

ESP STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES IN USING EDMODO

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Abstract: *Following the trend of ICT in teaching and learning English, many higher education institutions have an intention to lead the students into a digital environment by using Edmodo as an online platform. This study investigates ESP (English for Specific Purposes) students' experiences and challenges in using Edmodo. The data from this study were collected using questionnaires shared with 120 students and focus group discussions volunteered by ten students. The study revealed that the students frequently used Edmodo to help their academic achievement ($\bar{x}=3.63$). They also regularly felt comfortable using Edmodo as their learning circumstances ($\bar{x}=3.61$), and they occasionally had a problem using Edmodo ($\bar{x}=3.14$). The focus group interview discovered that the use of Edmodo can motivate them to learn English since it is an effective tool that can be accessed everywhere and anytime, especially for doing assignments and quizzes, communicating with one another, and collaborating with students from other schools or countries. Moreover, although they did not find any difficulties using Edmodo, they were worried about answering the questions in quizzes and assignments because they might make typos, incomplete sentences, or incorrect answers. Importantly, the result can be expanded into online learning circumstances to a new standpoint that can efficiently manage virtual activities in learning English using Edmodo. For further work, it is recommended to investigate the students' experiences and challenges of other e-learning platforms and their impact and motivation for the student's academic performances.*

Keywords: *Edmodo; Online Learning; ESP*

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INTRODUCTION

Through the past decades, education in Indonesia has been varied by the fast and rapid revolution in using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the Internet. As a result, students have converted the way they learn, read the learning materials, and access information. Diwan (2017) believed technological advancements develop people's lives controlled by the emergence of Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, the Internet of Things, Autonomous Vehicles, and Nanotechnology. These circumstances are

called Fourth Industrial Revolution, also known as Industry 4.0, affecting not only business and governance but also education. Thus the name Education 4.0 comes into existence. Therefore, many social learning environments and educational instruments are now available online. Both teachers and students can use ICT and the Internet and access many resources easily.

Education 4.0 is a current trend of digitalization in teaching and learning, which is almost implemented in every education institution. It showed that every teacher should be able to use ICT in their class. Education has to be able to adapt to new methods to follow up with the changes happening in technology since teaching and learning methods are derived from coping with the current technological revolution in the context of education 4.0 (Abdelrazeq et al., 2016, Ferdian, 2017). Since Education 4.0 continues to change, new challenges arise. Therefore, every teacher should be able to use innovative technologies and introduce new methods to support the teaching and learning process.

The impacts of education 4.0 have been reflected in any subjects, including teaching and learning. Hence, English teachers become facilitators to help students going through different stages in learning English. In other words, the teachers must organize and manage all the technological resources (websites, video links, wikis, blogs, podcasts, etc.) to support students' learning (Ochoa & Roberto, 2011, Ferdian, 2017). Many publications have shown that students prefer to learn online and can learn more successfully in virtual classrooms (Woltering, Herrler, Spitzer & Spreckelsen, 2009; Donnely, 2010; Ferdian, 2019). Therefore, understanding students' experiences and challenges in learning English will assist them in increasing their confidence in learning English.

The use of Edmodo as one of the online platforms for distance learning provides simple ways and innovative features to sustain both students and teachers in learning English. Students and teachers can connect and collaborate in a virtual class by using Edmodo as a free and secure platform for online language learning. In other words, Edmodo aims to assist them in utilizing online language learning facilities according to the conditions of learning in any classroom.

The facilities of Edmodo as online learning and testing can serve students to enhance their learning abilities and performance and motivate them to learn English. Additionally, in using Edmodo, teachers can upload tasks, provide feedback, send out quizzes. Teachers are also able to store and share content in a format that includes both files and links, allocate grades, obtain finished assignments, keep a class calendar, perform surveys, and send notes and text alerts to all students in their class. Using Edmodo for learning English can allow students to access the learning materials continuously, anytime, anywhere, and even at the same time. Besides, it also helps teachers to deliver homework activities continuously and easily without interruption for students. Thus, Edmodo has become a part of the parts educational process.

The purpose of this research is to explore and to investigate ESP (English for Specific Purposes) students' experiences and challenges in using Edmodo as the parts of educational process in Education 4.0. Recognizing the experiences and challenges would be expected to make the improvement in the teaching and learning process regarding to the class activities, learning materials, tasks and supported features of technology, etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the present of the ICTs and the Internet, the world has no space nowadays. The ICTs and the Internet have given sustainable impact on the lives of people as well as a major factor that assists students and teachers to reform their language teaching and learning. There is a rapid expansion of digital learning to support students nowadays and the presence of ICTs have facilitated them to learn from anyone, anywhere, and any time. One of the online platforms which can facilitate students is Edmodo. It a closed social network which was established by Jeff O'Hara and Nic Borg. It was created in order to create an online learning environment for teachers and students to share ideas, assignments and events. Thus, Edmodo can be categorized as a simple English teaching and learning platform which equips lesson contents, exercises, some quizzes and also sharing session that provides useful tools for students and teachers to interact online outside class anywhere and anytime.

The growth of online platform, such as Edmodo has completely reshaped the area of education. Using Edmodo is automatically able to develop students' learning since teachers can use it effortlessly by adding materials, ideas, and assignment. In fact, Edmodo is used via the Internet that can be accessed noticed by every learner all over the world. As a result, it has become of the most popular learning platform in the world. Edmodo is a free online learning management system that offers a secure virtual space for students and teachers to share and discuss texts, images, audio files, and videos. It is reasonable that this platform is also used by some lecturers in teaching students at Politeknik Negeri Subang.

Edmodo has fascinated students and teachers as a safe learning platform to communicate, collaborate, share and exchange information with one another. Moreover, Sanders (2012) stated that Edmodo is considered an effective tool to support students' involvement in any activities. It has also become famous for improving students' engagement in online classes to enhance their educational outcomes and help them achieve positive attitudes towards learning (Imlawi, 2013). Thus, the presence of Edmodo has provided the great potential to fundamentally transform how and what teachers and students do in the class since it is well thought-out as a beneficial tool to enhance and improve the process of teaching and learning.

Some previous researchers have conducted several studies about Edmodo; Al-Kathiri (2014) found that Saudi EFL female students have positive attitudes in the

language learning classroom (EFL Students), and Edmodo generated more positive attitudes towards English learning. Additionally, Alsmari (2019) showed that integrating Edmodo into the writing class was found to be highly beneficial in developing EFL students' writing abilities, up to paragraph level, as well as enriched students' knowledge and increased their motivation to learn, while Solikhi (2020) revealed that Edmodo was helpful in writing class because Edmodo enhanced Sociology students' writing. Moreover, Billy, Estela, and Dirain (2019) stated that Edmodo had improved academic performances, especially assessing online learning knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Then, Rosanna (2019) showed that students' motivation is not accounted for the E-learning that the teachers perceive because, during the Covid-19 outbreak, the transition to online classes was sudden and unexpected.

Considering from the previous studies, most of the researchers suggested doing further research about Edmodo, including a larger number of participants with more diverse backgrounds. In addition, the challenges of using Edmodo are also needed to be examined. Therefore, this paper comes up differently since it investigates students' experiences in using Edmodo with 120 participants learning in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) class and their challenges in using it. Additionally, learning using Edmodo offers an online environment for various opportunities, such as interaction among teachers and students, independent of time and place by reporting what experiences the students obtain and what challenges they usually face in using Edmodo for learning English in ESP class.

METHOD

This research used mixed methods, as the type of research in which the researcher combined elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches. It is selected to assist the researcher in gathering and investigating the quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions via questionnaire and focus group discussion.

The subject participants are 120 students at Politeknik Negeri Subang who had taken English for Specific Purposes in the academic year 2021/2022. This group of students was considered the participants for this study since they could provide the best information related to this study via questionnaires. Additionally, ten students had volunteered for the qualitative method to participate in the focus group discussion.

Two research instruments were employed in this study to obtain the data, namely questionnaires and focus group discussion. A questionnaire was designed by the researchers adopted and adapted from some scholars to analyze students' experiences and challenges in using Edmodo. The experts provided some statements on how students in learning English perceived Edmodo. The statements were adequate to be used since these could answer the issues of the study. They had a five-point Likert scale ranging from the values 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), consisting of 24 items about

students' experiences and challenges. The initial questionnaire design stage should focus on clarifying the research problem and identifying what critical concepts need to be addressed by the questionnaire (Dörnyei, 2003).

Since the instrument had not been used before, it was then piloted with other groups of students who were different from the selected sample. The results of the analysis of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation displayed that the items were valid because the average score of significant value was 0.019, and it was not higher than 0.05 ($0.019 < 0.05$). Therefore, it was acceptable since the questionnaire items are valid when the significant value is < 0.05 (Priyatno, 2014). Moreover, to obtain a better understanding of the students' experiences and challenges about Edmodo, the focus group discussion was used. It was useful to understand what and how the selected participants hold certain beliefs or opinions about their experiences and challenges in using Edmodo in learning English in ESP class.

In analyzing the data, the collected quantitative data were inputted into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0 to generate descriptive statistics and reveal the average and standard deviation value results. Additionally, the focus group discussion data were analyzed by content analysis to gain students' in-depth understanding and orientation of the students' experiences and challenges in using Edmodo.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The gathered data from the students' questionnaire and focus group discussions were presented into three dimensions: academic achievement, comfortable learning circumstances, and learning complications. The first dimension, academic achievement, covers the benefit of using Edmodo for students' achievement. The second dimension, students' learning circumstances, covers the students' convenience in using Edmodo for learning. The last dimension, which is learning complications, covers the students' issues and difficulties in using Edmodo.

Academic Achievement

Based on table 1, the researcher discovered that the overall mean value of the students was $\bar{x} = 3.63$. It indicated that the students informed that they had positive attitudes towards their academic achievement, as shown in Table 1. They believed that teachers are expected to use Edmodo regularly to improve their academic achievement.

Table 1.
Frequency Level of Students' Academic Achievement

Dimensions	Statements	Mean	SD	Frequency
Academic Achievement	<i>Edmodo improves my learning motivation</i>	3.68	0.64	Often
	<i>Learning English using Edmodo helps me to get feedback directly</i>	3.79	0.72	Often
	<i>Using Edmodo helps me to improve my achievement in English</i>	3.50	0.59	Often
	<i>Edmodo is effective for learning English</i>	3.66	0.59	Often
	<i>My scores improve when I do assignments in Edmodo</i>	3.2	0.66	Sometimes
	<i>Edmodo helps me to do self-learning</i>	3.85	0.67	Often
	<i>Edmodo helps me to evaluate my skills and ability in English</i>	3.70	0.66	Often
	<i>Edmodo is a good platform for online learning.</i>	3.70	0.68	Often
Overall mean results		3.63	-	-

The students were questioned to share their experiences using Edmodo. They expressed their points of view on the academic achievement in using Edmodo, as shown in table 2. As mentioned by the students, they are concerned about learning English using Edmodo because it is easy. They believe that Edmodo effectively facilitates their learning, especially when they do assignments using their phone. Additionally, some think that Edmodo can motivate them to learn English since they can compete with their friends. Lastly, they are happy to use Edmodo since they can get direct scores from the lecturers. Thus, Edmodo somehow was able to improve, help, and motivate students to reach their achievement in academic.

Table 2.
Students' Comments of Academic Achievement

Dimension	Data Extract
Academic Achievement	<i>"I think Edmodo is effective for learning English because it can facilitate us for self-learning or collaborative learning. We can do it because we usually use Edmodo in our handphone"</i>
	<i>"When our lecturer gives assignment, it is very easy to do the test. And it really helps us to get high score because I like it and it is very simple and fast for doing assignment"</i>
	<i>"I'm motivated to study English using Edmodo. There are many kinds of assignment in Edmodo and we usually compete with other students to get high scores"</i>
	<i>"We also enjoy using Edmodo because after we finish our assignment, there is a feedback directly from our lecturer. And it absolutely makes us happy to study English because we do not need to wait to get a feedback"</i>

The students' statements were also in line with the data ($\bar{x}=3,63$) where Edmodo helped their academic achievement frequently. They directed that the use of Edmodo in learning English can motivate them to learn English since it was effective, easy, and fast for reading materials and doing the assignment. It was also effective for doing assignments, evaluating students' skills, and getting feedback from lecturers. In other words, Edmodo was beneficial for their academic achievement. The students also agreed with a previous study that stated Edmodo is a powerful online learning tool that can encourage students' motivation and self-efficacy (Luaran, 2012). Al-Naibi, AL-Jabari, Al Kalbani (2018) also added that the easy interface of Edmodo motivated students to enhance their knowledge outside the classroom and improve their autonomy in the learning environment. Moreover, the students also stated that Edmodo could facilitate them to collaborate with their friends and teachers, especially to get feedback from lecturers.

The benefit of Edmodo is an easy tool for students to connect, collaborate, and access all their online activities in one platform (Hammonds et al.,2013). Importantly, students can share content, submit homework, assignments, and quizzes, receive their teachers' feedback, notes, and alerts as well as voting on polls (Jarc, 2010), while teachers evaluate the completed student assignments and provide feedback and ensure more effective and permanent learning (Altunkaya & Ayranci, 2020; Ferdian, 2020). Thus, the presence of Edmodo allows flexibility an advantageous tool for a blended learning classroom, especially for interpersonal and teamwork skill development, collaborative learning environments, as well as increasing students' learning motivation to create a more effective English learning.

Learning Circumstances

As shown in table 3, the overall mean value of the students was $\bar{x} =3.61$. It can be concluded that the students are convenient to use Edmodo as their learning device frequently. They agreed that teachers should often use Edmodo for English learning since they feel comfortable using it.

Table 3.
Frequency Level of Learning Circumstances

Dimensions	Statements	Mean	SD	Frequency
Students' Learning & Circumstances	<i>I am happy to read materials and do assignment using Edmodo</i>	3.44	0.80	Often
	<i>Edmodo saves our time to read materials and do assignment</i>	3.50	0.57	Often
	<i>Edmodo improves the learning model comparing from traditional model</i>	3.41	1.03	Often
	<i>Edmodo facilitates English learning in the campus</i>	3.73	0.70	Often
	<i>Edmodo can be used to do assignment</i>	4.33	0.65	Always

<i>whenever and wherever</i>			
<i>Edmodo trains students to be more active in the class</i>	3.73	0.65	Often
<i>Edmodo improves learning collaboration both students and teachers</i>	3.41	0.75	Often
<i>Edmodo helps students to interact with other students and also lecturer</i>	3.38	0.75	Sometimes
Overall mean results	3.61	-	

From the students' statements about their learning circumstances, it showed that they enjoy using Edmodo for their learning. They believed that Edmodo was a helpful device since it is easy to use for reading material, doing an assignment, and collaborative learning with friends and teachers.

Table 4.
 Students' Comments of Learning Circumstances

Dimension	Data Extract
Learning Circumstances	<i>"Using Edmodo is so simple because we can read the materials and do assignment wherever and whenever. We also do not need to turn on our laptop. We can do it in our phone. It is very easy and fast"</i>
	<i>"The facilities are also very complete, we can comment the materials from our lecturer, we can with our friends and also lecturer. Edmodo is really helpful to do collaborative learning, we can discuss, talk, and share our knowledge"</i>
	<i>"It is not like last year or when we are in the class, we do not need to answer questions in a paper anymore. Now, it is very fast to answer questions in Edmodo. When we answer the questions, we can directly send to our lecturer without waiting"</i>

The students' statements about their learning circumstances matched with the quantitative result (3,61), where they frequently felt comfortable using Edmodo as their learning tool. Edmodo improves their learning model from the traditional model, and it is an easy-to-use online learning tool that can be done everywhere and anytime, especially for doing assignments and quizzes, communicating with one another, and collaborating. The students' statements were also underpinned by Thongmak (2013) and Hankins (2015), they stated that Edmodo was useful, user-friendly and effective for educational activities of social networking in which students can use it to safely, connect virtually at any time to upload, exchange and share pictures, documents, blogs, and web links and to collaborate and post ideas, notes and messages. Moreover, the traditional approach in collecting students' work and providing feedback for each work takes a long time, and students could forget the subject they studied by the time they received the feedback, but it is different from online feedback through Edmodo that allows students to make changes in their drafts while the subject is still in focus (Carolan and Kyppö, 2015) and it indicates that the learning environment created by using Edmodo is more comprehensive than traditional approaches (Mokhtar, 2016).

Additionally, Edmodo can help teachers run various types of active learning, such as the provision of assignments and related resources, peer discussion, online quizzes concerning the learning topic, digital content assignment submission, and easy connection with other students or teachers from different schools or other countries (Pardede, 2017, Ferdian & Nirwana, 2021). In other words, both teachers and students can access libraries, teaching/learning materials, and their pages everywhere, when at home, school, and traveling, through Edmodo (Trust, 2012). Thus, it could be assessed that the use of Edmodo has facilitated both teachers and students a safe online atmosphere to communicate and collaborate and share knowledge, homework, and discussion. As a result, Edmodo can carry out more effective, active, and sustainable online teaching and learning activities.

Learning Circumstances

The students were asked to illustrate their problems using Edmodo in learning English. The overall mean value of the students was $\bar{x} = 3.14$, as shown in table 5. They occasionally had learning problems using Edmodo since some of them have been experts in using it, while others are still struggling. Although they do not worry about the problem of the device, such as signal, battery, and writing ability, they are still worried about using Edmodo, especially when they do assignments and read materials.

Table 5.
The frequency level of Learning Problem

Dimensions	Statements	Mean	SD	Frequency
Learning Problem	<i>I am worried to answer questions in Edmodo</i>	3.10	0.90	Sometimes
	<i>I get difficulties to understand materials and answer questions in Edmodo</i>	2.43	0.86	Seldom
	<i>I must think comprehensively to read materials and do assignments in Edmodo</i>	3.67	0.65	Often
	<i>When I am using Edmodo, I am worried if my phone's battery is low</i>	3.89	0.90	Often
	<i>I need high signal connection in using Edmodo</i>	4.00	0.72	Often
	<i>Edmodo affects my hand-writing ability.</i>	2.49	0.86	Seldom
	<i>I am worried in doing assignment with limited time.</i>	2.30	0.81	Seldom
	<i>Edmodo improve my critical thinking to think quickly and correctly.</i>	3.28	0.83	Sometimes
Overall mean results		3.14	-	-

The students' experiences showed that they are worried in some cases using Edmodo, such as typos, signal loss, low battery, and also limited time. However, they are still able to handle it. Although it seemed to be difficult, they still enjoyed Edmodo because it was interesting for learning and helping to improve their critical thinking ability.

Table 6.
 Students' Comments of Learning Problem

Dimension	Data Extract
Learning Problem	<p><i>By using Edmodo, it is not so difficult for me. The appearance, how to access, and how to answer the questions are not difficult. We can handle it.</i></p>
	<p><i>Sometimes, we also worry to answer the questions, especially when the answer is in the form of written text. We are afraid of making typo or incomplete sentences. And we know that in English, when we miss a word, it will be incorrect.</i></p>
	<p><i>For some of us, until now, reading materials and doing assignments in Edmodo do not affect our ability in writing. It is because we are forced to write answers correctly and quickly. I think Edmodo helps our vocabulary, writing, and reading skills.</i></p>
	<p><i>There are many things that we can get from Edmodo. Our critical thinking, fast-thinking, and right decisions get improved. I feel that I must be able to do multi-tasking activities, reading and writing, thinking and writing, and many more. We should do that because we have limited time. Every assignment is set by the time, so we must be fast in thinking. Yes, we are also worried, but it is interesting because it trains our brain to think quickly.</i></p>
	<p><i>One of the big challenges for us when using Edmodo is a mobile signal and battery. We are really worried when we do assignments, and the signal is unstable, even the battery is low. So, we usually move or do the assignment in a strong signal place and prepare a power bank.</i></p>

The students' perceptions showed that they occasionally had a problem using Edmodo, which also matched with the numeric data where it displayed that the students occasionally faced the problem. They mentioned they did not find any difficulties in using Edmodo, but they were worried about answering the questions in quizzes and assignments because they might be typos, incomplete sentences, or incorrect answers. In addition, Edmodo required them to think critically and quickly to answer questions with limited time and forced them to have strong signals and powerful battery capacity. The comments from the students' beliefs implied that they were satisfied and appreciated Edmodo for learning English, although they were nervous to answer the quiz and assignment. As mentioned by Lin & Fang (2010) and Çankaya et al. (2013), students who are already familiar with social media can use Edmodo without difficulties since they feel comfortable learning something mediated by computers. In addition, although Edmodo makes learning convenient and accessible for the students, some of them still felt anxiety with the questions that were inquired by the lecturers (Wallace, 2014; Manowong, 2016; Altunkaya & Ayranci, 2020). Moreover, Hariri & Bahanshal (2015) also highlighted that using Edmodo to learn English offers many choices for teachers to help students improve their thinking skills. Importantly, to ensure the success of using Edmodo, the lecturers should consider its disadvantages. As mentioned by Al-Said (2015) and Manowong (2016), some disadvantages using Edmodo such as time-consuming, difficulty in following the

procedures of Edmodo, plagiarism of other works and not all students have access to the Internet, and the battery does not last long to enable students to stay up on using Edmodo. Therefore, it became some challenges for teachers since there is a link between students' learning styles and the Edmodo learning environment. This issue had become one of the essential points for teachers to consider when employing technology in classrooms, such as difficulties in using Edmodo, anxieties to answer questions, and the availability of devices battery and the internet connection.

CONCLUSSION

The presence of Edmodo for English learning has become one of the problem-solving for education systems in terms of learning, practicing, and testing. Based on the students' experiences, Edmodo becomes an effective learning device that assists them in improving their motivation, flexibility, and participation in online learning classrooms and activities. Additionally, Edmodo is an innovative device that provides many educational benefits that can be implemented to encourage online learning environments and uphold classroom experiences and resources. Finally, this supplementary tool also became a challenge for students in some points, such as difficulties in using Edmodo, anxieties to answer questions, and the availability of devices battery and the internet connection. Therefore, teachers must be able to link between students' learning styles and the Edmodo learning environment so that the learning process using Edmodo will run easily and conveniently. This study has limitations: it has a limited number of study participants, and their backgrounds study is only in an institution. This study is also limited by the ESP course, which was the course that the students were enrolled in. For further researchers, it is strongly recommended to investigate the students' experiences and challenges of other e-learning platforms and their impact and motivation for the students' academic performances.

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