



Online Learning Model Implemented in Islamic Education in Post Covid-19 Pandemic: Case of Multicultural Students in Indonesia

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Abstract

Limited studies focused on the teaching and learning process in the Covid-19 pandemic with multicultural conditions of students. Thus, this study aims to determine the various models of online learning in the field of Islamic education lessons (PAI) after the Covid-19 pandemic in Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, in the context of multicultural conditions of students. This research is a case study where the focus of research is to investigate the natural phenomenon that happened during the Covid-19 pandemic especially related to how online learning was implemented in the teaching and learning process after the Covid-19 pandemic. The data collected focuses on gathering information about the actual conditions related to the various models of learning used by teachers in the field of Islamic education lessons. The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data sources gained from 26 teachers in 8 Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. The results of the study showed that the online learning model for the field of Islamic education lessons implemented after Covid-19 is a blended learning model. It is supported by online learning media such as WhatsApp Group, Google Classroom, Zoom Meeting, YouTube, Google Meet, Madrasah e-learning, and Facebook which can ease the students with multicultural circumstances in acquiring lessons from teachers. Advantages and challenges faced by teachers and students are explored in this research, and novelty and pedagogical implications are offered for future studies.

Keywords: Islamic education, Islamic high school, multicultural context, online learning, blended learning model

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about many changes and significant adjustments to various aspects, especially education. Education is a key component in developing quality human resources in Indonesia to be able to compete and adapt to changes in time (Alpian et al., 2019). The importance of this educational aspect is vital, making it a crucial part of a country's administration. Education policies are created and updated so that education can be implemented well, regardless of the conditions experienced by Indonesia. Regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, one of the policies issued in the regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture in circular No. 4 in 2020 regarding the implementation of education policy during the Covid-19 pandemic. With this circular, the learning process is conducted online while still considering the provision of meaningful learning experiences for students, without burdening them with the demand to achieve all curriculum requirements for graduation.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the learning process for Islamic education lessons was carried out online using various digital platforms such as WhatsApp group, Google Classroom, Zoom meeting, YouTube, and many other applications (Suharni, 2021). In this case, those applications are adjusted to the abilities of teachers and learning. In addition, the implementation of online learning is also supported by e-learning applications released by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, starting from Raudatul Athfl (RA) to Madrasah Aliyah (MA) levels.

Islamic education learning, when related to the condition of East Kalimantan which is the second largest region after Papua, with its geographical location of several areas that are difficult to access due to being bordered by rivers, hills, and mining areas, causes the region to be divided into rural and urban areas. Meanwhile, in terms of providing facilities and infrastructure as well as educational components, they have not been fully perfect, especially in terms of technology in rural areas (Taufik, 2019). This certainly creates differences in the application of e-learning in Madrasah or Islamic schools. When related to the demands of the digital era, the presence of e-learning becomes very important because students are already familiar with the use of platforms and social media, so the learning process must be adjusted to the students' condition. This is one of the reasons why the use of e-learning or online learning is still needed in the Covid-19 pandemic.

Some previous studies have been explored in order to investigate teaching and learning in post Covid-19 pandemic era. For instance, Saleh et al. (2021) explored the development of teaching and learning in higher education in post Covid-19 pandemic by investigating the implementation of blended learning used in teaching and learning process. They found it was interesting to find teachers use various kind of media in conducting blended learning model in teaching. Additionally, students responded positively towards the use of blended learning as a model to conduct teaching and learning process. Furthermore, Dos Santos (2022) also examined students' responses towards the use of online learning platform after the Covid-19 pandemic. In this case, students feel that online learning is flexible and convenience. Other than that, having online learning is unique and interactive experiences for students where they can listen to online materials without limitations.

Another research on COVID-19 learning conducted by Cahyadi et al. (2022) investigated the quality of interaction between students and teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic using two different models, i.e., hybrid and blended learning models. They found that in terms of perceived learning, classroom interaction has a more substantial impact and is more effective in blended learning mode. Different from other previous studies, Hu (2022) proved that students' learning

behavior changes during the COVID-19 pandemic and other periods, especially in conducting online learning mode, e.g., the habits of checking online videos for learning materials given by teachers. Not only are the changes in the students' online learning behavior, but there are also changes in the teachings and learning methods of management educators (Ratten, 2023).

Previously explained facts drive the significance of why the implementation of online learning is still relevant to this post-pandemic COVID-19 era. The gap that is offered in the current research is that the context of teaching and learning is more specific, where the researchers are eager to explore online teaching and learning in the Covid-19 era, specifically in Islamic education lessons in Islamic high schools' context. Mainly, deeper analysis is also explored in order to find out the challenges faced by students and teachers in conducting online learning where the condition and situation where this research was conducted is, of course, different from the previous studies. Since students of Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, are from different cities and social backgrounds (including family and economic backgrounds), the researchers believe that investigating the implementation of the online learning mode in the multicultural context is relevant to explore in this study. Therefore, this research intended to explore the use of online learning mode in post-pandemic COVID-19 in the context of Islamic education lessons in Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, in a multicultural context. Specifically, the researchers formulate three research questions as follows:

1. How is the implementation of online learning platforms in post Covid-19 pandemic applied in Islamic education lessons in a multicultural context?
2. To what extent the advantages of implementing an online learning platform experienced by teachers and students in the COVID-19 pandemic in teaching and learning Islamic education lessons in a multicultural context?
3. To what extent the barriers of implementing online learning platforms experienced by teachers and students in the Post-COVID-19 pandemic in the process of teaching and learning of Islamic education lessons in a multicultural context?

2. Literature Review

Online learning is the interaction process between teachers and students using computers and internet access to support learning (Baety & Munandar, 2021). The goal of online learning is to optimally deliver conventional learning by utilizing the internet network and paying attention to the control of the online platform teaching and learning (Rigianti, 2020). In the COVID-19 era, many formal educational institutions conduct controlling action of online learning by utilizing a learning management system, or LMS, as a component of e-learning that allows all activities to be managed (Yunitasari & Hanifah, 2020).

Online learning is a learning activity that uses the Internet network and utilizes technology in the interaction between teachers and students (Dewi, 2020). This certainly demands innovation from teachers to update the learning mechanism that has been taking place face-to-face. The challenge for teachers is how to present a meaningful learning process using technology while not neglecting the delivery of material that is in accordance with the achievement of competency standards, especially in the field of Islamic Education subjects, such as Qur'an Hadith, Aqidah and Akhlak, Fiqh, and History of Islamic Culture. Basically, the subjects in Islamic Education have curriculum goals that improve intellectual abilities and emotional, spiritual, and character value-building (Riswadi, 2020). This is in line with National Education System Law and the demands of

the 2013 curriculum, which state that character building is an academic necessity, so its implementation takes the form of adding learning time for Islamic education subjects (PAI). Its implementation involves adding learning time for Islamic education subjects so that character-building can be maximally implemented (Ifadah & Utomo, 2019). Thus, the learning process for Islamic education subjects needs special attention in its implementation.

According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Indonesia, e-learning has several advantages, i.e., it trains students to learn independently, makes the learning process more flexible, makes it possible to repeat the delivery of the material by teachers whenever and wherever the students are, gives unlimited access to knowledge development, makes students accustomed to use technology (Ajiatmojo, 2021). Nevertheless, by using the online platform of teaching and learning process, the students cannot get direct feedback from teachers, and there is a risk of frustration experienced both by teachers and students when conducting online learning (Nengrum et al., 2021). Regarding this research, the researchers investigated similar cases, specifically on what advantages and challenges teachers and students face during the online learning platform in the Covid-19 pandemic era in the context of its implementation in Islamic education lessons.

Many of the literature review shows that the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector is triggering the demand for online learning or blended learning models by using various media to convey the learning materials to students. The review of several studies, e.g., Imran et al. (2023), emphasizes the importance of flexible and adaptable learning methods to urge institutions to prioritize the creation of diverse learning methods to meet the needs of all students. In order to accomplish this, teachers should use digital teaching resources and technology to create stronger connections with students. Enhancing student experiences does not have a single answer, as it relies on specific circumstances. This allows educators to provide different options tailored to individual needs (Aguinis et al., 2019). Related to these facts shown by previous studies, the current research focuses on how the Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, meet the demand for online or the combination of online and offline modes in teaching and learning in the Covid-19 pandemic era and what sort of media the teachers utilize to facilitate the students in learning Islamic education lessons.

3. Research Methodology

This research is a case study with a qualitative approach. Specifically, this study was conducted in a unique phenomenon that happened naturally (Creswell, 2014; Cohen et al., 2017), i.e., investigating online learning in the post-COVID era in the context of Islamic education lessons. This research was done in eight Islamic high schools in different cities in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. Those eight Islamic high schools were chosen because the representation of multicultural aspects existed, i.e., ethnic and social strata.

The data source in this research is divided into two categories, i.e., primary and secondary data. Firstly, the primary data was gained by observing the teaching and learning process of Islamic education lessons in the classrooms. Additionally, using a semi-structured interview type, primary data was obtained from interviewing 26 teachers who teach Islamic education lessons. Secondly, the secondary data was obtained by checking the relevant artifacts to the research focus.

In terms of data analysis, the Flow Chart analysis model proposed by Miles et al. (2014), which consists of data reduction, data display, and data condensation, were utilized as the stages to analyze the data collected. At last, the data analyzed were validated through triangulation, i.e., source and technique triangulation types, which combines data from all data collection techniques used.

4. Results

1.1 Online learning implemented in Islamic Religious Education Lessons in post-COVID-19 Pandemic in Islamic High Schools in East Kalimantan in a multicultural context

The employment of Islamic Education subjects in a post-COVID era in Islamic High Schools in East Kalimantan is by utilizing a blended learning model with various media such as WhatsApp group, Google Classroom, Zoom meetings, YouTube, Google Meet, and e-learning madrasah. The results of media of blended learning used by eight Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan are summarized below chart:

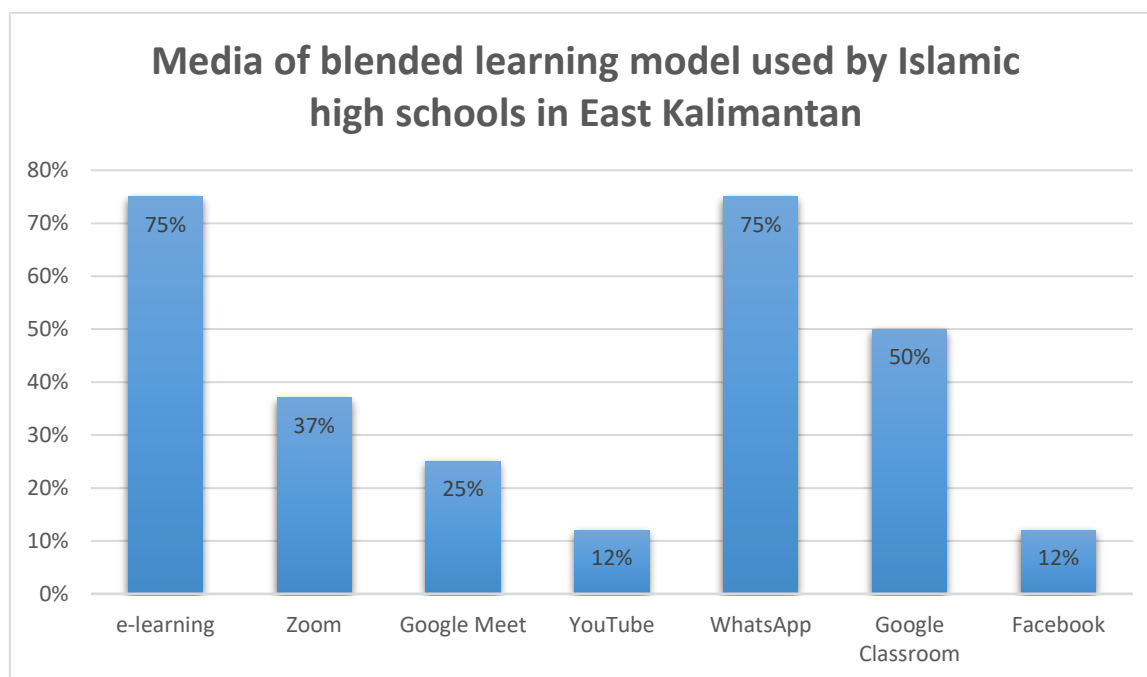


Figure 1. Media of blended learning model used by Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan

Furthermore, regarding using the above media in the blended learning model the teachers used, the researchers summarized the results gained from the semi-structured interview. Since students have different cultural, social, and economic backgrounds, teachers seem to use varied media to manage the implementation of online learning. As what is said by the below teacher of the history of Islamic Culture subject:

When conducting the teaching and learning process in an online platform, I often change the learning media to adjust the condition of my students. For example, some students might not have good signals to join Zoom meetings when it is raining. Therefore, I sometimes use

Google Classroom to send learning materials and ask my students to upload their assignments (male, 31).

In this case, all of the Islamic high schools provide e-learning to be operated in the teaching and learning process, as below except:

When conducting an online classroom, our school facilitates e-learning, which all students can access. The students can make their username and password to download the learning materials (male, 39).

Our school has already maximized the use of e-learning for teaching and learning. In teaching the Quran and Hadith, e-learning eases me to arrange lesson plans, check students' attendance, give assignments, and score (male, 42).

Furthermore, the media of Zoom meetings is used to conduct online, face-to-face meetings and e-learning of madrasah is used to provide the students with materials and assignments as the following excerpt:

In the History of Islamic Culture subject, I usually use Zoom meetings to conduct online classrooms with my students. In addition, to give the students learning materials and assignments, I use e-learning provided by the school (male, 30).

In another Islamic high school, the teacher of Quran and Hadith subject sometimes utilizes Zoom meetings or Google Meet to conduct the class. Other than that, YouTube is used to give the students supporting materials. To check the students' presence, the teacher uses WhatsApp group or sometimes uses e-learning provided by the school as follows:

I use various media to deliver lessons on the Quran and Hadith according to the topic of the material. I will check attendance in the WhatsApp group or e-learning platform and then present the material through Zoom meetings or Google Meet. In this case, as Zoom meeting has limited time, I also provide relevant additional material videos from YouTube (male, 32).

In another case, Google Classroom and WhatsApp are considered as favorable media to be used by teachers to teach Islamic education lessons, such as the following excerpt:

In the subject of Quran and Hadith and Akidah Akhlak, the use of Google Classroom and WhatsApp groups are easy to use and very helpful for me to collect students' assignments and give the students scores (male, 41).

When teaching the Quran and Hadith and Fiqh, I prefer to use two applications, i.e., WhatsApp group to send learning materials and Google Classroom to give assignments to students (female, 37).

1.2 Advantages of implementing online learning in teaching Islamic education lessons in a post-Covid era in Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan in a multicultural context

Several advantages is felt by teachers of Islamic education lessons in using the online platform in teaching. Firstly, by having online learning to conduct the teaching and learning process, the students are trained to act more humanist, understand differences between peer friends, and have democratic principles, as below interview except:

Online Learning Model Implemented in Islamic Education in Post Covid-19 Pandemic

When having an online meeting such as via Zoom meeting, I can see that my students are more tolerant and rarely interrupt in the middle of their friends talking during a presentation. They are listening more than complaining (female, 29).

Moreover, the combination of online and offline modes decreases students' expenses. In a multicultural context, students from middle to low-economic backgrounds are helped to lower the cost they need to spend. As the teacher of Quran and Hadith and Akidah Akhlak subjects said below:

By merging the online and offline modes, students with middle to low-economic backgrounds can reduce their learning costs (male, 41).

Secondly, students can still learn when teachers can't attend the class in offline mode. This means that online learning makes the learning becomes more flexible in terms of place. As what is said by the below teacher of Quran and Hadith and Fiqh subjects:

Online learning is helpful when I cannot attend the class in direct face-to-face interaction. I can interact with my students via Zoom meeting or Google Meet (female, 37).

Not only in terms of place flexibility, online learning makes learning more flexible in terms of time, as the following teachers of History of Islamic Culture subject statements:

Using an online learning platform, I can easily share learning materials with my students whenever and wherever (male, 32).

Through online learning, the teaching and learning process becomes faster and simpler (female, 28).

Lastly, the reason why online learning is beneficial is because learning materials and media become more varied. Teachers of Islamic education lessons become more innovative in applying learning media which is appropriate to the students' needs and abilities, as stated below statement:

Through online learning, I can push myself to use various learning materials such as videos. In addition, I can learn how to use e-learning in teaching (male, 32).

1.3 Barriers in implementing online learning in teaching Islamic education lessons in a post-Covid era in Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan in a multicultural context

Not only are the advantages of using the online learning platform, but there are also some barriers that are faced both by teachers and students in Islamic education lessons. In this case, students have different habits which are shaped by their culture. Therefore, it is such a big challenge to make them have independent learning, learn how to deal with technology used during online learning, as well as their responsibility in learning. The interview excerpt below shows how this barrier in teaching the History of Islamic Culture subject:

When I and my students have a schedule to meet online, it is a great challenge for me to have them learn by using e-learning because some of them feel it is difficult to operate the LMS provided by the school. Other than that, I doubt that they do learning stuff independently, such as preparing and reading the materials before the online meeting, so I feel worried about not finishing the learning target. I often find that students are less active when they are in online learning with me (male, 30).

Not only students the barrier to operating online applications also comes from the teachers, as below statement:

In teaching Fiqh Quran and Hadith, I feel that it is a little bit difficult to use e-learning, and I assume that it is also happened to other teachers in our school. Therefore, I usually use Zoom meetings and asking my students to join live on Facebook (male, 40).

The next challenge is from the internet connection which is faced by students. In this case, students located in slightly remote areas are sometimes asked for permission not to join the online class or to have their camera off during the learning because of the internet connection reason. As the following statement:

In teaching Quran and Hadith subjects, I try to maximize the use of Google Classroom and WhatsApp groups to send learning materials and assignments to students. It is because students face connecting problems to access the e-learning from their devices. Some students, especially those who live far from the central of the city, said that the internet connection is unstable, so that they have to turn their cameras off (female, 43).

Google Classroom is an alternative media for giving the students learning materials and assignments on History and Islamic Culture subject when the e-learning application provided by the school is not working. When using e-learning, some of them asked for permission for not attending the online class because of the connection (male, 28).

The next obstacle is online learning, where the delivery of materials becomes less optimal, and students' understanding of Islamic education lessons is low. As explained in the interview excerpt below:

I feel that during the delivery of material in online learning, I struggle to control students in achieving learning objectives, and learning becomes more theoretical than practical. Additionally, I feel I am not as effective in explaining the learning materials. Furthermore, students also seem to have more difficulty understanding the materials (female, 30).

Another challenge in implementing online learning is that students' affective, character, and social development is not well observed. Ideally, the goal of the learning process is to develop cognitive aspects and affective, psychomotor, and social attitudes in students. It is difficult to monitor students' social development and supervise their learning outcomes during online learning. As stated in the interview below:

The drawback of implementing online learning is that it reduces students' social interaction and social care because learning does not occur face-to-face. The social relationship between students and teachers and among students is not as strong as when the learning process takes place in the classroom (female, 28).

5. Discussion

From the findings described in the previous section, all of the Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan observed in this research use a blended learning model in implementing online learning to conduct Islamic education lessons. The results from this research show that to support online learning, the use of learning media such as WhatsApp, Google Classroom, Zoom meetings, YouTube, Facebook, and e-learning tried to be maximized by teachers. It is relevant to the theory of blended learning explained by Abroto et al. (2021), where blended learning is a learning model

where teachers combine a set of teaching stages, diverse types of media, and varied teaching materials with technology.

There are many existing theory and previous studies stating that the use of blended learning is beneficial to support the students' performance in learning, as what is said by Idris et al. (2019) that blended learning will increase students' learning proficiency (Idris et al., 2019). Additionally, according to Singh et al. (2021), combining offline and online meetings, such as in blended learning, is suitable during the transitional phase, preserving student involvement in post-pandemic learning activities. It is also supported by Pravingwong (2018), where pupils who get instruction through blended learning make more significant progress. Other than that, blended learning helps foster students' independent learning (Godwin-jones, 2011). In other words, utilizing blended learning is valuable to support the teaching and learning process.

Not only students' performance in learning the combination between online and offline learning can simply teach the students to respect differences and act to be tolerant of their peers. As supported by Wulandari et al. (2022) that, blended learning encourages the development of shared respect, acceptance, and understanding to act in a way that embraces humanistic ideals, diversity, and democratic principles. Additionally, in the context of multicultural students, who they come from different cultural, social, and economic backgrounds, combining offline and online modes can simply put them in lowering their expenses in going to school (alsaif, 2021). The online learning format has also played a role in enabling the successful functioning of multicultural classrooms by facilitating one-on-one or small-group collaborative learning opportunities (Lacaste et al., 2022).

The combination of offline and online modes of teaching and learning makes teaching and learning system becoming more flexible, as what has been said by some teachers in this research. This is in line with the research conducted by Noor et al. (2021), which states that online learning can be conducted flexibly anywhere and anytime, allowing students to complete assignments more freely and enabling teachers to develop their learning system using the platform to facilitate and improve the quality of learning. It is also supported by Dos Santos (2022) that students prefer the flexibility and convenience of online learning.

Obviously, the students already feel comfortable with the use of various technologies in the era after Covid-19 (Hogdal et al., 2021). The use of offline and online modes as in blended learning model in teaching and learning drives the teachers to be more innovative in utilizing learning media. It is because the teachers are insisted to fulfil an appropriate learning media which fits to students' needs and abilities. It is supported by the research conducted by Effendi & Wahidy (2019) that the implementation of blended learning enables the use of various learning media for students.

However, the research findings also highlight the challenges faced both by teachers and students where students face the obstacle of having bad internet connection when joining the online class. It is supported by the research conducted by Aini (2021) and Ashraf et al. (2022) where online learning is a type of learning which needs appropriate devices and internet connection. Other than that, online learning influences the students' understanding. It is in line with the previous study which found that learning with online mode impacts to the lack of students' understanding and enthusiasm (Magdalena et al., 2020).

Not only for students, the online learning also influence to the administration of teaching performance of teachers. As Ariesca et al. (2021) found that in online mode, teachers sometimes find it is difficult to do assessment to students' performance, deciding a appropriate evaluation, and delivering the learning materials. Furthermore, the online platform drives the lack of social interaction between students themselves as well as between students and teachers. This result is also found by Wibowo (2021) that it is a challenge in an online learning where there will be lack of social interaction, difficult to give a description of students' characteristics, and lack of parents' and teachers' control.

The findings from this research come with a novelty that among all of media in online learning, e-learning provided by schools is the media which is unpreferred by students because of some reasons. Therefore, the e-learning provided by schools need to be improved in order to ease the students and teachers in conducted the online learning platform. It is also because students are from different background of social, culture, and economic conditions, so that the use of simpler and faster technologies is preferable. Moreover, the results of this research shape some pedagogical implications which impacts the education system for now and in the future. Pandemic of Covid-19 brings positive impacts where one of them is creating new learning methods such as blended learning model which combine offline and online platforms in learning. Therefore, in post-Covid 19 era as the present time, the teaching and learning system tends to be closer to technological used. In multicultural context, the teachers can use appropriate media to adjust the condition of students, whether in geographical context or in social and economic conditions of the students. The teachers can use the application which is lighter and save the internet quota such as WhatsApp and Google Classroom. Lastly, through the mixture of online and offline modes in teaching, the tolerance and democratic characteristics can be directed to students.

Above all of the findings in this research, there are several limitations which are important to be highlighted. Firstly, in terms of the research scope, this research only focuses on the exploration of online learning in post Covid-19 in the process of teaching and learning in Islamic education lessons, as well as the advantages and challenges faced by teachers and students. Therefore, further researchers are expected to explore the online learning in post Covid-19 era to broader research focus such as students' emotion and achievement. Secondly, since the subject of this research are only in eight sites of Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, the further research probably can take more various subject of research in order to find out a wider result regarding the implementation of online learning in post Covid-19 pandemic.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings described previously, there are three main results that can be concluded in the current research, i.e., (1) the implementation of online learning in post Covid-19 pandemic in Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, is focusing on the use of blended learning model. It means that the teachers combine the teaching and learning process in offline and online platforms by using various media which are possible to be accessed by students depends on students' condition, (2) several advantages felt by both teachers and students in the implementation of blended learning, e.g., the class becomes more flexible, especially for students who are from different background of social, culture, and economics, and the learning materials provided by teachers tend to be more innovative, and (3) the biggest challenge faced by students and teachers is that the use of e-learning provided by schools where some teachers still need to

improve their capability in operating the e-learning provided schools, and students sometimes feel it is difficult to access the e-learning because of the barriers of internet connection and devices. Based on these facts, the management of Islamic high schools in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, needs to increase the performance of the e-learning facilitated by schools in order to ease the process of teaching and learning. Lastly, more various media is still needed to fulfil the students' demand which is suitable to the multicultural condition of students, whether in cultural or social background context.

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