Improving *Self Directed Learning* In Online-Based Education Systems (In The Network)

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Abstract : Increasing students' reasoning ability to take the initiative and have responsibility with full awareness in learning independently (self-directed learning) is certainly a current concern. In online learning situations, meaning without face-to-face contact with educators, each student is required to have the ability to determine strategies for learning, and the ability to evaluate independently well, the intrapersonal skills of each student will be visible. Self-directed learning activities cannot be separated from understanding the importance of literacy. Student independence in learning independently will be easily achieved if students have the ability to understand and process various information encountered when reading or writing. Learning which is currently carried out virtually or online certainly expands the variety of information and learning resources, mastering data-based literacy that does not only rely on textbooks. The activities in this service are focused on optimizing student independence in learning by improving literacy skills in online learning.

Keywords: Literacy, *Online Learning, Self Directed Learning*

INTRODUCTION

Almost all input components and process components in the implementation of education in Indonesia do not support the creation of quality education, and this happens in most schools in Indonesia (Astuti, 2007), including universities. School is an important environment for educating individuals to become individuals with character. Schools should instill character values in their school members, develop *soft skills* or *non- components* academic/non-cognitive , because in reality schools still focus on cognitive and academic aspects, both nationally and locally.

To realize students' maximum potential, it is important for students to have *self-directed learning* good *skills (Williamson, 2007) as stated by Galinsky (2010) that one of the basic skills that individuals must have is self-directed learning skills* , so the keyword in education is independence. The increasing challenges of life in the era of globalization (including the

AEC) mean that education must be able to provide adequate *hard skills* and *soft skills* to students so that they can actualize themselves positively in society, both now and in the future .

One of *the soft skills* that is important to train is *self-directed learning.* Individuals who have high *self-directed learning* will enable them to independently increase their knowledge and insight, complete their knowledge, update their knowledge, and adapt their knowledge according to the demands of life. By having high insight and knowledge, individuals will have better qualities so that they are able to compete and stand on an equal footing with other nations.

self-directed learning model opens up space for students to determine their learning process through their own initiative, exploration and self-regulation as well as freedom to learn in order to achieve maximum learning results and ultimately increase their independence in learning. According to Cahyaningsih (2020) *Self-directed learning* is a learning model carried out by each student for himself, maximum results will be obtained when students also work according to their abilities. In general, the learning process in *self-direct learning* is divided into three, the first is the planning stage, where students plan the components and learning targets they want to achieve, the second is the monitoring stage where students observe and observe their learning, the last stage is evaluation. *Self-directed learning* is a learning model in which a person analyzes learning needs, formulates learning goals, and evaluates learning results on his own initiative with or without the help of others (Pratiwi, and Laksmiwati, 2016).

Self-directed learning with a good understanding of literacy, namely the student's ability to manage, analyze and conclude any information obtained in writing or reading activities, is an old color that must be sharpened in current conditions, students must be able to explore the learning material more widely with a variety of type of digital literacy, meaning that limitations in carrying out online learning are not used as a substantial reason for achieving learning goals and outcomes.

Self-directed learning is an important factor in learning (Reio, 2004) which can be developed through planned educational interventions (Candy, in Williamson, 2007). The relationship between facilitators and students, the setting in which learning occurs, and the availability of required resources are seen as the main things in the independent learning process for students (Richard, 2007).

Educators have a very important role in facilitating the development of students' *selfdirected learning .* In an educational learning paradigm, educators as facilitators and learning resources not only transfer knowledge, skills and attitudes, but must also try to improve students' *self-directed learning . Self directed learning* will make students responsible are responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating their own learning and are expected to work independently or with others in order to achieve learning goals (Hiemstra & Brookfield, in Williamson, 2007).

The independent learning policy was designed by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, specifically the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Anwar Makarim. Freedom of learning according to Nadiem Anwar Makarim is the right to personal freedom of thought. This can be stated as (1) The concept of Independent Learning is a solution to the problems faced by teachers in the learning process, (2) Reduces the burden on teachers in carrying out their expertise by being independent or free. Determining learning assessments using appropriate tools, not influenced by learning management. adequate. requirements and freedom from pressure, criminalization and policies against teachers, (3) Provide a specific description of the problems teachers face when teaching in schools, starting from the problem of accepting new students, teacher management in learning, national examinations, and (4) Teachers must be leaders in educating the nation's next generation by designing a learning atmosphere and conditions that are able to attract students' attention (Mustagfiroh, 2020).

METHOD

The method implemented in this service is to reveal the problems faced by partners, the goals and solutions formulated. The method used to answer the problem is counseling and training. The extension method is used to convey information for general and theoretical material, in this case regarding providing material about the importance of improving *selfdirected learning* in online learning. And training methods are used to instill practical skills and abilities. The training method is used to provide training to prepare learning plans independently with an understanding of literacy in online learning.

DISCUSSION

This service activity is a solution to partners' problems, namely student learning independence which tends to be low, students' understanding of literacy is not yet optimal, and learning goals and outcomes in online learning are not yet optimal. Based on the problems described above, the solutions offered are as follows.

1. Providing students with an understanding of the importance of improving *selfdirected learning* .
2. Providing training and assistance to students on how to stimulate *self-directed learning.*
3. Providing training and assistance to students regarding digital literacy in the online learning era.
4. Providing training and assistance to students in achieving the learning goals and outcomes expected in online learning.

Effective learning requires planning both in terms of media and other supporting elements. Suroto, S., et al (2019). This service activity is an effort to improve students' abilities in *self-directed learning* . *Self-directed learning* is a learning model that opens up space for students to be able to take their own initiative, in analyzing their learning needs, determining learning goals, mapping learning resources, formulating and implementing learning strategies and evaluating learning outcomes (Partiwi, and Laksmiwati, 2016). *Selfdirected learning* , which means learning independently, cannot be interpreted as learning and solving problems in learning alone, but means how students gain knowledge on their own initiative to solve the problems they experience. According to Setyawati (2015) *Self-directed learning* is the ability of students to take the initiative to be responsible for what is being studied with or without the help of other people, awareness, strategy and learning activities as well as evaluation are important aspects in this learning model, in line with the above Nyambe (2015) stated that the *self-directed learning model* opens up opportunities for students to choose the desired learning design, starting from learning objectives, learning process plans, learning resources, academic decisions, to activities to achieve learning goals.

According to Aruan (2013) Self-directed learning is greatly influenced by several factors including.

a) Internal Factors (from within a person)
    1) Biological sex between men and women appears different, women are more consistent in carrying out tasks and have consistently higher intellectual abilities than men.
    2) Each student's way of learning is different, so it is necessary to understand how to learn according to each individual's needs
    3) Interest and health influence students' desire and motivation to study independently.

4) Intelligence behaves independently in students by increasing self-control in their personality and developing a critical attitude in deciding things freely 5) without the influence of others.
6) Individual education will allow them to know themselves better about their strengths and weaknesses.

b) External Factors (from outside a person)
1) Study Time, a person's ability is needed to be able to manage their own study time. If time management is good, independent learning will occur.
2) The study place and facilities in the form of a comfortable study place provide students with the desire to study independently.
3) Learning Motivation for example intrinsic motivation (realizing the importance of learning independently) and extrinsic (tests and grades).
4) Parenting style where an individual's personal development is determined by his parents so that parents are the first to influence, direct and educate him.

Freedom to learn is a trademark and there is no community involvement, so it cannot be called a policy. Don't let this just be a brand that turns into jargon but is considered an innovation (Charismiadji, 2021). Freedom to learn is cashclose which means it is clear what is meant, Schools with the Ministry of Education and Culture and the most important thing for PGRI is to see the data in the field that the teachers are very enthusiastic, for example during the pandemic they were very adaptive to the demands of digital literacy but the teachers were quickly able to adapting to delivering distance learning, which at that time was not in the college curriculum even while at school (Musfah, 2021). Freedom to learn at school not only teaches children to memorize and be filled with knowledge but also teaches them to practice thinking. However, teachers cannot do that during a pandemic (Listyarti, 2021).

There are four main policies related to independent learning (Kemendikbud, 2019). First, the national exam is a minimum skills assessment and personality survey. Assessments are carried out at levels 4, 8, and 9. This is what differentiates this assessment from national exams, where national exams are carried out at the end of each level of education. Second, national standard exams are carried out directly at schools. By determining assessments, schools gain independence, namely that schools are free to determine assessments in the form of portfolios, written assignments, etc. Third, classify the learning performance plan (RPP) format. For the sake of efficiency, the lesson plan is written on one page. The hope is that teachers do not waste time in the process of establishing learning authority so that their time can be used to improve skills and learning. Fourth, expand the zoning system except zone 3T in the New Student Admission System (PPDB). The PPDB system will provide more opportunities to candidates through success and affirmation pathways. Determining the planning area is left entirely to the regional government.

The concept of Merdeka Belajar is an important effort to change education in Indonesia, shifting the focus from a rote-based approach towards increasing critical thinking, creativity, independence and Pancasila values. This educational transformation has received various responses and challenges, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Assessing the success of this program involves a number of indicators, including student enthusiasm and teacher readiness, but also confronts issues such as budget allocation and unequal digital access. In facing these changes, it is important to encourage participation and dialogue between the various parties involved in implementing the concept of independent learning. This educational transformation process requires commitment and collaboration from the entire educational community and will have a significant long-term impact on Indonesia's future. Although there are various views and opinions regarding the concept of Merdeka Belajar, it is important to continue to develop this idea and overcome the challenges that arise. In the COVID-19 pandemic, education is one of the sectors that has been significantly impacted, and changing educational approaches has become

increasingly important to ensure quality and relevant education for Indonesia's young generation. By continuing dialogue and cooperation between various parties, we can achieve the goal of independent learning to shape better education in the future.

Assessing success in learning is an important step, and the "pro camp" has cited several indicators such as student enthusiasm and resilience in the past year. However, the statement suggests that enthusiasm and resilience may have weakened in the past year, and questions arise as to whether these indicators are significant enough to measure educational attainment. The statement also refers to the World Bank's warning that the literacy skills of Indonesian children could decline significantly over the course of one year. This can result in children having difficulty understanding what they read, which is an important indicator of learning. There is concern about the fact that, despite large budget allocations for educational improvement, the results may not be adequate, and there is a risk that many students are falling further behind in the learning process. This statement illustrates the need to discuss and improve educational approaches during the pandemic in order to achieve results in line with the ideals of educational development and economic growth in Indonesia. (Satria, 2021).

Even though education budgets are not evenly distributed, the level of school inequality continues to increase, even before the pandemic. This indicates a serious problem in the education system. This statement emphasizes that assessments of the success of Merdeka Belajar should not only be based on teacher dismissals or data that may be disputed, as happened with the World Bank. A more significant indicator is the impact felt by students, especially those at risk of dropping out of school. Government efforts to address this problem include derivative programs, such as bosses for honorary teachers and wage subsidies, which are designed to improve the conditions of teachers, especially those whose salaries are below the UMR (Regional Minimum Wage). In addition, improving broader educational conditions involves the key role of teachers in bringing about change. Teachers who have good competence and enthusiasm to share knowledge and experience with students and other teachers around them are considered important elements in achieving Freedom of Learning. These teachers are expected to not only be academically smart, but also able to develop mental attitudes that support a broader learning process and have a positive impact on students and society (Musfah, 2021).

The importance of continuing to increase dialogue and communication between the groups involved in conveying the pros and cons of Merdeka Belajar. It also emphasizes that transformative education is a good idea and is necessary to create multidimensional individuals with moral character and global insight. On the other hand, Merdeka Belajar education is also considered an instrument to encourage creativity in facing a future era full of disruption and globalization. In addition, contextualizing new educational methods to everyday life is key, and the results of these efforts may not be immediately visible, but need to be measured in the medium and long term. (Satria, 2021) Concluding that the idea of

Independent Learning is something that must be carried out seriously and involves active participation. The transformation of education in Indonesia requires a significant amount of time and must be carried out with extraordinary means and commitment from all parties. Merdeka Belajar is considered to be the solution being proposed by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud Ristek) at this time, and therefore, criticism and input from various parties are highly expected to ensure the success of this program (Iskandar, 2021).

The importance of real improvements in the superior human resource development program planned by President Jokowi. There are doubts about how far this program has gone and whether Indonesia is approaching superior human resource status or moving further away from it. This was expressed because many international studies also showed that progress was not in line with expectations. The statement emphasizes the need for involvement of the whole of society, not just elite groups, and supports public testing as a means of involving all parties in efforts to achieve this goal. In this context, it underlines the

importance of cooperation and broad community involvement in achieving superior human resources (Satria, 2021).

The issue that arises is the need to build balanced power relationships in schools, not just relying on a top-down approach. Principals have a huge influence on schools, and the question is whether teachers feel they have the space to contribute their ideas. The solution lies in creating a balance in power relations in schools. This includes the school development committee which has a role in decision making and school policy, and is not only a means of validation or the school principal's "stamp". School governance planning must consider the roles of the education office , school principals, teachers, students and parents. It aims to achieve a fair balance in interactions within the school, where the contribution of all parties is recognized and acknowledged. The goal is to create an atmosphere in schools where power relationships are more balanced and fair, so that all groups, including teachers, feel that their contributions are valued and fair (Matraji, 2021).

Technological advances in this era apart from providing many benefits also provide challenges. The automation that has developed recently is also greatly influenced by technology (Jaenudin, A., Suroto, S., & Astuti, DP (2019). Learning using the *self-directed learning method* must of course be balanced by students' understanding of literacy. Literacy is a very important ability for students to have, the ability to be able to access, understand and analyze any information accurately and intelligently is very much needed. In the Master Design of the Ministry of Education and Culture's Literacy Guide in Hidayah (2017) it is explained that the term "literacy" comes from the Latin word " *litratatus* " which in English is known as " *letter* " with a meaning that refers to the ability to read and write and then the meaning develops regarding the ability to master knowledge in a particular field. Meanwhile, in Law No. 3 of 2017 concerning Bookkeeping Systems, literacy is defined as "the ability to interpret information critically so that everyone can access science and technology as an effort to improve the quality of their life."

According to Belshaw (2011), there are eight essential elements for developing digital literacy, including:

1) Cultural, namely understanding the various contexts of digital world users;
2) Cognitive, namely the ability to think in assessing content;
3) Constructive, namely creating something expert and actual;
4) Communicative, namely understanding the performance of networking and communication in the digital world;
5) Responsible self-confidence;
6) Creative, doing new things in new ways;
7) Critical in responding to content; And
8) Socially responsible. Cultural aspects, according to Belshaw, are the most important element because understanding the user's context will help cognitive aspects in assessing content.

Based on the results of observations during the training process, the participants had high curiosity regarding the training on Improving *Self-Directed Learning* through Understanding Literacy in *Online Learning* which was discussed so that the information conveyed by the presenters was truly useful and reached the training participants. Thus it can be seen that *SelfDirected Learning* through Understanding Literacy in *Online Learning* is really needed by students. This can be proven through the average value of the pre-test and post-test results that have been carried out. In the data above, it can be seen that there is an increase between the pre-test and post-test scores. So it can be said that this activity has an influence on students' *Self-Directed Learning* .

CONCLUSION

Considering the important role of *soft skills* in facing life's challenges, including facing the AEC, it is time for formal education institutions, especially universities, to further improve the development of these *soft skills* through learning actions. One thing that must be developed is *self-directed learning* . Based on the results of this research, it is recommended that (1) lecturers use *inquiry based learning* to increase students' *self-directed learning* , (2) lecturers need to try to apply various alternative learning models that enable the development of students' *self-regulated learning* , (3) researchers to develop similar research further.

The concept of Independent Learning requires hard work and commitment from all parties, including teachers, school principals, the government and the wider community. In its implementation, it is important to create balance in power relations in schools, ensure active participation from all parties, and face real challenges, such as unequal digital access and changing approaches to learning. Even though there is still a lot of content and criticism regarding its implementation and impact, the concept of Merdeka Belajar reflects Indonesia's determination to liberate education, create multidimensional students, and face the future with creativity and strong moral character. It is an educational cultural revolution that is expected to bring long-term changes to the world of education in Indonesia.

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