

# Distance Learning and Student Anxiety at Palangkaraya University

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## Article Info

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*Covid 19,  
Distance Learning,  
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## Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound effect on the entire world, including the field of education. Students at the Faculty of Medicine experience anxiety due to distance learning. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent to which distance learning affects the anxiety level of students at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Palangkaraya. The research was conducted using a descriptive quantitative design. The population for this study was comprised of all students at the University of Palangkaraya's Faculty of Medicine and 219 individuals. The modified Halmilton Anxiety Rating Scale was used as the research instrument (HARS). The findings indicated that the greatest challenge encountered during distance learning was the absence of direct practical work (39 %). According to the level of anxiety, 141 respondents (64.38%) reported experiencing no symptoms of anxiety, 48 respondents (21.91%) reported experiencing mild anxiety, 22 respondents (10.04 %) reported experiencing moderate anxiety symptoms, and eight respondents (3.67%) reported experiencing severe anxiety. When anxiety symptoms manifest, the behavioral response manifests the highest percentage of mild anxiety symptoms, at 43.83%; the cognitive response manifests at 29.22 %; and the physiological and affective responses manifest at the same rate, at 26.48 %. The moderate and severe anxiety levels indicated that cognitive responses accounted for the highest anxiety response, at 18.27 % and 8.19 %, respectively. The study's conclusion indicates that distance education has a variable effect on the emergence of anxiety in medical faculty students at the University of Palangka Raya. As a result, support from various stakeholders is required to pay attention to the impact of distance learning on students.

## Abstrak

### Kata kunci:

*Covid 19  
Pembelajaran Jarak  
Jauh,  
Kesehatan Mental*

Pandemi Covid-19 menyebabkan pengaruh yang sangat besar untuk seluruh dunia, salah satunya adalah bagi dunia Pendidikan. Pembelajaran jarak jauh menimbulkan kecemasan bagi mahasiswa Fakultas Kedokteran. Tujuan Penelitian ini untuk mengetahui seberapa besar dampak pembelajaran jarak jauh terhadap tingkat kecemasan mahasiswa Fakultas kedokteran Universitas Palangkaraya. Desain penelitian yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kuantitatif. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah seluruh mahasiswa Fakultas Kedokteran Universitas Palangkaraya sebanyak 219 orang. Instrumen penelitian yang digunakan adalah *Halmilton Anxiety Rating Scale* (HARS) yang telah di modifikasi. Hasil Penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesulitan selama pembelajaran jarak jauh yang paling besar yaitu tidak dapat melakukan praktikum secara langsung (39%). Karakteristik responden berdasarkan tingkat kecemasan diperoleh gambaran sebanyak 141 orang responden (64,38%) tidak mengalami gejala kecemasan, 48 orang responden (21,91%) mengalami

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kecemasan ringan, 22 orang responden (10,04%) dengan gejala kecemasan sedang dan 8 orang responden (3,67%) mengalami kecemasan berat. Bila ditinjau dari gejala kecemasan yang muncul, maka respon perilaku menunjukkan presentase paling besar munculnya gejala kecemasan ringan yaitu 43,83%, respon kognitif 29,22%, respon fisiologis dan afektif memiliki persentase yang sama yaitu 26,48%. Pada tingkat kecemasan sedang dan berat menunjukkan bahwa respon kecemasan yang paling tinggi ditunjukkan oleh respon kognitif yaitu 18,27% dan 8,19%. Kesimpulan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran jarak jauh memberikan dampak bagi timbulnya kecemasan pada mahasiswa fakultas kedokteran Universitas Palangkaraya dengan tingkat dan respon yang berbeda. Oleh karena itu, sangat diperlukan dukungan dari berbagai pihak agar memperhatikan dampak yang ditimbulkan pada mahasiswa akibat pembelajaran jarak jauh.

## INTRODUCTION

The number of Covid-19 cases in Indonesia has steadily increased since it was first reported, so it requires the attention of all sectors, one of which is education. The pandemic of Covid-19 has had a significant impact on Indonesian education. Rather than face-to-face instruction, distance learning methods are used for students and students alike. In order to keep students engaged in the educational process, this method uses the principle of physical distancing (Basar, 2021).

Distance learning is nothing new in the world of education. The government's implementation of distance education is an effort to fix the right, planned, simultaneous, and optimal education system in improving education quality and human resources despite the Covid-19 pandemic (Munir, 2020). This distance learning method is almost applied worldwide, including Indonesia (Siahaan, 2010). Distance learning provides different challenges for teachers, students, institutions, and even the wider community (Darmayanti et al., 2007). In the distance learning process, lecturers and students have their respective roles. Lecturers act as facilitators and guide the process of teaching and learning activities, while students act as independent learners, constructors of knowledge and seek solutions to solve problems (Pratiwi, 2020).

There is a lack of familiarity in Indonesia with the idea of going to school at home. Especially for working parents in Indonesia, homeschooling comes as a big shock, especially given how much time they spend working outside the home. In the same way, students who are used to learning in person may experience psychological issues. Medical students in Indonesia have been severely hampered in their studies as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Face-to-face lectures and group discussions are common, as are practicums and lab experiences for medical school students. With the Covid-19 pandemic, the WHO (World Health Organization) has mandated social distancing, so the traditional learning process has been replaced by a distance learning process. Because of the Covid-19 Pandemic, academics and students must change their practices (Basar, 2021).

Boenga and Tiwuk (2020) researched the effect of distance learning and physical separation on student anxiety levels and found that medical students experienced extremely high anxiety levels (88 %). According to the findings of this study, distance learning, and physical separation impact students' anxiety levels. According to a study conducted by Sri Wulan et al. (2021) regarding the impact of distance learning on students' mental health during the pandemic, the DASS 21 questionnaire found that stress was students' most common psychological problem. As a result, BK teachers were called upon to provide counseling and guidance to students coping with distance learning. Additionally, Edi and Galih (2021) studied the effects of online learning anxiety on 50 first-semester students in the Covid-19 era. Practicum courses can benefit from an online learning process. However, the availability of learning support facilities must be considered.

The new normal of education has psychological implications for medical students, so support from family, lecturers, and fellow students is needed to avoid psychological disorders during the learning process. Face-to-face or distance learning (Pangastuti et al., 2020). Anxiety is a common side effect, and it manifests itself in a variety of ways, including changes in thoughts, feelings, and

bodily functions (Annisa & Ifdil, 2016). All of the aspects mentioned above have a significant bearing on the efficiency of online instruction. In the wake of this, researchers are scrambling to connect their findings. University students' anxiety levels will be studied as part of this research project. This study should serve as a wake-up call for lecturers.

## METHODS

This type of research is descriptive with a quantitative approach. The sample used in this study was all medical students at the University of Palangkaraya class 2017, 2018, and 2019 with 219 students. The instrument in this study used a modified Halmilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS). Data collection techniques using a questionnaire. The questionnaire used is divided into two parts. The first part contains questions related to respondents' demographic data such as name, gender, age, education force (year of admission to the Faculty of Medicine), sources of information about Covid-19, difficulties/obstacles during distance learning. At the same time, the second part contains 14 closed questions according to the response to anxiety symptoms. Respondents chose one of the four available answer options using a Likert scale.

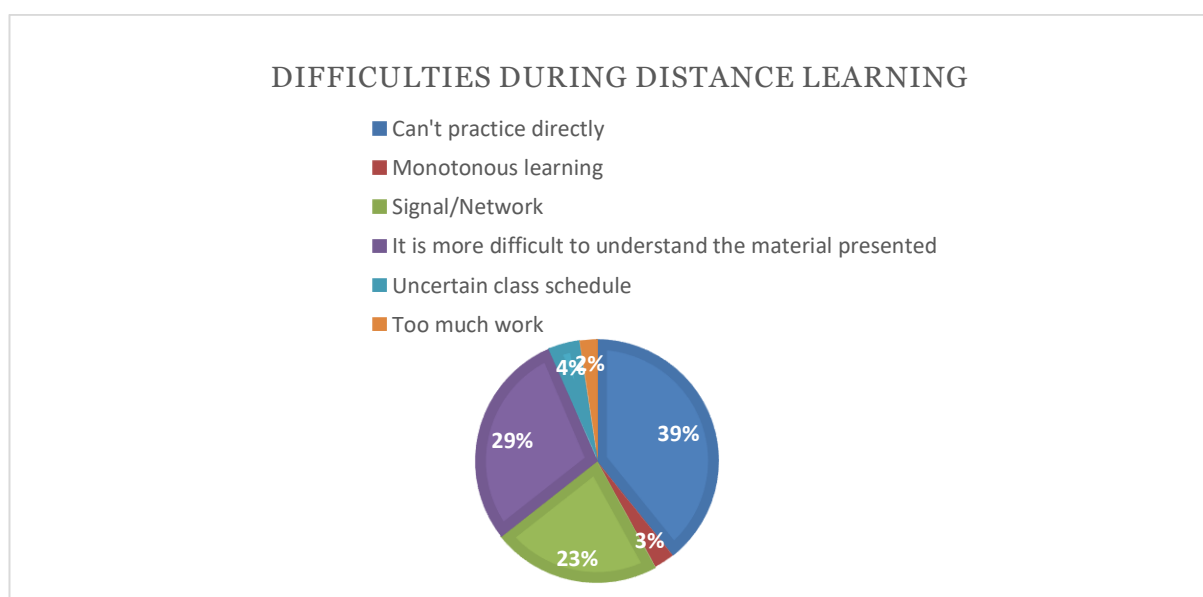
## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study results on the impact of distance learning on the anxiety level of Palangkaraya University students were obtained primary data in the form of demographic data and data on anxiety levels and student responses to anxiety.

**Table 1. Characteristics of students of the Faculty of Medicine**

Gender	Total	Percentage (%)
Male	56	25.8%
Female	163	74.2%
Total	219	100%

The difficulties experienced by students during distance learning are not being able to do direct practice as much as 39%, then followed by problems on the internet network as much as 23%, and difficulties understanding the learning material delivered as much as 29%.



**Figure 1. Difficulties During Distance Learning**

**Table 2. Characteristics of respondents based on respondents' anxiety levels**

Anxiety Level	Total	Percentage (%)
No Symptoms	141	64,38%
Mild Anxiety	48	21,91%
Moderate Anxiety	22	10,04%
Severe Anxiety	8	3,67%
Total	219	100%

Based on table 2, It can be seen that 141 respondents (64.38%) did not experience symptoms of anxiety, 48 respondents (21.91%) experienced mild anxiety, 22 respondents (10.04%) with moderate anxiety symptoms, and eight respondents. Respondents (3.67%) experienced severe anxiety.

**Table 3. Characteristics of respondents' anxiety levels based on physiological, affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses**

System	Anxiety				Number of Respondents
	No Symptoms	Mild Anxiety	Moderate Anxiety	Severe Anxiety	
Physiological	120 (54,79%)	58 (26,48%)	23 (10,50%)	8 (3,65%)	219
Behavior	87 (39,72%)	96 (43,83)	27 (12,32)	9 (4,10%)	219
Cognitive	96 (43,83%)	64 (29,22%)	41 (18,72%)	18 (8,19%)	219
Affective	120 (54,79%)	58 (26,48)	23 (10,50%)	8 (3,65%)	219

Based on table 3, the characteristics of respondents' anxiety levels were obtained based on physiological responses, behavioral responses, cognitive responses, and affective responses. The level of anxiety from physiological, cognitive, and affective responses showed the largest percentage, namely, without anxiety symptoms. When viewed from the anxiety symptoms that appear, the behavioral response shows the largest percentage of mild anxiety symptoms, which is 43.83%, then followed by cognitive response 29.22%, and physiological and affective responses have the same percentage, namely 26.48%. The highest anxiety response was indicated by cognitive responses at the moderate and severe anxiety levels, namely 18.27% and 8.19%, respectively.

One of the many ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic's emergence is in the field of education. Nowadays, rather than learning in a traditional classroom setting, students can take online courses, which allows for a more flexible and convenient learning experience. From kindergarten to college, students are being taught in a new way. The goal of limiting face-to-face learning is to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus infection by reducing physical proximity. Online learning from home is permitted for students, according to a Circular Letter from the Minister of Education and Culture Number 36962/MPK.A/HK/2020.

Since the Minister of Education and Culture issued the circular, all face-to-face learning processes and practicums at the University of Palangkaraya's Faculty of Medicine have been done from home or online. For students, distance learning is a completely new experience. This is a brand-new situation in which students have to get used to the old teaching style all over again. Students at the University of Palangkaraya's medical school reported difficulty understanding the practicum process because they could not do direct practice, particularly in practicums that required observation and required action or skills, according to observations of the distance learning process. When it comes to doing things. When medical students are learning about the process in a clinic or

hospital, or even after they have graduated and become doctors, they will need this practicum. Many students have difficulty comprehending the lecturer's material while taking distance education courses. This is because each student's ability to retain information varies. As a result, some students prefer to learn face-to-face or one-on-one with the instructor. Additionally, network issues are viewed as an impediment. This is due to a variety of factors, including location, servers, and the structure of the course. Students had to learn to work within a new system fraught with difficulties during implementation. The Covid-19 pandemic's impact on student's mental health has resulted in mental health issues, such as anxiety, during distance learning.

There is a physiological response to anxiety, which is a feeling of helplessness, discomfort, and emotional feelings unprepared to deal with the stresses of daily life. According to this research, students at the University of Palangkaraya's medical school had the highest levels of mild anxiety (21.91 percent), moderate anxiety (10.04 percent), and severe anxiety (3.67%). Due to the new culture and learning environment conditions, this incident occurred. Due to the lack of social and physical interaction as well as attending lecture classes, distance learning results in social isolation. Students in distance learning may feel isolated or miss out on social-physical interactions even though they can communicate via social networks such as applications that provide discussion groups or e-mails (Candratika And Purnawati, 2014)

Anxiety conditions can considerably impact physiological responses, affective responses, cognitive responses, and behavioral responses. Anxiety will impact success in learning, so it affects learning effectiveness. The transition period experienced by students encourages students to face new demands and developmental tasks. This study showed that mild anxiety affected behavioral responses, while moderate and severe anxiety influenced cognitive responses. Changes in behavioral responses resulting from the emergence of anxiety are characterized by restlessness, physical tension, withdrawing from interpersonal relationships, and avoiding problems. This can have an impact on decreasing concentration when doing distance learning.

A closely related relationship is that a decrease in learning concentration affects students' cognitive responses, namely a decrease in memory and thinking power. This impacts when the interaction is carried out in the distance learning process. Affective response resulting from anxiety is characterized by worry, fear, inability to sit still, and voice. The physiological response is characterized by clinical manifestations of nausea, insomnia, headaches, frequent urination, ineffective learning, diarrhea, palpitations, confusion. In addition to having an impact on the emergence of anxiety in students, distance learning also has a beneficial impact, including technology that is easily accessible from home, as well as some students who can learn from visual and audio stimuli and are useful for introverted students because these students can ask questions without feeling Embarrassed. Anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic is determined by several factors that affect the speed and way a person adapts, such as personality, age, experience, learning process, physical condition, and environment. A person's adaptability also plays a role in preventing stress and anxiety and determines how a person determines how to deals with negative feelings that arise when faced with challenges or pressure.

One of the drawbacks of distance education is that the teacher does not provide feedback. As a result, teachers have little or no control over their students' behavior because they aren't present at the same time and in the same place at the same time. Teachers don't know if their students' behavior has changed or not. 19 The mechanism of distance learning necessitates student autonomy. 20 Distance learning emphasizes the ability to learn on one's own or through self-study. A systematic approach to presenting learning materials, guiding students, and providing supervision for successful learning is used in independent learning.

Distance learning methods influence students' anxiety levels. Additionally, a positive learning environment, the way students learn, how they learn, and the readiness of devices that aid in learning are all important considerations in a successful distance learning experience. Students, universities,

and the government can all take steps to alleviate their concerns about distance education. Students can prevent and alleviate stress and anxiety by engaging in physical activity, getting enough sleep, engaging in hobbies, socializing even when virtual and anxiety feels heavy and disturbing, telling people they trust or seeking professional help.

## CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound effect on the world of education, one of its most notable effects. The use of distance learning is one way to keep the educational process moving forward. This shift in the educational process significantly impacted students, including those at the University of Palangkaraya's medical school, leading to increased anxiety. There is a wide range of anxiety levels, from mild to severe. Students at the University of Palangkaraya's medical school experience physiological, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes due to anxiety. Students, faculty, universities, and the government all need to work together to pay more attention to the effects of distance learning on mental health and implement more effective treatment efforts.

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