

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In Chapter III of this research, the researcher delved into the methodology and instruments employed to explore the experiences of students majoring in English education at Antasari State Islamic University. The participants, belonging to the classes of 2019 to 2021, shared their insights on learning loss during the transition to online education amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Utilizing phenomenological research methods outlined by Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (2013), the study aimed to capture the essence of the participants' experiences through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis.

The researcher experienced unexpected challenges in recruiting volunteers for an interview-based study on learning loss. Despite the popularity of the issue, finding willing participants proved more difficult than expected. While the ultimate sample size was limited to three individuals, the researcher decided to conduct in-depth, semi-structured interviews from the start. This method sought to maximize the depth of the data obtained by allowing for a full examination of participants' experiences and viewpoints. Although the sample size is restricted, the interviews' thorough nature provides useful insights regarding learning loss. These findings can serve as a solid foundation for future studies that aim to replicate or expand on the research with a bigger sample size.

As the researcher transitions into Chapter IV, the findings and discussions derived from the firsthand accounts of students navigating the challenges of learning loss in the context of online education will be uncovered. Through the voices of Student A, Student B, and Student C, the impact of the shift from face-to-face to distance learning on learning achievement, enthusiasm for learning, academic performance, and the role of support and resources in shaping overall learning outcomes will be explored. By immersing in these narratives, a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding learning loss and the strategies needed to address it effectively will be gained.

The following are the findings and discussions that illuminate the experiences of students grappling with learning loss in the digital age, drawing upon the insights of Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (2013) to guide our exploration.

A. Findings

1. Evidence of Post-Pandemic Learning Loss Experienced by English Education Students:

a) Impact on Academic Performance:

Students reported a decline in academic results despite their efforts, indicating a potential learning loss due to the challenges presented by the pandemic:

Student A: "Before the pandemic, I felt mentally stable. However, during distance learning, anxiety and uncertainty increased... My emotions ranged between anxiety and frustration. Study concentration suffered, and academic results declined."

The quoted statement from Student A reflects how increased anxiety and uncertainty during distance learning led to a decline in academic results. This suggests that the challenges posed by the pandemic had a direct negative impact on academic performance

b) Increased Mental Health Issues:

Common themes of increased anxiety, stress, and uncertainty were reported, affecting concentration and academic results. These mental health struggles likely contributed to learning loss among students:

Student A: "Before the pandemic, I felt more free to discuss directly with classmates and lecturers... However, during distance learning, the limited interaction hampered my critical thinking skills."

The statement from Student A highlights the shift from feeling mentally stable to experiencing anxiety and frustration during distance learning. This change in emotional well-being affected study concentration and ultimately led to a decline in academic results, indicating a correlation between mental health struggles and learning loss

c) Challenges with Critical Thinking Skills:

Students highlighted the loss of collaborative learning and reduced interaction, which hampered their critical thinking skills:

Student B: "Previously, I was active in class discussion groups. We debated, analyzed, and sought solutions together. However, during distance learning, the limited interaction made me feel disconnected. Solving complex problems independently became a challenge."

Student B's statement illustrates the transition from active participation in collaborative discussions to feeling disconnected during online learning. The limited interaction hindered the student's ability to solve complex problems independently, indicating a potential decline in critical thinking skills due to reduced collaborative learning opportunities

d) Difficulties with Time Management and Motivation:

Students expressed challenges with time management, motivation, and adapting to the new learning environment:

Student C: "Before the pandemic, I liked to discuss with my classmates and lecturers. During distance learning, the limited interaction made me feel isolated."

The statement from Student C reflects the impact of limited interaction on feeling isolated during distance learning. This sense of isolation may have contributed to challenges with time management, motivation, and adapting to the new learning environment, potentially leading to learning loss

2. Solutions for the Learning Loss Phenomena According to the Students:

a) Adaptable Curriculum and Diverse Materials:

Students emphasized the importance of an adaptable curriculum that integrates diverse materials and activities to enhance understanding, motivation, and engagement:

Student A: "I focused on self-discipline... attending lectures..."

Student A's focus on self-discipline and attending lectures suggests that an adaptable curriculum with diverse materials and engaging activities could enhance student understanding and motivation. By catering to different learning styles, such an approach may help mitigate learning loss and improve academic performance

b) Flexibility and Support:

Students highlighted the benefits of flexibility and support in overcoming challenges and improving learning experiences:

Student B: "The support from lecturers and classmates was invaluable. They provided guidance on using the platform and helped me with technical issues."

The support provided by lecturers and classmates to Student B highlights the importance of flexibility and support in overcoming technical challenges. This assistance not only addresses immediate issues but also fosters a supportive learning

environment that can help students navigate difficulties and prevent further learning loss

c) Enhanced Social Interaction:

Students suggested the need for increased opportunities for collaborative learning, active discussions, and direct engagement with peers and instructors to foster critical thinking development and mitigate learning loss:

Student C: "Support from lecturers and classmates helped me overcome these problems. I do not hesitate to ask questions and find out about learning support applications."

Student C's reliance on support from lecturers and classmates emphasizes the significance of social interaction in overcoming challenges. By encouraging collaborative learning, active discussions, and direct engagement, educators can promote critical thinking development and mitigate the negative impact of learning loss on students' academic progress

d) Access to Resources and Support Systems:

Students acknowledged the importance of support and resources in their learning journey:

Student A: "Fortunately, I had support from my lecturers and classmates. They helped me understand the learning platform and provided tips to overcome technical problems."

The statement from Student A underscores the value of support from teachers and peers in understanding the learning

platform and overcoming technical problems. Ensuring access to resources and robust support systems can empower students to address challenges effectively, enhancing their learning experiences and potentially reducing the impact of learning loss

By considering these detailed explanations and the quoted statements provided by the students, educators can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by English Education students post-pandemic and implement targeted solutions to address learning loss effectively.

B. Discussion

The findings sheds light on the significant impact of the post-pandemic era on English education students, particularly in terms of learning loss and mental health struggles. The findings reveal a correlation between the challenges faced during the pandemic and the decline in academic performance among students. Evidences of post-pandemic learning loss experienced by English education students include a decrease in study concentration, a decline in critical thinking skills, difficulties with time management and motivation, and increased mental health issues such as anxiety, stress, and uncertainty.

The transition to online learning brought about challenges in maintaining social interaction, collaborative learning, and direct engagement with peers and instructors, which are crucial for fostering critical thinking development and mitigating learning loss. Students highlighted the need for

increased opportunities for collaborative learning, active discussions, and support from lecturers and classmates to overcome these challenges.

1. Evidences of post-pandemic learning loss experienced by English Education students:

The evidences of post-pandemic learning loss among English education students include a decline in academic results, challenges with critical thinking skills, difficulties with time management and motivation, and increased mental health issues such as anxiety, stress, and uncertainty.

- a) **Decline in Academic Results:** Students reported a decline in academic performance despite their efforts, attributing it to increased anxiety, uncertainty, and a decrease in study concentration during distance learning. This evidence suggests a direct negative impact of the pandemic challenges on academic outcomes. This is align with Giusti et al., (2021), they found that half of the student sample reported significant impairment in concentration and learning abilities during and after the pandemic, which potentially led to learning loss.
- b) **Challenges with Critical Thinking Skills:** Students highlighted a loss of collaborative learning and reduced interaction, leading to a decline in critical thinking skills. The limited interaction during online learning hindered students' ability to solve complex

problems independently, indicating a potential decline in critical thinking skills. This is align with Altowairiki (2021), challenges with critical thinking skills emerged as students highlighted a loss of collaborative learning and reduced interaction during online education. These limitations hindered their ability to independently solve complex problems, indicating a potential decline in critical thinking skills.

- c) **Difficulties with Time Management and Motivation:** Students expressed challenges with time management, motivation, and adapting to the new learning environment. Limited interaction during distance learning made students feel isolated, potentially contributing to difficulties in managing time, staying motivated, and adapting to the new learning format. This is align with Jiang and Attan (2024), their study emphasizes the role of time management in students' learning outcomes and sheds light on the complex interaction between learning motives, time management patterns, and academic achievements.
- d) **Increased Mental Health Issues:** Common themes of increased anxiety, stress, and uncertainty were reported among students, affecting their concentration and academic results. These mental health struggles likely contributed to learning loss among English education students. Barbayannis et al. (2022) stated that there was

a significant correlation between worse academic stress and poor mental well-being in all surveyed students.

2. **Solutions for the learning loss phenomena according to the students:**

According to the students, solutions for the learning loss phenomena include an adaptable curriculum with diverse materials, flexibility and support from lecturers and classmates, enhanced social interaction, and access to resources and support systems. These solutions aim to enhance understanding, motivation, and engagement, address technical challenges, and create a supportive learning environment to prevent further learning loss.

- a) **Adaptable Curriculum and Diverse Materials:** Students emphasized the importance of an adaptable curriculum that integrates diverse materials and activities to enhance understanding, motivation, and engagement. By catering to different learning styles, such an approach may help mitigate learning loss and improve academic performance. This is align with Figueras-Daniel (2023), they stated that by tailoring learning experiences to individual students, adaptive curriculum fosters engagement, interest, and equitable learning practices. It meets students where they are academically and reflects diversity in materials and content. The positive impact on student success is

evident, making adaptive curriculum an essential consideration for educators and policymakers.

- b) **Flexibility and Support:** Students highlighted the benefits of flexibility and support in overcoming challenges and improving learning experiences. Support from lecturers and classmates in addressing technical issues and providing guidance fosters a supportive learning environment that can help prevent further learning loss. This aligns with Allendoerfer (2022), who stated that adopting a model of flexibility and transparency during the COVID-19 crisis was valuable for students and instructors. The sudden shift to remote learning in March 2020 created upheaval, with students facing challenges related to internet access, stress levels, and time zone differences. By allowing flexibility around due dates and attendance policies and being transparent about assignment purposes, educators can care for students while maintaining academic rigor. This approach can be applied beyond crisis teaching, emphasizing individualized support and learning objectives.
- c) **Enhanced Social Interaction:** Students suggested the need for increased opportunities for collaborative learning, active discussions, and direct engagement with peers and instructors to foster critical thinking development and mitigate learning loss. Social interaction plays a crucial role in overcoming challenges

and enhancing the learning experience. This is align with Gokhale (2012), he explores the positive effects of collaborative learning on critical thinking skills. By engaging in collaborative activities, students actively discuss ideas, evaluate different perspectives, and learn from their peers. The social interaction inherent in collaborative learning fosters critical thinking development and contributes to better learning outcomes.

- d) Access to Resources and Support Systems: Students acknowledged the importance of support and resources in their learning journey. Support from teachers and peers in understanding the learning platform, overcoming technical problems, and accessing learning support applications can empower students to address challenges effectively and enhance their learning experiences. This is align with Babacan and Thurgood (2022), they emphasized the critical role of nonacademic learner support services for online students. These services go beyond the curriculum and provide social, emotional, and physical resources. The four key pillars addressed in this reference are: Faculty Interaction and Orientation, Assistance with Using Technology, Health and Well-being-related Support, and Support Enhancing a Sense of Community and Belonging.