Students’ Expectations for Blended Learning Discussion in Higher Education

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Abstract. This study is aimed to describe students’ expectations toward the implementation of blended learning discussions in higher education institutions. This research was conducted to reflect on the ongoing discussion activities so that they can be improved according to student expectations. This investigation was conducted with a qualitative design. Researchers made observations on synchronous discussions and asynchronous discussions, then conducted in-depth interviews with students. Students are given relevant questions related to expectations of discussion in blended learning. The result of the research showed that students have high expectations for the discussion method carried out in blended learning to get more learning opportunities, higher-thinking level practice, collaborate, express opinions, and respect the opinions of others.

1. Introduction

Blended Learning is an option because it combines the two best sides of learning, namely taking the advantages of face-to-face meetings and the advantages of online learning. The implementation of blended learning uses the same method as face-to-face, it's just different modes [1]. Discussion is one of the popular methods in universities [2] - [4]. Discussion method with HOTS flow can improve 21st-century skills [5], [6], [7], and can be assessed through discussion activities both face-to-face and online. The more often combining face-to-face and online learning experiences, the more it has a positive impact on students. The research team has been pursuing b-learning since 2013-2018 [8] - [13], and analyzed that a standard discussion is needed in b-learning.

In addition to the reasons for the digital learning environment, the available online learning platform can help students discuss ideas, concepts, and problems relevant to the lecture topic from the perspective of each discussion participant. The platform provides virtual conferencing, chat, and discussion forum features. These features facilitate the discussion method as space for students to construct knowledge by solving authentic and complex problems. However, placing students in groups to work together on authentic and complex problems in an online learning environment is not always beneficial for learning, knowledge construction, and problem-solving. Empirical findings suggest that online collaborative learners generally face communication and coordination problems due to reduced bandwidth or available interaction modes associated with online learning, resulting in degradation of problem-solving, performance construction and knowledge. Responding to this problem, various instructional approaches have been carried out, one of which is the discussion method. Educators and faculty are greatly helped by the virtual conference, chat, and discussion forum features. This study
will reveal the expectations of students as active participants in participating in discussion activities in a blended learning environment.

2. Research Methodology
This investigation was conducted with a qualitative design. Researchers made observations on synchronous discussions and asynchronous discussions that took place in the Learning Theory course and the e-learning development course. Participants involved in this study were selected by purposive sampling and snowball sampling, then conducted in-depth interviews with participants regarding their expectations of the activities, support, and difficulties they found during the discussion. Students are given relevant questions related to expectations of discussion in blended learning. The data obtained were analyzed to obtain a description of student expectations of the discussion method in blended learning in tertiary institutions.

3. Result and Discussions
Based on the results of in-depth interviews with students in the Learning Theory course and the e-Learning Development course related to student expectations of the blended learning discussion method in tertiary institutions, classifying data into 10 aspects. The data collected is very diverse, so the classification is based on the supporting components of the application of learning, namely quota facilities, increased discussion features, application in other subjects, motivation, understanding of the material, attractive, interactive displays, solving learning problems, language use, and the role of lecturers. The following is the qualitative graphic data:

![Data Graph of Student Expectations on the Discussion Method in Blended Learning](image)

Based on these data, it turns out that students have high hopes for the method of a discussion carried out in blended learning. The highest expectation is internet quota facilities, then the expectation of improving discussion features, interactive activities, and the role of lecturers in managing the discussion. These expectations are also found in other studies that clear goals and expectations, the quality of the material, and the collaboration that occurs during the discussion can be a significant predictor of student performance [14], [15]. In addition, the discussion method in blended learning can also help achieve higher-order thinking skills in universities [16]. This means that the discussion method in a blended learning environment can be used both synchronous and asynchronous discussions by considering the components of student expectations.

4. Conclusion
The discussion method is not an ancient method that can be used in learning. The discussion method applies the same approach to dialogue as philosophers have done for hundreds of years ago. The method of discussion is still relevant to the novelty of science, technology, and art as well as the current digitalization. Discussions can
not only be done face to face but can also be done virtually. Discussions in blended learning will be effective if they pay attention to the expectations expressed by students, that to be able to participate in discussions they need support in the form of facilities, learning designs, and discussion designs, as well as it hopes for improving the features used.

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