

CYBER PEDAGOGY DURING COVID-19 AS CRITICAL SOCIAL PRACTICE IN A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Abstract: The policies and practices of higher education are reeling under the social, economic, and technological changes currently taking place in post-industrial, information societies. New communications and information technologies are constitutive factors in the philosophical and pedagogical shifts that are occurring in university classrooms. This paper uses a case-study methodology to investigate the use made of online technologies in one preservice teacher education context. Cyber technologies and their associated pedagogical activities are conceptualized in the paper not only as tools, but also as social practices. This approach enables a focus on learning and teaching as transformative practices. Following a description of the course content and delivery, the paper turns to an analysis of four key pedagogical features of cyber pedagogy as generated by the data. These are: Teaching and Learning as Self-directed Activity, Change in Student Identities and Self-perceptions, new forms of Techno literacies, and E-tutorials. The research found that online pedagogies are forming new spatiality's, multiliteracies, and identities of communication and learning.

Keywords: Online Education, E-Learning, Teaching, COVID-19

Introduction

This review paper outlines developments around the globe in research on cyber violence in order to raise awareness of the issue and inform the subsequent debate on the matter. Cyber violence is a relatively new phenomenon, with most of the reports emerging through publicity in the mass media. Despite the public interest and impact of cyber violence on children and adolescents, the educational community around the world has only made a small contribution. Scholarly writings in the disciplines of technology concentrate on the development, improvement and effectiveness of prevention and detection software and the effects; and in psychology on the profile and behavior patterns of the perpetrator as well as impact and counseling of the victim. Assumptions are often derived from familiar abuse scenarios in conventional, real-life contexts. Few writings explore the complexities of cyber violence from an educational perspective. There are limited empirical studies available and little knowledge has been gathered to understand the issue, to identify occurrence patterns and to support the most effective counter approach. Work in this area is necessary to inform and engage the teaching profession and to address issues emerging from the research. Findings will have pedagogical implications for classroom practice and for teacher education programs. The main goal of this review essay is to examine existing research and literature from the educational domain to document and present publications around the globe to gain a comprehensive picture of the work done so far. It begins with background on the definitions, forms and characteristics of cyber violence and specifically cyber bullying next, it analyses and synthesizes findings from the present body of work, alerting to the need for empirical data to investigate the research vacuum. Finally, the most prominent issues are identified as a starting point for the debate on this issue, to trigger discussion on the pedagogical implications, stimulate best practice through teacher education programs that deal with the concerns and develop more effective combat strategies to extinguish cyber violence.

In their work, Kowalski, Limber & Agatston (2019) identify flaming, cyber harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing & trickery, exclusion or ostracism and cyber stalking as sub-categories of cyber bullying. In addition, they suggest a relationship between certain types of online abuse and the preferred electronic environment for them. However, further investigation is needed to verify possible correlations. The development of both models has shown the discrepancy in labeling the gamut of inappropriate online behaviors. It has also shown the divergent views on the hierarchy of cyber violence and the need for research to establish the various forms and their linkage. Accurate labels and definitions are necessary to develop a common understanding. For educationalists it is important to be able to have awareness of the different types of cyber violence

and cyber bullying. This will help to identify the violation and provide the appropriate vocabulary for discussions. It will also assist in report each incident correctly and in providing the corresponding support during COVID-19.

Cyber Violence

A range of harmful activities through the use of Information and Communication technologies fall under the term of cyber violence (i.e. hate-speech, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual remarks, vulgar language and cyber bullying). The work of Herring (2020), Barak (2020) and (Belsey n.d.) were merged to compile the diagram below, which provides a starting point for the development of a proper conceptual taxonomy Herring (2019) had identified four different forms of cyber violence: online contact/ off line harm, cyber stalking, degradation and harassment. Online contact that leads to off line harms is signified by one person aiming to gain the trust of another in order to abuse them in real life, either physically, sexually or financially. It has criminal intent at its core. Cyber stalking is a form of intimidation that occurs through online monitoring of a person's activities; unwanted contact that invades the person's privacy and causes fear. At its basis is the perpetrator's desire for control and power. Cyber stalking has the potential to move from online to real life environment. The category of online harassment comprises words or actions that bother, alarm or abuse others. Examples are threads, rumors, mocking, defamation of character, coarse language, name calling, personal attacks and so on. Degrading is a type of cyber violence that refers to disrespectful images or words that cause harm to individuals and groups. This is particularly wide spread in the sexual arena but also pertains to racial, religious and political insults. Within the area of cyber violence, Barak (2005) focused on the examination of sexual harassment. Within this section, the categories of gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion were identified. It covers behaviors such as inappropriate sexual messages, offensive nicknames or online identities (i.e. bigdick, hotpussy) and unwanted pornographic material.

Cyber Bullying

Bill Belsey, a Canadian Educational Advisor, coined the term of cyber bullying to describe the annoying, abusing, threatening or harassing of another person through electronic means. He names the Word Wide Web (i.e., websites, blogs, emails, instant messaging, text messages, online games) mobile phones (i.e., messages and pictures) and pagers as locations for cyber bullying. (Belsey, n.d.) A rather divergent view with more differentiated breakdown of the variations within cyber bullying has been proposed by Kowalski, Limber & Agatston (2020). The graphic (below) was developed to present their observations. Although the boxes are of equal size, it is not to suggest that each sub-set of inappropriate behavior is equally present online. Some forms of cyber bullying are less frequent than others as they demand higher levels of technical skills. Impersonation for example requires pretending to be someone else online, thus taking on their electronic identity. The various levels of technological expertise may underpin particular cyber bullying behaviors, the frequency of their occurrence, the profile of the perpetrator and potential identification and thus elimination strategies.

Discussion

From the depth interview conducted with parents and students, it is found that learning from home can run well if the instruction or learning objective is clear. "I cannot understand the instruction because the language used in the instruction is not clear, and there are many mistakes in typing or spelling," said an informant. The parent also said, "I buy an internet voucher for my daughter because she keeps asking about the subjects I cannot help. By buying the internet voucher, she can browse or ask her friends". From the interview, it is found that students seem to hesitate to ask their teachers. "I am shy to ask many questions to my teacher, while my friends also do not understand the material topic." The teachers seem to view that e-learning is only about tasks that should be done on time without any feedback. At the same time, the LMS is not used effectively since the discussion only uses social media. The teacher's written communication ability has appeared when students state that they do not understand the instruction and explanation. Teachers should master logical ideas developed in written communication. In other words, teachers should keep writing and get used to generate their ideas in written form. The lack of writing skills can cause ambiguous instruction and explanation. The written communication should be evaluated, and if it becomes a barrier, then a school makes the teachers seem to be challenging to follow technology. The internet applications familiar to students are not used since the teachers do not understand how to operate them. They do not want to ask for their partners' bits of help since they believe their partners have similar duties. The short course or workshop does not give them ample space to ask and solve the problem. Another reason is the teachers are afraid of making a mistake in operating computers and internet applications. They prefer to teach in a classroom meeting rather than using LMS.

The social media the teachers have are WhatsApp and YouTube. WhatsApp is used in giving tasks and distributes information, while YouTube is used to search for relevant information for student's materials. The teachers do not have a YouTube channel and do not know how to upload their YouTube videos. They only use a computer for typing in Microsoft Office, PowerPoint, and Microsoft Excel. They have a piece of limited information on how to operate computers for the Zoom meeting and Google meeting. However, they do not use the applications for learning activities since it spends internet credit much higher than WhatsApp.

Engaging Student in Cyber Pedagogy

Distance education has been a topic discussed and provided by educators (McVay & Rockers, 2007; Ahmad, Basir, & Hassanein 2004). E-learning with various platforms is introduced to schools and teachers. Internet transforms to be a support system for e-learning. Then, e-learning is defined as using information technology to form a learning community, outcome, and experience (Ally, 2011; Horton, 2006). From the use of the internet and LMS, the educators also perform the blended learning method, enabling students to attend both offline and online classrooms. The medium to deliver materials can be varied (online or offline). However, the essence of education does not change. Learning is a must and becomes the core of education. Western countries frequently use e-learning and blended learning since the weather conditions make the educators and stakeholders open alternative in learning. Internet bandwidths become the main facilities at schools. The students' access to the internet is easy, and one of the learning lifestyles. Cyber pedagogy is comprehended and designed by teachers in delivering e-learning since e-learning is not merely putting the assignment on the LMS and giving many tasks to students without making interaction, giving feedback, and facilitating students with a new learning experience (Silva, Costa, Prior, & Rogerson, 2013; O'Neil, F, & Newbold, 2008). So, the teachers think hard to design challenging and interesting learning packages. The lesson plan is also created, generating the course objective, topic, materials, teaching method, and evaluation. Consequently, the learning quality is measured, and continuous reflection can be maintained even though it uses online learning. In Indonesia's context, the teachers' and stakeholder's mindsets towards cyber pedagogy are a little bit different. Cyber pedagogy is still approached from a teacher center perspective. Moreover, teachers post many assignments in LMS or social media, then students ask their parents to teach them. On the other hand, the stakeholder's mindset sees teachers do nothing because the learning activities are not observed as in the classroom does. Then the dispute between teachers, schools, parents, and stakeholder emerge. Another problem is the availability of gadgets, internet vouchers, and adequate internet bandwidth. Strong internet signals cover not all regions. If an internet provider is available in the area, it does not mean the gadget has a minimum requirement to meet the LMS or social media application. Non-technical problem is encountered by teachers, students, and parents, including internet service, gadget availability, and internet voucher cost, distracting the learning process. At the same time, the student's center perspective on learning has not been understood by teachers. Then, the teachers have difficulty in designing the learning process. To engage students in cyber pedagogy, teachers should shift the mindset on student's learning perspective. Constructivism views that students are the center of learning, while Indonesian teachers are influenced by behaviorism, which puts teachers as a learning center. The use of cyber pedagogy imposes the student center perspective and should prepare students as real independent learners. Moreover, building independent learners' sustainability is a significant concern for teachers, parents, and stakeholders. The government should evaluate education achievement in the teaching-learning process in terms of independent learner's objective. The shift mindset from the teacher center to the student center has significantly proceeded. By using a cyber, teachers should also make a lesson plan in which every learning activity stage is depicted and evaluated. A comprehension of asynchronous and synchronous media is also urgently needed. The teachers combine both synchronous and asynchronous media in teaching. The interaction between students and teachers is maintained by using frequent video conferences or by giving feedback. The pedagogical competence is importantly required to assess the students' situation and needs and see the support system's capability to run the learning activities. Some schools in Indonesia, from primary and intermediate education, launch home visits and learning groups instead of doing full online activities. This policy is made based on the problem faced by teachers, parents, and students (Vygotsky, 1978; Dabbagh, 2005). In cyber pedagogy, students-teachers interactions are limited. However, the government closes the eyes to the teacher's problems and still keeps learning from home policy. This phenomenon can be solved if the shifting mindset towards cyber pedagogy is promoted.

Teachers and Technology

The issue about teachers and technology or with the internet becomes an endless topic to discuss. Even, it becomes one of the favorite debate motions, like the topic "Can internet replace a teacher?" or "can a robot becomes a teacher?" In Indonesia, distance learning is one of the great concerns of the government. Universitas Terbuka (Open University) and SMP/SMA/SMK Terbuka (Open Junior, Senior or Vocational school) are examples of distance learning. However, the institutions' customers are people who have a job or employees who have little time to attend in the classroom. Then, online meetings and blended learning are performed. Unfortunately, these activities are not commonly experienced by all students. Only those who attend Universitas Terbuka do. Today, all students at all levels of education experience it. Even though the teachers make a learning module or student's worksheet or general description of the subject, they still do not satisfy the teachers' explanations on social media or in LMS. The students' and teacher's discussion in the chat room is hugely different from the classroom. The human interaction and transfer of values do not exist in the educational platform. From this condition, it seems that the debate motion dealing with teacher and internet or robot is concluded that the teacher is irreplaceable. However, advanced technology is not fully responded to well by teachers. They stay in a comfort zone where the learning activities are only running as a daily routine. The technology is not used as a supporting system in improving a learning experience. That is why the student center does not appear. School leaders are confused when learning from home should be applied as a technology cannot be operated very well by the teachers. The essential requirement of effective distant learning is that students should be independent learners, and teachers can design learning activities by combining their lesson plans with technology. The government should consider how long they can seriously create an independent learner. The indication is that the students know why they need to study and are curious to find new knowledge. In completing the students' curiosity, teachers benefit from technology from planning, delivering a lesson, and evaluating.

Conclusion

The mindset shift in teachers, parents, and stakeholders is required in encouraging students to get involved in learning activities. Using LMS or technology at home in learning is not regarded as an emergency solution, but it becomes part of learning channels. Independent learners should be built earlier. The student center perspective is maintained, and then the learning experience is facilitated by teachers while students can explore more other lessons that have not been discussed yet. Finally, creative teachers who have good literacy in information technology are needed in running cyber pedagogy and conduct interactive learning from home.

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