Social Interaction in Basic Training for Prospective Civil Servants Using the Blended Learning Method

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ARTICLE INFO
Article history:
Received 10 October 2023
Received in revised form 22 November 2023
Accepted 15 December 2023

Keyword:
Social Interaction, Basic Training, Civil Servant Candidates, Blended Learning

ABSTRACT
The movement in the style of Basic Training for Civil Servant Candidates (CPNS) from traditional or face-to-face methods to blended learning has been prompted by advancements in information technology and the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. Changes in training patterns result in alterations to the social interaction processes conducted among organizers, teachers, and participants. In the classical method, direct social contact is abundant, whereas in blended learning, digital-based communication media predominantly facilitate the engagement process. This study employs a literature review methodology to offer a comprehensive picture of social interactions during the CPNS Basic Training process, utilizing the blended learning approach.

INTRODUCTION
The creation of competencies aims to fulfil the competency requirements of civil servants (PNS) in order to align with job competency standards and career development plans (Litvinenko et al., 2022; Salman et al., 2020; Saputra & Mulia, 2021; Setiadiputra, 2017; Uhm et al., 2017). Competency is the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes or behaviours of a civil servant that can be observed, measured, and developed in carrying out their office tasks (Cabral & Dhar, 2019; Carmeli, 2003; Johari & Yahya, 2016; Skorková, 2016; Syamsir & Saputra, 2022). The Regulation of the Head of State Administrative Institutions (LAN) Number 10 of 2018, specifically in Article 25, outlines the competency development framework for the State Civil Service Apparatus. This framework primarily involves education and/or Training. According to the LAN Head Regulation, competency development can be achieved through two forms of training: classical training, which involves face-to-face learning in a classroom setting, and non-classical training, which emphasizes practical work-based learning and learning outside the classroom. Distance training and e-learning are two approaches commonly employed for non-classical training (Lindawati et al., 2022; Tomczyk & Walker, 2021).
Remote training and e-learning are becoming increasingly popular because of various factors, including the development of digital-era technology that has created learning devices that are used to facilitate the training process (Liu & Yu, 2023; Zhang et al., 2020). Another factor that also contributes is the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020 that hit Indonesia, which has had an enormous impact on the global community resulting in changes to a wide range of activities in everyday life. The Government of the Republic of Indonesia has also taken certain policies to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Even with the publication of the Presidential Decree No. 17 of 2023 on Ending the Status of the Corona Virus Disease Pandemic, it does not eliminate all the policies that have been formulated during the time of the pandemic. Among these policies are related to the implementation of the Basic Training of Civil Officers Candidates as the Regulations of the State Administration Institutions No. 1 of 2021 on Basic training of civil officers is provided in Article 7 that the CPNS Basic Education can be carried out in the form of classical training or blended learning. Blended Learning is implemented through three learning components: self-learning, distance learning and classical learning at the training facility (Bernard et al., 2014; Vanslambrouck et al., 2018).

In independent and distance learning, one important thing that needs to be taken into account is the interaction between the parties involved in the learning and training activities (Banerjee et al., 2015; Coman et al., 2020; Peters, 2020; Rapanta et al., 2020). In the training process, there should be a process of interaction between participants, organizers and training instructors (Baldwin & Magjuka, 2014; Chang & Hwang, 2022; García-Peña álvo, 2021). The form of interaction is first, the interaction of the participant with the organizer is the provision of training information, facilitation of training needs and control of the training process. Second, interaction between participants and training instructors is learning interaction and guidance of the implementation of training tasks.

The implementation of training protocols inevitably leads to modifications in the social dynamics among participants, organizers, and training instructors (Bond & Blevins, 2020; Bonk & Cunningham, 2012; Oakes & Rogers, 2006; Shaver, 2017). Utilizing the blended learning approach enhances the utilization of information and communication technology in communication throughout encounters. The majority of the learning process is conducted through the utilization of digital media.

To ensure efficient communication during training, all participants in training activities must have a clear understanding of the processes, forms, and media utilized in training using the blended learning approach. Utilizing information technology can serve as a strategic approach to enhance the calibre of leadership training in the context of digital-era education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

SOCIAL INTERACTION

Definition of Social Interaction

The term "social interaction" is derived from Latin roots. "Con" or "Cum" means "together," while "tango" means "touching." Therefore, the literal definition of social interaction is "touching together." Social interaction refers to the dynamic exchange between people, between individuals and groups, or between groups themselves, as they establish connections and engage with one another (Narwoko & Suyanto, 2004).

Social interaction as dynamic reciprocal social relationships, which
involve relationships between individual people, between human groups, and between people and human groups (Anderson et al., 2019; Aston, 2019; Capozzi & Ristic, 2018; Gallotti et al., 2017).

Aspects of Social Interaction

The aspects of social interaction are as follows:

a. There is a relationship

Every interaction certainly occurs because of the existence of a relationship between individuals and individuals, as well as between individuals in group relationships (Lebuda & Csikszentmihalyi, 2020).

b. There are individuals

Every social interaction requires the appearance of individuals carrying out relationships (Murray & Schaller, 2016).

c. There is a goal

Every social interaction has a specific goal such as influencing other individuals (Forgas & Williams, 2016).

d. There is a relationship with the structure and function of the group

This relationship with group structure and function occurs because individuals in their lives are not separated from the group, in addition, each individual has a function within the group (Homans, 2017).

Terms of Social Interaction

In a social process, social interaction can only be said to occur if it fulfils the requirements of the aspects of living together, namely the existence of social contact and social communication (Baghdadi, 2016; Simoes Aelbrecht, 2016).

a. Social contact refers to the interpersonal connection between individuals, characterized by meaningful conversations and a shared comprehension of each other’s goals and aspirations within the context of social interactions. Interpersonal interaction can take place either directly or indirectly between two individuals. Indirect social contact refers to social interactions that occur through the use of tools as intermediaries, such as the telephone, radio, letters, and so on. Meanwhile, direct social contact refers to interpersonal interaction that occurs through a physical meeting or verbal exchange between two individuals.

b. Social communication implies the same views between people who interact with something. With communication, the attitudes and feelings of one person or group of people can be known and understood by another person or group of people. This means that if in a social relationship there is no communication or they do not know each other and do not understand each other’s intentions, then in such circumstances no social contact occurs.

BASIC TRAINING OF PROSPECTIVE CIVIL SERVANTS

Understanding CPNS Basic Training

Training is a form or method of learning, conveying information, or developing skills. So, people who take part in training can learn something (Haven et al., 2023; Warner, 2020). In State Administration Agency Regulation Number 1 of 2021 concerning Basic Training for Prospective Civil Servants (CPNS), it is explained that CPNS are Indonesian citizens who have passed the selection for civil servant procurement, been appointed and determined by the PPK, and have received technical approval and been assigned an employee identification number. A CPNS has a trial period of one year, which must be completed through an education and training process. This phase is called the pre-service period. CPNS can
be appointed as civil servants after fulfilling several requirements, including being declared to have passed the CPNS Basic Training. CPNS Basic Training is education and training in the pre-service period that is carried out in an integrated manner to build moral integrity, honesty, enthusiasm, and motivation for nationalism and nationhood, superior and responsible personality traits, and strengthen professionalism and field competence. (LAN RI Nomor 1, 2021).

Implementation of this basic training is one of the requirements that must be completed before being appointed as a civil servant to provide participants with an understanding of the organization where they work. Apart from that, it is also to form competencies in the form of knowledge, skills, and behaviour that will later be used in my daily work as a civil servant.

**Forms and Pathways of Basic CPNS Training**

In general, based on Article 27 of LAN Regulation Number 10 of 2018, training consists of classical training and non-classical Training. The structure of the CPNS Training Curriculum consists of a curriculum for building CPNS character and a curriculum for strengthening technical competency in the field of work. The character-building curriculum in CPNS Basic Training is carried out by: 1) training using the blended learning method; 2) classical training for government agencies that are not ready to organize blended learning; or 3) distance learning training if it is not possible to carry out blended learning or classical training due to emergencies or other circumstances (such as disasters, pandemics, and security issues) (Keputusan Kepala LAN Nomor 14/K.1/PDP.07, 2022).

Basic CPNS Training using Blended Learning is Basic CPNS Training, which is carried out by combining the face-to-face learning process in the classroom with the online learning process. (LAN RI Nomor 10, 2018).

Blended Learning in CPNS Basic training is carried out through three learning sections, namely: 1) independent training, 2) distance learning, and 3) classical learning, at the location where CPNS Basic Training is held. Meanwhile, distance learning consists of: a) e-learning, which is carried out using direct (synchronous) and asynchronous online learning methods that take place at the participant’s place of residence; b) actualization of the Basic Values of Civil Servants, which is the practice of training material in the participant’s workplace.

**Parties Involved in CPNS Basic Training Activities**

Individuals or groups involved in CPNS Basic Training activities can be classified as:

1. Participants are CPNS who meet the requirements as CPNS Basic Training participants.
2. Organizers are individuals or groups of workers who are tasked with organizing training
3. Training material instructors are lecturers or presenters who deliver or facilitate the provision of training agenda materials.
4. The Actualization Teaching Team consists of a Coach who is tasked with guiding the participants, a Mentor who is tasked with accompanying the actualization activities of the application of the participants' basic values, and an Evaluator who is involved in assessing the actualization of the application of the participants' basic values.
BLENDING LEARNING

Blended means a mixture or combination, and learning means learning or training. So blended learning is a combination of various learning methods both online and offline (file sharing and face-to-face) (Nurhadi, 2020). Blended learning, which includes online and face-to-face learning in more detail, has the following elements: (a) face-to-face in class; (b) independent learning; (c) use of applications (web); (d) tutorials; (e) cooperation; and (f) evaluation. The facilitator also plays a role as a mediator in managing these elements. The facilitator gives instructions to the students on how to use the application. The facilitator also provides explanations of the same material as face-to-face learning but only uses media to add material or to give structured assignments to students. (Nurhadi, 2020).

RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this writing is the literature study method. According to Syofian (2021), a literature study is a research method used to collect information related to the subject to be researched. (Zakki et al., 2022). Apart from that, there are four main objectives of conducting literature studies: 1) finding what variables will be researched; 2) differentiating things that have been done and determining things that need to be done; 3) carrying out a synthesis and gaining a new perspective; and 4) determining the meaning and relationship between variables. Among the literature sources that can be used by researchers are: 1) abstracts of research results; 2) indexes; 3) reviews; and 4) journals. 5) Reference books (Sarwono, 2006).

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social interaction in CPNS Basic Training using the blended learning method

Social contact occurs directly and indirectly. Social contact that occurs during basic CPNS training using the blended learning method can occur directly or indirectly among all elements involved. Direct social contact occurs when training enters the classical or face-to-face stage at training institutions. Meanwhile, indirect social contact is dominant during the distance learning process. The occurrence of indirect contact is facilitated by interaction media, which include: 1) For web-based applications, the State Administration Institute provides a Learning Management System (LMS) application that functions as a learning medium containing teaching materials as well as a medium for interaction between teaching staff, participants, and the training organizer. The LMS can be accessed by teaching staff, participants, and organizers at the address https://kolabjar-asnpintar.lan.go.id/.

Through this application, training organizers, teaching staff, and participants can convey information to certain parties involved in the training process. Among the forms of interaction carried out through the LMS application are: a) the organizer conveys information related to the training schedule to the teaching staff and participants; b) the teaching staff conveys teaching materials, assignments, and quizzes to the participants; and c) participants ask the teaching staff about the material provided. given, d) Participants collect assignments given to the organizer and teaching staff, and e) Teaching staff collect participants’ grades for the Organizer. 2) Video Conference Application, which is technology that allows each user to be in the same meeting
room even from different locations. Meetings between teaching staff and participants in the distance learning method can still be carried out using the Video Conference application. Among the applications that are commonly used are Zoom Meeting, Google Meet, Skype, and so on. Indirect social contact through video conferencing applications in learning can be used, including for a) the delivery of learning material by teaching staff to participants; b) the delivery of information by organizers to participants; c) the implementation of training participant actualization evaluation seminars; and d) holding meetings between organizers and teaching staff, evaluators, and others related to the implementation of training. 3) In social media applications and long-distance training, facilities are needed to establish communication between related parties. Social media applications allow contact between organizers, teaching staff, and participants when necessary. Among the social media applications commonly used for social contact are WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, Facebook, and so on. Through social media applications, indirect social contact is made by sending messages, making voice calls, and also making video calls.

Types of social interaction carried out in basic CPNS training using the blended learning method include both direct and indirect social contact, namely: 1) interaction between one individual and another individual; an example of this interaction occurs when someone from the organizer conveys information to a teaching staff, when a participant asks a question regarding training materials or assignments to a teaching staff, or when teaching staff provide actualization guidance to training participants. 2) Interaction between an individual and a group, for example, when teaching staff provide learning materials to training participants in class or when organizers provide information and outreach to participants regarding training schedules and rules. 3) Interaction between groups and other groups; for example, interaction during coordination between organizers and teaching staff in preparing learning materials and schedules or when interacting between a team of teaching staff and training participants.

Challenges and Barriers to Social Interaction in Blended Learning Training

The majority of social interactions in blended learning training are carried out using technology-based media; therefore, there are several obstacles and challenges that influence the training process, including:

1. Limitations of Access and Infrastructure

Not all participants have the same access to technology or fast and representative internet. For participants whose internet connection is disrupted, it will be difficult to access the learning applications that have been provided. Communication that relies on the internet network will be disrupted if the internet connection is not supported (Gonzales, 2016).

2. Lack of Technology Skills

The application skills used by participants will influence the effectiveness of the training (Chukwu, 2016; Ritter & Mostert, 2017). The various applications provided by training providers must, of course, be studied first by those who use them during the training process. The ability of human resources to adapt to technological developments is not the same; there are those who are able to use the applications provided well, and there are those who need time and assistance to be able to use these applications. Application features that facilitate social interaction for organizers, teaching staff,
and participants will not be able to be used if there are parties who are not skilled in using these features.

3. **Lack of Focus**

Learning carried out during the distance learning period is carried out through independent learning and virtual face-to-face learning via video conference applications (Bojović et al., 2020; Fujs et al., 2022). In the virtual face-to-face learning process, participants view the material presented by the teaching staff through each participant’s monitoring device, which can consist of a computer screen or smartphone screen. In contrast to social interaction in classical classes, where the teaching staff and participants are in the same class or location, virtual face-to-face learning allows participants to be physically in separate locations. In these conditions, the teaching staff cannot ensure that the participants' attention is focused on the material being presented. There is a possibility that participants experience communication disruption, such as other communicator objects around the participant, other sources of sound being heard, or other activities being carried out by the participant, so that this causes the information conveyed by the teaching staff to be imperfectly received by the participant.

**CONCLUSION**

The change in training patterns from classical to blended learning influences social interaction patterns for individuals and groups involved in the training. CPNS Basic Training using the blended learning method, which includes independent and distance learning, requires facilities to maintain social interaction between the organizer, participants, and teaching staff. The media used in social interaction in CPNS Basic Training include a web-based application in the form of a learning management system that provides a feature for sending messages to each other, a video conference application for virtual face-to-face meetings in learning, and a social media application for communication tools. However, there are obstacles and challenges that influence whether social contacts made through these communication media are effective or not.

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