

Optimization of Online Learning During The Pandemic In The North Sumatra Region

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to describe the optimization efforts carried out by teachers, especially teachers at the early childhood level during the pandemic Covid-19. This research was conducted using a qualitative method, using a questionnaire distributed online via google form. The sample of this study was early childhood teachers spread across various regions in the province of North Sumatra. The results of the study show that teachers in general optimize through the use of technology media, develop self-efficacy in dealing with pandemic conditions and involve parents in the online learning process. This is evidenced from 15 research indicators. Starting from doing online learning, using learning media through zoom meetings or whatsapp groups, creating virtual learning media, make video tutorials, digital exploration in online learning, join webinars for self-improvement during the pandemic, communicative in the implementation of online learning, involve parents in online learning, provide simulation and socialization of learning models that need to be done so that parents are ready to run it, learning activities for children and parents sent via video, giving daily learning plan to parents as a reference for children's online learning from home, aspects of child development are measured through the tasks given, visiting the child's house to see the child's progress, children's tasks are adjusted to the needs of children during the pandemic, provide questionnaires to parents to participate in assessing child development.

Keywords: Optimizing Learning; Online Learning (e-learning), Covid-19

INTRODUCTION

Exploring the 2nd year of the Covid-19 virus pandemic which is still spreading throughout the world and is still increasing significantly. The impact of the Covid-19 virus pandemic has increasingly paralyzed all sectors of life, especially the health and education economic sectors. Vaccine discoveries in several countries have been distributed to other countries, one of which is Indonesia. Giving vaccines evenly is not a reason for the disappearance of the pandemic, therefore the government is still issuing rules for maintaining the Health Protocol with 5M (Wearing masks, washing hands with soap, Stay away from crowds, Keeping distance and Reducing Mobility) is a quick government action in minimizing COVID-19 sufferers. and still closes several sectors of life, one of which is the education sector. All levels of education in Indonesia carry out online learning activities and for green zone areas, blended learning methods can be used. This is also applied to learning activities in early childhood education programs.

An early age should be a golden age for every individual. All aspects of child development can develop optimally if they get optimal stimulus from the surrounding environment. One of the environments that support child development is school. So that the continuity of learning activities in schools must be optimized in various conditions. Including during a pandemic like now. The pandemic period is a barrier for children to play and of course the learning activities carried out by children are less fun and less in the application of habituation. If this condition continues for several years to come. Many young people will lose their golden age. Ofcourse this has an impact on the quality of the next generation.

According to Syarbini (2014: 87) habituation carried out from an early age / since childhood will bring hobbies. According to Hasnida (2014: 15) discipline includes teaching, guidance or encouragement carried out by adults. The goal is to help children learn to live as social beings and to achieve their optimal growth and development. Online learning activities at home with the habituation method are not easy. Some of the factors that become challenges are children who are less enthusiastic because children have not been able to control emotions well. This is in line with the results of Juraida's research that in controlling children's emotions, teachers always play a role in guiding and giving good advice. The role of this teacher is present as a facilitator as stated in Law No. 14 of 2005.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed habits in various sectors, including the learning process. In the past two years, students are accustomed to learning from home with an online learning system. In the current pandemic period, many schools are conducting online learning or other terms online learning. The definition of E-learning put forward by Moore and Kearsley (Oliveira et al., 2016) e-learning is a planned learning process that occurs in general, in a different place from ordinary schools, requires special techniques of course design, special forms of instruction, communication methods through electronic and other technologies, as well as important organizational and administrative arrangements. Technology is an integral part of the online learning process and teachers as the main actors of online learning must be ready to use technology.

The characteristics of online learning or with the term e-learning according to Colvin Clark and E. Mayer (Colvin Clark & E. Mayer, 2008) are (1) Storing and/or transmitting lessons on CD-ROM, local internal or external memory, or servers on the Internet or intranets, (2) Includes content relevant to objective learning, (3) Uses media elements such as words and pictures to convey

content, (4) Uses instructional methods such as exercises, and feedback to promote learning, (5) Can be instructor-led (synchronous e-learning) or designed for independent individual study (asynchronous e-learning), (6) Help learners build new knowledge and skills related to individual learning goals or to improve organizational performance. So, there are many new things that need to be adapted from teachers, students and even parents. For the successful implementation of online learning

The results of a preliminary study, a school principal in Bantul revealed that not all parents can be like teachers at school. Many parents are not patient, children are usually yelled at which also has a bad effect. Maybe because of the situation and conditions, the child becomes less enthusiastic at home so that he is bored, there are no friends, and no one to motivate. Because usually at school teachers deliver learning interspersed with art, there is clapping, singing, and other creative interludes, while at home it tends to be monotonous.

The results of Taradisa's research show that the obstacles experienced by teachers during online learning are the children's lack of understanding when carrying out the online learning process. This is because children do not understand the learning taught by the teacher because they do not meet face to face and teachers find it difficult to monitor children's learning progress. Another problem experienced by teachers is related to observation and assessment. Agustin's research (Agustin, et. al. 2020) results show that the achievement of aspects of child development has decreased drastically, except for the artistic aspect. During the Covid-19 pandemic, observations can only be made by viewing videos and photos sent by the students' parents. This causes the observation activities carried out by the teacher to be very limited. The pandemic situation has resulted in teachers not being able to repeat the child's memorization. The video that was sent, the teacher also could not see directly whether the child was memorizing or not, the task sheet was done by the child himself with parental guidance or not.

Departing from the above background, the researchers conducted research related to optimizing learning activities in early childhood during the COVID-19 pandemic. To see the optimization efforts made by teachers in carrying out learning during the covid 19 pandemic. Researchers hope that through the results of this study, it can become literacy for teachers and parents in optimizing learning during the current pandemic.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a survey method conducted to see the development of learning activities by teachers in the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic. The research data was obtained by distributing questionnaires to teachers via google form. The number of samples in this study was 26 people spread across various regions in North Sumatera. 17 respondents are bachelor and 9 other respondents are high school graduates or equivalent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The picture above is the stages of the research carried out. Based on the results of a survey that has been distributed to 26 respondents, consisting of 17 teachers with a qualification of bachelor and 9 other teachers are high school graduates or equivalent. The results of the study were obtained as follows.

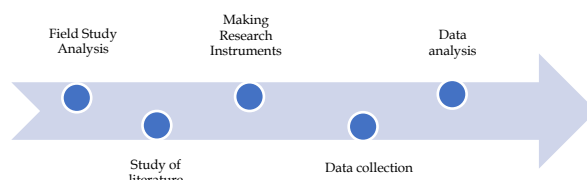


Figure 1. Research Stages

Table 1. Results of the Survey on Optimizing Early Childhood Teacher Learning Activities During the Pandemic

No	Indicator	Total respondents				
		Never	Ever	Seldom	Often	Always
1	Doing online learning	2	8	1	2	13
2	Using learning media via zoom meeting or whatsapp group	1	9	1	7	8
3	Creating virtual learning media	3	8	1	3	11
4	Make video tutorials	3	8	0	7	8
5	Exploration of digital in online learning	1	7	5	3	10
6	Join webinars for self-improvement during the pandemic	3	9	2	5	7
7	Communicative in the implementation of online learning	3	7	1	8	7
8	Involve parents in online learning	1	5	0	2	18
9	Provide simulation and socialization of learning models that need to be done so that parents are ready to run it	2	8	1	4	11
10	Learning activities for children and parents are sent via video	2	5	2	4	13
11	Giving RPPH to parents as a reference for children's learning while online from home	4	7	1	5	9
12	Aspects of child development are measured through the tasks given	1	6	0	6	13
13	Visiting the child's home to see the child's progress	4	5	4	5	8
14	Children's tasks are tailored to the child's needs during the pandemic	1	2	1	7	15
15	Provide a questionnaire to parents to participate in assessing the child's development	4	8	3	5	6

The instrument that was distributed to the respondents was in the form of a questionnaire containing 15 indicators in the form of a statement showing the efforts to optimize learning made by teachers during the pandemic. Indicators 1 to 5 are a form of optimizing online learning by utilizing technology. Points 6 and 7 are indicators of the form of self-development to support distance learning carried out by teachers individually or independently. While indicators 8 to 15 are activities to optimize online learning activities by involving parents or guardians of students.

The implementation of online learning during a pandemic is a new phenomenon in the world of education. The COVID-19 pandemic requires educators to be able to present online learning. The results of the survey conducted showed that 50% of teachers always did online learning, another 8% stated that they often did online learning but not always. This means that many teachers have done online learning when compared to teachers who never and rarely do it. This is evidenced by the percentage of teachers who have never done online learning is 8% and the number of teachers who rarely carry out online learning is the same as those who never.

This supports Kartini's findings (Kartini, 2021) that many studies have proven the effectiveness of online or online learning as a solution so that learning continues during the pandemic and also breaks the chain of the spread of the corona virus. In addition, according to Conrad (Satriana et al., 2021) online learning is an alternative learning model during the current pandemic to fulfill children's learning rights.

Online learning can be done with several social media applications. Online learning is one of the uses of technological developments. In accordance with the statement of Thompson, Ganxglass and Simon in (Supriyanta, 2013) that e-learning has the advantage of delivering more flexible learning, which can be done interactively by utilizing technology. The teachers who were respondents in this study stated that 35% had used social media applications in the implementation of online learning.

Even the other 30% always use the application during online learning for early childhood. Another 4% stated that they rarely use applications during online learning and only 4% of respondents have never used applications for the learning process. The results of this study support previous research (Hutami & Nugraheni, 2020) that the use of applications such as WhatsApp groups is an alternative for learning during the pandemic at ABA Kindergarten Kleco Kotagede.

For the other three indicators (making virtual learning media, creating learning media and exploring digital media in online learning) the same results were also obtained. The survey results show that the percentage value of teachers who always perform these three indicators is higher than that of those who never do. This confirms the results of research (Kartini, 2021) that the completeness of facilities in using technology is the key to the success of online learning carried out in urban areas.

In line with the definition of e-learning put forward by Moore and Kearsley (Oliveira et al., 2016) e-learning is a planned learning process that occurs in general, in a different place from ordinary schools, requires special course design techniques, special forms of instruction, special methods of communication via electronics and other technologies, as well as important organizational and administrative arrangements. Technology is an integral part of the online

learning process and teachers as the main actors of online learning must be ready to use technology.

Based on the results of research on five indicators that contain statements of ability to use technology. The teachers who were respondents in this study were teachers who had technological literacy and were able to keep up with the times. And adapt to the current pandemic conditions.

Furthermore, the indicator measured is the optimization carried out by teachers in developing their own abilities (teachers) to be able to carry out online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. As many as 35% of teachers stated that they had participated in webinars to develop their abilities during the pandemic. Even 27% of teachers stated that they always participated in various webinars that could develop their abilities. If the two percentages are added together, it can be concluded that teachers have the awareness to develop their own abilities. In order to be able to carry out online learning optimally. This is included in the development of professional competence of teachers.

In addition to professional competence, a teacher is also required to have pedagogic, personal and social competencies. Of course, these competencies must be supported by the teacher's ability to communicate. The teacher must be able to be a communicative person, so that students or students and parents or guardians who accompany children can understand the explanation from the teacher. In general, the results showed that 30% stated that they often communicated communicatively and 27% were always communicative during online learning. So, it can be concluded that teachers conduct online learning communicatively.

The implementation of online learning carried out by students from home requires parents to actively accompany their children during the learning process. Especially for children who are at the early childhood level, children must be guided and accompanied by parents during the learning process. According to research results (Kartini, 2021) the role of parents is one of the keys to the success of online learning in addition to the readiness and completeness of learning support facilities.

The results of the research conducted showed that 69% of teachers involved parents. This means that in general or more the percentage of teachers who involve parents in the online learning process. Although there are 4% or 1 teacher who stated that they never involved parents. Of course, it is very impossible for the online learning process in early childhood to be carried out without the guidance and assistance of parents.

Involving parents in the implementation of online learning for early childhood does not mean that a teacher can forget pedagogic competence. A teacher must be able to provide learning modeling that must be done by parents and students at home. Provide RPPH to parents as a reference in the implementation of online learning. So that parents can accompany and teach their children during the online learning process. So that there are no more obstacles to the online learning process due to parental misunderstanding.

The results of research by Eva Mufaziah and Puji Yanti Fauziah (Mufaziah & Fauziah, 2020) found that two obstacles were found by parents in accompanying children when learning online, namely internal constraints, namely lack of educational ability and external constraints, namely the provision of learning media. Based on the results of research

conducted, the percentage of teachers who always carry out indicators 9, 10 and 11 is more dominant than teachers who never do, with a ratio of 2:12.

The teacher can also optimize the implementation of online learning by conducting visits to students' homes to see the progress of students. As well as adapting tasks to the needs of children during the pandemic. The results of Nirmala and Annuar's research (Nirmala & Annuar, 2020) that home visits to students have proven to be one strategy to continue to provide educational services within the limitations of the 3T area. Of course, visits to students' homes can also be an educational strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was applied by 30% of the teachers who were respondents in this study saying that they always visited students' homes and 19% had made such visits. While adjusting tasks to the needs of children during the pandemic, 57% of teachers always do it and only 4% or 1 teacher never does this.

Assessment is one of the learning processes. Of course, assessment also needs to be considered in optimizing online learning for early childhood. Questionnaires assessing child development also need to be given to parents as a child's companion in the online learning process. Because the role of parents in online learning is very important and large to measure the achievement of children's learning outcomes.

As the results of research by Zahratur rahma and Siti Fatonah (Zahratur & Fatonah, 2021) in an article entitled Assessment of Early Childhood Development in Ea Covid-19, the assessment of student development is carried out by teachers in collaboration with parents. Parents write down the child's development which is supported by notes and documentary evidence in the form of photos and videos, then interpreted by the teacher into the assessment. Based on a survey conducted only 6 teachers or 23% who always provide a child development assessment questionnaire to parents. While the other 19% of respondents said they often, 15% never gave an assessment questionnaire, 31% had given an assessment questionnaire and 11% rarely gave an assessment questionnaire.

In addition to involving parents, assessment of child development can also be done through tasks given by the teacher. The results of the study indicate that in general, respondents make an assessment through the tasks given. 50% of respondents always do an assessment through the given task, 46% of the respondents have and often do an assessment through the given task. Only 4% or 1 respondent did not do the assessment through the tasks given to children during online learning.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is COVID-19 pandemic is not a reason to carry out learning indifferently. As teachers and educators, we need to do various ways to optimize online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the results of research conducted, in general PAUD teachers in North Sumatra have optimized the implementation of online learning. Starting from the use of technology media, self-development and parental involvement in the online learning process.

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