Once Upon a Time When Covid Greets New Students

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Abstract

There have been many major changes that have occurred in several aspects of life since 2020 after the outbreak of the Covid-19 Virus around the world. In Indonesia, one of these changes is related to the education aspect. The change in the education system to online learning has a certain impact on the components in it. This research, which uses a qualitative descriptive method, attempts to describe how the 2020/2021 class students build relationships with fellow students during the Covid-19 pandemic lecture period with all its limitations, and what motives underline this. According to the results of structured interviews conducted with respondents from one of the private universities in Solo City, it was found that there are several ways of communicating to build relationships and there are several variations of the motives that underlie these students in communicating to build relationships with fellow students.

Keywords: Covid-19; Pandemic; Education; Communication; Relationships

Introduction

The year 2020 is a new history for the international world. In that year the whole world was shocked by the outbreak of the Novel Corona Virus Disease or better known as Covid-19. This Covid-19 virus outbreak was first discovered in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019 (Vlachopoulos, 2020). The Covid-19 virus attacks human respiration, there are several recognizable symptoms, such as fever, dyspepsia, pain, dry cough and shortness of breath. Covid-19 is very lethal and is characterized by respiratory failure and other multiorgan dysfunction (Sohrabi et al., 2020). The World Health Organization or commonly referred to as WHO, has determined this Covid-19 virus as a case of a global pandemic that spread to various countries in a fairly short time (Nirwansyah, 2020). Until the beginning of June 2021, according to data from WHO, there were 171,292,827 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 3,687,589 cases of death (WHO, 2021).

The Covid-19 virus outbreak has spread to all corners of the world, as well as Indonesia. Until the middle of the second quarter of 2021, there were 1,837,126 confirmed positive cases of Covid-19 and 51,095 deaths due to Covid-19 (Satgas Penanganan Covid-19, 2021). The first case in Indonesia was first discovered in Depok City, West Java on March 2, 2020, then this outbreak quickly spread throughout Indonesia (Toharudin et al., 2020). The government has responded by making several regulations that are

expected to reduce the number of cases. Starting from the prohibition of crowding, then social restrictions or what we usually call social distancing and also a rule that regulates physical distance or what we call physical distancing. In April 2020, the Government of Indonesia together with the Ministry of Health issued a regulation in the form of Large-Scale Social Restrictions or commonly called PSBB (Sutrisno, 2020).

In addition to these regulations, the Indonesian government has also issued several policies, such as, stay at home, work from home and also study from home (Zaharah et al., 2020). Some of these policies have a fairly serious impact on several important aspects, such as social, tourism, economic and education aspects. In the aspect of education, there have been considerable changes after the issuance of regulations from the Government of Indonesia through the Ministry of Education and Culture. The regulation is contained in a Circular Letter of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 04 of 2020, which contains the prohibition of face-to-face learning and replacing it with distance learning or commonly referred to as PJJ (Surat Edaran Kemendikbud Nomor 04 Tahun 2020,2020).

With the enactment of this circular, the world of education in Indonesia has officially entered a new era. Educators are asked to ensure that learning activities must continue, even though students must remain at home. In this situation, educators are required to design a learning media by utilizing online media (Saputra, 2020). Online learning will cause potential obstacles, lecturers and students are required to be able to adapt to an unusual teaching and learning process. In addition, lecturers and students are also required to be able to wisely use the media used during online learning so that communication can run effectively (Adiyanto, 2021).

Online learning is a teaching method that utilizes internet network technology, in the era of online learning, of course, there will be special strengths, challenges and obstacles (Jamaluddin et al., 2020). One of the strengths encountered is that it is not limited by space and time or in other words it is flexible. On the other hand, online learning also faces several obstacles in its implementation. There are two weaknesses in online learning, namely technical weaknesses and communication weaknesses. The technical weaknesses will be influenced by geographical factors, internet networks and costs to access the internet. While the weaknesses related to communication include the slow adaptation to the interlocutor, learning media that are not yet optimal in communication, the interactive atmosphere has not been built and empathy has not been developed between people involved in online learning (Hidayat et al., 2020). The change in the education system which usually uses face-to-face methods to lectures with online methods will of course require an adaptation process that is not simple (Vera, 2020).

Higher Education is one of the education providers who are also affected by government regulations related to learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The impact of changes in the education system in Indonesia is not only faced by education providers, but also faced by university students, who enter right in the 2020/2021 school year. Students who enter that year are immediately faced with a new learning system, namely online learning. This system makes students unable to meet face-to-face, either with fellow new students, or with lecturers as teachers. This is one of the weaknesses of online learning, namely the lack of opportunities for social interaction (Kong, 2020).

Basically, humans are social creatures who need each other in groups, thus requiring interaction and communication (Inah, 2013). So that the lack of opportunities for social interaction for new students from the 2020/2021 generation will cause a lack of smooth communication that exists in the online learning process that runs in universities. This also causes the communication process for building relationships between students to be not good, so that it will also affect the way they relate to each other.

Humans as social beings, have a need to socialize with the surrounding environment, so that humans will establish a friendship relationship, some even go up to the stage as friends, husbands or can also become wives. Relationships like this are included in the study of interpersonal communication (Prasanti & Dewi, 2018). In this study, researchers are interested in examining how new students from the 2020/2021 class build their relationships with fellow students during lectures during the Covid-19

pandemic with all its limitations. Then the next thing is what motives underlie them in building their relationships with fellow students.

Literature Review

Every human being will always have a reason when they will do something. A person will make their choices in communicating with others, according to how they assume other people, then according to the interpretation of a situation and the person's desire to fulfill his wishes (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). So, from this, the motives of each individual in this world to communicate will be very interesting to know.

William Schutz introduced a theory in 1958, which he named Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO). In this theory, William Schutz states that someone will be motivated to start a relationship to satisfy three needs, namely inclusion, control and affection. This statement is commonly known as the Postulate of Interpersonal Needs (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). The need for inclusion is a need that has a basis in which an individual wants to get a satisfaction by participating directly, being useful directly or contributing fully to a group based on his self-awareness after doing an interaction in the group. This need has an orientation to a person's desire as an individual who has the ability in certain conditions (Prasanti & Dewi, 2018). Broadly speaking, this inclusion need can also be called a sense of belonging to one another in a group situation.

The types of inclusion needs are divided into several, namely the first social type, the second undersocial type, the third oversocial type and the last is the pathological type. Social type is where there is someone who gets an ideal satisfaction of interpersonal needs. That person will always be happy with any situation, be it alone or with other people. Undersocial type, is a type that is owned by individuals who experience a condition of deficiency in meeting the satisfaction of their interpersonal needs. The individual will usually tend to avoid an opportunity to be in a group or join other people (Liliweri, 1994).

Next to the oversocial type, this type is someone who has an excessive degree of satisfaction of interpersonal needs in an inclusion, people who are in this type are usually extroverts, often always want to contact other people and have high hopes that other people can also contact them. The last type is the pathological type, people in this type can be regarded as people who fail in trying to get themselves involved in a group. In this type people will tend to feel anxious if they have to relate to other people (Liliweri, 1994).

The second need is the need for control. This need is the desire of an individual to form an interaction (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). This need can also be interpreted as a need that is based on the awareness of someone who wants satisfaction by giving control or leading interactions in a group (Prasanti & Dewi, 2018). There are four types of control needs, namely the first ideal or democratic type of control, the second type of control that is lacking or abdicate, the third type of excessive or autocratic control, and the last is the pathological control type.

The ideal control type or democrat, is an individual who will get the ideal satisfaction of his interpersonal control needs, this individual is able to give an order or be ordered by another individual, and this individual can take full responsibility and also give a responsibility to others. Next is the type of control abdicrat, this type is an individual who tends to be self-deprecating in his interpersonal relationships, usually an individual with this type will often take a position as a subordinate. The third is the autocratic type, an individual in this type will tend to be more dominant towards others in his interpersonal relationships, usually tends to dominate other individuals and also tries very hard to position himself in a high hierarchy. The last is the pathological type, an individual who is in this type is a person who is not able to receive control in any form from another individual (Liliweri, 1994).

The third need is the need for affection, the need to be liked by someone and the need to maintain a relationship (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). This need can also be interpreted as the need for an individual with his social environment, or the need to be able to build an intimate personal relationship with another individual. A person will need mutual recognition and an emotional friendliness with another individual. (Prasanti & Dewi, 2018).

There are several types of affection needs, the first is the ideal or personal type, then the second is the deficient or underpersonal type, the third is the excessive or overpersonal type of affection and the last is the pathological type of affection. The ideal or personal affection type is someone who obtains a satisfaction in fulfilling his interpersonal relationship needs for his affection needs. While the type of affection that is lacking or underpersonal is an individual who has a tendency to avoid an intimate attachment and maintain a relationship with other individuals by providing distance. Then the type of excessive or overpersonal affection is an individual who has a tendency to have a very close relationship with other individuals in his affection needs. The last is the pathological type, is an individual who experiences difficulties and an obstacle in fulfilling his interpersonal affection needs (Liliweri, 1994).

Methodology

The type of research used in this research is qualitative. This method is also known as the naturalistic research method, because it is carried out in natural conditions. Research with qualitative methods has the aim of explaining a phenomenon as deeply as possible through data collection as deep as possible (Sugiyono, 2019). The method used in this research is descriptive, where the researcher will collect data related to the factors that will support the object under study, after which the role of these factors will be sought (Arikunto, 2010). Qualitative Descriptive Method is a data processing method that is carried out by making an analysis of factors related to research objects by providing a data presentation in a more in-depth way towards the research object (Prabowo & Heriyanto, 2013).

Informants in this study will be selected using a purposive sampling technique, namely by taking a source sample from a data with certain considerations (Sugiyono, 2019). The informants selected in the study were five new students from the Class of 2020/2021 Mass Communication Study Program at the Indonusa Polytechnic who had a GPA or GPA with the criteria of being the best five in the class. This informant was selected based on the consideration that it is expected that the informants with the selected criteria will represent students or students who are actively involved in communication between fellow students.

Data collection carried out in this study will use interview techniques by conducting verbal or direct interactions between researchers and research subjects (Sevilla, 1993). The interview used is an in-depth interview type. Interviews by conducting a discussion with a certain direction determined by the researcher and directly carried out to the subject or informant to discuss the problem to be studied (Gunawan, 2016). The data analysis that was carried out afterwards was carried out to get an answer to the initial design and the initial questions of this research itself.

Discussion

Based on the results of interviews that researchers have conducted with all sources, it can be seen that the new students of the 2020/2021 class of the D3 Mass Communication Studies Program at the Politeknik Indonusa, are still trying to build interpersonal relationships with their friends in the midst of all the limitations they feel during lectures during the pandemic. In addition, the new students of the 2020/2021 class of the D3 Mass Communication Studies Program at the Politeknik Indonusa also have different motives in an effort to build interpersonal relationships with their classmates.

According to ten new students from the 2020/2021 class of the D3 Mass Communication Studies Program at the Politeknik Indonusa who were informants in this study, the situation was quite difficult when they entered the online lecture system. Those who were previously accustomed to the face-to-face learning system by meeting face-to-face either with the teacher or with their friends, could not easily adapt. Constraints are felt not only related to lectures, but also with their process in establishing interpersonal relationships.

The informants said that during the early lectures during the Covid-19 Pandemic they relied on social media as a tool for them to communicate with each other in building relationships. According to most of the informants, social media was deemed insufficient in meeting their needs in building relationships. But there are also some people who feel there is no problem if they have to communicate to build relationships using only social media. Of all the informants interviewed by the researcher, they also have various motives in establishing relationships with their friends.

As stated by a first student with the initials RK, she feels that social media, such as *WhatsApp* Group, can help her need to communicate and build relationships with her friends. She involved herself in the conversation that took place in it, and also involved herself to start helping and solving some problems that occurred with her friends during the online lecture period. In fact, she is quite good at communicating directly either by telephone or private chat with her friends. She feels quite close to all his friends in class. Even during the Covid-19 Pandemic, she occasionally tries to meet her friends face to face. According to her, by doing this, she can feel that his needs in relation to her friends can be fulfilled. According to the results of the questions and answers in this study, the interaction needs motive of RK students is included in the category of socially fulfilled inclusion needs.

The second student, with the initials EP, said something different about this. The first time a class was included in a *WhatsApp* Group by the campus, she felt that one person had to lead or be at the forefront of coordinating the class. So she started to involve herself in communicating both in *WhatsApp* Group or private chat and also telephone with every individual in her class. She would always be the first when something was discussed together in class. She will distribute tasks to his friends when a systematic joint work is needed. When she is given a task by his friends, he will also work on it and complete it with full responsibility. Her personal relationship with her friends is quite good, even some of her friends who were involved as informants in this study said that they were quite good in their relationship with this EP informant. According to the answers to the questions that have been posed in this study, the motive for communicating to build relationships described by EP students is included in the control needs category of the democrat type.

Next is the third student who has the initials HS. As one of the students who has the highest five GPA in the class, he has unique things that are interesting to discuss. HS said that when he was first included in a *WhatsApp* Group containing his classmates, he tried to find information from his classmates, either by looking directly at his friends *WhatsApp* profiles or by looking for other social media accounts. According to him that way he will understand how he should behave towards each individual in his class. He wants to be able to relate closely and be able to communicate well with every individual in his class. According to some of his friends who became informants in this study, HS is a fairly popular person in his class, and has always been one of the individuals who have quite good relations with his classmates. In fact, there is an interesting fact, less than a year together in a group, HS already has a girlfriend who is also a classmate. According to the results of interviews that have been conducted, the motive for the interaction needs of HS students is included in the category of ideal type of Affective needs.

The fourth student has the initials PR, some facts obtained from this student are quite unique. She is one of the students who tend to be quiet and introverted. Even when the researcher conducted an interview with her, not much information could be extracted from the student. She said that during nearly a year of studying during the Covid-19 pandemic, she did not communicate enough with his friends. She will communicate with her friend if her friend first to contact her. She tends to be a passive student in

relating to her friends. Because according to her, she is not good enough in stringing words in starting a conversation. She tends to choose to be a passive reader in his class *WhatsApp* Group. Based on from what has been answered by PR students as one of the informants in this study, the motive for the interaction needs of PR students is included in the category of Inclusion needs with the undersocial type.

The last or fifth student has the initials YS. During the interviews conducted by the researcher on this student, he was the one student who was the most different from his other friends. This student tends to speak in a fairly loud voice, this student also always tries to get closer to the researcher by asking questions that are outside the context of the research. After going through interviews with researchers, it was found that YS students tend to be people who always want to be actively involved in making decisions related to their friends. According to him, he is always the owner of the solution to all the problems that occur in his class. According to his claim, he can always be close to his friends by frequently sending private chats to each other on *WhatsApp* and also frequently making phone calls with his friends directly or using other social media. However, as far as the researcher observed, YS students tended to not be spoken to by other informants who incidentally were their classmates who, according to YS, were very close to him. As for looking at the answers given by the last student, YS students are classified as people who have an inclusive interaction motive with the oversocial type, then control with the autocratic type and also affection with the overpersonal type.

Conclusion

Based on the results of interviews with all selected informants, namely New Students of the Politeknik Indonusa Surakarta, Mass Communication Study Program 2020/2021 class, it can be seen that even though they are currently studying during the Covid-19 Pandemic, this does not limit their need for social interaction with one another. They still communicate with each other using *WhatsApp* or other social media and also sometimes meet in person or face to face. This can show that their needs as social beings must always be met, namely to interact and also relate to each other.

The motives of each student in communicating to establish relationships are different. Of the five interviewees, they had various implied and explicit motives from the answers given during the interview with the researcher. Some experienced problems and some seemed quite fluent in interacting and relating. Although it appears that the closeness of their relationship cannot be as strong as if the lectures were conducted offline or face-to-face as in the years before the introduction of online lectures before the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus.

All the motives of the informants who have been interviewed by the researcher are very similar to what has been conveyed by William Schutz in the Fundamental Interpersonal Relationship Orientation Theory or FIRO, which states that an individual will be motivated to start a relationship or relationship with the aim of satisfying three needs, namely inclusion, control as well as affect. It can be seen from the results of interviews that the implementation of inclusion needs is related to all the needs to interact and be known, then the need for control can be seen in how the desire of an individual to be able to hold control and make a difference in his social environment, as well as the need for affection which is manifested by how he needs attention and then sense of belonging. affection and love from the social environment.

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