclination towards the hybrid learning approach, thereby contributing to a positive and conducive learning atmosphere. The next table will show data on the extent to which hybrid learning improved the group's ability to understand and master the learning material.

Question 5

Table 5. The group's understanding of learning material increases

Informant	The group's understanding of learning material increases			
	Low increased	Quite increased	Increased	Highly increased
1st informant	-	-	√	-
2nd informant	-	-	√	-
3rd informant	-	-	√	-
4th informant	-	-	√	-
5th informant	-	-	√	-
6th informant	-	-	√	-
7th informant	-	-	√	-
8th informant	-	-	√	-

The group's perception of increasing understanding of learning material in the hybrid learning context was evaluated based on the responses of eight informants. The responses given uniformly showed a positive trend, where all informants assessed their understanding by ticking (√) in the "Improving" column. The absence of assessments in the “Low Improvement”, “Moderate Improvement”, or “High Improvement” categories indicates consistent and moderate improvement in the group's understanding of the learning material. This collective perspective aligns with the benefits often associated with hybrid learning models, where the integration of online and face-to-face elements is believed to improve students' understanding of educational content.

The unanimous agreement of the informants regarding increasing understanding of learning material shows the success of implementing the hybrid learning approach in facilitating effective learning. However, to gain a comprehensive understanding, future research could investigate specific aspects of the hybrid model that contribute to increased understanding and identify areas for further improvement. Overall, the positive response from this group shows the success of the integration of the hybrid learning approach in encouraging a deeper understanding of educational material among participants.

Discussion

Data collected from various tables provides valuable insight into participants' experiences with hybrid learning, including satisfaction, engagement, accessibility of learning resources, motivation, and understanding of learning materials. The group's overall satisfaction with the hybrid learning experience was notable, as most participants expressed satisfaction, especially those in the "Satisfied" category. This positive sentiment is reinforced by the high levels of reported motivation, with all informants marking their motivation as "Motivated", indicating a strong commitment to the hybrid learning model.

Additionally, the participants demonstrated active engagement in the hybrid learning environment, and most fell into the "Active" category. This level of engagement is critical to the effectiveness of hybrid learning, as it indicates successful integration of face-to-face and online elements. Additionally, participants viewed the availability and accessibility of learning resources as generally positive, and categorized them as "Very Accessible". These findings indicate that the hybrid learning model has effectively equipped participants with the tools and materials necessary for their educational journey.

Furthermore, the data shows that there are similar perceptions regarding increasing understanding of learning material among participants. The absence of responses in the "Low Improvement," "Moderate Improvement," or "Very Improved" categories implies consistent and moderate improvement in group understanding, reinforcing the efficacy of the hybrid learning approach in facilitating deeper understanding of educational content.

CONCLUSIONS

In a synthesis of the findings above, it can be concluded that the data collectively provides a positive outlook on participants' experiences with hybrid learning, highlighting satisfaction, engagement, resource accessibility, motivation, and increased understanding of learning material. Most participants expressed their satisfaction with the hybrid learning experience, with the majority selecting the category "Satisfied." The active engagement of participants in the hybrid learning environment, the majority of which fell into the "Active" category, reflects successful integration between face-to-face and online elements. Positive perceptions of the availability and accessibility of learning resources indicate that the hybrid learning model is effective in providing the tools and materials needed by participants. The high level of motivation, as reflected by all participants who selected the "Motivated" category, shows a strong commitment to the hybrid learning model . Hybrid learning can also improve students' ability to understand and master learning material. Additionally, these

findings provide valuable insights for educators and institutions looking to refine and optimize hybrid learning models to achieve better student outcomes.

There is potential further research to better understand the factors underlying high levels of satisfaction, engagement and motivation. It is therefore advisable to research further qualitative studies to provide in-depth insight into the specific aspects of hybrid learning that influence positive responses. Additionally, such follow-up investigations can help identify and refine specific aspects of the hybrid learning model that need improvement. Thus, these findings provide a basis for continuous development and improvement in the implementation of hybrid learning to achieve optimal learning outcomes.

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