

Interests of Indonesian Islamic Students in using Social Media as a Means of Online Learning during the Post Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT: Although the COVID-19 pandemic has ended, the traces of post-Covid-19 online learning in Indonesia are still ongoing. This manuscript reports the level of student interest in Islamic higher education in using social media as a means of online learning. The study, which involved 471 students from three Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia, used thematic analysis. The research findings show that the most attractive social media platforms for online learning in Indonesia are Google-Meet, Zoom App, Youtube, Whats App, Facebook, Instagram, and E-Learning Applications created by campuses. However, the lecturers feel that the use of social media as a means of online learning is not effective. This is indicated by the low involvement of students during online learning, as well as the problem of uneven internet access for students living in remote areas in Indonesia. This has an impact on the emergence of boredom to a decrease in student participation and motivation to learn. This study recommends that the findings be used as a basis for consideration in evaluating policies and implementation of online learning in Islamic higher education.

KEYWORDS: Islamic higher Education, Online Learning, Social Media

I. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic forced the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia to issue Regulation Number 4 of 2020 which requires learning activities to be carried out online [1]. The issuance of these instructions is part of the government's commitment to combating the spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia through education. This rule was then followed by educational regulations at Islamic universities which instruct lecturers and students not to study on campus, but to virtual with online learning platforms [2]. This policy was held to prevent the transmission of the Covid-19 virus among students[3]. However, the lack of interaction and supervision between lecturers and students actually has an impact on the low academic ability of students [4]. This is due to drastic changes in the choice of media, models, and tactics because the implementation of online learning and face-to-face learning in class is very different.

In the realm of education in Indonesia, so far studies on online learning tend to discuss three issues. First, existing research offers more of a conceptual study of online learning, which only discusses the meaning, benefits, drawbacks, and incomplete theoretical framework [5], Second, online learning research is generally applied to basic education institutions. In fact, in terms of human resources and infrastructure, universities outperform primary and secondary schools [6], so it is interesting to see whether the availability of such infrastructure can make it easier for students to adapt to online learning. Third, online learning research during the Covid-19 period was more related to how it contributed to reducing physical contact, but did not explain how effective it was in improving students' academic abilities [7], especially in Islamic religious education institutions which in Indonesia are more identical to conventional learning.

Of the three trends, there are still few studies that look at the dynamics of online learning in Islamic higher education. In fact, this topic is important because the character of Islamic education in Indonesia is very distinctive from traditional learning [8], while online learning forces students to use digital platforms [9]. So it is interesting to do research on the dynamics of online learning in Islamic universities. Therefore, this research will focus on three topics: a) what digital application platforms are used in the online learning process; b) how is the response of students in Islamic higher education in online learning; and c) what are the challenges faced in online learning. These three answers can provide recommendations for universities in Indonesia to develop better learning management

II. METHODS

This study is a qualitative type using a phenomenological approach. This decision is taken to describe an individual's life experience related to a concept or phenomenon [10]. Meanwhile, Husserl stated that phenomenological research is based on the

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direct experience of participants, so that they can see firsthand the experience of participants [11]. Data were collected by in-depth interviews, documentation studies, observation, and surveys. The data sources in this study consisted of 471 students and three lecturers. In balance, they come from leading Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia, including Walisongo State Islamic University, Semarang, Nahdhatul Ulama Islamic University Jepara, and KH. Abdurrahman Wachid State Islamic University, Pekalongan.. Then from 471 respondents, 8 respondents were randomly selected for in-depth interviews. This effort can be done to find out the reasons why respondents choose certain answers in the completed survey [11].

The decision was taken to obtain varied data. Eight randomly selected informants were asked questions, recorded, and then transcribed orally with informed consent. Informants were given the initials M for students, and initials D for lecturers to maintain confidentiality. The interview procedure was terminated when data saturation was reached and no new information was received [12].

Table 1. Profiles of randomly selected respondents for in-depth interviews

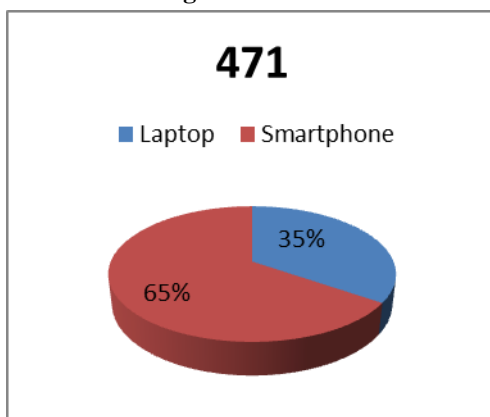
Student			Lecturer		
Initial	Sex	Age	Initial	Sex	Age
M1	Female	19	D1	Female	34
M2	Female	20	D2	Female	27
M3	Female	20	D3	Male	47
M4	Female	21			
M5	Female	23			
M6	Male	21			
M7	Male	21			
M8	Male	23			

The interpretation and findings of this study are based on the thematic data analysis [10]. It is considered the best choice for research seeking to establish multi-interpreted data. All interpretations are available in the theme analysis [13]. The theme approach leads to an in-depth investigation to address a particular problem [11]. This is done in three stages of analysis, namely reading the transcript over and over again, making exploratory comments on the parts that are considered important, and developing the main theme. After analyzing, the researcher found the findings in the research problem [14].

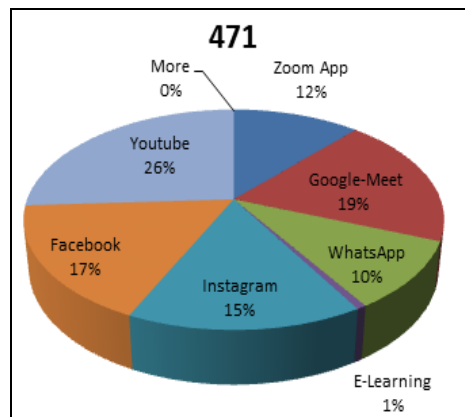
III.RESULTS

This study highlights a number of critical issues in the implementation of online learning in Islamic universities in Indonesia. The problem is focused on knowing the type of media used, online learning responses, and the learning challenges felt by students. This decision was taken to look at the same side of previous studies in other countries [3], [15], until it is known whether there are differences from the findings.

1. Platforms used in online learning



Pic. 1. Students' preferred hardware



Pic. 2. The social media most often used by students for online learning

The findings reveal that in online learning, 65% of students prefer to use smartphones and another 35% use laptops as online learning aids. While in the types of social media that are most often used, 12% choose Zoom App, 19% Google-Meet, 10% WhatsApp, 1% E-Learning, 12% Instagram, 17% Facebook, 26% Youtube. This data shows that the majority of respondents use

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YouTube more often as a learning medium, compared to e-learning applications designed by universities. They also prefer to use smartphones rather than laptops as study aids.

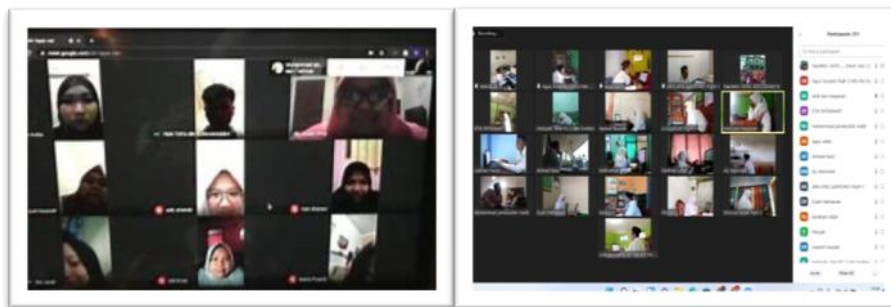
Each respondent has various reasons for using the selected device. According to informant M1, the laptop was chosen because it is more comfortable to operate, while informant M4 stated that the laptop has a larger screen size, does not need to be held constantly, and can be positioned in various positions, as well as the ability to launch additional applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, browsers/search engines, and other applications (M2). While the drawback is that laptops are less portable so they can't be carried anywhere (M8). Likewise, other informants (M2 and M7) stated that using a laptop for more than 3 hours during lectures would cause the laptop to stop working, as experienced by their colleagues..

However, many students use smartphones which are considered more practical. Informant M2 stated that smartphones were easier to use, while informant M6 stated that their use consumes less internet data based on their observations. The problem with smartphones is that they have a small screen, which makes the presentation of the presenter difficult to see clearly (M4). Smartphones, unlike computers, require a tripod to maintain a stable position (M1). In addition, the M3 informant stated that the use of large applications for a long time can cause the smartphone to heat up faster. Interfere with application performance (M3).

In terms of software, the majority of students chose the Zoom and G-Meet programs as their favorite software, rather than the E-Learning facilities made by the campus. Informant (M7) stated that the zoom application can accept a larger number of participants while still providing good audio and video quality (M8). Meanwhile, informant M2 stated that zoom has a time limit, so that sometimes the material presented by the lecturer is not finished, but the time for zooming has run out. M3 and M4 informants stated that Zoom consumes large amounts of data packets and they are worried about data breaches that occur to Zoom users due to hacking because Zoom is still using TLS (Transport Layer Security), which is open to eavesdropping and information theft (M5). As a result, most of the informants chose to take advantage of Google Meet.

According to the majority of informants, Google-Meet is easier to use than Zoom (M7, M8). In addition, G-Meet, according to respondents M4, does not cause the phone to overheat and saves more data than zoom. Meanwhile, G-meet's limitation is that it cannot change the background display, and the free service is only limited to 36 people (M5). Some informants also stated that managing G-Meet is more challenging than Zoom in terms of displaying power slides for sharing presentation materials because the menu is more limited than Zoom.

When asked to compare the use of zoom and G-Meet, the informant gave a different point of view. The advantage of the Zoom feature is that it can change the virtual background which allows informants to set an image or video as the background during the meeting (M2). Even M7 informants stated that there is a Touch Up My Appearance menu offering which is basically a filter that smoothes the skin, and makes itself look more beautiful (M1) This is different from Google Meet, where it is said that the conference tool does not have special specifications. Because, from the beginning Google put more emphasis on simplicity.

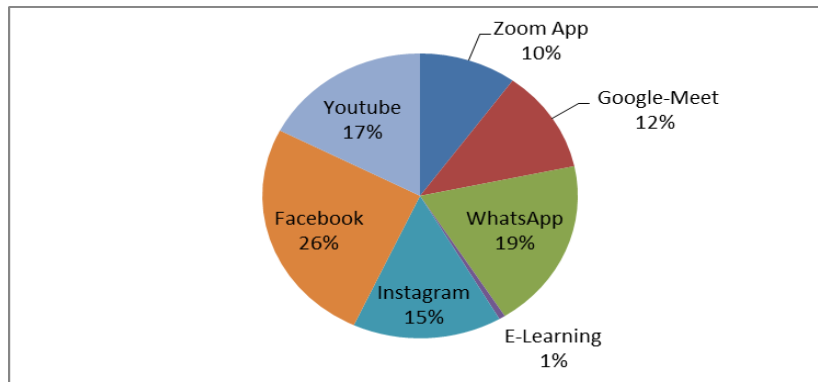


Pic. 3. Learning using Google-meet **Pic.4. Learning using Zoom App**

Both competitors do have subscription packages with additional advantages, especially the ability to record. However, the packages offered by G-Meet are more expensive. From the number of participants, Zoom has a large number of participants (D2). Where, the most expensive package on Zoom is even able to support meetings with 500 participants. while the most expensive Google Meet package is limited to 250 participants (D1). Google Meet plans start at US\$6 per month allowing up to 100 people to join the meeting. That amount can go up to 150 for the next package, if the participant pays 12 US dollars a month (D3).

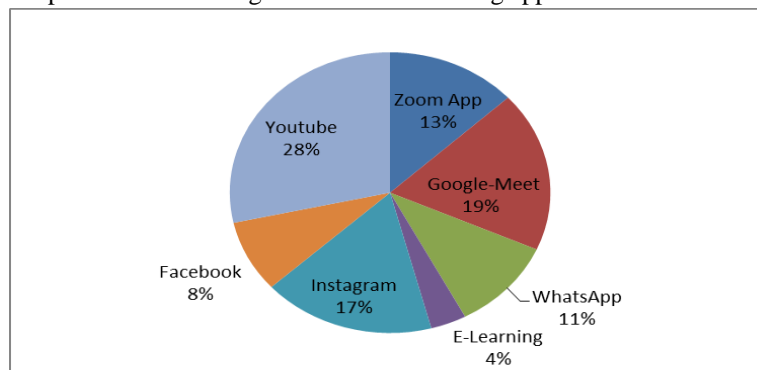
In addition to zoom and G-Meet, online learning also uses social media applications Whats Apss, Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube. However, these four applications are not used very often in lectures. Because lectures are conducted with video displays, the video call features provided by Whats Apss, Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube are not eligible to carry out online learning (D3). In addition to the very limited number, Whats Apss, Facebook, and Instagram also have poor video call quality, apart from not being able to display the presentation file display (D1). As for Instagram and Youtube applications, lecturers usually use them for additional material (D1, D2, D3). The following is a comparison of student selection regarding social media used for learning:

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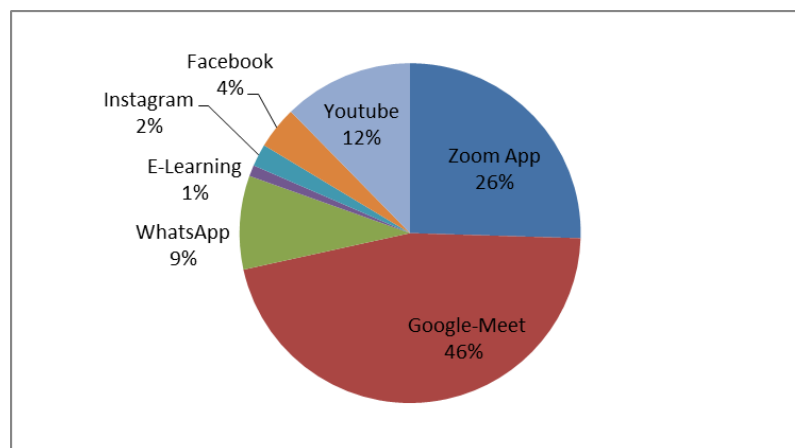
Pic. 5. The easiest social media to use for online learning

The majority of students view that the easiest social media to use is Facebook with a percentage of 26%, followed by Whats Apss 19%, Youtube 17%, Instagram 15%, G-Meet 12%, Zoom 10%, and E-Learning 1%. Respondents (M1, M2, M3, M8) stated that the socialization carried out by the campus was still lacking so that the E-Learning application was not understood by students.



Pic. 6. Social media that has the best audio-visual quality for online learning

The majority of students view that the social media that has the best audio-visual quality is Youtube with a percentage reaching 28%, followed by G-Meet 19%, Instagram 17%, Whats Apss 11%, Zoom 13%, Facebook 8%, and E-Learning 4%. In our survey, this data was adopted through the question "Under the same signal strength conditions, which of the following social media has the best audio-visual quality?".

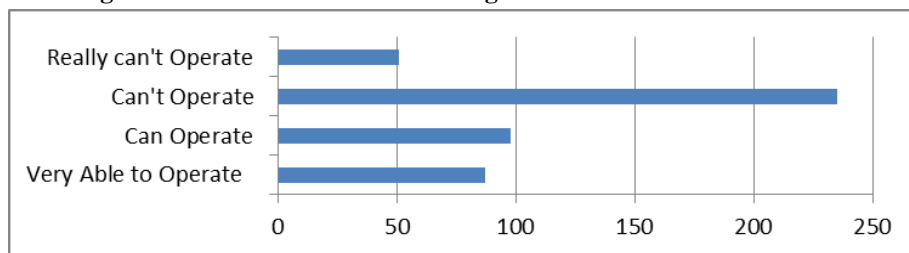


Pic. 7. The most suitable social media for online learning

The majority of students view that the most suitable social media for online learning is Google-Meet with a percentage of 46%, followed by Zoom 26%, Youtube 12%, Whats Apss 9%, Facebook 4%, Instagram 2%, and E-Learning 1%. This data was adopted through the question "As far as your experience following online learning, what platform is most suitable for online learning?" on the google form link that we share.

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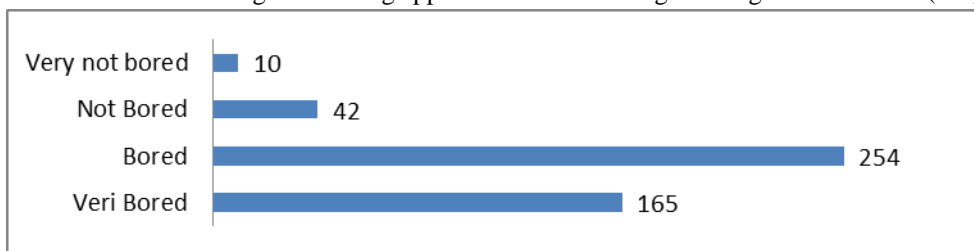
2. Student responses in using social media as an online learning tool



Pic. 8. Students' ability to operate digital devices for online learning

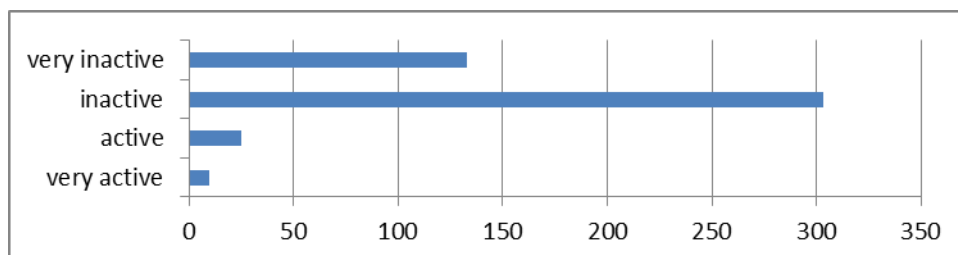
The results showed that more than 50% of students had not been able to operate the online learning platform properly. Before the implementation of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, informant M8 said that he was not familiar with Zoom, G-Meet, and even E-Learning. Informants M1, M2, M3, M7, and M8 admitted that they could not operate the E-Learning account provided by the campus. They experience various obstacles such as difficulty logging in due to a system error, confused about which menu to choose when the lecturer announces the uploaded material/task via E-Learning, and confused about how to submit assignments via E-learning.

Meanwhile, M4 informants did not understand the procedures for using digital devices provided by the campus (E-Learning). This is reinforced by the testimony of informant M8 who stated that it is still difficult to do screen share/presentation of impressions to other participants, either through zoom or G-Meet. At the time of the presentation, they asked their friend who knows better to help display the sharing screen. For those who understand, on average studying the menu at zoom/G-meet is self-taught (M5). Meanwhile, the D3 informants studied it through Youtube, although there were a small number of students who claimed to have received material about digital learning applications when taking learning media courses (M6)..



Pic. 9. The answer to the question "Do you feel bored when online learning takes place?"

This study shows that most students in Islamic universities feel bored when participating in online learning. The findings show that 35% are very bored, 54% are bored, 9% are not bored, and 2% are not very bored. According to students, the online learning system used tends to be unstructured with a long period of time (M2, M8, M5). This is exacerbated by the number of assignments given by the lecturer which can cause a feeling of laziness and boredom. The M2 informant said that what he did not like about online learning was not being able to meet face-to-face with lecturers. There is a sense of saturation when the lecturer explains the material monotonously but does not provide clarity so that students seem to be forced to understand the material by themselves (M1, M7, M8). This makes them feel lazy and bored. The monotonous implementation of online learning using limited applications causes a sense of laziness in participating in learning (M5). Coupled with the many assignments and materials, but the lack of explanation and reinforcement from the lecturers causes boredom of students to study (M8). Informant M6 stated that online learning boredom was also caused by learning that was carried out for a long time, the media and methods tended to be the same.



Pic. 10. The level of student activity in learning .

This study shows that most students in Islamic universities are not actively participating in online lectures. Out of 471 students, their acceptance based on the distributed questionnaire showed that 2% were very active, 5% were active, 65% were inactive, and

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28% were very inactive while participating in online learning. The results of this study show the low involvement of students in the learning process. Informants M1, M3, M7 and M8 admitted that they never asked/give input to the lecturer after the material was delivered. Not because he understood what the lecturer said, but because the audio quality was so bad that he couldn't understand the material presented by the lecturer (M3). Informant M2 said that the material delivered through online learning tends to be confusing because he cannot easily follow the lesson (M5). Confession of the lecturer (D2), stated that when asked to hold discussions in online classes, students were silent and made the class quiet.

A. In addition to the activeness of students, the lecturers also admitted that they were annoyed with the attitude of students who did not focus on attending lectures (D1). In fact, according to the D2 informant, many students often turn off the camera during lectures. Worse yet, students admitted that when conducting online lectures they were also accompanied by other activities outside of lectures such as chatting with parents (M1), playing with pets (M3, M8), or when traveling on public transportation (M2, M4). Even though one of the ethics that must be considered when taking online lectures is that students keep the camera feature on as a form of respect for lecturers who are happy to share knowledge with students.

3. Constraints faced by students in online learning

The geographical condition of Indonesia as an archipelagic country is the main obstacle in fulfilling the availability of internet services. This affects the implementation of online learning because the distribution of students is almost evenly distributed throughout Indonesia. Students who claim to have network difficulties are those from East Nusa Tenggara, Papua, Palembang, and Sulawesi. On average, students who live on the island of Java do not experience internet interference except for certain phases such as blackouts, heavy rain, and/or in rural areas with weak signal strength (M3).

Regarding additional financing for purchasing internet data packages, all informants admitted that they were burdened. Based on in-depth interviews that have been conducted, the informants spend a data package of 500-2200 Mega stanzas for one meeting with an average of 1000 mega stanzas for two credits.

Table 2. Calculation of the use of internet data packages for learning

Student			Teacher		
Inisial	Number of data Packets Used (in MB)	Lecture Period	Inisial	Number of data Packets Used (in MB)	Lecture Period
M1	631	2 SKS	D1	817	2 SKS
M2	508	2 SKS	D2	592	2 SKS
M3	2002	4 SKS	D3	601	2 SKS
M4	700	2 SKS			
M5	915	3 SKS			
M6	800	SKS			

Whereas in one week there are 24 credits that must be followed, so it can be concluded that in one week they spend a minimum of 12,000 Mb for lectures, meaning that in one month they need a minimum of 48,000 Mb to take online lectures. According to the informant, the size of the data package issued depends on the length of time used for lectures. It is also influenced by the type of application and software used. If you use zoom, it consumes more data than G-Meet. While the use of laptops consumes more data than smartphones. Informant M4 said, at least one month spent 100 thousand rupiah to buy a data package only. While in the area where they live, there is no signal that can be used to take online lectures, so even though they cannot attend face-to-face lectures, these students also continue to pay for boarding houses in areas close to campus so that their academic journey is not disrupted (M5). Another informant said that the data package assistance provided by the government was not evenly distributed. Including himself and many other friends who have actually registered their phone numbers in academic accounts, but have not received data package assistance from the government (M2, M3, M8).

IV. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Our research shows that 65% of college students prefer to use smartphones over laptops. In this case, Arjunina Maqbulin, (2021) announced that the use of smartphones as online learning media was chosen by students because it was more flexible. However, Ikhrom stated that using a smartphone is actually not better than a laptop, because it has limited features with a small screen. Therefore, socialization regarding the selection of online learning hardware is very important, [18] none other than so that the selection of the use of learning hardware is adjusted to the needs of learning objectives. [19]

Regarding the type of social media used in online learning, Youtube was the most chosen application by students (26%). Batdi, V., Dogan, Y., & Talan, 2021 revealed that among the causes of the large number of youtube users for learning because it has HTML

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link facilities, Embed learning video codes that can be shared on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and also websites. However, when asked about the most suitable type of social media for learning, 46% of respondents chose Google-Meet and another 26% chose Zoom App. related to this, Adedoyin, O. B., & Soykan, 2020 stated that students and lecturers need features to present learning materials, so Google-Meet and zoom are considered the most effective.[18]

Both competitors do have subscription packages with additional advantages, especially the ability to record. However, the packages offered by G-Meet are more expensive. From the number of participants, Zoom has a large number of participants (D2). Where, the most expensive package on Zoom is even able to support meetings with 500 participants. while the most expensive Google Meet package is limited to 250 participants (D1). Google Meet plan prices start at 6 US dollars per month allowing up to 100 people to join the meeting. That number can go up to 150 for the next plan, if you pay 12 US dollars a month. Meanwhile, the most expensive plan goes for 25 US dollars per month which allows the use of up to 250 participants per meeting [20].

The use of Facebook and Instagram in education is indeed less effective for learning. Footnote said, when learning is delivered with Facebook, children sometimes switch their concentration to see other features that are not in accordance with learning. In line with that, the unavailability of presentation menus on Instagram and Facebook makes online learning less flexible [21]. Moreover, the public nature of Facebook is sometimes interfered with by people other than students to comment[22] [23].

This study also stated that 52% of respondents admitted that they were very inactive in participating in online lectures, while 34% of them were inactive. This is very likely because the survey shows that more than 54% of respondents feel bored and study is boring. The lack of student involvement in online lectures during the Covid-19 pandemic can occur because learning is held incidentally and suddenly, so lecturers are less mature in planning and developing online lecture designs [24]. Students are also not ready materially and mentally in the face of a lecture system that is suddenly out of the ordinary[25]. The unpreparedness of these students ultimately causes a sense of saturation and frustration in participating in online learning [26]. There needs to be good planning by lecturers so that the implementation of online lectures can run optimally.

In addition to the above, this study also shows that internet access is an obstacle for students in participating in learning. The geographical condition of Indonesia as an archipelagic country is an obstacle in fulfilling the availability of internet services in the 3T area [27]. The areas outside Java that are the least accessible to the internet, with 70 million Indonesians having difficulty accessing the internet [28]. Students who claim to have network difficulties are those from East Nusa Tenggara, Papua, Palembang, and Sulawesi. In online learning, the failure of internet access gives the meaning of learning failure[19]. Because the problem of internet access makes students unable to properly accept the material presented by the lecturer. [29]

From the data that has been collected, it can be understood that the implementation of online learning in Indonesia requires a transition to an educational model that is in line with the digital era. Previous studies revealed that online learning platforms bring benefits to students when used as emergency learning media [30] In addition, most of the studies mentioned show that students generally have a positive attitude towards online learning [31], although they sometimes experience technical problems because of self-taught information literacy with all the benefits from online learning such as: better results in assimilating information [32]. adapting courses to student needs, flexibility, student centeredness[33] and eliminating barriers of space and time, to other things that motivate students to join in the conversation and exchange opinions [34] .

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

To increase the usefulness of social media in the implementation of online learning in Islamic higher education, several recommendations are proposed, which can be summarized as follows: (a) Strengthen collaboration between Islamic educational institutions and digital education training institutions, to train lecturers and students to be able to use learning technology. (b) Develop an integrated education policy between Islamic higher education and training institutions, which should be part of a structured partnership. (c) Rethinking the lecturer recruitment process to include an ability test to utilize digital tools for learning, and (d) stimulating national reflection on the process of implementing online learning to determine the best approach to balance it.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study shows that online learning implemented in Islamic higher education in Indonesia is essentially a form of conventional learning presented in digital format through information technology. This innovation can be used to replace face-to-face learning during the Covid-19 pandemic at Islamic universities in Indonesia. This study shows that the use of social media in online learning has not been maximized, as evidenced by the high number of students who are bored and not actively attending lectures. However, many students consider the use of Google-Meet and the Zoom App as the right media, giving hope that lecturers need to modify the learning system so that lectures can run optimally. Finally, the results of our study need to be supplemented by other studies with a larger number of respondents. Due to the limited number of respondents in this study, it has an impact on the limited updating of data, so it cannot be used to generalize the phenomenon of online learning in Indonesia as a whole.

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