

## BUKTI KORESPONDENSI

### Comparing the Experience of Pre-Service Teachers in the First and Final Semesters in Online Learning Using a Focus Group Study

Proses editorial yang telah dilakukan adalah:

#### 1. Article submission: 26 Mei 2022

The screenshot shows an email interface with a sidebar on the left containing folders like Inbox (2,192), Drafts (86), and Social (132). The main content area displays an email from 'Editors of The Qualitative Report' dated Thu, 26 May 2022, 14:26. The subject is 'MS #5727: Submission received for The Qualitative Report'. The body text states: 'A new submission for The Qualitative Report has been uploaded by "suyatno suyatno" <suyatno@pgsd.uad.ac.id>'. It lists authors: 'suyatno suyatno' <suyatno@pgsd.uad.ac.id>, 'Sibawaihi' <sibawaihi@uin-suka.ac.id>, 'wantini wantini' <>wantini@mpai.uad.ac.id>, 'Dzihan Khilmi Ayu Firdausi' <dzihanayu@unmuhbabel.ac.id>, and 'Lilis Patimah' <lilispatimah74@gmail.com>. The title is: 'Lecturers' Professional and Personal Aspects in Online Learning: Comparing the Experience of Pre-Service Teachers in the First and Final Semesters'. The keywords are: 'Higher education, online learning, pre-service teacher, professional and personal aspect'. The disciplines are: 'Education, Social Sciences, Humanities, Health Sciences, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Engineering, Technology, Business, Law, Medicine, Agriculture, Environmental Sciences, Interdisciplinary Studies'.

#### 2. Revision required 1:

The screenshot shows an email interface with a sidebar on the left containing folders like Inbox (2,193), Drafts (86), and Social (133). The main content area displays an email from 'Ronald Chenail' dated Sun, 13 Nov 2022, 03:46. The subject is 'MS #5727 - The Qualitative Report'. The body text starts with 'Dear Suyatno Suyatno, Sibawaihi Sibawaihi, Wantini Wantini, Dzihan Khilmi Ayu Firdausi, and Lilis Patimah,'. It congratulates the authors: 'Congratulations, your paper, "Lecturers' Professional and Personal Aspects in Online Learning: Comparing the Experience of Pre-Service Teachers in the First and Final Semesters," has been accepted into the Qualitative Report's Manuscript Development Program (MDP)! Your acceptance into this program means that the editorial team assigned to your paper has dedicated themselves to work with you to revise your manuscript until it is ready for publication in The Qualitative Report (TQR). As a result, when you successfully complete the MDP your completed paper will be published in TQR.' It then states: 'We have determined that revision of your article is necessary in order for your manuscript to be ready for publication. Although we are positive about your work's potential, we have also shared some important questions and concerns regarding your manuscript. We offer these comments in the spirit of helping you make your paper better.' It provides instructions: 'Please see the attached Word file for our review and article mark up. Make sure you turn on the "All Markup" option in the Tracking Changes Options so you can see all our comments in your paper. The link to the page where the file is located can also be found at the end of the email. When you navigate from the email link to the page on the TQR website, please scroll down the page to find the hyperlink to the Word file with our comments and edits. Please do not use the "Native" or PDF versions to make your revisions.' It concludes with: 'Please use the attached Word file to review, revise, and resubmit your revised manuscript as soon as possible. If you choose to resubmit your manuscript, please use the "Revise Submission" option at the top of the page using the link below. Also, please work within the attached file and use the Microsoft Word Review tools (e.g., Track Changes) to make your revisions.'

#### Catatan reviewer

##### Reviewer 1:

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to review your paper! We offer our comments to help you make your paper even better.

Ron Chenail

Editor-in-Chief

The Qualitative Report

Include your design in the title please.

I think this is a good suggestion and also keep in mind that titles should be under 15 words.

Reviewer 1: I appreciate the well written problem statement.

Reviewer 1: Please spell out first use of FGD. You might want to cite this source as justification for your sample size (here or later in your methodology section):

Hennink MM, Kaiser BN, Weber MB. What Influences Saturation? Estimating Sample Sizes in Focus Group Research. Qual Health Res. 2019 Aug;29(10):1483-1496.

Reviewer 1:

This section begins as Introduction section; however, I think it is combined with a Literature review / Theory section. Maybe revise the title as Introduction and Literature Review?

In general I think:

1. The first paragraph is too long, shorter paragraphs will enable in developing the research gap or addressing the research question.
2. Probably the synchronous and asynchronous digital learning styles can be two paragraphs. Though this learning style existed, post COVID19 what has been the impact on stakeholders in HE.
3. Paragraphs 3 and 4 have reviewed readiness and learning technologies well and understood that these were the themes.

However, what are the other themes that has been reviewed is not as clear.

I agree with the reviewer that more information about your design is needed, but I disagree with characterizing your design as a case study.

I think you have conducted a qualitative focus group study. As such, I would encourage you to cite literature on focus group research.

I appreciate that you address the assumptions that undergird your qualitative design – pointing to its interpretive nature. At the same time, I am a bit confused about what you mean by an ‘expert’ and ‘specific problem.’ I think some editing here is needed for clarification.

Professional and personal aspects of what?

Note that a theme is like a newspaper headline. It should carry meaning. A theme is not just a label for a domain or category of information. This one thing that differentiates qualitative research from journalism.

Reviewer 1: It might be better to insert Table 2 at the end of the Results section as the Table is an outcome of the analysis of respondent data.

Reviewer 1: Did you explore or initiate the dimension of technology? Since asynchronous leaning involves readiness to use technology; see the Literature review by the authors (see pp. 3, last paragraph).

Reviewer 1: Were there themes that contrasted with other literature?

Based on the analysis you have put forth the discussion section with clarity!

## Reviewer 2:

I think this is a good suggestion and also keep in mind that titles should be under 15 words.

Please add a keyword for your qualitative design. Reviewer 1 also suggested COVID-19 be added.

I would delete professional and personal aspect (it’s unclear what is being referenced).

While the background material here is interesting – much of it necessary – I encourage you to consider the audience – readers who are looking for qualitative subjects. I suspect that is what is coming next. Still, after reading 2 pages there is no mention of the design used. I feel that is important, given our readers.

Perhaps try using this model. You will see the design is held in step 5. Use this as an introductory paragraph

### Topic F.O.C.U.S.

1. What is the **Real Issue** for this topic?
  - a. Write a topic sentence.
  - b. The topic for this proposed research project is...
2. **F** The second sentence will address the **facts** as we know them now.
  - a. Address how the phenomenon of interest held by this topic is defined theoretically or in practice. (citation(s))
  - b. What is the **Real Issue** for this topic?
  - c. Write a topic sentence.
  - d. The topic for this proposed research project is...
3. **O** The next sentence(s) will speak to emerging **opportunities** to address or understand the phenomenon held by this topic.
  - a. **Where** is your topic located in the literature?

- b. **How** is your topic known?
- c. **Who** knows your topic? Who are primary sources and what are their fields?
- d. **When** has your topic been studied? Are there historical benchmarks to note?
- 4. **C** What are the likely **consequences** or outcomes that may be discovered or revealed?
  - a. Potential impact of the study
  - b. Potential Conflicts
- 5. **U** What is the emerging **utility** for exploring this topic?  
In this aspect, begin to think as a methodologist. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your proposed method and design?
- 6. **S** What is the significance of this study to the field?  
By including this sentence, the writer creates a rationale for conducting the study and a statement of why the results will be significant. In short, what will this study be contributing to your field of inquiry?

### Reviewer 3:

Greetings, You will see many comments that are offered with the intention of helping to strengthen the presentation of your ideas. They are related to what we believe is necessary to include in the publication of qualitative inquiry. What I found best about this article was the depth taken in the data analysis. I think the article's back half was stronger than the opening few pages. I would suggest the following developmental steps be taken:

1. The document needs to follow APA 7 formatting conventions.
2. There is a need for some generally editing throughout. See my comments.
3. The opening section could be streamlined, and an additional element that includes the research design could be included. See my suggestions.
4. There needs to be more clarity around what type of design is being used. See my notes.

Again, I see some real strength in your analysis. My comments are aimed at helping you move to publication. What kind of qualitative research design?

Given what I am reading I would guess a that this is an exploratory case study with multiple (2) cases.

**Exploratory.** An exploratory case study is a technique used to collect more in-depth data about *what* is occurring. Exploratory case studies are used to explore phenomena where no defined outcomes are foreseeable (Yin, 2009).

### 3. Revision required 2: 7 Maret 2023

The screenshot shows an email interface. On the left is a sidebar with folders: Inbox (2,193), Starred, Snoozed, Important, Sent, Drafts (86), Categories (Social: 133, Updates: 843, Forums: 135, Promotions: 387), More, Is (+), [imap]/Sent, Unwanted. The main content area shows an email from Jennifer R. Wolgemuth (editor-tqr-5727-2131201@dncsu.bepress.com) dated Tue, 7 Mar, 22:50. The subject is 'MS #5727 - The Qualitative Report'. The body of the email reads: 'Dear Suyatno Suyatno, Sibawaihi Sibawaihi, Wantini Wantini, Dzihan Khilimi Ayu Firdausi, and Lilis Patimah, Congratulations again on having, your paper, "Comparing the Experience of Pre-Service Teachers in the First and Final Semesters in Online Learning Using a Focus Group Study," accepted into the Qualitative Report's Manuscript Development Program (MDP)! As a reminder, your acceptance into this program means that the editorial team assigned to your paper has dedicated themselves to work with you to revise your manuscript until it is ready for publication in The Qualitative Report (TQR). As a result when you successfully complete the MDP your completed paper will be published in TQR. Thank you for your excellent revisions in light of the reviewers' first round comments! After reading your revised manuscript, I think a second revision of your article is needed in order for your manuscript to be ready for publication. Please see the attached for my review and article mark up. From my perspective, these revisions are relatively minor and are likely the last ones we'll request before moving your manuscript forward. Please review, revise, and resubmit your revised manuscript as soon as possible. If you choose to resubmit your manuscript, please use the "Revise Submission" option at the top of the page using the link below. Also, please work within the attached file and use the Microsoft Word Review tools (e.g., Track Changes and Insert Comment) to make your changes to the paper. This will allow us to readily see what steps you have taken to revise your paper. Additionally please use the Insert Comment tool to address the questions and observations made by the reviewers. Lastly, if you have questions of your own, please add them to the paper using the Insert Comments feature.'

### Catatan reviewer:

You might also speak here to the importance of comparing students in the first and final semesters of their programs.

Before moving on to Methods we ask all of our authors to provide a brief discussion of their own context. This is based on a belief that who you are and how you involved with the topic and study will influence the presentation.

We want readers to have a fair understanding of the researcher in order to make the fullest evaluation of the study and to have greater confidence in what they are about to read. Toward that end, please tell us your

relationship to this inquiry. Who are you? What is your interest in this topic? What is your investment in this project? What are your intentions?

It's not clear to me why this comparison between first and final semester students is important. Can you explain that her or include it in the purpose statement in your introduction? Or both?

Why most expected?

The sentence has been revised

Can you at some point in this conclusion speak to the importance of comparing first and last semester students?

Why does it matter that their experiences differed (or were similar in some cases)? What have we learned by comparing them?

#### 4. Accepted for publication: 1 April 2023

The screenshot shows an email interface. On the left is a sidebar with folders: Inbox (2,193), Starred, Snoozed, Important, Sent, Drafts (86), Categories, Social (133), Updates (843), Forums (135), Promotions (387), and More. Below these are Labels: [imap]/Sent and Unwanted. The main content area shows an email titled "MS #5727 - The Qualitative Report" from Ronald Chenail, dated Sat, 1 Apr, 02:51. The email body contains the following text: "Dear Suyatno Suyatno, Sibawaihi Sibawaihi, Wantini Wantini, Dzihan Khilmi Ayu Firdausi, and Lilis Patimah, On behalf of The Editorial Board for The Qualitative Report (TQR) I would like to congratulate you on the acceptance of your article, 'Comparing the Experience of Pre-Service Teachers in the First and Final Semesters in Online Learning Using a Focus Group Study.' We think the paper is much improved and do not see the need for any further revisions. We also appreciate all your hard work! In order for your paper to be published, we now have an Article Processing Charge (APC) of \$500 (US). We use this one-time per paper submission fee to pay for copyediting, formatting, publishing, and promoting your paper. To make your APC payment, please go to <https://www.nova.edu/webforms/tqr-article-processing/index.html>. We provide discounts for papers whose corresponding authors are based in HINARI low resource countries, areas, and territories (HINARI Groups A and B). The list can be found at Eligibility for access to Research4Life (<https://www.research4life.org/access/eligibility/>). We also provide discounts to members of the TQR Editorial Board."

#### 5. Artikel Terbit: 24 April 2023

The screenshot shows an email interface. On the left is a sidebar with folders: Inbox (2,196), Starred, Snoozed, Important, Sent, Drafts (86), Categories, Social (134), Updates (844), Forums (135), Promotions (387), and More. Below these are Labels: [imap]/Sent and Unwanted. The main content area shows an email titled "MS #5727: New submission published to The Qualitative Report" from the Editors of The Qualitative Report, dated Mon, 24 Apr, 20:10 (2 days ago). The email body contains the following text: "Hi! Dear Suyatno Suyatno, Sibawaihi Sibawaihi, Wantini Wantini, Dzihan Khilmi Ayu Firdausi, and Lilis Patimah, Congratulations, your submission 'Comparing the Experience of Pre-Service Teachers in the First and Final Semesters in Online Learning Using a Focus Group Study' (MS #5727) has been published to The Qualitative Report. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol28/iss4/16> We appreciate you sending us your paper and for working with us through the manuscript development process! To help you maximize the impact of this work, please read our new online resource - '5 things to do after your article is published in The Qualitative Report': <https://tqr.nova.edu/files/2017/11/infographic-271879k.pdf>"

**Lampiran 1: Draft awal artikel**  
**Lampiran 2: Artikel hasil revisi 1**  
**Lampiran 3: Artikel hasil revisi 2**

## **Lecturers' Professional and Personal Aspects in Online Learning: Comparing the Experience of Pre-Service Teachers in the First and Final Semesters**

**Suyatno Suyatno, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia**

**Sibawaihi Sibawaihi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia**

**Wantini Wantini, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia**

**Dzihan Khilmi Ayu Firdausi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bangka Belitung, Indonesia**

**Lilis Patimah, Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surakarta, Indonesia**

### **Abstract.**

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, online learning has become the new innovation and an alternative virtual education adopted by universities, due to campus closures. The sudden adoption of the innovation without prior preparation and training causes the ineffective implementation of online learning in most institutions. Students' perception of lecturers' competence are one of the determinants required for the successful implementation of the program. Therefore, this study aims to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers regarding their numerous abilities to provide a good online learning program. Using a qualitative design, data were obtained through the FGD on 58 and 52 teachers during the first and final semesters. The results showed that both groups had similar and different experiences, regarding lecturers' ability to effectively perform online learning. According to participants' beliefs, lecturers with professional and personal capacities were able to create an interesting learning atmosphere for students. In addition, some of the differences highly depended on the specific indicators of the two aspects. These results are expected to provide a framework for university lecturers and administrators, towards implementing the learning process.

### **Keywords:**

Higher education, online learning, pre-service teacher, professional and personal aspect

## Introduction

The Covid-19 outbreak has caused basic changes in the educational sector, specifically in the institutions' learning process. This includes the rapid adoption of online learning within a short period (Bhaumik et al., 2020; Chung et al., 2020; Coman et al., 2020; Khalil et al., 2020; Simamora, 2020). Consequently, institutions are found to increase students' access and flexibility, with the campuses still closed due to the spread of Covid-19 (Bryson & Andres, 2020; Castro & Tumibay, 2021). The online learning process is becoming a trend and entering the mainstream, as it contributes to the expansion of educational accessibility to a wider community (Gallagher & LaBrie, 2012). It also promises many benefits and uses (Castro & Tumibay, 2021) regarding the financing, flexibility, and effectiveness of learning outcomes (Lorenzetti, 2013). In this condition, many adult learners enjoy the flexibility provided by online learning when they are instructed to balance their studies and work (Bell & Federman, 2013). The learning process is also a major component of global education (Singh & Thurman, 2019), showing that universities are capable of using synchronous and asynchronous digital platforms (Farros et al., 2020). Based on the synchronous platform, "live" interactions are often allowed between lecturers and students, e.g., audio and video conferencing, web chat, etc. Meanwhile, the asynchronous platform involves delaying the interaction time between the educational personnel, e.g., E-mail, previous video recordings, discussion forums, etc (Finkelstein, 2006). In this case, these various platforms are important modalities for universities, to help carry out online learning (Evans, 2011; Khalil et al., 2020; Ridgway et al., 2007). Similar to the universities in other countries, the Indonesian government has reportedly implemented full online learning since mid-March 2020, through the ministry of education and culture (Agung & Surtikanti, 2020). Irrespective of this condition, the management system accessibility is still the main obstacle (Sobaih et al., 2020), with most institutions not completely ready to implement the learning process (Coman et al., 2020). This is because of the expensive costs incurred during the development phase, compared to offline education (Bahasoan et al., 2020). Students are also found to experience many obstacles, with Octaberlina & Muslimin (2020) and (Gonzalez-Ramirez et al., 2021) exhibiting numerous challenges during online learning, such as inadequate implementation skills, slow internet connection, physical conditions (e.g., eye strain), concentration difficulty, financial problems, anxiety, and boredom (Stephan et al., 2019). Due to these difficulties, most of them do not want to continue using the learning process (Chung et al., 2020). Despite this, those with specific characteristics still have better learning experience, compared to offline education (Muhammad, 2020).

Many previous studies reportedly attempted to explore online learning in universities, with most of them focusing on determining the barriers, readiness, impact, and influential factors of the educational service. According to Baticulon (Baticulon, 2021), these barriers were examined from the perspective of 3,670 medical students in the Philippines, as a developing country. In this condition, only 41% of them were found to be physically and mentally capable towards using online learning. This proved that five obstacles were encountered by participants, namely technological, individual, domestic, institutional, and community barriers. Agung and Surtikanti (2020) also performed an analysis on the same topic, with three main obstacles encountered by the language students at the Pamane Talino Indonesia School of Teacher Training and Education. These included internet connection availability and sustainability, teaching media accessibility, and tool suitability to access media. Based on

Gonzalez-Ramirez et al. (2021), the impact of changing online learning was also examined on students' psychological wellness at the School of Education and Health. The results indicated that the social relationships with peers and lecturers decreased during the online learning process. This was accompanied by the decrease in students' social connections, motivation, and mental health. Another report proved that online learning became boring from the first two weeks and increased student anxiety, specifically those whose parents had low income and were not in the mood to study due to many assignments (Irawan et al., 2020). The lack of direct interaction between students and instructors was also another problem encountered in developing countries such as Pakistan (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). In addition, more challenges were observed, including difficult accessibility and connectivity, as well as inadequate communication and interaction between educational personnel and peers (Aboagye et al., 2020). Increased training costs, isolated feelings, and technology gaps were also some challenges reported by other study experts (Castro & Tumibay, 2021).

To prove students' online learning readiness, two other studies were subsequently conducted, with Chung et al. (Chung et al., 2020) investigating this factor at two digital course institutions in Malaysia. Through a survey of 399 participants, female and degree students were observed to be more prepared and satisfied with the learning experience, compared to male and diploma students. However, more than half of participants preferred direct learning to online education. Blayone et al. (2018) also investigated the digital readiness profile of students in Georgia and Ukraine, regarding this learning process. Using the survey of 150 participants, most students in both countries were not ready to participate in some online learning activities. Another study also examined students' satisfaction with these learning platforms, where comfortability was often derived through Google Hangouts and Classroom, as well as LMS (Learning Management Systems) (Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020). This was in line with Baber (2020) and Herguner et al. (2020), where online learning satisfaction was influenced by class interactions, motivation, lecture structure, instructor knowledge, facilities, and positive attitudes. According to Yudiawan et al. (2021), the factors influencing the success of online learning were mapped and tested at Islamic Religious Universities in West Papua, Indonesia. From the results, the quality of lecturers and the system had the highest influence (94.2%), with diversity and institutional services having no significant effect. In addition, an empirical study was widely carried out using a systematic literature review method (Pei & Wu, 2019; Redmond et al., 2018; Singh & Thurman, 2019; Valverde-Berrocoso et al., 2020).

A great variation was also observed in the boundaries of online learning, according to a previous literature analysis, where it was initially found to use a management system or digitally upload text and PDF as student academic materials (Singh & Thurman, 2019). Based on the development of interpretation, online learning is defined as the variational use of the internet to asynchronously and synchronously increase the interaction between teachers and students (Curtain, 2002). Some equivalent terms are also embedded towards the interpretation of the educational process, e.g., mobile (Alhassan, 2016), blended (Palalas et al., 2015), distance (Anderson & Dron, 2011), open, web-based (Costa et al., 2012), and computer-mediated (Anaraki, 2004; Cojocariu et al., 2014) learning. These describe the digital activities and tools used in learning, to achieve the set educational goals. In this process, many components such as the technology, pedagogy, and assessment guides are involved (Aparicio et al., 2016), regarding the global accessibility of the educational content (Blayone et al., 2018).

Based on these various definitions, the important elements in online learning includes technology, time (synchronous and asynchronous), access, interaction opportunities, physical distance, and traditional comparisons. In this condition, a forum allowing communication and collaboration is created between lecturers and students, as a substitute for the traditional classes experiencing limitations during campus closure (Cacheiro-Gonzalez et al., 2019).

Although several studies attempted to examine online learning in universities, a specific report exploring students' pattern of experience and the types of capable lecturers has still not been comprehensively considered. This shows that the report on students' perception of lecturers is important, due to the essential role of the educators in the success of online learning (Baber, 2020). The behavioral aspects of lecturers or instructors are also the important variables affecting the quality and outcomes of the learning process in higher education, e.g., the ability and intensity of communication (Alawamleh et al., 2022; Baticulon, 2021) and face-to-face interaction (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). Therefore, this study aims to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers regarding their numerous abilities to provide a good digital learning condition. The results are expected to be used as a framework for university lecturers and administrators, to improve the quality of online learning for students.

## **Methods**

### ***Study design***

A qualitative design was used to complete this essay, with (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) stating that it is a method used to narrow a broad field into one more specific topic. It also seeks to analyze the in-depth interpretation of a specific problem (Mohajan, 2018). Furthermore, the main interest of a qualitative expert is to understand the interpretations constructed by the study. Based on Yazan and De Vasconcelos (2016), the primary interest of this expert often emphasized the realistic perception of people, regarding their environment and experience. Through these philosophical assumptions, this study aims to explore the interpretation of participants' experiences in communicating with their lecturers during online learning.

### ***Participant***

These are the pre-service teacher-students studying the Elementary School Education program at a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Using the convenience sampling technique, a total of 110 participants were selected, containing 58 and 52 students in semesters 2 and 6 (first and final semesters), respectively. The demographics of these participants are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Participant Demographics

<b>Student Semester</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Total</b>
First semester	Male	4	6,9	58
	Female	54	93,1	
Last semester	Male	6	11,54	52
	Female	46	88,46	

### ***Data collection***

The data were obtained through group discussion forums (FGD), where participants were selected due to their abilities to explicitly generate information through the interaction process (Pope & Mays, 1995). They also provided opportunities for individuals to build on the answers of other members, leading to the creation of new ideas (Holloway & Galvin, 2016). Moreover, FGDs provided more time for participants to reflect on respective opinions (Krueger, 2014), with the explanation process being digitally recorded with their consent. The process was also guided by a semi-structured interview guide, used in asking questions during FGD (Merriam, 1998). Despite using these guidelines, “listening actively and requesting many interviews were still important regarding the knowledge of participants” (Seidman, 2006). FGDs also produced sufficient information to understand the analyzed phenomenon (Yin, 2013).

### ***Data analysis technique***

The data obtained were systematically analyzed by categorizing and comparing the FGD results of the two groups (Yin, 2013), i.e., the pre-service participants in the first and final semesters. This analysis was carried out through the following two stages, (1) the data were categorized into the first and final groups, where each dataset was thoroughly analyzed for the realistic perception of the story. It was also accompanied by several systematic readings, noting assumptions, keywords, perspectives, and attitudes (Smith et al., 2009). According to Merriam and Tisdell (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), data analysis was "a complex process involving the thorough assessment between concrete and abstract concepts, inductive and deductive reasoning, as well as description and interpretation. In this process, some common threads were found in participants' stories, such as contrast experiences and connective themes (Fraser, 2004). Besides, side comments were also provided for the identification of possible themes and sub-themes. After analyzing the transcript, the acquired themes were combined and grouped to obtain a clear participants' perception, and (2) A comparative assessment was carried out on the analytical results of each generated theme and sub-theme from the two groups. This led to the observation of two similar themes in the initial and final semesters, namely professional and personal aspects, respectively. In these themes, 4 common sub-themes were subsequently observed, i.e., "delivery of clear and easy material" and "interactive", as well as “relaxing & fun” and “pleasant personality” for the professional and personal aspects, respectively. Meanwhile, the slight difference depended on the addition of several sub-themes in both themes. From the data analysis process, the themes and sub-themes are presented in Table 2.

### **Results**

This study aimed to explore student experiences with lecturers during online learning, by comparing the pre-service teachers in the initial and final semesters. The results led to the determination of two similar main themes, namely professional and personal aspects, although the difference only depended on a few sub-themes between the two student groups. The data coding comparison is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Coding Data

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Total Participants</b>
	Professional aspect	Submission of material is clear and easy to understand	22

First-semester Pre-service teachers		Do not stress	16
		Interactive	10
	Personal aspect	Relaxing and fun	18
		Friendly	10
Final semester Pre-service teachers	Professional aspect	His personality is fun	10
		Submission of material is clear and easy to understand	13
		Interactive	8
		Do not provide much work	6
	Personal aspect	Provide good grades	5
		Understanding student conditions	17
		His personality is fun	14
		Motivate students	13
		Relaxing and fun	5

### **The similarity of pre-service teacher experience in the first and final semesters**

#### *Professional aspect*

In the professional aspect, similar experience were observed between the initial and final semester participants. This indicated that the delivery of clear and easy-to-understand material, as well as the interactive sub-themes were importantly stated by the pre-service teachers, i.e., 22/10 and 13/8 statements in the initial and final semesters.

#### *Submission of material is clear and easy to understand*

The pre-service teachers' perceptions about lecturers conveying clear and easy materials were the most expected experience, due to being supported by the following codes, (a) easy to understand, (b) clear, (c) detailed, (d) not confusing, as well as (e) concise and clear. Through FGD, the statement of a final semester pre-service teacher (R15) is observed as follows:

*In online learning, lecturers are often expected to explain easy-to-understand materials. Maybe this is also experienced by friends because online learning is sometimes more difficult because students cannot discuss more freely like offline learning time.*

In this process, similar answers were also expressed by an initial semester student (R9) as follows:

*The most important thing in my opinion is a lecturer who can convey the material clearly. For example is Mr [name of lecturer], in Zoom lectures, the material is easy to understand.*

#### *Interactive*

The interactive lecturer was the second sub-theme mentioned by the two participants' groups. This was supported by the following codes, (a) easy to contact, (b) interactive with students, (c) fast response, (d) responsive, (e) interactive invitation, (f) feedback provision, and (g) adequate communication. Through FGD, one of the initial semester participants (R24) stated that:

*An enjoyable experience for me in online learning is when the lecturer can communicate well, hence, the class becomes fluid and not stressful.*

Similar experiences were also shared by many other participants as follows:

*"I am happy with Ms. [lecturer's name], based on the ease of communication with students, through Whatsapp or other available media" (R16), "Adequate interactions during lectures provide the opportunities for students to ask questions" (R1), "Lecturers are interactive, hence, they can build a good learning atmosphere" (R8).*

### ***Personal aspect***

Based on a personal aspect, the pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters also had similar experience. This clarified that lecturers with pleasant personalities, as well as relaxed and fun sub-themes were frequently stated during online learning, i.e., 10/18 and 14/5 statements in both groups, respectively.

#### ***His personality is fun***

This was an interesting sub-theme for students during online learning, which was supported by the following codes, (a) pleasant lecturers, (b) interesting explanation, (c) interesting material presentation, (d) not boring, (e) sleepless atmosphere, and (f) interesting. In FGD, R3 is explained as follows:

*Lecturers need to have fun and interesting qualities, due to the stressfulness of the pandemic period. The tasks are many, and sometimes the schedule clashes with other activities.*

This was in line with the statements of other participants, e.g.:

*"Fun lecturers really helped me while learning online" (R7), "Alhamdulillah, although learning online, most of lecturers are fun, hence, they do not get bored even though they are online" (R18), "Lecturers who enjoy online learning, in my opinion, are those who are interesting and serious but also relaxed" (R10).*

#### ***Relaxing and fun***

This experience was obtained by both pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters, with 18 and 5 statements observed for both groups, respectively. It was also supported by the following codes, (a) relaxed, (b) fun, (c) serious and relaxed, (d) relaxed and disciplined, and (e) interesting teaching process. Based on FGD, the statement of a student (R23) is observed as follows:

*What I hope for during online learning is lecturers who teach in a relaxed manner, but can motivate students. It is a delight that many lecturers in this institution have these qualities, for example, Mr. [name of lecturer] when teaching is relaxed but students understand.*

### **Differences in the experience of the first and final semester participants**

#### ***Professional aspect***

These pre-service teachers also had different experiences in both professional and personal aspects, despite the various similarities being observed. In the first semester, a sub-theme was highly stated by 16 participants, namely "Do not stress", explaining that the experience was

not stressful. Those in the final semester also preferred the lecturers that did not provide many assignments, although produced good grades, regarding the perceptions of 6 and 5 participants, respectively.

### ***First semester:***

#### *Do not stress*

This sub-theme was an interesting experience for participants during online learning, which was subsequently supported by the following codes, (a) not tense, (b) not scary, (c) relaxed class atmosphere, and (d) cheerful atmosphere. From FGD, a first semester participant (R20) stated the following:

*I like online learning because lecturers teach without straining the class. For example, Mrs. [name of lecturer] and Mr. [name of lecturer] when teaching through zoom, there is humor, hence, the class is not tense.*

### ***Final semester:***

Based on the professional aspect, the final semester participants preferred lecturers who did not provide many assignments, although produced good grades (6 and 5 statements) and give good grades (mentioned by 5 participants). The sub-theme that did not multitask was supported by some codes, namely (a) not many assignments, and (b) not only with assignments. Meanwhile, the cheap value variable was supported by the following, (a) good grade provision, and (b) unselfish towards grade provision.

#### *Not providing many assignments*

This was one of the important experience supporting final semester pre-service teachers during online learning. In this condition, almost all lecturers were reported to provide assignments during the early periods of the Covid-19 outbreak, leading to the high stress level and heaviness of students in lectures. However, the trend were observed to change during the final semester. Besides the provision of assignments, lecturers also conducted more synchronized learning through various platforms. Based on FGD, a final semester participant (R28) stated the following:

*Lecturers I expect are those who do not only give assignments as was often done in the early days of COVID-19, resulting many students are stressed. However, lecturers conduct more lectures through Zoom, Google Meet or e-learning when other media are unavailable.*

#### *Give good grades*

This sub-theme was frequently stated by the final semester participants, indicating that many students whose lectures were oriented towards cumulative achievement index were still observed. Through FGD, one of these participants (R25) stated the following:

*"I think giving good grades to lecturers is important because a high GPA is also important as alumni".*

### ***Personal aspect***

According to the personal aspect, some differences were also observed between the pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters. In this process, the sub-themes of "friendly lecturers", as well as "understanding" and "motivating" students' conditions were observed for both groups, with 10, 17, and 13 statements, respectively.

***First semester:***

*Friendly lecturers*

This was supported by the following codes, (1) friendly, and (2) not rude (keep the image). In this process, friendly lecturers had the following characteristics, (a) open to communicating with anyone, (b) not far from students, and (c) like to communicate and greet. Based on FGD, one of the pre-service teachers in the first semester (R 19) stated the following:

*I like friendly lecturers, hence, they do not scare students. For example, Ms. [lecturer's name] and Mr. [lecturer's name], sometimes before teaching they greet students one by one, often even talking about student problems outside the material. I think it is also important that students feel cared for.*

***Final semester:***

*Understanding student conditions*

This sub-theme was frequently stated by the final semester participants (17) and supported by several codings, namely understanding student conditions, constraints, circumstances, and limitations. Through FGD, R10 stated the following:

*My experience in online learning that ultimately can increase my motivation in learning is that lecturers understand my condition. For example, the condition of the internet network is not connected, hence, if lecturers see an off-camera student they not angry because knowing that my internet signal is bad.*

Based on the results, network constraints were mostly encountered by students during online learning, indicating the need for lecturers with high and classified understanding levels. Besides this, other students also expect lecturers to understand their academic abilities, with the following stated by R17 through FGD:

*Lecturers need to understand the condition of students, for example, the simultaneous lateness to zoom meetings should be highly comprehended, as this is likely due to many unforeseen circumstances.*

*Motivate students*

In online learning, students often need motivation from various parties due to the encounter of many challenges. This showed that most of the final semester pre-service teachers preferred lecturers with the motivational capabilities during the learning process. The sub-theme was supported by the following coding, namely (1) motivating students, (2) triggering motivation, and (3) uplifting. Through FGD, one of participants (R19) stated the following:

*Besides delivering varied material, ideal lecturers also need to motivate student learning in online education, for the achievement of greater outcomes, which requires a higher effort.*

## Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the experience patterns of the pre-service teachers in online learning during the Covid-19 outbreak. Based on the comparative analysis between the first and final semester participants, some similar and different aspects were observed in describing the ideal lecturer during the learning process. This proved that the similarity aspect was observed at the “theme” level, where the pre-service groups expect the ideal lecturer to emphasize 2 features, namely the professional and personal aspects. Meanwhile, the differences depended on the several sub-themes supporting the two themes. In the first semester group, the professional indicators of the ideal lecturers included clear material conveyance, relaxed, interactive, and cheerful, regarding the statements of 22, 16, 10, and 10 participants, respectively. Besides this, those in the final group also included the delivery of easy-to-understand materials, interactive, did not provide many assignments, and good great value, concerning the perceptions of 13, 8, 6, and 5 members. According to the personal aspect, the first-semester group stated that the ideal lecturer was relaxed and fun, as well as friendly, through 18 and 10 participants, respectively. However, the statements in the final semester included the understanding of students’ conditions, pleasant personality, motivational, and relaxed, concerning the perceptions of 17, 14, 13, and 5 participants. Based on these analyses, the following results were obtained and evaluated:

Firstly, both pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters agreed that the ideal lecturer need to have professional and personal aspect capacities. In the professional aspect, these educators need to possess the abilities to adequately master and convey their knowledge to students. However, the personal aspect was observed as the standard of character and personality possessed by a person. In this condition, personality described the unique psychological qualities influencing an individual's behaviour, thoughts, and feelings (Roberts & Jackson, 2008), leading to the increased effectiveness of the educators' works (Holmes et al., 2015). The unity between the professional and personal aspects was also the main requirement supporting online learning in universities. In addition, professionalism had three essences, namely (1) having a specific scientific capacity according to the field, (2) providing services to others, and (3) having moral and ethical standards (Bair, 2016; Heck & Ambrosetti, 2018).

Secondly, both pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters agreed that the abilities of lecturers to interactively deliver clear and easy-to-understand online material was an important indicator of their professional aspects. This indicated that the ability to clearly and easily convey material was a pedagogic competency that should be mastered by all professional educators. According to Law № 19 of 2005 concerning Indonesian Teachers and Lecturers, all the professional university educators were required to have four competencies, such as pedagogic competence, which mastery helps in the following, (1) understanding students more deeply, (2) designing learning, (3) implementing learning, (4) designing and evaluating learning, and (5) developing students (Suyatno et al., 2021). Despite communication being an important part of pedagogic competence, inadequate interaction was still a challenge in online learning (Coman et al., 2020; Firmansyah et al., 2021). This was in line with most of the previous reports showing that interactive communication was an important online learning factor. In the classroom, the interaction between lecturers and students (Alawamleh et al., 2022;

Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Baticulon, 2021; Baber, 2020; Dumford & Miller, 2018), as well as the communication skills (Slimi, 2020) also affected academic experience during the learning process. In addition, these interactive and communicative abilities activated several supporting variables in online learning, such as student involvement (Brown et al., 2022; Martin & Bolliger, 2018) and participation (Hussein et al., 2020).

Thirdly, the experience similarity between the first and final semester participants occurred in the personal aspect. In this condition, all the pre-service teachers agreed that the cheerful, as well as relaxed and fun sub-themes were two important indicators of a lecturer during online learning. This proved that lecturers with pleasant personalities, as well as relaxing and fun were mentioned by 24 and 23 pre-service teachers, i.e., 10/14 and 18/5 in the first and final semesters, respectively. These results explained the main problems encountered during online learning, where psychological aspects such as stress (Heo & Han, 2018; Kumalasari & Akmal, 2022; Sukdee et al., 2021), anxiety and depression (Fawaz & Samaha, 2021), as well as boredom (Esra & Sevilen, 2021), were the scourge of students. To reduce setbacks, students expected their lecturers to be able to relaxedly and interestingly teach online. This was in line with most previous reports, where a pleasant educator had an impact on the following, (1) enjoyment and comfort of classroom learning (Becker et al., 2014; Suyatno et al., 2022), and (2) students' positive emotions (Goetz et al., 2013). It also fostered better student motivation and learning outcomes (Keller et al., 2014). In addition, the results strengthened Benekos and Benekos (2016) and Miron and Mevorach (2014), where most of the expected lecturers characteristics were fun, interesting, and motivating.

Fourthly, the differences between the experience of the first and final semester participants depended on several additional indicators in lecturers' professional and personal aspects. In the professional aspect, the first semester teachers emphasized educators who did not cause tension as an important indicator in online learning. Meanwhile, the honorary teachers in the final semester highly focused on lecturers who did not provide many assignments and cheap grades as a professional aspect. According to Irawan et al. (2020), many assignments were found to lower the mood of students' participation in online learning, during Covid-19. Regarding the personal aspect, the first-semester teacher also focused in 10 friendly participants, with those in the final session mostly emphasizing lecturers who understood (17 participants) and motivated (13 participants) the conditions of students. This confirmed that a person's experience often formed a different perception, and vice versa (Richmond & Zacks, 2017; Vernon, 2017). The final semester pre-service teachers were found to have undergone online learning in universities for 4 full sessions, due to the campus closure effected since March 2020 until the data collection period. This explained that they had attended offline lectures for a full semester, accompanied by 2 meetings in the next session. However, teachers in the first semester had just completed online lectures at universities for one full semester, accompanied by several meetings in the next session.

These results provided a framework for relevant parties, specifically university lecturers and administrators. For lecturers, the will to continuously develop themselves is very important in this era, as different situations are found to often require distinct needs. Meanwhile, the curriculum and experience obtained when in the universities were not designed for the situations and conditions presently encountered. This showed that individual professional development (Cutri et al., 2020) is the key for lecturers to carry out online learning, which is

effective, interesting, fun, and related to students' feelings. Based on the university administrators, the design of lecturers' self-development programs was very important, regarding the possession of adequate professional and personal capacities, which were close to the description of their students. The self-development program oriented to pedagogic and personality competencies also acquired a more adequate portion, as most of ideal lecturers' indicators were highly oriented to both features in online learning.

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Blind review

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**Comparing the Experience of Pre-Service Teachers in the First and Final Semesters in  
Online Learning Using a Focus Group Study**

**Suyatno Suyatno, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia**

**Sibawaihi Sibawaihi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia**

**Wantini Wantini, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia**

**Dzihan Khilmi Ayu Firdausi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bangka Belitung, Indonesia**

**Lilis Patimah, Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surakarta, Indonesia**

**Abstract.**

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, online learning has become the new innovation and an alternative virtual education adopted by universities, due to campus closures. The sudden adoption of the innovation without prior preparation and training causes the ineffective implementation of online learning in most institutions. Based on this description, insufficient information is available regarding the experiences of the student population, which are the most affected by online learning in higher education. Students' perception of lecturers' competence are one of the determinants required for the successful implementation of the program. Therefore, this study aims to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers regarding their numerous abilities to provide a good online learning program. Using a qualitative focus group study design, data were obtained through the focus group discussion (FGD) on 58 and 52 teachers during the first and final semesters. The results showed that both groups had similar and different experiences, regarding lecturers' ability to effectively perform online learning. According to participants' beliefs, lecturers with professional and personal capacities were able to create an interesting learning atmosphere for students. According to the experience of the participants, the lecturers with pedagogical and social-personal skills were able to emphasize and encourage the attractiveness of online learning. In addition, some of the differences highly depended on the specific indicators of the two aspects. These results are expected to provide a framework for university lecturers and administrators, towards implementing the learning process.

**Keywords:**

COVID-19, focus group study, higher education, online learning, pedagogical and social-personal skills, pre-service teacher, professional and personal aspect

**Introduction**

The Covid-19 outbreak has caused basic changes in the educational sector, specifically in the institutions' learning process, causing a very quick adjustment from offline to online learning platforms. This includes the rapid adoption of online learning within a short period (Bhaumik et al., 2020; Chung et al., 2020; Coman et al., 2020; Khalil et al., 2020; Simamora, 2020). This rapid change has led to chaotic and uncomfortable experiences for most of the academic community, namely university managers, lecturers, and students (Al-Karaki et al., 2021)(Vaskivska et al., 2021). Besides the lecturers experiencing anxiety, stress, and burnout (Banton & Garza, 2023)(Evanoff et al., 2020), the learning performances of students are also negatively affected by the shift to online education (Serrano Sarmiento et al., 2021). From this context, the students often encounter increased stress due to sudden changes in the learning environment and are more prone to depression, tiredness, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization (Simic et al., 2021)(Liu et al., 2022).

Similar to the universities in other countries, the Indonesian government has reportedly implemented full online learning since mid-March 2020, through the ministry of education and culture (Agung & Surtikanti, 2020). Irrespective of this condition, the management system accessibility is still the main obstacle (Sobaih et al., 2020), with most institutions not completely ready to implement the learning process (Coman et al., 2020). This is because of the expensive costs incurred during the development phase, compared to offline education (Bahasoan et al., 2020). Students are also found to experience many obstacles, with Octaberlina & Muslimin (2020) and (Gonzalez-Ramirez et al., 2021) exhibiting numerous challenges during online learning, such as inadequate implementation skills, slow internet connection, physical conditions (e.g., eye strain), concentration difficulty, financial problems, anxiety, and boredom (Stephan et al., 2019). Due to these difficulties, most of them do not want to continue using the learning process (Chung et al., 2020). Despite this, those with specific characteristics still have better learning experience, compared to offline education (Muhammad, 2020).

Although several studies have attempted to examine online learning in higher education, only a few of them explored the experiences of the students most affected by the digital educational system. Therefore, this study aims to explore the online learning patterns of students and the kind of lecturers needed for the provision of a meaningful educational experience. By using a qualitative approach, more detailed perceptions are provided from student experiences, accompanied by the consideration of each participant's unique context and the performance of complex analyses through multiple perspectives (Creswell, 2010). The participants are also allowed to be study partners, a data collection procedure emphasizing the enhancements of the subjects' perspectives (Creswell, 2010). From this context, the results are expected to provide a framework for lecturers and higher education managers to implement online learning, based on the perceptions of the end users, namely students.

## Literature Review

A great variation was also observed in the boundaries of online learning, according to a previous literature analysis, where it was initially found to use a management system or digitally upload text and PDF as student academic materials (Singh & Thurman, 2019). Based on the development of interpretation, online learning is defined as the variational use of the internet to asynchronously and synchronously increase the interaction between teachers and students (Curtain, 2002). Some equivalent terms are also embedded intowards the interpretation of the educational process, e.g., mobile (Alhassan, 2016), blended (Palalas et al., 2015), distance (Anderson & Dron, 2011), open, web-based (Costa et al., 2012), and computer-mediated learning (Anaraki, 2004; Cojocariu et al., 2014) ~~learning~~. These describe the digital activities and tools used in learning, to achieve the set educational goals. In this process, many components such as the technology, pedagogy, and assessment guides are involved (Aparicio et al., 2016), regarding the global accessibility of ~~the~~ educational content (Blayone et al., 2018). Based on these various definitions, the important elements in online learning includes technology, time (synchronous and asynchronous), access, interaction opportunities, physical distance, and traditional comparisons. ~~In this condition, a forum allowing communication and collaboration is created between lecturers and students, as a substitute for the traditional classes experiencing limitations during campus closure (Cacheiro-Gonzalez et al., 2019).~~

As a substitute for traditional classes, online learning is enabled for the interactive communication and collaboration between lecturers and students, with various limitations experienced during campus closures (Cacheiro-Gonzalez et al., 2019). Consequently, institutions are found to increase students' access and flexibility, with the campuses still closed due to the spread of Covid-19 (Bryson & Andres, 2020; Castro & Tumibay, 2021). The eOnline learning process is becoming a trend and entering the mainstream, as it contributes to expanding the expansion of educational accessibility to a wider community (Gallagher & LaBrie, 2012). It also promises many benefits and uses (Castro & Tumibay, 2021) regarding learning outcomes' financing, flexibility, and effectiveness the financing, flexibility, and effectiveness of learning outcomes (Lorenzetti, 2013). In this condition, many adult learners enjoy the flexibility provided by online learning when they are instructed to balance their studies and work (Bell & Federman, 2013). The learning process is also a major component of global education (Singh & Thurman, 2019), showing that universities are capable of using synchronous and asynchronous digital platforms (Farros et al., 2020). Based on the synchronous platform, "live" interactions are often allowed between lecturers and students, e.g., audio and video conferencing, web chat, etc. Meanwhile, the asynchronous platform involves delaying the interaction time between the educational personnel, e.g., E-mail, previous video recordings, discussion forums, etc (Finkelstein, 2006). In this case, these various platforms are important modalities for universities, to help carry out online learning (Evans, 2011; Khalil et al., 2020; Ridgway et al., 2007).

Many previous studies reportedly attempted to explore online learning in universities, with most of them focusing on determining the barriers, readiness, impact, and influential factors of the educational service. According to ~~Baticulon~~ (Baticulon (, 2021)), these barriers were

examined from the perspective of 3,670 medical students in the Philippines, as a developing country. In this condition, only 41% of them were found to be physically and mentally capable towards using online learning. This proved that five obstacles were encountered by participants, namely technological, individual, domestic, institutional, and community barriers. Agung and Surtikanti (2020) also performed an analysis on the same topic, with three main obstacles encountered by the language students at the Pamane Talino Indonesia School of Teacher Training and Education. These included internet connection availability and sustainability, teaching media accessibility, and tool suitability to access media. Based on Gonzalez-Ramirez et al. (2021), the impact of changing online learning was also examined on students' psychological wellness at the School of Education and Health. The results indicated that ~~the~~ social relationships with peers and lecturers decreased during the online learning process. This decrease was accompanied by ~~at~~ the decrease in students' social connections, motivation, and mental health. Another report proved that online learning became boring from the first two weeks and increased student anxiety, specifically among those whose parents had low income and were not in the mood to study due to many assignments (Irawan et al., 2020). The lack of direct interaction between students and instructors was also another problem encountered in developing countries such as Pakistan (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). In addition, more challenges were observed, including difficult accessibility and connectivity, as well as inadequate communication and interaction between educational personnel and peers (Aboagye et al., 2020). Increased training costs, isolated feelings, and technology gaps were also some challenges reported by other study experts (Castro & Tumibay, 2021).

To prove students' online learning readiness, two other studies were subsequently conducted, with ~~Chung et al.~~ (Chung et al., 2020) investigating this factor at two digital course institutions in Malaysia. Through a survey of 399 participants, female and degree students were observed to be more prepared and satisfied with the learning experience, compared to male and diploma students. However, more than half of the participants preferred direct learning to online education. Blayone et al. (2018) also investigated the digital readiness profile of students in Georgia and Ukraine, regarding this learning process. Using the survey of 150 participants, most students in both countries were not ready to participate in some online learning activities. Another study also examined students' satisfaction with these learning platforms, where comfortability was often derived through Google Hangouts and Classroom, as well as LMS (Learning Management Systems) (Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020). This was in line with Baber (2020) and Herguner et al. (2020), where online learning satisfaction was influenced by class interactions, motivation, lecture structure, instructor knowledge, facilities, and positive attitudes. According to Yudiawan et al. (2021), the factors influencing the success of online learning were mapped and tested at Islamic Religious Universities in West Papua, Indonesia. From the results, the quality of lecturers and the system had the highest influence (94.2%), with diversity and institutional services having no significant effect. In addition, an empirical study was widely carried out using a systematic literature review method (Pei & Wu, 2019; Redmond et al., 2018; Singh & Thurman, 2019; Valverde-Berrocoso et al., 2020).

Although several studies attempted to examine online learning in universities, only a few of them explored the experiences of the students most affected by the digital educational practice. Therefore, this study aims to explore a specific report exploring students' patterns of experience and the types of capable lecturers has still not been comprehensively considered. ~~This shows that~~ the report on students' perception of lecturers is important, due to the essential role of ~~the~~ educators in the success of online learning (Baber, 2020). The behavioral aspects of lecturers or instructors are also the important variables affecting the quality and outcomes of the learning process in higher education, e.g., the ability and intensity of communication (Alawamleh et al., 2022; Baticulon, 2021) and face-to-face interaction (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). Therefore, this study aims to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers regarding their numerous abilities to provide a good digital learning condition. The results are expected to be used as a framework for university lecturers and administrators, to improve the quality of online learning for students.

## **Methodology**

### ***Study design***

This study used a qualitative focus group study design, which was selected for its ability to provide a broad explanation from the participants (Throuvala et al., 2019), as well as facilitate shared thoughts, feelings, and attitudes (Stewart & Shamdani, 2014). A qualitative design was used to complete this essay, with (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) stating that it is a method used to narrow a broad field into one more specific topic. It also seeks to analyze the in-depth interpretation of a specific problem (Mohajan, 2018). Furthermore, the main interest of a qualitative expert is to understand the interpretations constructed by the study. Based on Yazan and De Vasconcelos (2016), the primary interest of this expert often emphasized the realistic perception of people, regarding their environment and experience. Through these philosophical assumptions, this study aims to explore the interpretation of participants' experiences in communicating with their lecturers during online learning in the pandemic period. In the initial and final semesters, data were obtained from the pre-service teachers undergoing online learning at the higher education for four full terms. These complete semesters emphasized the campus closure period in March 2020 until the data collection time.

### ***Participants***

These are the pre-service teacher-students studying the Elementary School Education program at a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Using the convenience sampling technique, a total of 110 participants were selected, containing 58 and 52 students in semesters 2 and 6 (first and final semesters), respectively. This value met the criteria of code and meaning saturations, as described by (M. M. Hennink et al., 2017). From a previous study, code saturation was achieved at nine interviews, where various thematic issues had been identified. Meanwhile, meaning saturation required 16 to 24 interviews, to develop a texturally rich understanding of the problem. The demographics of these participants are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Participant Demographics

Student Semester	<del>Sex</del> <del>ender</del>	Respondent	Percentage	Total
First semester	Male	4	<u>3,646,9</u>	58
	Female	54	<u>49,0993,1</u>	
Last semester	Male	6	<u>5,4511,54</u>	52
	Female	46	<u>41,8288,46</u>	

**Data collection**

The data were obtained through group discussion forums (FGD), where participants were selected due to their ability to explicitly generate information through informationies to explicitly generate information through the interaction process (Pope & Mays, 1995). They also provided opportunities for individuals to build on ~~the answers of~~ other members answers, leading to the creation of new ideas (Holloway & Galvin, 2016). Moreover, FGDs provided more time for participants to reflect on their respective opinions (Krueger, 2014), with the explanation process being digitally recorded with their consent. ~~The process was also guided by a semi-structured interview guide, used in asking questions during FGD (Merriam, 1998).~~ This study was regulated by a focus group guide developed after conducting a literature review (Kitzinger, 1995), to explore students' experiences of lecturers during online learning. Despite using these guidelines, “listening actively and requesting many interviews were still important regarding the knowledge of participants” (Seidman, 2006, p. 15). FGDs also produced sufficient information to understand the analyzed phenomenon (Throuvala et al., 2019).

**Data analysis technique**

The data obtained were systematically analyzed by categorizing and comparing the FGD results of the two groups, i.e., the pre-service participants in the first and final semesters (M. Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). This analysis was carried out through the following two stages, (1) the data were categorized into the first and final groups, where each dataset was thoroughly analyzed for the realistic perception of the story. It was also accompanied by several systematic readings, noting assumptions, keywords, perspectives, and attitudes (Smith et al., 2009). According to Merriam and Tisdell (~~Merriam & Tisdell, 2015~~), data analysis was "a complex process involving the thorough assessment between concrete and abstract concepts, inductive and deductive reasoning, as well as description and interpretation. In this process, ~~some~~ common threads were found in participants' stories, such as contrasting ing experiences and connective themes (Fraser, 2004). Besides, side comments were also provided for the identification of possible themes and sub-themes. After analyzing the transcript, the acquired themes were combined and grouped to obtain a clear participants' perceptions, and (2) A comparative assessment was carried out on the analytical results of each generated theme and sub-theme from the two groups. This led to the observation of two similar themes in the initial and final semesters, namely pedagogical skills and social-personal skills~~professional and personal aspects~~, respectively. In these themes, 4 common

sub-themes were subsequently observed, i.e., "delivery of clear and easy material" and "interactive", as well as "relaxing & fun" and "pleasant personality" for pedagogical skills and social-personal skills, respectively. Meanwhile, the slight difference depended on the addition of several sub-themes in both themes. From the data analysis process, the themes and sub-themes are presented in Table 2.

## Results

This study aimed to explore student experiences with lecturers during online learning, by comparing the pre-service teachers in the initial and final semesters. The results determined two similar main themes, namely pedagogical skills and social-personal skills, although the difference led to the determination of two similar main themes, namely, although the difference only depended on a few sub-themes between the two student groups. The data coding comparison is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Coding Data

Participants	Theme	Sub-theme	Total Participants
First-semester Pre-service teachers	<u>Pedagogical skills</u>	Submission of material is clear and easy to understand	22
		<u>Non-stressful lectures</u>	16
		Interactive	10
	<u>Social-personal skills</u>	Relaxing and fun	18
		Friendly	10
		His personality is fun	10
Final semester Pre-service teachers	<u>Pedagogical skills</u>	Submission of material is clear and easy to understand	13
		Interactive	8
		Do not provide much work	6
		Provide good grades	5
	<u>Social-personal skills</u>	Understanding student conditions	17
		His personality is fun	14
		Motivate students	13
		Relaxing and fun	5

### The similarity of pre-service teacher experience in the first and final semesters

#### Pedagogical skills

In the pedagogical skills, similar experience were observed between the initial and final semester participants. ~~This indicated that t~~ the delivery of clear and easy-to-understand material and, as well as the interactive sub-themes were importantly stated by the pre-service teachers, i.e., 22/10 and 13/8 statements in the initial and final semesters.

*Submission of material is clear and easy to understand*

The pre-service teachers' perceptions about lecturers conveying clear and easy materials were the most expected experience, due to being supported by the following codes, (a) easy to understand, (b) clear, (c) detailed, (d) not confusing, as well as (e) concise and clear. Through FGD, the statement of a final semester pre-service teacher (R15) is observed as follows:

*In online learning, lecturers are often expected to explain easy-to-understand materials. Maybe this is also experienced by friends because online learning is sometimes more difficult because students cannot discuss more freely like offline learning time.*

In this process, similar answers were also expressed by an initial semester student (R9) as follows:

*The most important thing in my opinion is a lecturer who can convey the material clearly. For example is Mr [name of lecturer], in Zoom lectures, the material is easy to understand.*

#### *Interactive*

The interactive lecturer was the second sub-theme mentioned by the two participants' groups. ~~This was supported by the~~ following codes supported this, (a) easy to contact, (b) interactive with students, (c) fast response, (d) responsive, (e) interactive invitation, (f) feedback provision, and (g) adequate communication. Through FGD, one of the initial semester participants (R24) stated that:

*An enjoyable experience for me in online learning is when the lecturer can communicate well, hence, the class becomes fluid and not stressful.*

Similar experiences were also shared by many other participants as follows:

*"I am happy with Ms. [lecturer's name], based on the ease of communication with students, through Whatsapp or other available media" (R16), "Adequate interactions during lectures provide the opportunities for students to ask questions" (R1), "Lecturers are interactive, hence, they can build a good learning atmosphere" (R8).*

#### Social-personal skills

Based on a personal aspect social-personal skills, the pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters also had similar experience. This clarified that lecturers with pleasant personalities, as well as relaxed and fun sub-themes were frequently stated during online learning, i.e., 10/18 and 14/5 statements in both groups, respectively.

#### *His personality is fun*

This was an interesting sub-theme for students during online learning, which was supported by the following codes, (a) pleasant lecturers, (b) interesting explanation, (c) interesting

material presentation, (d) not boring, (e) sleepless atmosphere, and (f) interesting. In FGD, R3 is explained as follows:

*Lecturers need to have fun and interesting qualities, due to the stressfulness of the pandemic period. The tasks are many, and sometimes the schedule clashes with other activities.*

This was in line with the statements of other participants, e.g.:

*"Fun lecturers really helped me while learning online" (R7), "Alhamdulillah, although learning online, most of lecturers are fun, hence, they do not get bored even though they are online" (R18), "Lecturers who enjoy online learning, in my opinion, are those who are interesting and serious but also relaxed" (R10).*

#### *Relaxing and fun*

This experience was obtained by both pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters, with 18 and 5 statements observed for both groups, respectively. It was also supported by the following codes, (a) relaxed, (b) fun, (c) serious and relaxed, (d) relaxed and disciplined, and (e) interesting teaching process. Based on FGD, the statement of a student (R23) is observed as follows:

*What I hope for during online learning is lecturers who teach in a relaxed manner, but can motivate students. It is a delight that many lecturers in this institution have these qualities, for example, Mr. [name of lecturer] when teaching is relaxed but students understand.*

### **Differences in the experience of the first and final semester participants**

#### Pedagogical skills

These pre-service teachers also had different experiences in both pedagogical skills and social-personal skills professional and personal aspects, despite the various similarities being observed. In the first semester, a sub-theme was highly stated by 16 participants, namely "Do not stress", explaining that the experience was not stressful. Those in the final semester also preferred the lecturers that did not provide many assignments, although they produced good grades, regarding the perceptions of 6 and 5 participants, respectively.

#### **First semester:**

#### Non-stressful lectures

This sub-theme was an interesting experience for participants during online learning, which was subsequently supported by the following codes, (a) not tense, (b) not scary, (c) relaxed class atmosphere, and (d) cheerful atmosphere. From FGD, a first semester participant (R20) stated the following:

*I like online learning because lecturers teach without straining the class. For example, Mrs. [name of lecturer] and Mr. [name of lecturer] when teaching through zoom, there is humor, hence, the class is not tense.*

### **Final semester:**

Based on the professional aspect, the final semester participants preferred lecturers who did not provide many assignments, although they produced good grades (6 and 5 statements) and give good grades (mentioned by 5 participants). The sub-theme that did not multitask was supported by some codes, namely (a) not many assignments, and (b) not only with assignments. Meanwhile, the cheap value variable was supported by the following, (a) good grade provision, and (b) unselfish towards grade provision.

#### *Not providing many assignments*

The lecturer who do not providing many assignments ~~This~~ was one of the important experience supporting final semester pre-service teachers during online learning. In this condition, almost all lecturers were reported to provide assignments during the early periods of the COVID-19 outbreak, leading to the high stress level and heaviness of students in lectures. However, the trend waswere observed to change during the final semester. Besides the provision of assignments, lecturers also conducted more synchronized learning through various platforms. Based on FGD, a final semester participant (R28) stated the following:

*Lecturers I expect are those who do not only give assignments as was often done in the early days of COVID-19, resulting many students are stressed. However, lecturers conduct more lectures through Zoom, Google Meet or e-learning when other media are unavailable.*

#### *Give good grades*

This sub-theme was frequently stated by the final semester participants, indicating that many students whose lectures were oriented towards cumulative achievement index were still observed. Through FGD, one of these participants (R25) stated the following:

*"I think giving good grades to lecturers is important because a high GPA is also important as alumni".*

### Pedagogical skills

According to the pedagogical skills, some differences were also observed between the pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters. In this process, the sub-themes of "friendly lecturers", as well as "understanding" and "motivating" students' conditions were observed for both groups, with 10, 17, and 13 statements, respectively.

### **First semester:**

#### *Friendly lecturers*

This theme was supported by the following codes, (1) friendly, and (2) not rude (keep the image). In this process, friendly lecturers had the following characteristics, (a) open to communicating with anyone, (b) not far from students, and (c) like to communicate and greet. Based on FGD, one of the pre-service teachers in the first semester (R 19) stated the following:

*I like friendly lecturers, hence, they do not scare students. For example, Ms. [lecturer's name] and Mr. [lecturer's name], sometimes before teaching they greet students one by one, often even talking about student problems outside the material. I think it is also important that students feel cared for.*

#### **Final semester:**

##### *Understanding student conditions*

This sub-theme was frequently stated by the final semester participants (17) and supported by several codings, namely understanding student conditions, constraints, circumstances, and limitations. Through FGD, R10 stated the following:

*My experience in online learning that ultimately can increase my motivation in learning is that lecturers understand my condition. For example, the condition of the internet network is not connected, hence, if lecturers see an off-camera student they not angry because knowing that my internet signal is bad.*

Based on the results, network constraints were mostly encountered by students during online learning, indicating the need for lecturers with high and classified understanding levels. Besides this, other students also expect lecturers to understand their academic abilities, with the following stated by R17 through FGD:

*Lecturers need to understand the condition of students, for example, the simultaneous lateness to zoom meetings should be highly comprehended, as this is likely due to many unforeseen circumstances.*

##### *Motivate students*

In online learning, students often need motivation from various parties due to ~~the~~ encountering ing of many challenges. ~~The is showed that~~ most of the final semester pre-service teachers preferred lecturers with ~~the~~ motivational capabilities during the learning process. The sub-theme was supported by the following coding, namely (1) motivating students, (2) triggering motivation, and (3) uplifting. Through FGD, one of the participants (R19) stated the following:

*Besides delivering varied material, ideal lecturers also need to motivate student learning in online education, for the achievement of greater outcomes, which requires a higher effort.*

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

This study aimed to explore the experience patterns of the pre-service teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 outbreak. Based on the comparative analysis between the first and final semester participants, some similar and different aspects were observed in describing the ideal lecturer during the learning process. ~~This proved that~~ the similarity aspect was observed at the “theme” level, where the pre-service groups expect the ideal lecturer to emphasize 2 features, namely the pedagogical skills and social-personal skills. Meanwhile, the differences depended on the several sub-themes supporting the two themes. In the first semester group, the professional indicators of the ideal lecturers included clear material conveyance, relaxed, interactive, and cheerful, regarding the statements of 22, 16, 10, and 10 participants, respectively. Besides this, those in the final group also included the delivery of easy-to-understand materials, interactive, did not provide many assignments, and good great value, concerning the perceptions of 13, 8, 6, and 5 members. According to the personal aspect, the first-semester group stated that the ideal lecturer was relaxed ~~and fun, fun, and as well as~~ friendly, through 18 and 10 participants, respectively. However, the statements in the final semester included understanding students’ conditions, pleasant personality, motivation, and relaxation, ~~the understanding of students’ conditions, pleasant personality, motivational, and relaxed~~, concerning the perceptions of 17, 14, 13, and 5 participants. Based on these analyses, the following results were obtained and evaluated:

Firstly, both pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters agreed that the ideal lecturer need to have pedagogical skills and social-personal skills. In the pedagogical skills, these educators need to possess the ability ~~ies~~ to adequately master and convey their knowledge to students. However, the social-personal skills was observed as the standard of character and personality possessed by a person. In this condition, personality describes ~~d~~ the unique psychological qualities influencing an individual's behaviour, thoughts, and feelings (Roberts & Jackson, 2008), leading to the increased effectiveness of the educators' works (Holmes et al., 2015). The unity between the pedagogical skills and social-personal skills was also the main requirement supporting online learning in universities. In addition, professionalism had three essences, namely (1) having a specific scientific capacity according to the field, (2) providing services to others, and (3) having moral and ethical standards (Bair, 2016; Heck & Ambrosetti, 2018).

Secondly, both pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters agreed that the abilities of lecturers to interactively deliver clear and easy-to-understand online material was an important indicator of their pedagogical skills. ~~This indicated that the~~ ability to clearly and easily convey material was a pedagogic competency that all professional educators should master should be mastered by all professional educators. According to Law No 19 of 2005 concerning Indonesian Teachers and Lecturers, all ~~the~~ professional university educators were required to have four competencies, such as pedagogic competence, which mastery helps in the following, (1) understanding students more deeply, (2) designing learning, (3) implementing learning, (4) designing and evaluating learning, and (5) developing students (Suyatno et al., 2021). Despite communication being an important part of pedagogic competence, inadequate interaction was still a challenge in online learning (Coman et al.,

2020; Firmansyah et al., 2021). This finding was in line with most of the previous reports showing that interactive communication was an important online learning factor. In the classroom, the interaction between lecturers and students (Alawamleh et al., 2022; Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Baticulon, 2021; Baber, 2020; Dumford & Miller, 2018), as well as the communication skills (Slimi, 2020) also affected academic experience during the learning process. In addition, these interactive and communicative abilities activated several supporting variables in online learning, such as student involvement (Brown et al., 2022; Martin & Bolliger, 2018) and participation (Hussein et al., 2020).

Thirdly, the experience similarity between the first and final semester participants occurred in the social-personal skills. In this condition, all the pre-service teachers agreed that the cheerful, as-well-as-relaxed, and fun sub-themes were two important indicators of a lecturer during online learning. This proved that lecturers with pleasant personalities, as well as relaxing and fun were mentioned by 24 and 23 pre-service teachers, i.e., 10/14 and 18/5 in the first and final semesters, respectively. These results explained the main problems encountered during online learning, where psychological aspects such as stress (Heo & Han, 2018; Kumalasari & Akmal, 2022; Sukdee et al., 2021), anxiety and depression (Fawaz & Samaha, 2021), as well as boredom (Esra & Sevilen, 2021), were the scourge of students. To reduce setbacks, students expected their lecturers to be able to be relaxed/relaxedly and interestingly teach online. This was in line with most previous reports, where a pleasant educator had an impact on the following, (1) enjoyment and comfort of classroom learning (Becker et al., 2014; Suyatno et al., 2022), and (2) students' positive emotions (Goetz et al., 2013). It also fostered better student motivation and learning outcomes (Keller et al., 2014). In addition, the results strengthened Benekos and Benekos (2016) and Miron and Mevorach (2014), where most of the expected lecturers characteristics were fun, interesting, and motivating.

Fourthly, the differences between the experience of the first and final semester participants depended on several additional indicators in lecturers' pedagogical skills and social-personal skills. In the pedagogical skills, the first semester teachers emphasized educators who did not cause tension as an important indicator in online learning. Meanwhile, the honorary teachers in the final semester highly focused on lecturers who did not provide many assignments and cheap grades as a social-personal skills. According to Irawan et al. (2020), many assignments were found to lower the mood of students' online learning participation-participation in online learning, during Covid-19. Regarding the social-personal skills, the first-semester teacher also focused in 10 friendly participants, with those in the final session mostly emphasizing lecturers who understood (17 participants) and motivated (13 participants) the conditions of students. This confirmed that a person's experience often form/see a different perception, and vice versa (Richmond & Zacks, 2017; Vernon, 2017). The final semester pre-service teachers were found to have undergone online learning in universities for 4 full sessions, due to the campus closure effected from/since March 2020 until the data collection period. This explained that they had attended offline lectures for a full semester, accompanied by 2 meetings in the next session. However, teachers in the first semester had

just completed online lectures at universities for one full semester, accompanied by several meetings in the next session.

Although several studies have attempted to examine online learning in higher education, only a few of them explored the experiences of the students most affected by the digital educational system during the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on the results, the perspectives of students in describing lecturers provided meaningful experiences in reinforcing the recommendations (Kuhlee & Winch, 2017) on the importance of teacher professionalism. This should not be interpreted as a universal value because the indicators of professionalism often vary in different contexts. Moreover, the perceptions of the involved pre-service teachers highlighted the importance of two important online learning competencies, namely pedagogical and social-personal skills. These two indicators, for example, were quite different from the determinants of previous studies, which always provided technological skills (Mehrotra et al., 2022)(Baran & Correia, 2014)(Guasch et al., 2010)(Palloff & Pratt, 2011). These results provided a framework for relevant parties, specifically university lecturers and administrators. For lecturers, the will to continuously develop themselves is very important in this era, as different situations are found to often require distinct needs. Meanwhile, the curriculum and experience obtained when in the universities were not designed for the situations and conditions presently encountered. ~~This showed that i~~ndividual professional development (Cutri et al., 2020) is the key for lecturers to carry out online learning, which is effective, interesting, fun, and related to students' feelings. Based on the university administrators, the design of lecturers' self-development programs was very important, regarding the possession of adequate pedagogical skills and social-personal skills, which were close to the description of their students. The self-development program oriented to pedagogic, social, and personality competencies also acquired ~~a n-more~~ adequate portion, as most of ideal lecturers' indicators were highly oriented to both features in online learning.

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## Comparing the Experience of Pre-Service Teachers in the First and Final Semesters in Online Learning Using a Focus Group Study

Suyatno Suyatno, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia

Sibawaihi Sibawaihi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Wantini Wantini, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia

Dzihan Khilmi Ayu Firdausi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

Lilis Patimah, Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surakarta, Indonesia

### Abstract.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, online learning has become the new innovation and an alternative virtual education adopted by universities, due to campus closures. The sudden adoption of the innovation without prior preparation and training causes the ineffective implementation of online learning in most institutions. Based on this description, insufficient information is available regarding the experiences of the student population, which are the most affected by online learning in higher education. Therefore, this study aims to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers regarding their numerous abilities to provide a good online learning program. Using a qualitative focus group study design, data were obtained through the focus group discussion (FGD) on 58 and 52 teachers, which were divided into 10 study groups during the first and final semesters ~~during the first and final semesters~~. The results showed that both groups had similar and different experiences, regarding lecturers' ability to effectively perform online learning. According to the experience of the participants, the lecturers with pedagogical and social-personal skills were able to emphasize and encourage the attractiveness of online learning. In addition, some of the differences highly depended on the specific indicators of the two aspects. These results are expected to provide a framework for university lecturers and administrators, towards implementing the learning process.

### Keywords:

COVID-19, focus group study, higher education, online learning, pedagogical and social-personal skills, pre-service teacher

### Introduction

The COVID-19 outbreak has caused basic changes in the educational sector, specifically in the institutions' learning process, causing a very quick adjustment from offline to online learning platforms (Bhaumik et al., 2020; Chung et al., 2020; Coman et al., 2020; Khalil et al., 2020; Simamora, 2020). This rapid change has led to chaotic and uncomfortable experiences for

most of the academic community, namely university managers, lecturers, and students (Al-Karaki et al., 2021); (Vaskivska et al., 2021). Besides the lecturers experiencing anxiety, stress, and burnout (Banton & Garza, 2023); (Evanoff et al., 2020), the learning performances of students are also negatively affected by the shift to online education (Serrano Sarmiento et al., 2021). From this context, the students often encounter increased stress due to sudden changes in the learning environment and are more prone to depression, tiredness, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization (Simic et al., 2021); (Liu et al., 2022).

Similar to the universities in other countries, the Indonesian government has reportedly implemented full online learning since mid-March 2020, through the ministry of education and culture (Agung & Surtikanti, 2020). Irrespective of this condition, the management system accessibility is still the main obstacle (Sobaih et al., 2020), with most institutions not completely ready to implement the learning process (Coman et al., 2020). This is because of the expensive costs incurred during the development phase, compared to offline education (Bahasoan et al., 2020). Students are also found to experience many obstacles, with Octaberlina & Muslimin (2020) and Gonzalez-Ramirez et al. (2021) exhibiting numerous challenges during online learning, such as inadequate implementation skills, slow internet connection, physical conditions (e.g., eye strain), concentration difficulty, financial problems, anxiety, and boredom (Stephan et al., 2019). Due to these difficulties, most of them do not want to continue using the learning process (Chung et al., 2020). Despite this, those with specific characteristics still have better learning experience, compared to offline education (Muhammad, 2020).

Although several studies have attempted to examine online learning in higher education, only a few of them explored the experiences of the students most affected by the digital educational system. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the online learning patterns of students and the kind of lecturers needed for the provision of a meaningful educational experience. By using a qualitative approach, more detailed perceptions are provided from student experiences, accompanied by the consideration of each participant's unique context and the performance of complex analyses through multiple perspectives (Creswell, 2010). The participants are also allowed to be study partners, a data collection procedure emphasizing the enhancements of the subjects' perspectives (Creswell, 2010). From this context, the results provide a framework for lecturers and higher education managers to implement online learning, based on the perceptions of the end users, namely students.

### **Literature Review**

A great variation was also observed in the boundaries of online learning, according to a previous literature analysis, where it was initially found to use a management system or digitally upload text and PDF as student academic materials (Singh & Thurman, 2019). Based on the development of interpretation, online learning is defined as the variational use of the internet to asynchronously and synchronously increase the interaction between teachers and students (Curtain, 2002). Some equivalent terms are also embedded in the interpretation of the educational process, e.g., mobile (Alhassan, 2016), blended (Palalas et al., 2015), distance

(Anderson & Dron, 2011), open, web-based (Costa et al., 2012), and computer-mediated learning (Anaraki, 2004; Cojocariu et al., 2014). These describe the digital activities and tools used in learning, to achieve the set educational goals. In this process, many components such as the technology, pedagogy, and assessment guides are involved (Aparicio et al., 2016), regarding the global accessibility of educational content (Blayone et al., 2018). Based on these various definitions, the important elements in online learning includes technology, time (synchronous and asynchronous), access, interaction opportunities, physical distance, and traditional comparisons.

As a substitute for traditional classes, online learning is enabled for the interactive communication and collaboration between lecturers and students, with various limitations experienced during campus closures (Cacheiro-Gonzalez et al., 2019). Online learning is becoming a trend and entering the mainstream, as it contributes to expanding educational accessibility to a wider community (Gallagher & LaBrie, 2012). It also promises many benefits and uses (Castro & Tumibay, 2021) regarding learning outcomes' financing, flexibility, and effectiveness (Lorenzetti, 2013). In this condition, many adult learners enjoy the flexibility provided by online learning when they are instructed to balance their studies and work (Bell & Federman, 2013). The learning process is also a major component of global education (Singh & Thurman, 2019), showing that universities are capable of using synchronous and asynchronous digital platforms (Farros et al., 2020). Based on the synchronous platform, "live" interactions are often allowed between lecturers and students, e.g., audio and video conferencing, web chat, etc. Meanwhile, the asynchronous platform involves delaying the interaction time between the educational personnel, e.g., E-mail, previous video recordings, discussion forums, and so on (Finkelstein, 2006). In this case, these various platforms are important modalities for universities, to help carry out online learning (Evans, 2011; Khalil et al., 2020; Ridgway et al., 2007).

Many previous studies reportedly attempted to explore online learning in universities, with most of them focusing on determining the barriers, readiness, impact, and influential factors of the educational service. According to Baticulon (2021), these barriers were examined from the perspective of 3,670 medical students in the Philippines, as a developing country. In this condition, only 41% of them were found to be physically and mentally capable towards using online learning. This proved that five obstacles were encountered by participants, namely technological, individual, domestic, institutional, and community barriers. Agung and Surtikanti (2020) also performed an analysis on the same topic, with three main obstacles encountered by the language students at the Pamane Talino Indonesia School of Teacher Training and Education. These included internet connection availability and sustainability, teaching media accessibility, and tool suitability to access media. Based on Gonzalez-Ramirez et al. (2021), the impact of changing online learning was also examined on students' psychological wellness at the School of Education and Health. The results indicated that social relationships with peers and lecturers decreased during the online learning process. This decrease was accompanied by a decrease in students' social connections, motivation, and mental health. Another report proved that online learning became boring from the first two

weeks and increased student anxiety, specifically among those whose parents had low income and were not in the mood to study due to many assignments (Irawan et al., 2020). The lack of direct interaction between students and instructors was also another problem encountered in developing countries such as Pakistan (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). In addition, more challenges were observed, including difficult accessibility and connectivity, as well as inadequate communication and interaction between educational personnel and peers (Aboagye et al., 2020). Increased training costs, isolated feelings, and technology gaps were also some challenges reported by other study experts (Castro & Tumibay, 2021).

To understand students' online learning readiness, two other studies were subsequently conducted, with Chung et al. (2020) investigating this factor at two digital course institutions in Malaysia. Through a survey of 399 participants, female and degree students were observed to be more prepared and satisfied with the learning experience, compared to male and diploma students. However, more than half of the participants preferred direct learning to online education. Blayone et al. (2018) also investigated the digital readiness profile of students in Georgia and Ukraine, regarding this learning process. Using the survey of 150 participants, most students in both countries were not ready to participate in some online learning activities. Another study also examined students' satisfaction with these learning platforms, where comfortability was often derived through Google Hangouts and Classroom, as well as LMS (Learning Management Systems) (Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020). This was in line with Baber (2020) and Herguner et al. (2020), where online learning satisfaction was influenced by class interactions, motivation, lecture structure, instructor knowledge, facilities, and positive attitudes. According to Yudiawan et al. (2021), the factors influencing the success of online learning were mapped and tested at Islamic Religious Universities in West Papua, Indonesia. From the results, the quality of lecturers and the system had the highest influence (94.2%), with diversity and institutional services having no significant effect. In addition, an empirical study was widely carried out using a systematic literature review method (Pei & Wu, 2019; Redmond et al., 2018; Singh & Thurman, 2019; Valverde-Berrococo et al., 2020).

Although several studies attempted to examine online learning in universities, only a few of them explored the experiences of the students most affected by the digital educational practice. Therefore, this study aimed to explore pre-service teachers' experiences and perceptions of their lecturers in online learning. The report on students' perception of lecturers is important, due to the essential role of educators in the success of online learning (Baber, 2020). The behavioral aspects of lecturers or instructors are also the important variables affecting the quality and outcomes of the learning process in higher education, e.g., the ability and intensity of communication (Alawamleh et al., 2022; Baticulon, 2021) and face-to-face interaction (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). Therefore, this study aimed to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers regarding their numerous abilities to provide good digital learning experiences.

The early [2<sup>nd</sup> semester] and Final [6<sup>th</sup> semester] semester students are two groups with different experiences regarding online learning. From this context, the early group are found

to have experienced 100% online learning with no encounter recorded for offline education during their time as pre-service teachers. Meanwhile, final semester students have experienced both learning methods. This explains that they had experienced offline learning for 2 full semesters before adopting online education since March 2020. These experience differences allow both student groups to have distinct perspectives on the aspects of learning, leading to comfortability. Therefore, this study aims to identify the similarities and differences between early and final semester students, to develop a perspective regarding the effects of experience distinction on the assessment of lecturers during online learning in higher education.

### **The role of the study authors**

The five study authors are lecturers in the Faculty of Education, which emphasize various issues related to learning, training, and development for pre-service teachers. In this analysis, the authors encountered similar phenomenon, regarding the digital education of pre-service teachers by appropriate lecturers. They were also actively involved in the study and data analysis process. From this context, the first, second, and third authors were involved in planning the study, paper writing, as well as data collection and analysis. Meanwhile, the fourth and fifth authors played a role in reviewing, providing critical notes, and revising the paper toward perfection. Furthermore, the study is motivated by the confusion experienced by most teachers in higher education during online learning. This sudden change has led to the inability to determine the appropriate pattern for implementing the digital education method. Based on these descriptions, the knowledge of the specific factors contributing to the success of online learning is expected to greatly assist teachers in higher education, by improving their teaching quality. The results obtained are also anticipated to provide an overview for higher education teachers in building communication with students during online learning. This should be accompanied by the prioritization of important elements greatly impacting students' digital education and the provision of the necessary treatments supporting the success of the learning method.

## **Methodologys**

### ***Study design***

This study used a qualitative focus group study design, which was selected for its ability to provide a broad explanation from the participants (Throuvala et al., 2019), as well as to facilitate shared thoughts, feelings, and attitudes (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). It also sought to analyze the in-depth interpretation of a specific problem (Mohajan, 2018). Furthermore, the main interest of a qualitative researcher is to understand and generate the interpretations constructed by the study. Through these philosophical assumptions, this study aimed to explore the interpretation of participants' experiences in communicating with their lecturers during online learning in the pandemic period. In the initial and final semesters, data were obtained from the pre-service teachers undergoing online learning at

the higher education for four full terms. These complete semesters emphasized the campus closure period in March 2020 until the data collection time.

**Participants**

Participants were pre-service teacher-students studying the Elementary School Education program at a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Using the purposeful sampling technique, a total of 110 participants were selected, containing 58 and 52 students in semesters 2 and 6 (first and final semesters), respectively. ~~This sample size was considered sufficient to ensure code and meaning saturations, as described by Hennink et al. (2017). From a previous focus groups study, code saturation was achieved at nine interviews, where various thematic issues had been identified. Meanwhile, meaning saturation required 16 to 24 interviews, to develop a texturally rich understanding of the problem. This value met the criteria of code and meaning saturations, as described by (Hennink et al., 2017). From a previous study, code saturation was achieved at nine interviews, where various thematic issues had been identified. A total of 10 FGDs were also observed for the early and final semester students, with the members contained in both groups ranging from 5-6 participants.~~ The demographics of these participants are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Participant Demographics

Student Semester	Sex	Respondent	Percentage	Total
First semester	Male	4	3,64	58
	Female	54	49,09	
Last semester	Male	6	5,45	52
	Female	46	41,82	

**Data collection**

The data were obtained through group discussion forums (FGD), where participants were selected due to their ability to explicitly generate information through information (Pope & Mays, 1995). They also provided opportunities for individuals to build on other members answers, leading to the creation of new ideas (Holloway & Galvin, 2016). Moreover, FGDs provided more time for participants to reflect on their respective opinions (Krueger, 2014), with the explanation process being digitally recorded with their consent. This study was regulated by a focus group guide developed after conducting a literature review (Kitzinger, 1995), to explore students' experiences of lecturers during online learning. Despite using these guidelines, "listening actively and requesting many interviews were still important regarding the knowledge of participants" (Seidman, 2006, p. 15). FGDs also produced sufficient information to understand the analyzed phenomenon (Throuvala et al., 2019).

**Data analysis technique**

The data obtained were systematically analyzed by categorizing and comparing the FGD results of the two groups, i.e., the pre-service participants in the first and final semesters

(Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). This analysis was carried out through the following two stages, (1) the data were categorized into the first and final groups, where each dataset was thoroughly analyzed for the realistic perception of the story. It was also accompanied by several systematic readings, noting assumptions, keywords, perspectives, and attitudes (Smith et al., 2009). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), data analysis was "a complex process involving the thorough assessment between concrete and abstract concepts, inductive and deductive reasoning, as well as description and interpretation. In this process, common threads were found in participants' stories, such as contrasting experiences and connective themes (Fraser, 2004). Besides, side comments were also provided for the identification of possible themes and sub-themes. After analyzing the transcript, the acquired themes were combined and grouped to obtain a clear participants' perceptions, and (2) A comparative assessment was carried out on the analytical results of each generated theme and sub-theme from the two groups. This led to the observation of two similar themes in the initial and final semesters, namely pedagogical skills and social-personal skills, respectively. In these themes, 4 common sub-themes were subsequently observed, i.e., "delivery of clear and easy material" and "interactive", as well as "relaxing & fun" and "pleasant personality" for pedagogical skills and social-personal skills, respectively. Meanwhile, the slight difference depended on the addition of several sub-themes in both themes.

### Results

This study aimed to explore student experiences with lecturers during online learning, while also comparing the pre-service teachers in the initial and final semesters. The results determined two similar main themes, namely pedagogical skills and social-personal skills, although the difference depended on a few sub-themes between the two student groups. The data coding comparison is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Coding Data

Participants	Theme	Sub-theme	Total Participants
First-semester Pre-service teachers	Pedagogical skills	Submission of material is clear and easy to understand	22
		Non-stressful lectures	16
		Interactive	10
	Social-personal skills	Relaxing and fun	18
		Friendly	10
		His personality is fun	10
Final semester Pre-service teachers	Pedagogical skills	Submission of material is clear and easy to understand	13
		Interactive	8
		Do not provide much work	6
		Provide good grades	5
	Social-personal skills	Understanding student conditions	17
		His personality is fun	14

		Motivate students	13
		Relaxing and fun	5

### The similarity of pre-service teacher experience in the first and final semesters

#### Pedagogical skills

In the pedagogical skills, similar experiences were observed between the initial and final semester participants. The delivery of clear and easy-to-understand material and the interactive sub-themes were importantly stated by the pre-service teachers, i.e., 22/10 and 13/8 statements in the initial and final semesters.

#### *Submission of material is clear and easy to understand*

~~The pre-service teachers' perceptions about lecturers conveying clear and easy materials were the most expected experience.~~ The lecturers easily and clearly conveying learning materials are the most frequently mentioned sub-themes by the participants [22 participants], due to being supported by the following codes, (a) easy to understand, (b) clear, (c) detailed, (d) not confusing, as well as (e) concise and clear. Through FGD, the statement of a final semester pre-service teacher (R15) is observed as follows:

*In online learning, lecturers are often expected to explain easy-to-understand materials. Maybe this is also experienced by friends because online learning is sometimes more difficult because students cannot discuss more freely like offline learning time.*

In this process, similar answers were also expressed by an initial semester student (R9) as follows:

*The most important thing in my opinion is a lecturer who can convey the material clearly. For example is Mr [name of lecturer], in Zoom lectures, the material is easy to understand.*

#### *Interactive*

The interactive lecturer was the second sub-theme mentioned by the two participants' groups. The following codes supported this, (a) easy to contact, (b) interactive with students, (c) fast response, (d) responsive, (e) interactive invitation, (f) feedback provision, and (g) adequate communication. Through FGD, one of the initial semester participants (R24) stated that:

*An enjoyable experience for me in online learning is when the lecturer can communicate well, hence, the class becomes fluid and not stressful.*

Similar experiences were also shared by many other participants as follows:

*"I am happy with Ms. [lecturer's name], based on the ease of communication with students, through Whatsapp or other available media" (R16), "Adequate interactions during lectures provide the opportunities for students to ask questions" (R1), "Lecturers are interactive, hence, they can build a good learning atmosphere" (R8).*

### **Social-personal skills**

Based on a personal aspect social-personal skills, the pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters also had similar experience. This clarified that lecturers with pleasant personalities, as well as relaxed and fun sub-themes were frequently stated during online learning, i.e., 10/18 and 14/5 statements in both groups, respectively.

#### *His personality is fun*

~~This was an interesting sub-theme for students during online learning.~~ The possession of a pleasant personality is also a sub-theme mentioned by 10 participants, which was supported by the following codes, (a) pleasant lecturers, (b) interesting explanation, (c) interesting material presentation, (d) not boring, (e) sleepless atmosphere, and (f) interesting. In FGD, R3 is explained as follows:

*Lecturers need to have fun and interesting qualities, due to the stressfulness of the pandemic period. The tasks are many, and sometimes the schedule clashes with other activities.*

This was in line with the statements of other participants, e.g.:

*"Fun lecturers really helped me while learning online" (R7), "Alhamdulillah, although learning online, most of lecturers are fun, hence, they do not get bored even though they are online" (R18), "Lecturers who enjoy online learning, in my opinion, are those who are interesting and serious but also relaxed" (R10).*

#### *Relaxing and fun*

This experience was noted by both pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters, with 18 and 5 statements observed for both groups, respectively. It was also supported by the following codes, (a) relaxed, (b) fun, (c) serious and relaxed, (d) relaxed and disciplined, and (e) interesting teaching process. Based on FGD, the statement of a student (R23) is observed as follows:

*What I hope for during online learning is lecturers who teach in a relaxed manner, but can motivate students. It is a delight that many lecturers in this institution have these qualities, for example, Mr. [name of lecturer] when teaching is relaxed but students understand.*

### **Differences in the experience of the first and final semester participants**

#### **Pedagogical skills**

These pre-service teachers also had different experiences in both pedagogical skills and social-personal skills professional and personal aspects, despite the various similarities being observed. In the first semester, a sub-theme was highly stated by 16 participants, namely "Do not stress", explaining that the experience was not stressful. Those in the final semester also preferred the lecturers that did not provide many assignments, although they produced good grades, regarding the perceptions of 6 and 5 participants, respectively.

#### **First semester:**

##### *Non-stressful lectures*

This sub-theme was an interesting experience for participants during online learning, which was subsequently supported by the following codes, (a) not tense, (b) not scary, (c) relaxed class atmosphere, and (d) cheerful atmosphere. From FGD, a first semester participant (R20) stated the following:

*I like online learning because lecturers teach without straining the class. For example, Mrs. [name of lecturer] and Mr. [name of lecturer] when teaching through zoom, there is humor, hence, the class is not tense.*

#### **Final semester:**

Based on the professional aspect, the final semester participants preferred lecturers who did not provide many assignments, although they produced good grades (6 and 5 statements) and give good grades (mentioned by 5 participants). The sub-theme that did not multitask was supported by some codes, namely (a) not many assignments, and (b) not only with assignments. Meanwhile, the cheap value variable was supported by the following, (a) good grade provision, and (b) unselfish towards grade provision.

##### *Not providing many assignments*

The lecturer who did not providing many assignments was one of the important aspects of the online experiences supporting final semester pre-service teachers. In this condition, almost all lecturers were reported to provide assignments during the early periods of the COVID-19 outbreak, leading to the high stress level and heaviness of students in lectures. However, the trend was observed to change during the final semester. Besides the provision of assignments, lecturers also conducted more synchronized learning through various platforms. Based on FGD, a final semester participant (R28) stated the following:

*Lecturers I expect are those who do not only give assignments as was often done in the early days of COVID-19, resulting many students are stressed. However, lecturers conduct more lectures through Zoom, Google Meet or e-learning when other media are unavailable.*

##### *Give good grades*

This sub-theme was frequently stated by the final semester participants, indicating that many students whose lectures were oriented towards cumulative achievement index were still observed. Through FGD, one of these participants (R25) stated the following:

*I think giving good grades to lecturers is important because a high GPA is also important as alumni.*

#### Pedagogical skills

According to the pedagogical skills, some differences were also observed between the pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters. In this process, the sub-themes of "friendly lecturers", as well as "understanding" and "motivating" students' conditions were observed for both groups, with 10, 17, and 13 statements, respectively.

#### **First semester:**

##### *Friendly lecturers*

This theme was supported by the following codes, (1) friendly, and (2) not rude (keep the image). In this process, friendly lecturers had the following characteristics, (a) open to communicating with anyone, (b) not far from students, and (c) like to communicate and greet. Based on FGD, one of the pre-service teachers in the first semester (R 19) stated the following:

*I like friendly lecturers, hence, they do not scare students. For example, Ms. [lecturer's name] and Mr. [lecturer's name], sometimes before teaching they greet students one by one, often even talking about student problems outside the material. I think it is also important that students feel cared for.*

#### **Final semester:**

##### *Understanding student conditions*

This sub-theme was frequently stated by the final semester participants (17) and supported by several codings, namely understanding student conditions, constraints, circumstances, and limitations. Through FGD, R10 stated the following:

*My experience in online learning that ultimately can increase my motivation in learning is that lecturers understand my condition. For example, the condition of the internet network is not connected, hence, if lecturers see an off-camera student they not angry because knowing that my internet signal is bad.*

Based on the results, network constraints were mostly encountered by students during online learning, indicating the need for lecturers with high and classified understanding levels. Besides this, other students also expect lecturers to understand their academic abilities, with the following stated by R17 through FGD:

*Lecturers need to understand the condition of students, for example, the simultaneous lateness to zoom meetings should be highly comprehended, as this is likely due to many unforeseen circumstances.*

#### *Motivate students*

In online learning, students often need motivation from various parties due to encountering many challenges. The most of the final semester pre-service teachers preferred lecturers with motivational capabilities during the learning process. The sub-theme was supported by the following coding, namely (1) motivating students, (2) triggering motivation, and (3) uplifting. Through FGD, one of the participants (R19) stated the following:

*Besides delivering varied material, ideal lecturers also need to motivate student learning in online education, for the achievement of greater outcomes, which requires a higher effort.*

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

This study aimed to explore the experience patterns of the pre-service teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 outbreak. Based on the comparative analysis between the first and final semester participants, some similar and different aspects were observed in describing the ideal lecturer during the learning process. The similarity aspect was observed at the “theme” level, where the pre-service groups expect the ideal lecturer to emphasize 2 features, namely the pedagogical skills and social-personal skills. Meanwhile, the differences depended on the several sub-themes supporting the two themes. In the first semester group, the professional indicators of the ideal lecturers included clear material conveyance, relaxed, interactive, and cheerful, regarding the statements of 22, 16, 10, and 10 participants, respectively. Besides this, those in the final group also included the delivery of easy-to-understand materials, interactive, did not provide many assignments, and good great value, concerning the perceptions of 13, 8, 6, and 5 members. According to the personal aspect, the first-semester group stated that the ideal lecturer was relaxed, fun, and friendly, through 18 and 10 participants, respectively. However, the statements in the final semester included understanding students’ conditions, pleasant personality, motivation, and relaxation, concerning the perceptions of 17, 14, 13, and 5 participants. Based on these analyses, the following results were obtained and evaluated:

Firstly, both pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters agreed that the ideal lecturer need to have pedagogical skills and social-personal skills. In the pedagogical skills, these educators need to possess the ability to adequately master and convey their knowledge to students. However, the social-personal skills was observed as the standard of character and personality possessed by a person. In this condition, personality describes the unique psychological qualities influencing an individual's behaviour, thoughts, and feelings (Roberts & Jackson, 2008), leading to the increased effectiveness of the educators' works (Holmes et al., 2015). The unity between the pedagogical skills and social-personal skills was also the main requirement supporting online learning in universities. In addition, professionalism had

three essences, namely (1) having a specific scientific capacity according to the field, (2) providing services to others, and (3) having moral and ethical standards (Bair, 2016; Heck & Ambrosetti, 2018).

Secondly, both pre-service teachers in the first and final semesters agreed that the abilities of lecturers to interactively deliver clear and easy-to-understand online material was an important indicator of their pedagogical skills. The ability to clearly and easily convey material was a pedagogic competency that all professional educators should master. According to Law No 19 of 2005 concerning Indonesian Teachers and Lecturers, all professional university educators were required to have four competencies, such as pedagogic competence, which mastery helps in the following, (1) understanding students more deeply, (2) designing learning, (3) implementing learning, (4) designing and evaluating learning, and (5) developing students (Suyatno et al., 2021). Despite communication being an important part of pedagogic competence, inadequate interaction was still a challenge in online learning (Coman et al., 2020; Firmansyah et al., 2021). This finding was in line with most of the previous reports showing that interactive communication was an important online learning factor. In the classroom, the interaction between lecturers and students (Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Alawamleh et al., 2022; Baber, 2020; Baticulon, 2021; Dumford & Miller, 2018), as well as the communication skills (Slimi, 2020) also affected academic experience during the learning process. In addition, these interactive and communicative abilities activated several supporting variables in online learning, such as student involvement (Brown et al., 2022; Martin & Bolliger, 2018) and participation (Hussein et al., 2020).

Thirdly, the experienced similarity between the first and final semester participants occurred in the social-personal skills. In this condition, all the pre-service teachers agreed that the cheerful, relaxed, and fun sub-themes were two important indicators of a lecturer during online learning. This suggested that lecturers with pleasant personalities, as well as who were relaxing and fun were mentioned positively by 24 and 23 pre-service teachers, i.e., 10/14 and 18/5 in the first and final semesters, respectively. These results suggest that the main problems encountered during online learning such as were psychological aspects such as stress (Heo & Han, 2018; Kumalasari & Akmal, 2022; Sukdee et al., 2021), anxiety and depression (Fawaz & Samaha, 2021), as well as boredom (Esra & Sevilen, 2021), were important concerns for students. To reduce setbacks, students expected their lecturers to be able to be relaxed and interestingly teach online. This was in line with most previous reports, where a pleasant educator had an impact on the following, (1) enjoyment and comfort of classroom learning (Becker et al., 2014; Suyatno et al., 2022; Suyudi et al., 2021), and (2) students' positive emotions (Goetz et al., 2013). It also fostered better student motivation and learning outcomes (Keller et al., 2014). In addition, the results strengthened Benekos and Benekos (2016) and Miron and Mevorach (2014), where most of the expected lecturers characteristics were fun, interesting, and motivating.

Fourthly, the differences between the experience of the first and final semester participants depended on several additional indicators in lecturers' pedagogical skills and social-personal skills. In the pedagogical skills, the first semester teachers emphasized educators who did not

cause tension as an important indicator in online learning. Meanwhile, the honorary teachers in the final semester highly focused on lecturers who did not provide many assignments and cheap grades as a social-personal skills. According to Irawan et al. (2020), many assignments were found to lower the mood of students' online learning participation during COVID-19. Regarding the social-personal skills, the first-semester teacher also focused in 10 friendly participants, with those in the final session mostly emphasizing lecturers who understood (17 participants) and motivated (13 participants) the conditions of students. ~~This confirmed that a person's experience often forms a different perception, and vice versa (Richmond & Zacks, 2017; Vernon, 2017).~~ The final semester pre-service teachers were found to have undergone online learning in universities for 4 full sessions, due to the campus closure effected from March 2020 until the data collection period. This explained that they had attended offline lectures for a full semester, accompanied by 2 meetings in the next session. However, teachers in the first semester had just completed online lectures at universities for one full semester, accompanied by several meetings in the next session. The difference in experience also provided different perspectives on their online learning needs, with pragmatic aspects such as teachers not providing many assignments and grades easily, becoming a source of concern for final semester students regarding pedagogical skills. For the early group, more emphases were placed on the personality and communication patterns of teachers, with interaction comfortability being considered their most important need. This difference indicated that an individual's experience was found to shape different perceptions in online learning (Richmond & Zacks, 2017; Vernon, 2017). These results provide useful information for teachers, regarding their patterns of understanding the needs of each student from different semester levels, due to their similar and distinct needs.

Although several studies have attempted to examine online learning in higher education, only a few of them explored the experiences of the students most affected by the digital educational system during the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the results, the perspectives of students in describing lecturers provided meaningful experiences in reinforcing the recommendations (Kuhlee & Winch, 2017) on the importance of teacher professionalism. This should not be interpreted as a universal value because the indicators of professionalism often vary in different contexts. Moreover, the perceptions of the involved pre-service teachers highlighted the importance of two important online learning competencies, namely pedagogical and social-personal skills. These two indicators, for example, were quite different from the determinants of previous studies, which always provided technological skills (Baran & Correia, 2014; Guasch et al., 2010; Mehrotra et al., 2022; Palloff & Pratt, 2011). These results provided a framework for relevant parties, specifically university lecturers and administrators. For lecturers, the will to continuously develop themselves is very important in this era, as different situations are found to often require distinct needs. Meanwhile, the curriculum and experience obtained when in the universities were not designed for the situations and conditions presently encountered. Lecturers are also required to understand the dynamics of student experience because different encounter levels often potentially provide distinct perceptions and needs. Individual professional development (Cutri et al., 2020) is the key for lecturers to carry out online learning, which is effective, interesting, fun,

and related to students' feelings. Based on the university administrators, the design of lecturers' self-development programs was very important, regarding the possession of adequate pedagogical skills and social-personal skills, which were close to the description of their students. The self-development program oriented to pedagogic, social, and personality competencies also acquired an adequate portion, as most of ideal lecturers' indicators were highly oriented to both features in online learning.

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