
Perspectives on Learner Engagement and Online Learning Climate: Insights from Indonesia

Udan Kusmawan

Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Jati Ariati

Associate Professor, Center for Cyber Technology & Human Interaction, Psychology,
Universitas Diponegoro, Indonesia

Niken Hartati

Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

Nur Eva

Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

Abstract:

This study examines learner engagement and the online learning climate in addressing educational gaps within diverse distance education contexts in Indonesia. Focusing on Universitas Terbuka (UT), the research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative data from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with 35 participants from Batam (Riau Islands) and Mataram (Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara). Thematic analysis identifies key themes, including time management, strategies to foster online engagement, and challenges posed by technological barriers. Quantitative analysis further reveals regional disparities, with Batam students showing higher engagement levels and better technological access compared to Lombok participants. These findings are interpreted through an equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) lens, highlighting how unequal digital access shapes engagement and learning outcomes in distance education. This perspective also emphasizes the role of institutional support, local learning contexts, and adaptive pedagogical strategies in promoting more equitable and meaningful online learning experiences.

Keywords:

Digital Equity, Distance Education, Educational Gap, Online Learning Climate, Student Engagement.