

TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES ON THE USE OF GOOGLE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Technology has impacted in most of the sectors, including education field. Nowadays, many schools have incorporated technology through the utilization of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) into the learning. The use of platforms such as Google Classroom is one of the ways to fit the best classroom practices. This study reveals the teacher's perception on the use of Google Classroom as a learning media. The qualitative research design which applies interview method is carried out. Seven high school teachers in Tangerang Selatan, Indonesia, who have actively integrated Google Classroom in their teaching for at least 1 year became the participants. Findings showed that teachers use it as a facilitation tool for managing students' tasks, organizing classroom and accommodating students' interaction. In general, teachers perceived the use of Google Classroom was very helpful to conduct their virtual classroom. However, teachers stated that they needed to maximize other features of Google Classroom as they hadn't explored all which would surely bring benefits for their professional development.

Key words: *Google Classroom, technology, integrated, teachers' perception*

Introduction

"*Technology is a part of my life,*" declared a student when he was asked about important things in his life. That statement was also agreed by most of the students as they finally shared how technology had created excitement for them. They normally used it for entertainment, such as playing online games, chatting on social media, browsing information and other fun activities that they enjoyed.

This phenomenon which mainly occurs in part of the world can not be denied as technology has been improving a lot nowadays. It is obviously seen that students are surrounded and facilitated by computer, internet, smartphones and other forms of technology around them which impact their social and educational lives (Simuforosa, 2013). Their dependancy on technology changes their learning

behaviors which make them easily get bored when a teacher only explains without any visual images or provides them with the printed material. Knowing this condition, there is a big opportunity to shift the teaching method from the traditional method into the integration of technology. According to Kuh et al. (2001), technology has been proven to enhance students' active participation and learning outcomes. Students become more active to join the learning activity compared to the traditional approach which would require the students to only become passive learners. Moreover, students are motivated to get involved when teacher integrates the technology while explaining or conducting the activities (Ali, Ayari, & Ayari, 2012). This means, using no technology possibly no longer interests students because they do not actively participate thus would become

demotivated in studying. Since motivating students is one of the teacher's main goals, it is urgent to accommodate the way students learn as it has impacts on their outcome (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). Therefore, adjusting teaching strategies should be noticed and evaluated regularly to find the best practices.

Recently, there has been a lot of various applications which are user-friendly for both teacher and students. School stakeholders, including teachers and students realize the advantage of educational technology (Stošić, 2015). Google Classroom as a free tool offers its various features which encourage student-teacher interaction through a virtual online class. This paper explores the implementation of Google Classroom in the classroom context where teachers' perception are presented based on their experiences.

Literature review

About Google Classroom

Google Classroom is firstly introduced in 2014 by Google Apps for Education. This platform is specifically designed for educational purposes to promote interactive learning environment. This virtual classroom serves a place for teachers to create and post materials (pictures, videos, link), invite students, assign students, conduct quiz and manage administrative needs.

Advantages of Google Classroom

Mafa (2018) states the benefits of using Google Classroom to support the learning process:

1) Classroom management

Google Classroom empowers teachers' authority to simply create and post content materials for students. The material itself can be in a form of documents, pictures, audios, file attachments and even videos. It also provides discussion board where

students may discuss or interact with each others easily. It also empowers other features such as announcements, upcoming task, datelines, and feedback, so students are able to manage their own independent learning.

2) Flexibility

Students and teachers may access all the features of Google Classroom in any forms of gadgets, such as personal computer or smartphone. Accessing Google Classroom is very simple. It is integrated with gmail account which connects everything to it.

3) Safety and security

Students can enroll the class by entering the class code or based on teacher's invitation through e-mail. **It means, it is restricted to certain people only and that no interlopers or unapproved groups or classes may have the access.**

4) Promote collaboration

Students can interact with others on the discussion board which encourages them to have better collaboration. They can discuss the task or project through online. Besides, teacher may invite students parents or guardian to get involved in the class. It means, they can track the progress of their children at anytime. They can easily get informed of any announcements and/or otherwise questions in the class stream.

Features on Google Classroom

There are two options for signing in. First, teacher starts with the Google Classroom website: classroom.google.com, then type the e-mail address and its password. (Keeler & Miller, 2016). Second, teacher can open his/her Gmail account then it can automatically access Google Classroom in the provided menu (Ginanjar, n.dt). After successfully signed in, teacher gets two options, joining or creating a class.

There are three pages available on Google Classroom, they are: stream, classwork and people.

1) Stream

The stream is a page where teachers focus on announcements and posts.

2) Classwork

A Classwork is the main page that allows teachers to organize assignments into modules and units. This is where teachers can create questions, quiz, assignments and post materials for students. Teacher can divide the section based on the topic, thus it is easier for students to find the assignments.

3) People

In this menu, teachers can see list of teachers and students who enrolled in the class. Teacher are also possible to invite other students to join the class.

Previous research on Google Classroom

Several research has been conducted related to the use of Google Classroom. Azhar (2018) presented the teacher’s perception towards Google Classroom as it is only a facilitation tool, for example for uploading

document and giving announcements. Unfortunately, teachers still see this application ineffective in terms of the lack of user-friendliness.

Another research was conducted by Iftakhar (2016) at Daffodil International University which mainly emphasized on teachers’ and students’ perceptions of using Google Classroom. Generally, teachers use Google Classroom as it is required by the university. The use of Google Classroom creates a better interaction between teacher and students, while students believe that this platform is helpful since they can easily get the learning materials uploaded by teachers.

Methodology

This study included 7 teachers who have been using Google Classroom into the learning for at least one academic year. Survey was given to both teachers and students to know their experiences. Further interview was conducted to get deeper answers from the teachers.

The survey used online questionnaire which was adapted from Asnawi (2018).

Factor	Questions	Scoring			
		RD	D	A	RA
Usefulness	1) Does this application help you become more effective?				
	2) Does this application help you become more productive?				
	3) Is this application useful?				
	4) Does this application save time when you use it?				
Ease of Use	5) Is this application easy?				
	6) Is this application simple when it's used?				
	7) Is this application user-friendly?				
	8) Do you use this application without written instructions?				
	9) Can you use recover instantly when making mistake?				
	10) Do you learn how to use it fast?				

Ease of Learning	11) Do you easily remember how to use it?				
Satisfaction	12) Are you satisfied with this application?				
	13) Is this application fun to use?				
	14) Does this application work as expected?				
	15) Is this application great?				
	16) Is it convenient to use?				

Note: RD Really Disagree, D Disagree, A Agree, RA Really Agree

2) What are the features/menus of Google Classroom do you use the most?

3) How do you promote collaborative learning?

The further interview questions are listed below:

- 1) Do you use Google Classroom regularly?
- 4) What are the benefits of using Google Classroom?
- 5) What would you do to make the use of Google Classroom better?

Finding and Discussion

Recapitulation of teachers' survey

Factors	RD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	RA (%)
Usefulness	0	0	58,35	41,65
Ease of Use	0	26,64	73,36	0
Ease of Learning	0	33,35	66,65	0
Satisfaction	0	6,66	93,34	0

Teacher's experiences

From the data collected, teachers' view points were noted. All teachers mentioned that they were engaged in digital learning since the school encouraged them to be digitalized to catch up with the students' era. It was supported by the school system which emphasized on the use of technology in learning as a part of increasing education quality.

The implementation of utilization of Google Classroom itself ran successfully because of three reasons. First, teachers

regularly attended the professional development program in which they acquired knowledge and practices on how to use Google Classroom in the beginning of academic year. Teachers were invited to attend the workshop which started by the introduction of Google Classroom, benefits and how to operate it to support the leaning process. From that program, teachers obtained deeper understanding of the application, hence they were able to maximize in its operation. Mizzel (2010) emphasizes that professional development

becomes a school's effort to upgrade the educators' skills in order to accommodate students' needs. As it is expected that students will fully achieve their satisfying results because teachers provide them with the best method to suit their interest.

Secondly, the awareness to be paperless also encouraged teachers to manage the class using technology as it didn't require much paper and printed worksheets. It was in line with the momentum of green campaign with the advancement of technology and the awareness of being able to maintain the consumption of natural resources (Carley, 2014).

Finally, students were facilitated by their own personal gadget as the main learning tool to substitute the availability of workbook and coursebook. This is the nature of using digital technology in learning whereby students utilize digital apparatus instead of notebooks and textbooks (Wang, 2010).

Usefulness

Another finding showed that all teachers regularly used Google Classroom as a resource to store the document materials. They normally posted materials before and/or after the class had been conducted depending on the needs. When they shared materials before the class, it was intended to be pre-reading materials to further students in their understanding towards the lesson's topic. It is beneficial to activate their background knowledge before they come into the classroom discussion. Besides, after the lesson, some teachers also liked to post the materials that had been presented in the class as a review, so that students may access them once the classroom learning session ended. Follow up exercises and projects were also included to track their progress.

Promoting collaborative learning also became a main concern in utilizing Google Classroom. One teacher shared that he

preferred to post critical questions which could attract students' interest to answer in the discussion board. This was the best part as students tried to get involved and comment on others' ideas as there were numerous various opinions. He believed that teacher still played the significant role to hook students' participations by giving them the sufficient elicitation through questions. What is more, students could also discuss the projects or assignments progress. Having a Google Classroom as the platform, help the educator to record the discussions' results which later would be used to assess their performance. Another teacher also agreed that the use of Google Classroom was helpful for students' engagement. This was because students were precisely informed of the tasks uploaded on Google Classroom as this app is able to give notification through e-mail account of the students thus enabling them to automatically access the app.

Moreover, using Google Classroom saves their time much. Teachers needn't spend time on copying materials and distribute them to students. Through one click, all the materials can easily be admitted. This is the benefit of using technology which can save time, so teachers would have more spare time to prepare the lessons (Beuning, Besson & Snyder, 2014).

Ease of Use

In general, teachers agreed that this platform is substantially ubiquitous in regards to their teaching activities since this application is accessible through their laptops or smartphones with different kinds of operation systems (OS). It is compatible with Windows, Linux, Android, etc. (Hausammann, 2017). To operate Google Classroom is quite easy too for them, they don't have any essential difficulties to operate the features. Besides, all the documents, students' tasks and quizzess can be recorded well. They are not afraid

of data lost compared if they give printed paper which sometimes could be misplaced by the students (Carley, 2014).

Ease of Learning

Dealing with google application is not something new for the teachers. They have been kept in touch with gmail account, google drive and other features for many years. It is the same thing of using Google Classroom where they don't find any significant difficult eventhough this platform is considered new. Teacher stated that this platform is quite simple to be explored. It doesnt require a long period to adjust with all of the contents.

Satisfaction

Overall, teachers are satisfied with Google Classroom as it brings more good to the students' progress. However there are some notes to concern when incorporating this. Since students deal with technology, there are a lot of tendencies to open other sources which are not related to learning.

Students' experiences

Recapitulation of students' survey

Factors	RD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	RA (%)
<i>Usefulness</i>	2,275	7,575	56,8	30,3
<i>Ease of Use</i>	0	16,96	61,22	21,82
<i>Ease of Learning</i>	0	9,1	53,05	37,85
<i>Satisfaction</i>	0	18,78	53,32	27,88

Most students, amounting up to 56,8%, agree that within the factor of usefulness this Google Classroom is useful. While the experience of Easiness when using, 61,22 of them agree that the application is easy to use. The next factor also takes agreement that to learn to use the app, 53,05 of the students went through easiness. Lastly, the level of satisfaction, 53,32% of the students experience that they are satisfied.

Taking example, students may play online games, open social media and chat through online applications. These things are distractions which make them not able to concentrate on the task(s) given. This finding is also supported by Shonfeld and Mesihar-Tal (2017) that paperless classroom somehow creates chances for students to be distracted while learning, such as the exposing of the popup messages, games and online communication. That is, it is necessary for teachers to set rules and make an agreement the dos and don'ts while learning.

Dealing with technology has not been easier for some teachers. They found it difficult to explore something new which is not familiar before. Google Classroom itself has a lot of beneficial features, however teachers think that they have not utilized them maximumly. They need to explore all the features and learn how to operate first before it is introduced to students.

Conclusion

To sum up, teachers perceive Google Classroom application positively and that it brings good to their students' learning processes. Teachers found it effective to promote collaborative learning, minimize problem, organize students' documents and save time. The suggestion to use Google Classroom is not only because of the useful utility tool, but it also encourages teachers to be more creative in using the features to create better teaching

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