

# Deception in Online Learning During the Pandemic of Covid-19 in Indonesia

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**Abstract:** *Computer-mediated communication on distance learning brings various effects on the lecturers and the higher-education students. Distance learning has been performed on campuses in Indonesia since the pandemic of Covid-19. This research aims to describe the students' deception via computer-mediated communication. Interpersonal deception and computer-mediated communication theories are chosen to analyze this deception phenomenon. Data were collected through questionnaires and distributed to students in Jakarta as the red zone of the pandemic of Covid-19. The findings show the students tended to manipulate information before they deliver it to the audience and to hide their identity or presence during the virtual classroom.*

**Keywords:** *computer-mediated communication, deception, distance learning, higher education*

**Abstrak:** *Computer-mediated communication pada pembelajaran jarak jauh memberikan berbagai macam dampak bagi dosen dan mahasiswa. Distance learning telah dilakukan di kampus-kampus sejak pandemi Covid-19. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan perilaku kebohongan mahasiswa melalui computer-mediated communication. Teori interpersonal deception dan teori computer-mediated communication digunakan untuk menganalisis fenomena ini. Data diperoleh secara kuantitatif dari kuesioner yang didistribusikan kepada mahasiswa di Jakarta ketika menjadi zona merah penyebaran Covid-19. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa ada kecenderungan para mahasiswa memanipulasi pesan/informasi sebelum mereka menyampaikannya kepada komunikan lainnya dan menyembunyikan identitas selama kehadirannya dalam kelas virtual.*

**Kata Kunci:** *kebohongan, komunikasi bermedia, pembelajaran jarak jauh, pendidikan tinggi*

Some campuses should make a dramatic change in the interaction between lecturers and students on the campus. It is about usual interaction in the classroom where the lecturers meet their students in the classrooms or laboratories which are scheduled firmly from sixteen meetings in sixteen weeks. They talk to their students in front of the class directly. Some equipment is prepared such as a computer or laptop and an LCD projector to operate a PowerPoint. The

lecturers directly speak before the class so that they can use their body language to stress their explanation. On the other hand, the students are sitting on their chairs listening to the lecturer. It is a real interaction between a lecturer and students in the real classroom. Students might ask questions and the lecturer gives the answers directly. Then, all students listen to the feedback at the same time.

That process of natural and ordinary class interaction stopped suddenly caused

by a circular from the Minister of Education and Culture. The class interaction should be done online or at a distance due to the pandemic of Covid-19 (De, 2020, p. 85; Mishra, Gupta, & Shree, 2020; Wut & Xu, 2021, p. 371). Students and lecturers are not allowed to meet in the classroom. The lessons should be delivered from home and the lecturers must think to find ways how to deliver class interaction from home. However, it needs a great effort to do complete the order (Gao & Zhang, 2020, p. 1; Parczewska, 2021, p. 889). The shifting paradigm is not easy since this change is out of reach of lecturers in general, even they have not anticipated this before. Some lecturers are easily adapting to the new life of teaching but some get a stressful situation and they surrender. They allow others to take over their classes (Besser, Lotem, & Zeigler-Hill, 2020, p. 1; Moawad, 2020, p. 100).

Classroom activity is replaced by information and communication technology (Broadbent, Panadero, Lodge, & de Barba, 2020, p. 37; Rakhmawati, 2020, p. 145). The students and the lecturer are connected by devices that are connected by the internet. The change of distance learning processes triggers a new problem, i.e. interpersonal deception. It is an unavoidable situation where both parties send untrue or manipulated messages or information. They might deliver a vague or false message, such as bargaining an extension of submitting a task as they have an unstable internet connection, computer disorder, insufficient internet quota, and so

on. The real problem is that they do not do the task as they are not present in the virtual class. They escape from the scheduled time for an online classroom or they are not able to submit the task as the submission period is over.

It is too difficult to judge the students' authenticity of their work as they can copy it from others. It is impossible to protect them from asking somebody else to do their task. It is very easy for them to copy and paste the work of others as it is found out that the work is identical, in terms of the same mistake, the same misspelling, and similar marks. It can be traced when a plagiarism application is implemented to make sure that the students work by their thoughts. Furthermore, students might log in to the application used for distance learning but they hide their activities, especially when video conference application is applied in distance learning. It is difficult to check if the students are really there since they have the right to activate or deactivate the video features.

There are ways to set up distance learning. Lecturers can manage electronic mail (email) or maximize the use of the website to deliver tasks for students or to collect students' work. Those who are updated with technology can set up virtual meetings with students by using meetings applications such as *ZOOM* Cloud Meetings and *Google Meet*. Class interaction is exchanged with virtual interaction which is called computer-mediated communication.

Distance learning is not only simple but it has obstacles (Kruszewska, Nazaruk,

& Szewczyk, 2020, p. 1; Wenczenowicz, 2020, p. 1750). The lecturers must have more extra time to prepare for the lessons compatible with online learning. To do so, they must have a computer and an internet connection. Furthermore, they must be literate in operating any kind of application matching with the characteristic of the lesson. Distance learning becomes a burden for students (Alzahrani, 2019, p. 301). They must spend more time doing more tasks given by the lecturers. To attend and to do the online learning, they must have an internet connection. It means they need more money to provide an internet connection. Internet connection is not always good for all students. Some have to rent an internet connection. Some must spend more money for internet data. Some others do not have a computer and have no internet connection.

Distance learning is a new method of delivery in teaching and learning activities (Kupczynski, Mundy, Goswami, & Meling, 2012, p. 81; Borisova, Vasbieva, Malykh, Vasnev, & Bírová, 2016, p. 1175). Furthermore, homework, individual or group work, mid and final tests are done online. The matter is how to manage the evaluation of the students' work and to face some cheating issues, such as working together during the individual exam, copying, and pasting any sources including from their colleagues, and falsifying their presence when online teaching is in progress.

This background motivated the researcher to answer the research question

of how computer-mediated communication can facilitate students to deceive. This research objective is to describe the likelihood of deception of the students during distance learning and the ways how the students deceive when computer-mediated communication takes place as distance learning is not implemented by force due to nationally social distancing during the pandemic of Covid-19.

At the beginning of March 2020, it was found out that there were two women from Depok West Java were infected by Corona deceases. The president of Indonesia announces this information. Then, it was informed that the suspect of Covid-19 was reported from other regions of Indonesia. When this research was done, there were 16,496 suspects and 1,076 persons who died on May 14, 2020 (Tim Komunikasi Publik Gugus Tugas Nasional, 2020).

The crisis forces the government to stop any economic and public sector activities in Indonesia and overseas (Mubdi, 2020). The order of social and physical distancing has forced people to avoid crowds. As a result, offices, factories, malls, shopping places, restaurants, schools, and campuses are forced to temporarily close. Public transportation is not allowed to transport full capacity. It should be only half of its capacity. Most face-to-face communication should be done indirectly that is via computer-mediated communication. Office and public activities are done from home. Teaching and learning processes are replaced by online learning. Though face-to-face communication is forbidden, it does

not mean that interaction is fully stopped. It can be done although the communicators do not meet physically. They can still interact and talk virtually via modern communication devices such as social media (Cendrawan & Ajisukmo, 2020, p. 203).

Face-to-face communication is intimate as communicators are directly able to exchange messages or information (Qiu & McDougall, 2013, p. 1). They can easily have feedback on the message received. Direct interaction makes the communicators opportunities to see the reaction of serious, funny, frightening, scared, and fascinating messages or information. The communicators can also predict their communicative behavior. True messages or information can be identified easily via face-to-face communication, though it is still possible to tell a lie or to deceive. Deception is considered as a result of interaction and it can be detected from their gestures, facial expression, and eye contact. Direct face-to-face communication makes it rather easy to see if the counterpart is deceiving or not.

Due to the order of school from home, education institution makes hard and sudden shifting strategies. Classroom interaction between students and lecturers is replaced by virtual interaction (Bailenson, Yee, Blascovich, & Guadagno, 2008, p. 77). Face-to-face communication is replaced by speaking to a computer or gadget screen. Body language, gestures, facial expression, warm interaction, fast responses, a nice smile, little jokes, direct eye contact, soft-

touch are missing (Bernstein, 2020, p. 1; van Der Lee & Schellekens, 2020, p. 1421). The conversation is now tasteless. Transferring meaning is now very difficult. It seems something is limiting the freedom of expressing emotional touch. There is a feeling of boredom, a little bit of frustration, and unsatisfying interaction as communication is restricted. It might take time to adapt to the new life of communication activities.

Further, distance learning is not a new strategy (Bozkurt, 2019, p. 252; Sadeghi, 2019, p. 80; Bobyliev & Vihrova, 2021, p. 1). It has been introduced and successfully implemented in any school abroad (Beldarrain, 2006, p. 139). It was also informed that some favorite campuses in America and Europe are possibly closed as online learning and virtual offices were implemented. Students do not need to meet the lecturer or tutor and official services can be done virtually (Kdouh, 2017, p. 1). There are also campuses in Indonesia that implement full distance learning. The class interaction is very limited and administration activities are served online. The good news is that there is no report of failure communication from the students or the faculty.

The lecturers are thinking hard to develop teaching materials that can be delivered online. Furthermore, lecturers work very hard to operate a computer equipped with video conference applications or e-learning applications. Unavoidably, the lectures are making trial and error in operating virtual interaction mediated by computer or other electronic media. There are, though, distance

learning models that can be implemented easily such as email, forum, room chat, or other e-learning applications (synchronous and asynchronous distance learning) that were implemented in campuses in the world (Boulos, Taylor, & Breton, 2005, p. 583). Due to instant preparation, the lecturers do not have time to master the distance learning application. As a result, the lecturers are frustrated with the media and the students have difficulties in following the instruction from the lecturers as they also have many limitations aside from the limitation of the lecturers' instruction. It is then called digital stress (Prabakaran, 2020, p. 86).

Researches are focusing on interpersonal deception which is done online. Deception is identified as a deliberate attempt without forewarning to create in another a belief which the communicator considers to be true (Hancock, Thom-Santelli, & Ritchie, 2004, p. 129). Then, deception is an intentional act that occurs when communicators control information in a message to create a particular effect (Carlson, George, & Adkins, 2004, p. 7). Furthermore, deception is a message knowingly transmitted by a sender to foster a false belief or conclusion by the receiver (Carlson et al., 2004, p. 6). It is an intentional act that occurs when communicators control information in a message to create a particular effect. Therefore, to deceive is various and it is possibly done every time (Hancock & Gonzales, 2013, p. 364).

Deception is not only done during face-to-face interaction. When the world becomes digital, deception can be strongly

done online. An online environment is usually called digital deception (Hancock, 2012, p. 2; Malin, Gudaitis, Holt, & Kilger, 2017, p. 37). Researches are focusing on deception done online. It was found out that communicators are likely conveying vague or untrue information or message (Burgoon, Bonito, & Dunbar, 2003, p. 1). Almost every day people deceive on face-to-face interaction (Hancock et al., 2004, p. 129). Even, Carlson et al. (2004, p. 7) said that people deceive in many forms, from direct deception and fabrication to a smooth way as half-truths, vagueness, equivocation, and concealments. What more is the tendency of deceiving is bigger when the communicators do not meet face-to-face or when communication is mediated by computer or other electronic media such as telephone or computer (Carlson et al., 2004, p. 12; Hancock & Gonzales, 2013, p. 368; Hancock et al., 2004, p. 129). Burgoon et al. (2003, p. 1) said that when a person is in a certain environment, she/he tends to give a truth bias and the given information or message is not accurate. This is usually done when communicators are separated by the distance communication medium. The term is called digital deception (Hancock, 2012, p. 2).

In specific, digital deception is the intentional control of information in a technologically-mediated message to create a false belief in the receiver of the message (Hancock, 2012, p. 2). Therefore, there are many kinds of digital deception. Burgoon et al. (2003, p. 1) said that one-third of daily conversations include some

form of deception, broadly construed to include concealed, evasive, ambiguous, or exaggerated information as well as outright lies.

Digital deception can be found when communicators talk on the phone (Hancock & Gonzales, 2013, p. 368). It is summarized that communication spaces created by various technologies can shape communicators' decisions to use deception as a pragmatic tool in accomplishing their objectives. It is in the case of interpersonal interactions with technologies such as email, instant messages, and the telephone.

It is a dilemma of truth and deception is commonly done when someone does his/her job virtually or it is mediated by a computer. It is said that deception is well-prepared and it will happen when communicators are trying to control the message (Cudmore, 2017, p. 15). It is then we know that there are kinds of deception such as half-truths, vagueness, equivocation, and concealments. Hancock even said that deception is a means of completing any kind of thing though there are sometimes internal and external obstacles (Gutierrez & Kiekintveld, 2020, p. 231; Hancock & Gonzales, 2013, p. 363; Rubin, Chen, & Conroy, 2015, p. 1). The farther the communicators, the more possibilities of untrue information will be (communication becomes distal and all of the deceptions are possible).

In the advance of information and communication technologies, there are telecommunication devices developed to facilitate users to keep in touch (Reinke,

Gerlach, Tarafdar, & Stock, 2016, p. 1). By using telecommunication devices, communication can be done, though the other communicators are not before them. Furthermore, there are synchronous and asynchronous software applications that facilitate kinds of communication settings. Synchronous communication will help communicators to interact directly with other persons via telephone, video call, or video conference. Asynchronous communication is an application that makes communicators send messages indirectly. It will take hours, days, weeks, even months to receive any responses or feedback. This communication can be facilitated by short messages, email, fax, or telegram.

The focus of this study is to see the deception of the students when they have online learning during the pandemic of Covid-19. Physically, students and lecturers are separated by distance but it does not mean that the intensity of interaction is decreasing. Some electronic devices support their interaction and communication, such as computers and smartphones that can operate many applications supporting interaction between communicators either synchronously and asynchronously (Drago, 2015).

Interpersonal deception theory is relevant to analyze this phenomenon. Deception may take place in interpersonal face-to-face communication and mediated communication. A communicator can deceive other communicators in mediated communication such as via asynchronous media (social media, electronic mail,

chatroom, email) and synchronous media, such as video calls and video conferences.

Aside from interpersonal deception, this research concentrated on computer-mediated deception which happens in online settings. Furthermore, computer-mediated communication is the communication that takes place in a direct conversation between communicators and indirect conversation settings (Burgoon et al., 2003, p. 1). It is said that mediated communication using audio devices or audio-video devices is more unique than textual communication as the user can control the communication medium so that it is more personal to keep privacy. The communicators may set the mute and unmute features. It does not happen when users use textual communication applications as the users cannot control the medium.

Burgoon et al. (2003, p. 2) said that deception in communication is a communication burden as the deceiver should work harder to create deceitful messages than that speaking truthfully. Deception in interpersonal deception is not only in verbal communication but also in non-verbal one. Then, to some extent, the act of deceit creates a more cognitive load for message senders, deceivers should experience more challenges in putting together a credible deceptive performance than a truthful one (Burgoon et al., 2003, p. 2; Markowitz, 2020, p. 1). Burgoon et al. (2003, p. 4) also said that audio-conferencing and video-conferencing give senders further advantages and receivers further disadvantages.

There are two basic concepts of information and communication technology. First, information technology is identical to a computer. Second, information technology is developing very rapidly as people around the world are connected by the internet. If the technology of computers is combined with the internet, it will give enormous effects. The advance of communication and technology facilitates communication that may breakdown the space and time limitations. People can communicate with other people on this globe as this world is very small as McLuhan called the global village.

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) theory teaches us to communicate globally (Georgakopoulou, 2011, p. 93). The users do not need sophisticated equipment. They only need a computer and internet connection. A smartphone is a computer that is not big and expensive but it is as small as our palm so that the users can bring it anywhere. It is integrated with a camera, voice recorder, video recorder, calculator, calendar, microphone, agenda, music player, telephone, and so on.

There are three aspects of computer-mediated communication: (1) communication, (2) medium, and (3) computer. Communication is sending and receiving messages between communicators. A medium is a tool or channel used to connect the communicators. It functions to transmit a message in a form of audio, picture, text, or audio-visual. The last concept is the computer. They are the hardware and software that will facilitate communicators to send and receive messages.

Computer-mediated communication is a concept of social interaction that is influenced by advanced computer technology and the developed internet connection (Herring, 2005, p. 112). The combination of computer and internet connection makes it possible for communications to be connected virtually. Today, there is no time and space limitation in communication. They can still communicate anywhere and anytime as long as they have an internet connection.

There are two important aspects in mediated communication (Caparas & Gustilo, 2017, p. 349; Dzardanova, Kasapakis, Gavalas, & Sylaiou, 2019, p. 1). First of all, it is synchronous communication where communicators can communicate as if it is a real conversation as the communicator can do it in real-time. They can receive messages at the same time and they can receive feedback quickly if they are supported by synchronous media such as telephone and web-cam conversations such as telemeeting, and teleconference where communicators not only listen to the voice but they may share the real setting via video. It depends on the communicators either showing his or her face or not as they can manage the settings (Wang, Walther, & Hancock, 2009, p. 61). There are synchronous applications that supported this communication, such as *ZOOM* Cloud Meetings, *Skype*, and *Google Meet*.

The second one is asynchronous communication. The communicators are not able to communicate in real-time such as telephone and video calls but it takes time for communicators to receive messages. The communicators cannot receive responses or

feedback quickly, they may wait for hours, days, weeks, or even months to send or receive feedback. This kind of communication may take place via email, letter, memo, recording, and short messages. As it is asynchronous, it might cause misunderstanding (Chan, 2011, p. 84).

Both communication media are still relevant to the present. The use of both depends on the intention of the communicators. Synchronous communication is used when the communicators need a fast response and asynchronous communication will be another choice as the communicators do not need a fast response or they need a specific requirement, such as an authentic signature or original document which is printed on paper. It is also giving more time for the communicators to do or to manage the message. It will be useful for students who need more time to discuss and complete the task given by the lecturers.

The coming of new technology is developing or replacing the old one. Asynchronous communication medium such as email was very popular. The invention of the telephone (the synchronous communication system) was very important and it is still very helpful today. Technology changes telephone as audio synchronous medium becomes audio and video communication medium. The communicators do not only share audio but they may share the setting where the conversation takes place. Besides, it becomes teleconference when there are not only two persons on the phone but many people are joining in the conversation. This is called a video conference. It is supported



by the advanced software application that facilitates it.

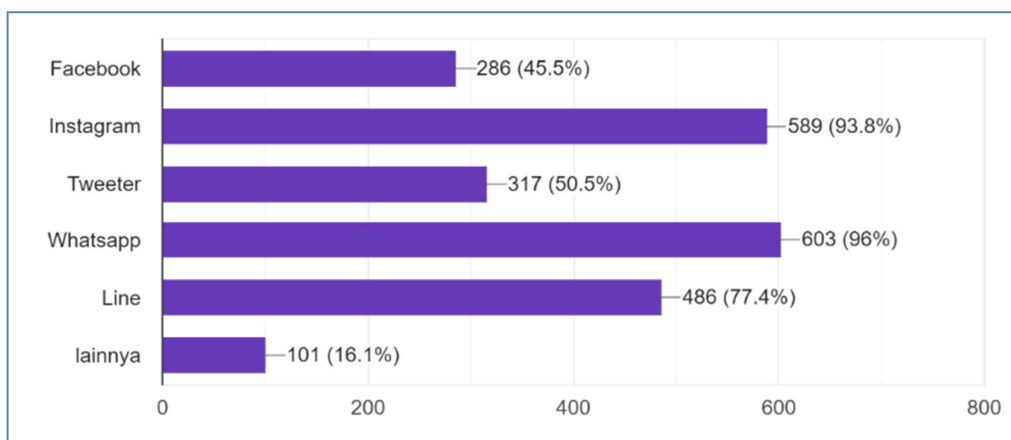
**METHOD**

This research employed a descriptive quantitative approach as statistics is used to describe or to analyze research result but it is not used to draw a generalized conclusion (Sugiyono, 2008, p. 21). This research was designed to describe a phenomenon scientifically from the research objects. The focus of this research is to describe facts got in a certain period (Sanusi, 2011, p. 13). The population is all university students in Jakarta. The samples were selected using nonprobability sampling. The number of samples was determined by quota sampling technique as the questionnaire was distributed via *WhatsApp*, either directly or via *WhatsApp* groups, during the pandemic Covid-19 in 2020. The distribution is not face-to-face because Jakarta all campuses have online learning during the pandemic. The number of samples was determined as many as 500 respondents or more. Jakarta was chosen as it is a red zone of the

Covid-19 pandemic. The questionnaires were distributed to students in Jakarta from April 13-30, 2020. There were 629 questionnaires collected after two weeks of distribution.

**FINDINGS**

The data shows that students interacted with others via social media. Students generally have more than one social media application. There were 96 percent of respondents using the *WhatsApp* application, 93.8 percent are using *Instagram*, and 77.4 percent using *Line*. It was counted 603 out of 629 respondents were using *WhatsApp*, 589 were using *Instagram*, and 486 were active in *Line* application. *Facebook* was on the fourth rank with 286 respondents. In short, there were five top-rank social media applications actively used by the students in Jakarta: (1) *WhatsApp*, (2) *Instagram*, (3) *Line*, (4) *Twitter*, and (5) *Facebook*. However, the students did not fill in the registration form of the social media using their real self-identity, such as name, sex, status, date, and place of birth.



**Figure 1 The Use of Social Media among Students in Jakarta**  
 Source: Primary Data

There were three favorite social media: (1) *WhatsApp*, (2) *Instagram*, and (3) *Line*. They are usually used by students. It is almost the same as the lecturers in choosing social media. The time average used for assessing social media is 3 hours and 26 minutes (Jayani, 2020). Exchanging messages or information between lecturers and students is very easy in the era of social media.

When signing up, the users must fill out the simple form of their identities, such as date of birth, first gender, and last name, complete name, address, photograph, and recovery email address. These items can be created artificially or with false information. Because of the opportunity to inform untrue information, it is

implemented by users to keep their identity on the social media as it was researched by Mary et al. (Ho, Lowry, Warkentin, Yang, & Hollister, 2017, p. 21). This research shows that 8.5 percent of respondents are giving false name, gender, and age. There were 17.1 percent of respondents do not write the correct date of birth. They write the wrong or false date of birth and the age. There are 9.9 percent of respondents are uploading unreal photographs for photo-profile. They tend to use someone's else photographs, such as their favorite movie stars, public figures, cartoon characters, abstract pictures, beautiful and handsome pictures taken from the internet, or even edited photographs.

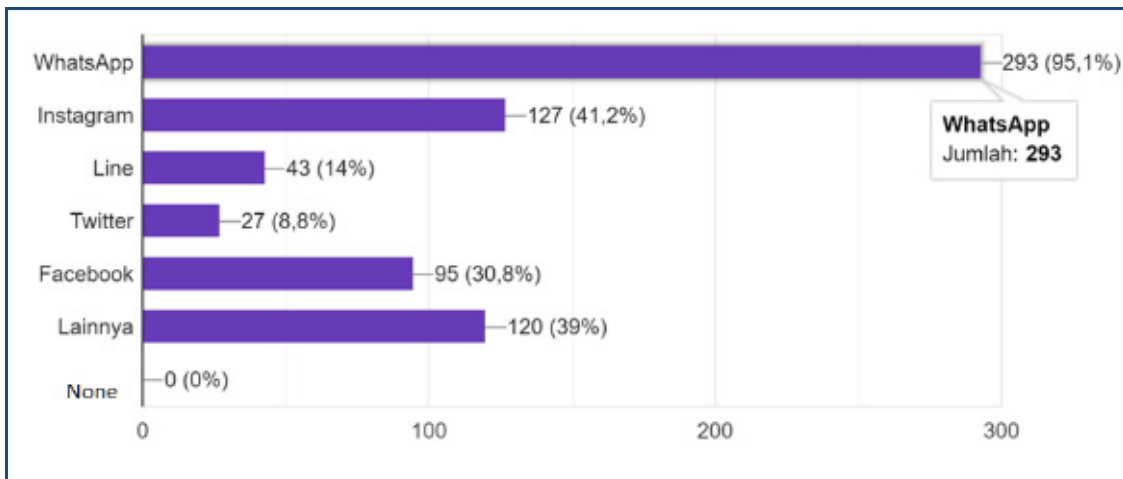


Figure 2 Social Media Used by Lectures

Source: Primary Data

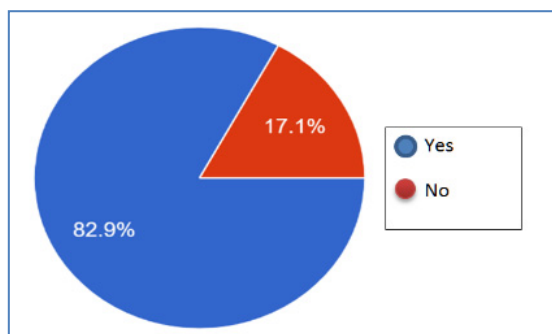


Figure 3 Students Hide Their Personal Identity

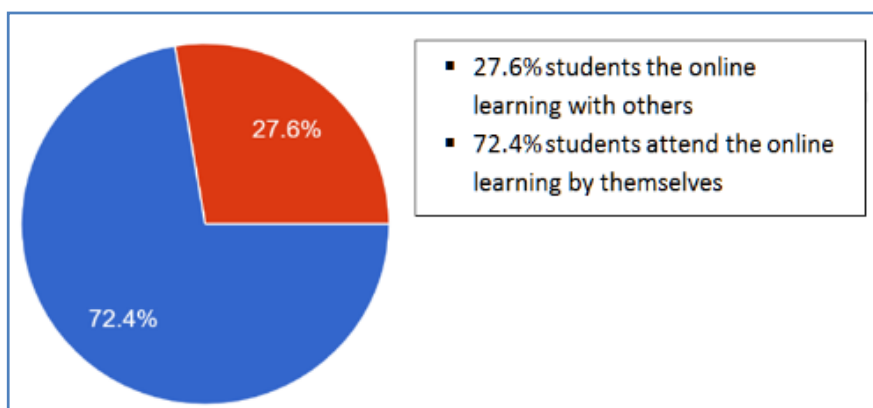
Source: Primary Data

There are various reasons why users do not display their real identities on social media. In this research, 37.3 percent of respondents falsified information about self-identity on social media due to self-security and 35.5 percent of respondents did it because they want to be safe from any kind of cyber-crime. In short, the intention to lie online is done from the very beginning of applying or registering users to social media applications. It confirms that users falsifying information about themselves is done obviously on purpose.

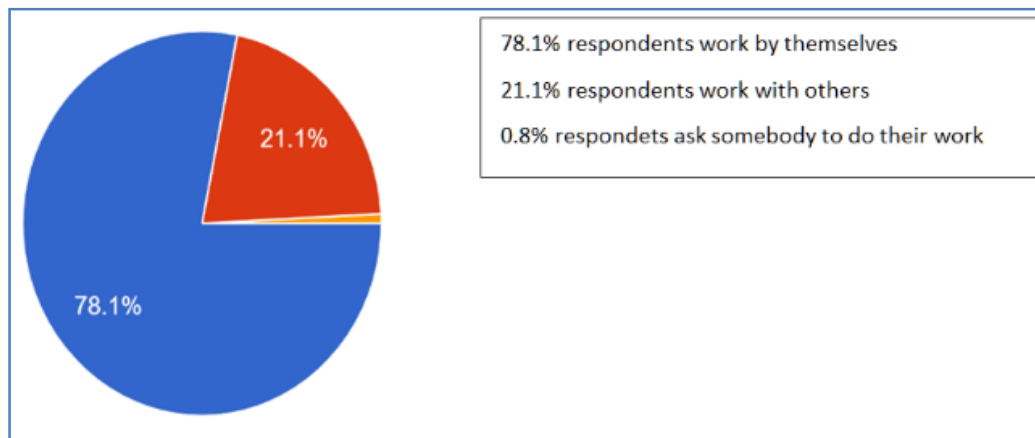
The limitation of natural social interaction between students forces them to maximize social media to interact with others and to send and receive messages between users. Virtual interaction during self-quarantine at home forces the students to study and to do any kind of activities from home to minimize outside activities. Virtual interaction is the only way to get in touch with others. Though any outside activities are forbidden to minimize the spread of Covid-19, there are still 27.6 percent of respondents who are doing online classes together.

There are reasons why they do so. First, respondents are from boarding campuses and they live in a dormitory or they live in the same boarding house. Second, they visit a public internet rental service as they are not facilitated with postpaid internet for online learning. Third, they visit their friend's houses to attend the online learning together. They find friends for distance learning to avoid boredom, loneliness, and drowsiness. It is not only for online learning but students are doing their homework together. There were 21.1 percent of respondents who were doing their homework together. Furthermore, 0.8 percent of respondents ask somebody to do their tasks. The students manipulate messages when they are doing their tasks online. It is easy to collect messages or information needed to answer the questions on the internet or just copy and paste the work of their friends.

This research found that students were not totally at home during the self-limitation from social interaction. They may visit his/her friend, rent an internet service provider, and so on. In short, it is not easy to limit the



**Figure 4 Students Are Attending The Online Learning**  
 Source: Primary Data



**Figure 5 Students Do Their Homework/Test**

Source: Primary Data

interaction of people since they need others for some reasons. It is not easy to control or forbid students to cheat when they work online. There are opportunities for them to falsify their work because the lecturers cannot control it strictly.

The respondents were given a question about their idea of online learning, seemingly 73.8 percent of respondents are not keen on online learning. In case they have to choose between online learning and a conventional one, they firmly choose conventional learning where students are in the classroom and the lecturer is teaching directly before them. There were 92.7 percent of respondents agreed to have a conventional learning strategy. They are happy to attend the class in specific scheduled class activities together with their colleagues and lecturers.

It is indicated that students are not well-motivated to attend online learning. They are not keen on this unpredictable class exchange. When someone has no motivation to do such activities, they are forced to do things they do not really like. As a result, they will not fully be responsible to complete any tasks

given. It is just a matter of completing the responsibility of a student. That's the reason why they work with friends or they even ask somebody else to do his/her school work. They also cheat in any class activity. There were 27.6 percent of respondents who were happy to attend the online learning and to do the task together.

The results show that students are cheating during online learning from home. There were 21.1 percent of respondents who were doing their tasks together with their friends. It is assumed that they work together. As a result, they have no enough time to do the assignment and they were late submitting their work on time. There were 23 percent of respondents who were late uploading their work and some students (0.4 percent) did not upload their work due to the lateness. When working online, students broke the time limit given by the lecturers. Due to the lateness, they create a story or concealment to be allowed to send their work via email or other media as if they had a lot of problems when doing the work. There were created stories such as the broken computer or laptop, blackout,

terrible internet connection, limited internet quota, and technical problems when uploading their work. It was found out that 45.2 percent of respondents were late for the work due to the internet connection, 39.1 percent had a computer problem, 24.9 percent were late due to the time limitation. Furthermore, there were 0.6 percent of respondents (4 students) said that they were late uploading their work because they had done the work with their friends.

In short, students are deceived due to the chance to manipulate the message due to the limitation of online learning. There was no valid proof that students were independent when working on their assignments or other tasks given by the lecturers. Students might create a story as if it were real difficulties in doing the assignment online.

Distance learning can be done in two different ways: (1) real-time and (2) delayed. Real-time communication between the students and the lecturers is called synchronous communication. These kinds of class activities are facilitated by synchronous media such as video calls and video meetings applications. Then, the exchange of messages or information can be delayed or asynchronous as the communicators can exchange information, the lecturers deliver messages asynchronously. It is not real-time but it is delayed. The lecturers deliver a message or assignment via electronic mail (email), faxes, or other learning management systems (LMS).

Live distance learning can be done by using video conference applications

such as *Skype*, *ZOOM* Cloud Meetings, *Google* Hangouts, and *Google* Meet. By using these applications, the lecturers and the students can communicate in real-time. The equipment needed to set up this kind of video meeting is a computer or smartphone which is connected to the internet. The shortcoming of this real-time communication is that both parties are dependent on electronic media and internet connection. The second weakness is that both the lecturers and the students should have an appointment in advance to have the video meeting. The third one is the ID. The students as the participants of the video meeting should have the ID meeting to be able to join the conversation.

When choosing to use *ZOOM* Cloud Meetings for teaching, the host and the attendees are free to change the visual background. This feature can be set up to hide the real setting of the students and the lecturers. Besides, the host and the attendees are allowed to activate and deactivate the video feature. Stopping the video protects other participants to see their activity. It is to hide the real activities of the communicators. It is also useful to manipulate the presence of the students. The students are present but they are not present.

Muting the video feature means hiding their activities. This feature allows communicators to cheat. The students might be present by joining the meeting though they are not really present. They join the meeting but they do not join the class activities as they mute the video feature. The host cannot detect for sure that the attendees are really present

or cheating. Therefore, deception might take place when the class is in progress. The lecturers might talk by themselves without the presents of the students, though all students join the meeting, the names are seen on the host screen. The presence of the students is proven badly.

Figure 6 shows that 32.4 percent of the respondents mute the audio and video, 37.2 percent activated the audio when the online class is done via *ZOOM* Cloud Meetings. However, it shows that not only the students but also the lecturers can manipulate the presence by deactivating the video feature on the application used. The hidden setting or inactive video can be interpreted as an uninterested motive. They want to be not present but they have to. It

is due to the requirement to be present in the class more than 75 percent of the total presence. Students are not really present because they are not interested in learning online. To support this statement, 92.7 percent of respondents do not like online learning. They want to have a conventional class.

It is contradictory with their enthusiasm for online learning at the beginning of this force-majeure online learning. They are doing the online meeting on time and all faces are seen. They are very happy having a class online and they can do it from home. But then, their present faces are decreasing from one meeting to another meeting. It seems that they get bored of having an online class for all subjects.

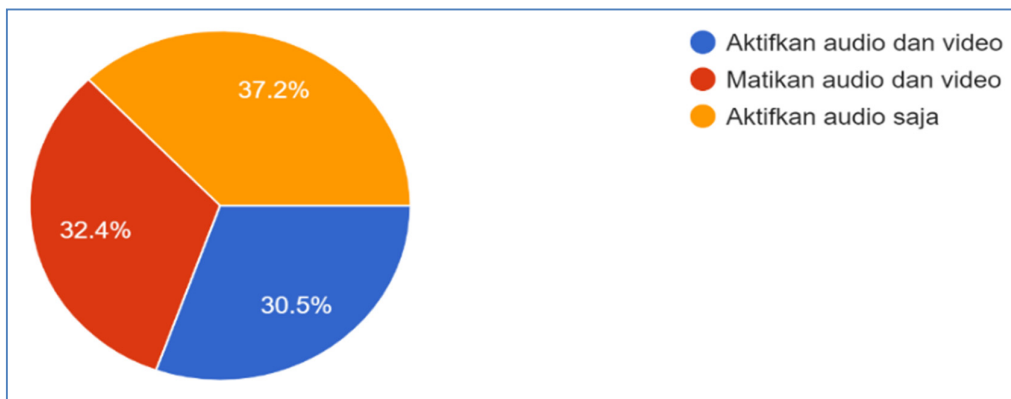


Figure 6 Students' Activity During Online Learning

Source: Primary Data

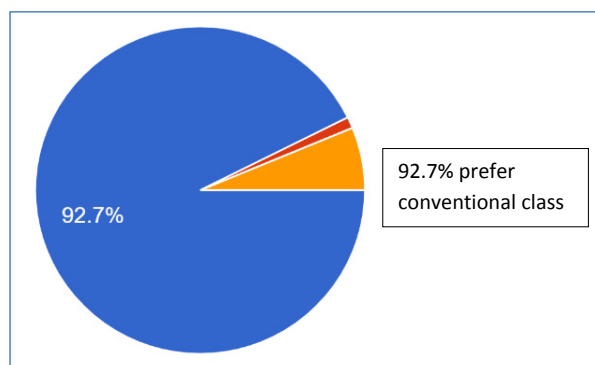


Figure 7 Like and Dislike of Online Learning

Source: Primary Data

Honesty in online learning is not easy to be proven. The data shows that not all students are willing to show their faces when joining online learning. It is not easy for the lecturers to make sure the presence of the students. The feature of the application allows the users to be present or not present.

## DISCUSSION

### New communication and cultural shock

Not all communication technologies are well received by society. This depends on how this technology is useful or not for human life. Regardless of whether the application or communication technology is popular or not, humans, including students, will experience changes in attitudes and behavior. Some are quick to adapt, some are slow to adapt, some are surprised, stressed, or frustrated. Some can take advantage of the latest technology to facilitate communication, and even become a means of replacing conventional communication. The presence of communication technology at this time is driven by an extraordinary condition that is not planned but must be dealt with quickly. It is not surprising that there has been a culture shock in interpersonal communication or public communication (Dardjito, Robiasih, & Pamungkas, 2020, p. 169; Eseyin & Wagbara, 2021, p. 178; Kim, 2012, p. 229; Mundeza, 2021, p. 26).

The coming of communication technology in a disruptive world due to Covid-19 has given a new challenge for lecturers and students as well. Some lecturers

give up and stop teaching due to difficulties interacting with students. On the other sides, students quit school because they do not have supported electronic equipment and an internet connection to join the online learning. Some students are frustrated because they cannot communicate with friends or teachers directly. Communication is limited by the media.

### New Communication Technology, Its Advantages, and Shortcomings

Information and communication technology, which was growing rapidly in this pandemic era, was a technology that could be used as a tool to communicate not only between individuals but also groups and even large groups. The out-reach of this technology is not only for certain groups, for example in a class, but also for activities with an unlimited number of participants.

Currently, there are many choices of communication applications that are commonly used in education. The most popular is the *ZOOM* Cloud Meeting application. It is user-friendly and it can facilitate a big number of participants. It is also easy to use, even for new users. Some features can be activated by the users because this technology is used to bridge conventional communication, such as muting or unmuting audio and video and modifying the virtual background.

Aside from the fact that it is important for users, some features facilitate users to deceive. One example is that users can disable the camera. Users can enable or disable the camera function. Thus, the host cannot see what the participants are doing. With this

facility, the users can cheat or lie because they are not in place and following the ongoing event. Second, apart from the camera, participants can also turn on or turn off the audio function. This function is very good because by turning off the mic, the atmosphere in the *ZOOM* is not noisy and only the mic of certain people you want can be heard. Third, users can mute or enable both audio and video. This function is great for users because they can set whether to enable or disable the audio and video functions. On the other hand, if both of these functions are turned off, then the host can experience the deception of users/participants. The lie occurred because it was assisted by the facilities available in the *ZOOM* Cloud Meeting application. The students can follow this *ZOOM* while working, driving, doing other activities, and so on. In addition, the virtual background can be changed at will by the user. This is certainly very interesting because users can change the virtual background according to the user's wishes. But behind it all, the virtual background eliminates the wearer's originality or can be used as a means of camouflaging the zooming user. The students might say that they are at home during the *ZOOM* class meeting, but actually, they are not at home.

The goodness and sophistication of technology not only makes it easier for users but also allows users to cheat, including allowing users to lie, unlike if the communication is done face-to-face. Online learning using these applications on the one hand is very helpful but on the other hand, creates a condition that is not real.

### **How Technology Facilitate Students to Deceive**

Virtual interaction between communicators, in this case between the lecturer and the students, has negative effects. Communication technology is free for everyone to have and to use. It is free to modify and to change the ordinary setting to be more personalized. As a result, the presentation of a person in a *ZOOM* meeting or social media is not always the real one. Their appearance on social media such as *Facebook* is misleading. The name, the identity, and the profile picture presented on social media are not the real ones. They do it for different reasons. Some of them falsify their personal identity, status, job, and so on.

It is not only about love that ends in vain. Cybercrime happens in many forms. There are offers on the internet such as foreign exchange business, online quizzes, lucky draw, and even crimes. It is informed that they win a quiz or other luck draws but they have to transfer some amount of money before they receive the money from the quiz or luck draw. It is also a short message informing us that we win a lucky draw from a cellphone provider. If we are not careful, we will be the victims of such cyber-crimes.

Cybercrime might take place in the online classroom where students and lecturers are separated by distance. They only are mediated by computer screens to communicate. Both students and the lecturers have the same probability to cheat. The lecturers might say that they are busy and is unable to give the lesson. Then, they give a task for students to do. Their job



is just giving students the task to do. On the other hand, the students might cheat online learning. They log in on the virtual meeting application used for online learning but they are not really tuned in to the lesson. They might sleep or do something else as there is nobody who will keep an eye on them. They may cheat for their work as they may copy and paste the work of others which are easily found on the internet, even they may let somebody else do for them. In short, the work submitted to the lecturer is not really their genuine one.

Ideally, communication takes place directly and face-to-face. Face-to-face communication makes it possible for communicators to see their body language, facial expression, eye contact, and the context of communication when it takes place (Whittaker, 2003, pp. 243-244). The presence of communicators can involve emotion or feeling when they communicate (Whittaker, 2003, p. 265) feedback is very important for students to maintain progress, and what ties the student group together is a common goal such as finishing the course with a decent grade. As for communication research, the paper suggests that the ethnographic researcher will have to find a way to penetrate the online community and then remain as an active participant to understand and become part of the community world of his or her subjects. When this is accomplished, an effective analysis and interpretation can be completed. (Contains 30 references.. Furthermore, face-to-face communication gives direct feedback to them.

In any condition, communication might not take place face-to-face. The communicators are separated by distance either locally, regionally, or internationally. In this case, communication still can take place via telecommunication media such as letters, electronic mail, telephone, video call, and many more. Communication technology helps them to get in touch with each other regardless of distance and time constraints. In the education world, it can be done conservatively, direct face-to-face interaction between the teacher and the students in the classroom. It can be done without meeting each other in the classroom. The teacher and the students might stay and attend the virtual class. The interaction is facilitated by information and communication technology where students and the lecturer can communicate online.

This online learning has to be done in most Indonesian higher education campuses by force. It is due to the pandemic of Covid-19. The government instructed campuses and schools to do classroom instructions from home. Social distancing is implemented to cut off the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia by keeping physical distance between speakers. Devito (2019, p. 152) explains that social distancing is to keep individuals to stay in a distance though they are not socially separated as they can still communicate with each other via communication technology. So far this way, communication technology is not only able to connect people in distance such as telephone or telegraph but it can also help communicators to see each other

by using video call or video conference. Therefore, they are physically separated but emotionally they are still connected. Though students and the lecturer are separated, they are still connected via online video learning with of course its strengths and weaknesses in educational purposes.

The survey was done and it was found out that there was any possibility for students to deceive when they have to attend the online learning via *ZOOM* Cloud Meetings application for virtual class interaction. There are four important points. First, the intention to lie during the online learning has taken place from the registration of an account in a social medium including the online meeting application. The information on the social medium is not written as it was for different reasons. It is therefore clear enough that the students deceived on purposes and they did it in full awareness.

Second, it is not easy to limit the interaction between students though it is prohibited by the authorized government. Some students still leave their homes to meet their friends to attend the online learning together. The data shows that students are not only together in attending the online learning but they also do their tasks or even quizzes together with their friends.

Third, students deceived their lecturer due to the opportunity to do it without any control from the lecturer. The lecturer cannot keep an eye on the students' activity during the online learning and online homework or online examination. Due to

the limitation of lecturers' control upon the students, they falsified their schoolwork by doing it together or even asking others to do it for them. In short, they submitted the work of others in the name of themselves.

Fourth, the truth that the students are working by themselves is honestly difficult to be proven. A survey indicated that not all students are willing to show their faces when attending online learning. It is difficult for the lecturers to make sure that the students are really present on their online distance learning. Modifying the feature on the *ZOOM* meeting allows students to hide their presence by muting the audio and video features. By deactivating this feature, the students can do whatever they like including leaving the online classroom without being witnessed by the lecturer.

It is not difficult to identify the students' deception when communication is done via communication media. The students might deceive when they change the virtual background. It can hide the real setting where the students do the online learning. The students might deceive when they deactivate audio or video features. By activating these features, their faces and sound cannot be identified. They might be away from the computer or they might do something else. Then, students might deceive when they have to submit their homework or other duties given by the lecturers. It is found out that not all students are doing their duties of the exam by themselves. They have the opportunity to work together and to ask somebody else to do it. By doing so, they are sometimes late to submit the homework

or even the examination. As a result, they create stories such as computer problems, internet connection, blackouts, and so on. At last, they call and send messages to ask for a time extension or to send their homework or examination via email or other online media.

The presence of technology that facilitates communication must be accompanied by awareness to maintain communication etiquette. The existence of new technology requires new norms that regulate the use of responsible communication technology and still maintain the etiquette and morals according to the Indonesian culture. Without the new rules, users can arbitrarily commit violations.

The findings in this study strengthen the theory developed by David Buller and Judee Burgoon that in communication, especially interpersonal communication, there is a tendency to lie or tell the truth (Wagner, 2011, p. 4). In face-to-face communication, they can lie, especially if the communication is facilitated by technology where the communication participants do not meet face-to-face. However, the communication interaction is facilitated by technology capable of displaying both voice and video. Of course, the tendency to lie becomes greater. Communication participants can hide their identity, existence, and presence in a digital conversation facilitated by communication technology. Conversations that are built through the medium provide an opportunity for the participants of communication to hide something.

## CONCLUSION

Deception in communication does not only take place in face-to-face communication but also happens in mediated communication. It is easily done especially because the communicators do not meet directly. In this situation, it is easy for them to manipulate messages, to tell the untrue story as if it were the truth. It is unavoidable to receive vague news or messages from those who want to get advantages over others. Online deception can be done easily as the communicators are separated by space. Online deception or digital deception might take place for education purposes. It is not easy to control the students' activity because the lecturer is difficult to control the presence of the students, their activity, and their work. This is supported by technology, though it is built to help users in some cases, it can be dangerous for the users too. It is recommended that the authority should work very hard to facilitate lecturers with the new kind of online learning. Shifting technology by force due to the Covid-19 gives a negative impact on both the students and the lecturers. It must more effective if online learning is another alternative that we should do voluntarily.

Based on the research result, the researcher proposes some recommendations. First, it is recommended that communication via *ZOOM* or other platforms force us or users to be more creative in producing content so that it will drive students' attention. Communication via *ZOOM* is not really attractive, it is boring. It is also

wise to make more attractive methods of teaching done online. Second, this research is limited only to the deception done during the *ZOOM* class activities. There are still opportunities to research other related issues. Other researchers may analyze other related topics with different points of view. It is, for example, very interesting to see this case in terms of dramaturgy. It will see how the users of *ZOOM* Cloud Meetings perform front stage and backstage. Lastly, it is necessary to speed up building internet infrastructures massively in Indonesia. By doing so, the gap of facilities between students living in big cities and remote areas can be minimized.

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