

Implementation of Distance Learning at the Indonesian School Abroad in Singapore (SIS)

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Abstract

This study examines the implementation of Distance Learning (PJJ) at Indonesian Schools Abroad (SILN) in Singapore using the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation). The research identifies several challenges, including limited teacher-student ratios, technological barriers, and variations in student motivation. However, digital platforms such as Google Classroom and Zoom are considered effective in supporting learning, though improvements are needed in the quality of materials, delivery methods, and teacher feedback frequency.

Findings indicate that most students benefit from the flexibility of time and technology access provided by PJJ. Nonetheless, challenges such as difficulty in maintaining focus during online learning, perceived heavy workloads, and mismatches between teaching materials and teachers' backgrounds persist. To optimize distance learning, teacher training, diversified teaching methods, improved teacher-student interaction, periodic evaluations, and active parental involvement are recommended. This study concludes that structured collaboration between educational institutions, parental support, and regular system improvements can enhance the quality of distance learning, provide better learning experiences, and meet students' holistic needs.

Keywords: Distance Learning, Google Classroom, ADDIE Model, Indonesian Schools in Singapore, Educational Technology

Background

Distance Learning (PJJ) has become one of the primary solutions to addressing global educational challenges, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Singapore, the education system has long been prepared for such emergencies through the development of digital platforms and innovative learning methods. Meanwhile, the Indonesian School in Singapore (SIS) has also strived to implement distance learning to ensure that students continue to receive quality education despite being far from their homeland.

Singapore is renowned for its advanced and structured education system. Since 2015, the country has been piloting the use of digital devices in education and developing the Singapore Student Learning Space, an online learning platform supporting distance education. In this context, SIS must adapt to policies and best practices implemented in Singapore, even though there are significant differences in the quality and readiness of educational infrastructure between the two countries. Data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) shows that Singapore's education scores are far higher than Indonesia's, with scores of 549, 569, and 551 in reading, mathematics, and science, respectively, compared to Indonesia's scores of 371, 379, and 396 (UGM, 2020).

The implementation of distance learning at SIS is not without challenges. One of the main issues is the insufficient teacher-to-student ratio due to regulations in Singapore, as well as the technological access gap among students. To address these problems, the SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Centre (SEAMOLEC) has conducted workshops for SIS teachers to enhance their understanding of technology use in distance learning. Furthermore, the Indonesian government has been working to strengthen overseas education systems through technological support and teacher training (Kemendikbud, 2024).

By leveraging Singapore's experiences and innovations, SIS can develop more effective distance learning methods. Despite the challenges, collaborative efforts between the Indonesian government and educational institutions in Singapore can help ensure that students continue to have access to quality education. Thus, distance learning not only serves as a temporary solution but also as a strategic step to improve the quality of education for Indonesian students abroad.

Research Method

The object of this study is the implementation of ICT-based distance education at Indonesian Schools Abroad (SILN). The research was conducted at the Indonesian School in Singapore (SIS), involving secondary-level teachers and students as research subjects. The procedure used follows the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation).

I. Analysis & Design

In the analysis phase, activities included coordination between institutions and organizations, identifying technical and administrative needs, and designing the development model. Researchers first examined the existing learning activities to map out the required improvements. This was followed by module design and preparation for module development workshops.

II. Development

The development phase included preparations for module development workshops, which aimed to create learning tools such as distance learning designs and digital content. This phase also ensured the availability of digital content in the Learning Management System (LMS).

III. Implementation

During the implementation phase, trials of the models or products developed during the workshops were conducted.

IV. Evaluation

The evaluation phase involved monitoring and assessing the implementation both on-site and online. This phase concluded with a report that included recommendations and feedback on the developed products.

Data collection in this study was carried out through direct observation of three classes and three teachers: Grade 7 Indonesian Language, Grade 11 Geography, and Grade 12 Sociology. Additionally, questionnaires were distributed to students from the observed classes to gather insights into their experiences with distance learning implementation.

Result and Discussion

The findings are explained at each stage of the ADDIE model. In the **analysis and design** stage, the initial activity involved coordination between institutions and organizations. This was filled with discussions among stakeholders to identify issues related to educational infrastructure, teachers, and subjects. The study revealed that SIS had been conducting distance learning with teachers based in Indonesia, while students learned from classrooms at SIS. However, the implementation was found to be less than optimal.

The second step was model development planning. This involved creating an outline to guide the model development process, which was based on an assessment of current educational activities. This planning was critical due to variations in challenges across SILN schools in different countries, despite having similar objectives. The process included data collection, data analysis, activity organization, and expert involvement. These activities were conducted online via video conferencing, involving SEAMOLEC researchers and the development team.

The analysis identified a shortage of human resources at SIS, which contrasted with the heavy workload. While distance learning was intended to address these issues, optimization was still needed. The next step involved preparing modules by identifying needs for instructional material development across 14 subjects. Teachers provided input on learning topics, digital media, strategies, and other tools. Monthly progress was monitored between researchers and teachers. Workshops were prepared with technical guidance from SEAMOLEC to help teachers set up the necessary software and hardware.

The **development** phase included a module development workshop aimed at creating tools such as distance learning designs and digital content. The goal was to ensure these materials were available on the Learning Management System (LMS). This phase involved in-person workshops with SEAMOLEC and university-

based reviewers from June 19–21, 2024. Following the workshops, the modules were finalized and uploaded to the LMS.

In the **implementation and evaluation** stage, the finalized modules were tested by subject teachers at SIS through a learning trial workshop. This identified and documented the results of the distance learning implementation. The findings were used to analyze the system components that required further improvement and modifications to enhance the quality of distance learning at SILN schools.

A survey was conducted among 18 high school students at SIS, with 84.2% of respondents from grade 12 and the remainder from grade 11. Key findings include:

- **Internet Quality:** 84.2% rated the internet as good, while 15.8% reported poor quality. Internet stability was adequate for distance learning.
- **Technical Issues:** Problems such as power outages and device malfunctions significantly impacted learning, with 15.8% experiencing these issues frequently and 73.7% occasionally.
- **Ease of Understanding:** 68.4% found Google Classroom effective for delivering content, but improvements in material quality and delivery are needed.
- **Teacher Feedback:** Although most teachers provided feedback, 42.1% of students indicated it was inconsistent.

Students also reported differences in workload perception, with 47.4% finding it manageable while 36.8% considered it excessive. Communication between teachers and students was moderately effective, with 52.6% finding it interactive, though 42.1% felt it needed improvement. Platforms used for communication included WhatsApp (68.4%), Google Classroom (15.8%), and others (15.8%). For the results of the observation, they can be viewed through the following link: https://s.id/hasilobservasi_PJJSIS

Based on the results from the student questionnaire and field observations, the findings can be summarized as follows:

- **Learning Media**
The majority of students feel comfortable using Zoom and Google Meet as communication media. However, some students find it hard to focus when there is only one screen in front of the class.
- **Mismatch with Teachers' Educational Background**
Students believe that PJJ is conducted almost daily, and the material taught is sometimes not aligned with the teachers' educational background, leading to a perceived lack of mastery of the material by the teachers.
- **Focus and Discipline**
Some students find it difficult to focus during distance learning, especially when the classroom conditions are not conducive.
- **Teacher Engagement**
Some students feel that teachers are more active during distance learning, while others feel that teachers' engagement is not optimal.
- **Workload**
Some students feel that the workload is quite heavy, especially before exams or during class projects.

It can be concluded that the implementation of distance learning has both strengths and weaknesses. Strengths of distance learning include:

- **Time Flexibility:** With the help of Google Classroom and the Flipped Classroom method, students have more flexibility in managing their study time at home. They can revisit material they haven't understood or learn faster if they already understand it.
- **Technology Accessibility:** The use of technology such as Zoom and Google Classroom facilitates the learning process.
- **Learning Flexibility:** With video-based learning, students can learn at their own pace. They can pause, rewind, or even search for additional materials from other sources.

While the weaknesses include:

- **Lack of Focus:** Many students find it difficult to concentrate during distance learning, especially during video conferences in class where only one screen is used in front of the class.
- **Student Motivation:** Not all students are motivated to study independently. Therefore, some students feel that distance learning is less effective compared to face-to-face learning.
- **Technology Accessibility:** Distance learning requires a stable internet connection and adequate devices, and sometimes there are disruptions like connection issues or problems with devices or power.

It can be concluded that the implementation of distance learning has good potential but needs continuous improvement. Several factors that need attention include:

- **Variety in Teaching Methods:** Teachers need to use various teaching methods so that students don't get bored and remain motivated.
- **Schedule Arrangement:** Learning schedules should be arranged in such a way that they are not too tight, giving students enough time to rest.
- **Regular Evaluation:** Periodic evaluations need to be conducted to identify issues faced by students and teachers, as well as to find appropriate solutions.
- **Parental Involvement:** Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's learning during distance learning.
- By addressing these factors, it is expected that the implementation of distance learning can run more effectively and provide optimal benefits for students.

Conclusion

The implementation of Distance Learning (PJJ) at Indonesian Schools Abroad (SILN) in Singapore shows that this program has both strengths and weaknesses that complement each other. The main strengths of PJJ are time flexibility, the accessibility of technology that facilitates learning, and learning methods that allow students to learn at their own pace. However, PJJ also has some drawbacks, such as issues with student focus, limited self-directed learning motivation, technical challenges such as internet access and device availability, as well as the need for teaching that aligns with the teachers' educational backgrounds.

The research findings emphasize the importance of optimizing the distance learning system through structured and collaborative efforts between educational institutions. Interaction between teachers and students, parental involvement, and variations in teaching methods are aspects that need to be improved to overcome the existing challenges. Additionally, the use of platforms such as Google Classroom, Zoom, and Google Meet is considered effective, although adjustments are still needed to make them more engaging and interactive. Questionnaire data also revealed that the majority of students felt helped by digital platforms, despite challenges related to the frequency of feedback from teachers, heavy workloads, and a lack of subject mastery among some teachers that does not align with their educational background.

Suggestion

Based on these findings, here are several suggestions to improve the effectiveness of PJJ:

1. **Enhancing Teacher Competence**
Teachers need relevant training to support content mastery and the use of technology in PJJ. This can reduce the mismatch between teachers' educational backgrounds and the subjects they teach.
2. **Diversification of Teaching Methods**
There is a need for a variety of teaching methods, such as group discussions, educational games, and collaborative projects, to maintain student engagement.
3. **Optimizing Teacher-Student Interaction**

Teachers need to provide consistent and more structured feedback and enhance interaction with students through digital platforms.

4. **Regular Evaluation and Monitoring**

Regular evaluations should be conducted to identify both technical and pedagogical challenges, so that solutions can be proactively applied.

5. **Parental Involvement**

Parents should be actively involved in supporting their children's learning at home, both in managing study time and providing motivation.

By implementing these recommendations, it is expected that the implementation of PJJ at SILN can become more optimal, provide a quality learning experience, and meet students' needs more holistically.

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Link 2: <https://www.akreditasi.me/akses-ke-pendidikan-berkualitas-seamolec-fasilitas-lokakarya-pjj-guru-sekolah-indonesia-singapura/>