

STUDY-FROM-HOME PROGRAM: MOTIVATIONAL BELIEFS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THE ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT The new learning program of study-from home amidst the COVID-19 outbreaks urges most all level students to do online learning for their learning process. It attracts a diverse range of students with different learning motivations and prior experiences. The purpose of this present study is to investigate the students' motivational beliefs in online learning, in particular focusing on how students' motivational aspects of persistence values, self-efficacy, and test anxiety for taking online learning courses affect their learning behaviors and employments of motivated learning strategies. Applying an exploratory research design, investigation of the motivational beliefs of 186 online learners at the tertiary level, the questionnaire consisting of 34 statements was distributed to all participants. The findings detected that motivated learning strategies covering three substantial aspects of persistence values, self-efficacy, and test anxiety shaped how the students conceptualized the purpose of online learning and affected their perceptions of the learning process. Thus, for the potential benefits, the students' motivated learning strategies as well as perceived learning in the online learning environments in higher education should be studied in order to provide an enhanced well-designed learning experience for prospective online students.

Keywords: Motivational beliefs, persistence values, self-efficacy, test anxiety

A. INTRODUCTION

Millennial learners as the knowledge constructors should experience an interactive learning process (Sari & Putri, 2019) based on their learning characteristics to build their knowledge and strengthen their interaction and engagement with facilitators, classmates, and other aspects such as learning tools and learning materials. As the advance of technology in the educational field has the valuable part of the learning process, its process needs suitable learning environment and innovative sources to provide accessible and up-to-date education to all ages and the flexible time and place for students to enhance education quality (Sari & Wahyudin, 2019b; Ayu, 2020).

To support a fruitful online learning environment, teachers hold the gold key to play roles as a medium to provide knowledge accessible to their students (Rido & Sari, 2018) and as a formal instructor (Sari & Wahyudin, 2019a) by allowing them to learn anything, anytime, and anywhere (Ayu, 2020). Besides, the students should play a role as an independent learner due to the rapid changing of these educational technologies (Aminatun & Oktaviani, 2019) and need to promote several learning strategies to achieve their learning goals (Fathiyah et al., 2020).

The implementation of online learning is in an encouraging stage since some universities have integrated it as the new form of learning innovation to provide learning opportunities and promote the diverse needs in the learning process (Littlejohn et al., 2016), especially in the pandemic Covid-19. It is a good time for English teachers and students to enhance and modernize teaching skill by adopting the technology, such as digital platforms. Besides, the nature of online learning that allows registered learners to enroll in the course leads to diversity in motivations among learners (Kizilcec et al., 2013). Thus, online learning has received much attention from educators and the government for their great potential to maximize the learning process during the time of disruptive (Mujtaba et al., 2021).

Further research is required, which focuses not only on the effectiveness of online learning but also for the user perceptual that can support the successful online learning process. It also needs to be studied to reflect how students view their online learning experiences to detect areas for the development and improvement of online learning. The concern on the success of the online learning process leads this present study to investigate the motivational beliefs of students in college students during their engagement in online learning courses. The discussion is based on the information gauged from the questionnaire and interview.

B. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the present situation of Covid-19 pandemic, online learning becomes the best choice for all education institutions to continue teaching and learning process. Several aspects such as online learning objectives, the preparation and delivery of teaching-learning materials, online teaching styles, online interaction between teacher and students, and effective feedback during online learning and online discussion in synchronous and asynchronous sessions have to be considered equivalently by teachers before implementing online learning. On the other side, students need to obtain suitable online learning platforms, online learning activities for their language proficiency, assignments or projects, and proper feedback from teacher.

Moreover, motivation in the related study is defined in terms of achieving learning goals and self-efficacy. According to Clayton et al. (2010), achievement learning goals reflect on the concerned with the reasons why the students engage in academic-related tasks. Then, self-efficacy is another aspect of the motivational construct in which the students find that they have a learning ability to accomplish a specific task during the course. Self-efficacy might affect student's thought patterns, determine student's motivation level, and dominate student's emotional reactions (Bandura, 1997).

Motivated learning strategies have essential roles in remote teaching and learning. By using proportional learning strategies such as affective, memory, social, metacognitive, cognitive, and compensation language learning strategies, they help students to achieve their learning objectives (Putri & Sari, 2020; Fathiyah et al., 2020). Students have to, individually, determine when they start to engage in online courses, how they engage with them, and with what content and activities they engage (Milligan & Littlejohn, 2014; Sari & Oktaviani, 2021).

C. METHOD

Respondents

To investigate the purpose of this study, an exploratory research design was adopted. The subjects were chosen by using purposive sampling due to obtaining the data as much as possible through some sources to the needs and purposes. They were 186 undergraduate students from English major who joined more than 10 online learning courses during the educational emergency conditions they were facing recently due to the uncertainty surrounding the outbreak of the new pandemic.

Instruments

The data were collected from questionnaires and interviews. The length time of collecting research data was at least six months, end of February to August 2020, since the announcement of the study-from-home program, suggested by the Indonesian Government. The questionnaire was designed to gauge the students' motivational beliefs. There were three aspects of motivational items. These aspects were persistence values, self-efficacy, and test anxiety. The statements on the questionnaire were 34 items, including 21 statements for the persistence values aspect, 9 statements for self-efficacy aspect, and 4 statements for the test anxiety aspect. This questionnaire was created in a Google Form, then, it was distributed to all participants through WhatsApp Group. On the other side, a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions was conducted online via ZOOM, an online meeting application. A total of 35 participants were asked 15 questions about motivating learning strategies to obtain their insights into certain occurrence as the basis for further inquiry.

Procedures

This study was carried out in several steps. The first step of this study was to choose and determine the research object and subjects. The researcher selected a population consisting of research object and subjects using purposive sampling technique from the second semester students from English department. After that, the process of collecting data and data sources started from distributing questionnaires and doing interview. Then, the researcher analyzed the

data qualitatively and described in the descriptive form. Lastly, the research report was written from the research results to explore the formulation of the research problems that had been answered.

Data analysis

Questionnaire data were interpreted using the level of strongly disagree (1.00-1.80), disagree (1.81-2.60), neutral/moderate (2.61-3.40), agree (3.41-4.20), and strongly agree (4.21-5.00). Then, these data were analyzed using mean score and standard deviation (SD). Meanwhile, the result of interview were transcribed and analyzed using a narrative analysis to highlight essential points of interview respondents’ responses.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Students’ motivational beliefs

This present study was conducted to investigate the students’ motivational beliefs for their experiences in attending online learning courses. This section discusses the results of this study.

To gauge the students’ perceptions of their motivational beliefs in doing online learning activities, three main aspects strengthen the results – persistence values, self-efficacy, and test anxiety. The findings revealed that most students use these three aspects as their motivating learning strategies.

Table 1: Students’ motivational beliefs

<i>Aspects</i>	<i>mean</i>
Persistence values	5.33
Self-efficacy	5.11
Test anxiety	4.90

Table 1 highlights the average score of each aspect. There are three essential aspects to show the students’ motivational beliefs in this study. The result showed that all aspects were rather equally applied by the students at the tertiary level. Furthermore, each aspect of students’ motivational beliefs was analyzed to find out which typical aspects frequently considered by the students.

Persistence values

The results of persistence values aspects were displayed in table 2. There were 21 statements. The questionnaire analyses are as follows:

Table 2: Students’ perceptions of their persistence values

Statements	mean	sd
I tell myself not to worry when things are difficult.	5.67	1.03
I try not to worry about the possibility of doing worse than I want.	5.20	1.19
I try to persuade myself not to worry about the mistakes I make.	4.74	1.42
I try not to worry about the possibility of getting things wrong.	4.72	1.36

When I am feeling anxious about how things are going, I tell myself that things will work out alright.	5.49	1.17
When I am feeling bored studying for this online course, I force myself to pay attention to it.	5.16	1.37
When my mind begins to wander during a learning session for this online course, I make a special effort to keep concentrating.	5.39	1.12
When I begin to lose interest in this online course, I push myself even harder and increase my studying effort.	5.21	1.28
I work hard to do well in this online course even if I don't like what I have to do.	5.45	1.14
Even when materials in this online course are dull and uninteresting, I manage to keep working until I finish.	5.62	1.11
I prefer challenging classwork so I can learn new things.	5.17	1.32
I need to learn what is being taught in this online course.	5.62	1.09
I like what I am learning in this online course.	5.09	1.20
I think I will be able to use what I learn in this online course in other classes.	5.13	1.14
Even when I do poorly on a test, I try to learn from my mistakes.	5.78	1.09
I often choose paper topics. I will learn something from even if they require more work.	4.89	1.18
I think that what I am learning in this online course is useful for me to know.	5.60	1.06
I think that what we are learning in this online course is interesting.	5.08	1.17
Understanding this subject is important to me.	5.89	1.01
I work hard to get a good grade even when I don't like a class.	5.73	1.21
I ask myself questions to make sure that I know the material I have been studying.	5.25	1.24

From the questionnaire analysis on the students' perception of their persistence values, the highest mean score of persistence values aspect was 5.89 with SD=1.01, for statement "understanding this subject is important to me". Most students tended to think that understanding the online learning course was important to them. The lowest mean score of persistence values aspect was 4.72 with SD=1.36, for the statement "I try not to worry about the possibility of getting things wrong". The persistence values table generally describes the condition in which the students encourage themselves not to think about learning problems such as finding an uninteresting topic, reading difficult learning materials, the possibility of doing mistakes, feeling bored, and lost concentration for studying online that might happen in their way of learning. Thus, they attempt themselves to find the best way to overcome the possibility of learning problems by realizing the importance of learning material comprehension.

To strengthen the results of the students' perceptions of their persistence values during online learning courses, they were randomly interviewed online. They were asked questions about their opinions and responses towards their thinking of being worried when joining the online learning courses. The extracts are as follows:

- NF *Actually, my determination to learn all subjects via online learning systems on our campus is high. I think, as long as I can read all materials given by my lecturers and they give spare time to accomplish all tasks, I will not worry about my learning process.*
- MB *.... I commit myself that I will not be lazy to attend online learning. If I find something difficult, I directly texted my lecturer and my friends for help...*
- DG *Something that makes me worry is unstable connections rather than difficult topics. When I got a bad connection, I lost my interest and can cause me to become lazy to download the material which should be read.*

SM ... I don't like some subjects that burden me to read a lot of materials and give me so many assignments. But go back to my goal, I have to push away my dislike things to get a good grade at the end of the semester. I push myself to attend all meetings when I remember my learning goals.

BD When it starts difficult, I have to think about a good score. It boosts me to pursue my learning goals.

VQ I need to inhale and exhale when I start bored with online learning activities. I'd like to say thank you to all my classmates in Whats.App Group who always hand in hand give abundant support.

Self-efficacy

There were nine statements of the self-efficacy aspect. The result of the questionnaire analysis was shown in table 3.

Table 3: Students' perceptions of their self-efficacy

Statements	mean	sd
Compared with other students in this online course, I expect to do well.	5.33	1.16
I'm certain I can understand the ideas taught in this online course.	5.16	1.05
I expect to do very well in this online course.	5.59	1.16
Compared with others in this online course, I think I'm a good student	4.73	1.22
I am sure I can do an excellent job on the problems and tasks assigned for this online course.	5.25	1.07
I think I will receive a good grade in this online course.	5.31	1.13
My study skills are excellent compared with others in this online course.	4.65	1.23
Compared with other students in this online course, I think I know a great deal about the subject.	4.71	1.17
I know that I will be able to learn the material for this online course.	5.30	1.07

The result on table 3 described that the highest score was in the statement of “I expect to do very well in this online course” with mean score=5.59 and SD=1.16. The lowest mean score was 4.65 with SD=1.23, for the statement “My study skills are excellent compared with others in this online course”. According to the self-efficacy table, the results show that the students claimed confidence in their capability to do good learning performance and control their learning motivation. It can be stated that they have already known how well they could execute the online learning courses. It is also stated from the extracts of the interview result, as follows:

ST I sometimes talk to my self that I have to be better than others in learning...

CW I'm so confident in joining online learning because I know I'm not lazy to learn and read the materials from my lecturers.

NN I always say “you are a good learner” on my mind. Hehe...

LM I think I can compete with each other and I'm sure I can handle difficult things in my online learning process.

KN My classmate often gives me support and why don't I struggle a lot to gain a good score. I'm sure I have good ability and a fast learner.

Testing anxiety

The result of the questionnaire analysis related to testing anxiety aspect was shown in table 4, as follows:

Table 4: Students' perceptions of their test anxiety

Statements	mean	sd
I am so nervous during an online test/post-test in the online forum that I cannot remember the facts I have learned.	5.13	1.39
I have an uneasy, upset feeling when I take an online test/post-test in the online forum.	4.60	1.41

I worry a great deal about an online test/post-test in the online forum.	5.02	1.29
When I take an online test/post-test in the online forum, I think about how poorly I am doing.	4.83	1.41

Based on table 4, the highest mean score was 5.13 points, with SD=1.39 and the lowest mean score was 4.60, with SD=1.41. Most students showed their anxiety toward their learning performances when they did an online test or submitted a post-test in the online forum. Thus, they seemed to be afraid to gain unsatisfying results from the test. It is seen from the extracts of the interview result, as follows:

- FH *Honestly, when I see there is a limitation of time to answer the questions in our systems, I make me feel nervous and I lost my concentration to answer the questions.*
- MP *I always worry when my lecturers give me essay questions because I have to recall what I have learned before. I need to reopen the downloaded material and find the answer to all essay questions.*
- WTN *Even though I have a good preparation before the online test, I'm still afraid that I will get a bad score at the end. During the test, I always recheck my answers three times before the test ends...*
- KK *.... I worry about the final result. What if it is a bad score,...*

In general, motivation is one of the influential reasons for taking the course, attending the course, and showing performance outcomes. It is considered as a mediating role in resulting in student's competent performances and creating interests in the course activity (Schunk et al., 2008). Zheng et al., 2018 assert that learners' motivational self-system is regarded as a positive predictor for their online learning.

Based on Littlejohn et al. (2016), the main motivation for students in their study were: (1) relevance to work, (2) for their professional development and to enrich their skill set, (3) an enjoyment for their learning process, and (4) to support their career development. In the online learning environment, students' ability to improve their willingness to engage in the course and complete all academic activities has been seen as an important aspect of understanding their learning and performance. It is in line with Sari (2020) who states that students' accomplishments to do online learning activities may affirm their consistency to perform their enthusiasm to achieve the learning goals. Thus, students' motivation has been linked to successful learning (Clayton et al., 2010).

In this present study, motivational beliefs have three distinct motivational aspects such as persistence, self-efficacy, and test anxiety. The findings on the students' perceptions of persistence aspects show that the students provided responses concerning their interest in doing online learning activities and perceived importance of online course tasks and preference for the challenge and mastery goals of learning. They also showed positive responses to the self-efficacy aspects since they perceived learning competences and confidence in their performance of the online class.

Self-efficacy reflects the extent to which a student feels confident in their learning skills to complete and participate in the online learning activities, their learning skills to do something in a determined way, and students' determination and discipline when doing online learning activities. On the other side, the test anxiety showed the students' worries about the tests during online class and their cognitive interference on the tests. These findings were connected to Littlejohn et al. (2016) and Tseng & Tsai (2010).

E. CONCLUSION

In light of the findings, there are different belief systems among the students at the college level that might often explain why the students act their motivating learning strategies in different ways. The students also are required to be skillfully managers using their persistence, self-efficacy, and test anxiety to achieve their learning goals so that their motivation keeps at a pace. To conclude, the dynamics of students' motivational beliefs in online environments are more complex than expected. Further studies might be undertaken to unveil the complexity of the motivational factors. These findings hopefully can generate more meaningful pedagogical implications for language instructors and technology providers.

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