Parents' Perception on the Implementation of Home Learning during Covid-19
(A Case Study on Elementary School in Rural Area)

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Abstract

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan persepsi orang tua tentang manfaat dan tantangan belajar di rumah selama pandemi. Penelitian ini bersifat deskriptif kualitatif dengan mengambil kasus di dua sekolah dasar di kota Kupang, Nusa Tenggara Timur. Ada 20 orang tua dari kedua sekolah yang diambil secara purposive sebagai sampel. Mereka diberi 20 pertanyaan dalam kuesioner yang diposting di Google Form sebagai instrumen. Jawabannya dirangkum secara deskriptif sebagai hasil penelitian ini. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pelaksanaan pembelajaran di rumah membawa dua persepsi yaitu manfaat dan tantangan. Manfaatnya antara lain home learning memberikan pengalaman individual dan sistem pendidikan yang fleksibel, meminimalkan kemungkinan anak tertular virus Covid-19, mempererat hubungan intim antara anak dan orang tua, serta meningkatkan literasi digital orang tua serta kreativitas dalam melaksanakan materi pembelajaran. Persepsi lebih lanjut menyebutkan bahwa pelaksanaan home learning juga membawa tantangan tersendiri bagi para orang tua seperti, membutuhkan biaya yang lebih besar untuk membeli kuota internet, menyebabkan anak-anak kurang termotivasi dan kewalahan dalam belajar, beban kerja orang tua yang meningkat, ketidakefisienan waktu untuk bekerja karena orang tua meluangkan lebih banyak waktu untuk membantu anak-anak selama pembelajaran, meningkatkan ketegangan antara anak-anak dan orang tua selama pembelajaran.
Kata Kunci: Persepsi, manfaat, tantangan, belajar dari rumah, pandemi covid 19

Abstrak

This study aimed to describe the parents' perception of the benefits and challenges towards home learning during the pandemic. A descriptive qualitative study taking a case in two elementary schools in Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara. There were 20 parents from both schools taken purposively as the sample. 20 questions were posted on Google Form as the instrument. The results showed that the implementation of home learning brought two perceptions on the benefits and challenges. The benefits were regarding the possibility of home learning to provide an individualized experience and flexible system of education, to minimize the possibility of the kids getting infected by the Covid-19, to an intimate relationship between the kids and parents, to enforce as well as boost the parents' digital literacy as well as creativity in carrying out the learning material. Further perception mentioned that the implementation of home learning also brought certain challenges to those parents such as, requiring more expenses to buy the internet quota, causing the kids less motivated and overwhelming in learning, raising the workload of the parents, time inefficiency for working parents by spending more time to assist the kids during the learning, increasing the tension between the kids and parents during the learning.
Keywords: *perception, benefits, challenges, home learning, Covid-19 Pandemic*

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INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic is now a global issue eminent in a wider community. The determination of the corona virus as a global pandemic is based on the increasing cases of virus infection in countries around the world. The spread of this virus force organization of all types to shift their operations to online mode, therefore, this pandemic has brought many negative impacts towards all sectors such as economic, social and education.

One of the impacts of the pandemic as stated previously is on the education sector. In Indonesia, all educational institutions are encouraged to eliminate direct or onsite learning since the cases of infected people are increasing in all provinces in Indonesia (Hardianti et al., 2020). Many Schools, then, are required to adapt the learning process immediately. Globally, schools in every country with enormous cases of Covid-19 infection are facing the same situation (Yuzulia, 2021). Schools, especially those in the red zone area are demanded to run the teaching and learning activities online. This has forced schools teachers to quickly adjust and prepare (Padmo et al., 2020). Teachers who are adaptive or used to this kind of teaching-learning activities can do it without any serious problem. This way is believed as one of the solutions to inhibit the spread of Covid-19 (Gaffar & Septyandi, 2020)

Related to the phenomena stated above, many students nor parents however seem unready with the presence of online learning. This is experienced by students, parents, and even teachers in a rural area in which the limited access to and the limited knowledge on using technology become the common inhibiting factors of online learning. (Lase et al., 2020). (Sonny Eli Zaluchu, 2021), Most parents also get difficult to access as they do not have supporting facilities such as smartphone, computer, and internet connection. Even if they have they are not familiar with using the devices. These factors have become the common ones during online learning which include limited tech experience, lack of motivation, personal cognitions, challenging material, inadequate support, lack of community involvement, and learner boredom (Pappas, 2016). Despite these inhibitions, the teachers, students, and parents should collaborate to make the teaching and learning process successful during the pandemic. (Rachmah, 2020)

The Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia has issued a Circular Letter Number 4 the Year 2020 regarding the implementation of online learning in schools and colleges after the Covid-19 outbreak to provide meaningful learning experiences for students (Soeryanto et al., 2020). Following the letter, the government has also distributed the first round of internet quota for online learning targeting the students, teachers, and parents. Another letter has been published Number 4 the Year 2021 concerning the technical operation of internet quota distribution for online learning during the pandemic of COVID-19 in 2021. This regulation explains that the learning process implemented at home through online learning should be implemented. Home learning can be focused on education life skills among others regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, (Hignasari, 2020).

Online learning (e-learning) is one of the digital era learning systems used in distance learning using electronic media or devices such as laptop or computer, and smartphone supported with internet access (Abed, 2019) stated that e-learning is a kind of learning done facilitated with the internet connection. E-learning could be considered as a network available transfer of skills and knowledge to a wide number of participants at the same or different times (Efriana, 2021). The existence of e-learning is highly increasing and getting more familiar among users after the break out of Covid-19. This way of learning is expected to minimize the risk of transmission of this deadly virus. (Rahmawati, 2016)

E-learning could function as a means of interaction among teachers, students, and parents. In which E-learning could be used to manage, provide and send the materials, assignments, and see the result of the works from the students (Alshamrani, 2019). Through this, the students and teachers are easier to interact with one another during the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, online learning will give the impression that the

education system in Indonesia now is more innovative, updated, and adapted to the development of technology and its use. (Husain et al., 2020)

Various applications are being used to carry out the teaching and learning activities through e-learning such as; Google Classroom, Google Form, Google Meet, Zoom, and also WhatsApp group. These applications have their functions with various features such as classroom platforms to post class materials, assignments, and evaluations. They also provide features for video class meetings for visual and virtual learning. Through those various applications stated above, the existence of teaching and learning activities can run well and effectively. In this case, the teachers could have great challenges to create their materials, assignments, or questions creatively for the students. (Aini et al., 2020)

Lee and Owens (2004: 191) mention some advantages of e-learning: 1) Universal access, meaning that everyone can access the web with a web browser, which means that everyone can deliver material from anywhere and anytime; 2) Easy of use, the internet is easy to use, easily accessible to broad users even with limited computer experiences; 3) Multimedia content, namely this technology supports multimedia so that the content can be more attractive and can facilitate user learning from different learning styles.

Moreover, the advantages of e-learning are also stated by (Edwards & Bone, 2012). First, e-learning can provide an individualized experience. Another, it can provide a safe harbor for learner mistakes and e-learning can be a continuing source of reference information. Thus, through e-learning anyone especially the students can access much information based on their needs freely (Thanji & Vasantha, 2018). Further, the students can also be motivated to learn more from their failure and through e-learning, the teaching and learning activities can be continued independently. (Arkorful & Abaidoo, 2015)

Behind the advantages of e-learning stated above, Bullen and Beam in Suyanto (2010: 7) criticize that e-learning also has weaknesses. There are several weaknesses of e-learning, namely: 1) the lack of interaction between teachers and students or even between students themselves which can slow down the information of values in the teaching and learning activities; 2) the tendency to ignore academic or social aspects and vice versa encourage the growth of business or commercial aspect; 3) the teaching and learning activities tend towards training rather than education; 4) changing the role of teachers from previously mastering conventional technique in teaching, now required to know teaching technique used ICT; 5) students who do not have high learning motivation tend to fail; 6) not all places have internet facilities; 7) lack of personnel who perceive and have internet skills; 8) lack of mastery of computer languages.

Not all students and their parents in rural areas are familiar with learning online systems. In addition to that, Parents have limited abilities in providing online learning facilities for children (Rahayu & Wirza, 2020). Not all of them have internet facilities and stable electricity that can be existed anytime. So based on this issue, this research is to find out about the parents' perceptions towards learning online or learning from home during this pandemic era of Covid-19.
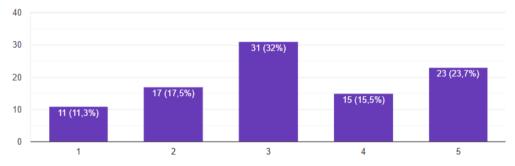
METHOD

The research approach of this study was a descriptive qualitative method in which the researchers described the parents' perception towards the implementation of online learning during this pandemic era of Covid-19 focusing on its benefits and challenges encountered. The total sample used was 97 parents from two different schools in Kupang city, East Nusa Tenggara. The data were gathered from the answers to the 22 questions delivered to the parents using a questionnaire posted on Google Form. The researchers then summarized the answers from the questionnaire based on the benefits and challenges of online home learning.
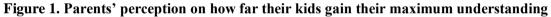
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Parents' perception towards the benefits of online home learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Online home learning has been run by many schools all around Indonesia. The schools' shareholders and management then respond positively to support the government's policy regarding the current pandemic. Teachers and students then are required to adjust for their safety. Parents, especially those of primary schools students, whether they like it or not, ready or not, also are encouraged to assist their children during online home learning. Based on the findings found in the parents' perceptions regarding the implementation of online home learning during the pandemic of Covid-19, there are several benefits encounter.

The first perception found is that most parents believe that online home learning conducted by the schools carries a positive impact on their children. Around 43% of them claim that their children can help understand the lesson material during the home learning. However, only 23% of them agree that their children can have their maximum understanding of the lesson.

Figure 1. Parents' perception on how far their kids gain their maximum understanding

Most parents admit that online learning can satisfactorily help their children to comprehend the lessons. They mention that the teachers sometimes explain to the parents about the assignment but do not clearly explain the lesson material previously. This repeatedly confuses the parents for their limited knowledge of the lessons.

However, online home learning can provide an individualized experience and flexible system of education because students could learn anywhere and anytime they want. Some parents claim that their children become more independent in learning. Even if the students do not understand the lessons, their parents can help them access the internet to get more resources for a better explanation on the materials, things that sometimes they do not get from their teachers during the online home learning. Students who are familiar with some applications like internet browsers and YouTube can freely and easily find the topic materials. This is the second benefit of having online home learning based on the parents' perception.

The next benefit of having the students study from home is the safety from the Covid-19 transmission. For sure, Indonesia has had a significant increase in the Covid-19 transmission cases since the first case was found in March 2020. Online home learning in schools around East Nusa Tenggara, specifically in Kupang city then has been conducted more consistently since the first transmission case emerged in Kupang nearly in the mid of April 2020.

Another advantage of having the children learning at home every day, parents can build better communication and relationship with them. It then increases the intimacy and emotionally bound between the parents and their children. One parent pleasantly admits that they can be like friends with their children. They often communicate while doing the assignments or when the children help their parents, especially mothers, do the house chores when the learning is off. Helping the parents can also train the children's life skills. Moreover, parents can also educate the children's religious knowledge and belief more intensively from what the children learn from Religious Education books distributed by the teachers. Most importantly, the parents are excited that they can play their role as teachers fully at home. They can teach their children the lesson on their approach, recognize their children's level of knowledge and skill in their study, identify their improvement, and look for

possible solutions to help their children's learning problems. A parent says "… through learning from home we can act like a real teacher in which we can accompany them during the study and explained the material to them so that they can understand."

To support their role as teachers for their children, parents gain the last benefit from online home learning. To do this role well, the parents are reinforced to be more creative and innovative. Parents who are not familiar with digital technology, digital applications and all features in their smartphones finally are encouraged to upgrade their digital literacy to give their best assistance to their kids. One parent mentioned that at the beginning he/she never knew how to use an android cell phone and a laptop with some applications inside, but since the kids got many assignments from his/her teachers to use the technology, then he/she can understand how to use the devices.

Parents' perception towards the challenges of Home Learning during pandemic Covid-19.

Teachers in both schools investigated conducted the online learning by building communication with the parents in WhatsApp (WA) group chat. They never use any platforms to meet the students virtually in a video meeting. However, other platforms like Google Classroom and Google Form sometimes are used by the teacher to post the learning materials, assignments, and evaluations. This happens because most parents even the teachers are not familiar with the applications commonly used for online learning.

Giving assistance to their children during online home learning has increased the parents' workload. Parents in primary schools who are lack knowledge and skill of using the applications used in online learning required in the current situation commonly find this adding to their workload. This becomes the first inhibiting factor of online learning for rookie users. This inhibiting factor then makes the teachers prefer to ask the parents to meet them at school for submitting any assignments and evaluations. This is also caused by the parents' inability to post their children's work on the WA group as previously have instructed by the teachers at the beginning of the online learning soon after the Covid-19 outbreak.
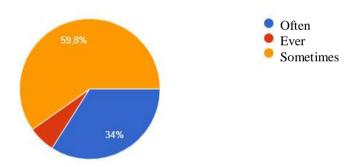

Figure 2. Parents are often requested to meet the teachers at school offline.

The second factor emerges as most parents at the schools do not have sufficient features in their smartphones to support such learning. Some parents who participated in the survey also reported that there are parents who are not included in the WA group because they do not have any smartphone to access the online learning. Further, the lack of support also comes from the insufficient internet network connection. Wi-Fi facilities are not always available for every parent to access the internet. The personal quota of internet data is also limited so that parents cannot regularly access the materials and assignments the teachers post on the WA group. Most of the parents basically cannot afford to buy the internet quota because of limited economical capacity. The Indonesian government has distributed the subsidy of the internet data quota for all parents whose children are in the primary or the basic level education. However, this subsidy has not been distributed fairly to all parents around Indonesia, especially those living in rural areas.

In some areas where the parents live, the unstable connection contributes to the third inhibiting factor which is the insufficiency of support during online learning. Some children often skip online learning. This makes the kids and parents miss some parts of the lessons delivered by the teachers. Consequently, the teachers

still let these exceptional parents meet them at school offline to distribute the lesson materials and assignments for the students to learn and do. Some parents living nearby also volunteer to forward the message from the teachers and let them know any assignment delivered by the teachers.

The fourth challenging factor of online home learning is the pressure present in the parents and their children. Even though students in these schools do home learning, they do not experience online learning from home themselves. Parents become the ones who interact and communicate with their teachers. For primary school students, the teachers used to be their role models, persons who should they obey. Without the teachers, some parents state that it is sometimes difficult to make the children listen to and obey them. This frequently creates tension between the parents and the children while doing online home learning, especially when assisting the children in doing their assignments or evaluations.

Boredom in the students then becomes the fifth challenge of this learning. Another perception states that the kids became less motivated during online home learning. They did not want to put their maximum effort to learn the materials given by the teachers. They depend fully on the internet browser like Google search engine to help them with any assignment, and even evaluations. In this case, copy-pasting often happens with no contribution to the students' knowledge. Moreover, they are also often distracted by game applications or videos that are not related to their learning materials. Around 20% of the parents testify that their children prefer to use their parents' smartphones to play online games than to learn. This situation makes the parents think that their children are lazy, senseless, or irresponsible. This judgment then could create another problem which is the worse neglecting behavior in the children.

The next challenge of this learning is inefficient. Students who are not facilitated with individual devices may find this kind of learning is overwhelming. The teachers sometimes give too many assignments which are sometimes too difficult for the children to do them individually. Students whose parents are workers then should wait for them to lend their smartphone or laptop to start noticing the lesson materials posted by the teachers and then continuing doing their awaited works. Accordingly, they cannot do their works at their best as they get exhausted before completing their papers. Then sometimes they are pushed to stay up late to do their work assisted with their physically and/or psychically drained parents after work. In this situation, the learning then becomes ineffective for the students to get the lesson.

On the other hand, parents also find this problem annoys them. Working parents, particularly, even though they also work from home, feel disturbed when they have to check the WA group class and think about their children's assignments. This issue confronts the parents because they must share their phone or laptop with their children meanwhile they should also use them to do their work. This problem then is considered as the last challenging factor of the online home learning faced by the parents in the schools investigated.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding it can be summarized that the existence (implementation) of home learning brought two perceptions on the benefits and challenges of the implementation. The benefits were regarding the possibility of home learning to provide an individualized experience and flexible system of education, to minimize the possibility of the kids getting infected by the Covid-19 virus, to the more intimate relationship between the kids and parents, to enforce as well as boost the parents' digital literacy as well as creativity in carrying out the learning material.

While the certain challenges to those parents such as, requiring more expenses to buy the internet quota, causing the kids less motivated and overwhelming in learning, raising the workload of the parents, time inefficiency for working parents by spending more time to assist the kids during the learning, increasing the tension between the kids and parents during the learning. More supports for better implementation of online home learning are necessarily gained from all parties, especially from the kids as the students, the parents, and the teachers.

Onsite or offline learning, then is still considered effective to be conducted in schools located in rural areas. Students can be more motivated to learn at school with their teachers and friends to get more comprehensive lessons.

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