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Online Learning (Online) for Elementary School Students During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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ARTICLEINFO	ABSTRACT
	The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted traditional learning methods, prompting a widespread transition to online education, particularly at the elementary school level. This study aims to examine the online learning process, identifying both supportive and inhibiting factors encountered by teachers during the pandemic. Conducted at SDS Bunga Tanjong Morawa, this research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach employing a case study method. Elementary school teachers at SDS Bunga Tanjong serve as the study subjects, with data collection methods including interviews and documentation. The findings reveal profound impacts of the pandemic on the learning process, with the shift from in-person to online learning leading to student disengagement and boredom. Online learning, particularly for elementary school students, is perceived as less effective. Supportive factors for teachers include access to mobile phones, sufficient data quotas, and a stable internet connection. However, inhibiting factors such as limited student access to devices and parental work commitments pose significant challenges. This study underscores the complexities of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the importance of addressing both supportive and inhibiting factors to enhance educational outcomes in remote learning environments.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The 2019 corona virus disease (Covid-19) outbreak, which has hit 215 countries in the world, presents its own challenges for educational institutions, especially education at the elementary school (SD) level. To fight Covid-19, the government has prohibited crowds, social distancing and maintaining physical distance, wearing masks and always washing hands. Through the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Government has prohibited educational institutions from carrying out face-to-face (conventional) learning and ordered them to hold online learning (Kemendikbud Dikti Circular Letter No. 1 of 2020). The government also issued a Learning From Home (BDR) policy as outlined in the Circular Letter of the Minister of Education and Culture No.

The BDR learning system can vary between regions and even between educational units according to the readiness of the institution. The approaches used in BDR are online learning and offline learning. In schools located in areas with high spread of Covid-19 (yellow zone, orange zone and red zone), the government has not allowed schools to carry out face-to-face

activities directly. Schools can implement online learning systems, namely internet-based learning models and Learning Management Systems (LMS) by utilizing various online learning applications such as Zoom, Google Meet, and others. With this condition, The use of smartphones or other types of technology is increasing as a tool to support the implementation of the learning process (Al-Maroof 2018), in addition, schools can also utilize modules or teaching materials that they can find in their surroundings to support learning using an offline system. Online learning is very different from normal learning, according to Riyana (2019: 1.14) online learning places more emphasis on students' accuracy and astuteness in receiving and processing information presented online. The concept of online learning has the same concept as e-learning. Online learning is very different from normal learning, according to Riyana (2019: 1.14) online learning places more emphasis on students' accuracy and astuteness in receiving and processing information presented online. The concept of online learning has the same concept as e-learning. Online learning is very different from normal learning, according to Riyana (2019: 1.14) online learning places more emphasis on students' accuracy and astuteness in receiving and processing information presented online. The concept of online learning has the same concept as e-learning.

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a swift transition to online learning, presenting both challenges and opportunities for students, parents, and educators alike. As educational institutions grappled with the unprecedented circumstances, parents voiced concerns regarding various issues encountered during the implementation of online learning at home. Among the chief complaints were the perceived overload of assignments and the perceived lack of technological optimization by teachers. Despite these challenges, it is important to acknowledge that online learning also offers several distinct advantages.

Online learning provides unparalleled flexibility in terms of both time and location. Students have the freedom to engage in learning activities from the comfort of their own homes, whether it be in their bedrooms, living rooms, or any other suitable environment. Furthermore, the timing of learning sessions can be tailored to individual preferences, accommodating varying schedules and allowing for learning to take place during mornings, afternoons, evenings, or even late at night. Additionally, online learning eliminates geographical barriers, enabling students to access educational resources and participate in lessons without the need to physically commute to school. This aspect of online learning is particularly beneficial for students residing in remote areas or facing mobility constraints.

By recognizing the advantages of online learning alongside the challenges, stakeholders in education can work towards optimizing the online learning experience for all involved parties. Understanding the multifaceted nature of online learning is essential for devising strategies to harness its potential while mitigating its limitations, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and effective educational landscape amidst the ongoing pandemic and beyond.Apart from the advantages of online learning, online learning also has disadvantages. According to Sari (2015: 27-28) the advantage of online learning is that it creates a new learning atmosphere, online learning will bring a new atmosphere for students, who usually study in class. This new atmosphere can foster students' enthusiasm for learning. There are several disadvantages that occur in online learning, namely that children find it difficult to focus on learning because the home atmosphere is not conducive. Limited internet quota or internet package or WiFi which is the link in online learning as well as interference from several other things.

According to Hadisi (2015: 131) online learning results in a lack of interaction between teachers and students and even between students themselves. This lack of interaction can slow down the formation of values in the teaching and learning process. Online learning which is currently being implemented is something new that is experienced by teachers and students. Based on the problems described previously, researchers are encouraged to provide an overview of the online learning process for teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic and provide an overview of the supporting factors as well as factors that become obstacles for teachers in the online learning process during the Covid-19 pandemic. 19. Therefore,

2. METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach, specifically utilizing the case study method to investigate the implementation of online learning for elementary school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study subjects consist of teachers from SDS Bunga Tanjong, located in the Tanjung Morawa District, who also serve as research informants.

Data collection is primarily conducted through in-depth interviews with the selected teachers. These interviews focus on exploring various aspects of the online learning process, including challenges faced, strategies employed, and perceptions of effectiveness. The interviews are structured to gather rich, detailed insights into the experiences and perspectives of the teachers regarding online teaching practices amidst the pandemic.

The analysis of the collected data follows a descriptive approach, wherein the researchers organize and interpret the information obtained from the interviews in a comprehensive manner. This involves identifying recurring themes, patterns, and key findings related to the implementation of online learning. The research findings are then presented descriptively, providing a detailed account of the experiences and observations gleaned from the study.

Overall, the qualitative nature of this research methodology allows for a nuanced exploration of the complexities surrounding online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, offering valuable insights into the challenges, opportunities, and strategies employed by elementary school teachers in adapting to remote teaching environments.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Online Learning Support Media

There are several applications that teachers can use to support the implementation of the online learning process, for example Whatsapp, Zoom, Edmodo, and others. The government has also prepared various digital platforms to encourage the effectiveness of online learning, including home learning, our desks, smart classrooms, Microsoft Office 365, your school, and several other digital applications. Of the various applications that can be utilized, online learning at SDS Bunga Tanjong utilizes many applications such as Whatsapp. The aim of online learning is to provide quality learning services that are massive and open to reach more and wider learning enthusiasts (Handarini, 2020).

Another type of media that teachers use most often is Google Meet. This media is very effective to use, especially for carrying out face-to-face learning activities online (Purwanto, 2020). Google Meet is a product from Google which is a video communication service developed by Google. This media is also an option as a communication medium between teachers and students considering that this application is easy to use, without the need to install, and allows two-way interaction between teachers and students online and synchronously. Meanwhile, the use of email as an online medium is very rarely used by teachers and students. In this context, the use of technology is important as a tool that helps smooth the learning process. Several studies show that technology makes a positive contribution to learning. The internet has been mixed and matched in learning as a tool to complement learning activities.

Online Learning Using the WhatsApp Application

In the world of education, the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic is the change in learning to learning that can be done remotely. The learning media commonly used by teachers in general are the Zoom application, Jitsi, Google Meeting and so on to achieve effective learning even without face-to-face contact. Online learning is carried out using applications such as Google Meet, Google Classroom and Zoom. However, the problem that generally occurs is the ignorance of both students and their parents in using the application. So another alternative is to use an application that is frequently used or most commonly used, namely the WhatsApp application.

Teachers at SDS Bunga Tanjong in their learning process use the Whatsapp application because this application is often used by the people of Tanjung Morawa sub-district, including parents of students. However, that doesn't mean that all parents have gadgets so they can install the WhatsApp application. There are around 80% of students who can take part in online learning using the WhatsApp application. When using the Whatsapp application as a learning medium, it only acts as a provider of assignment information from the teacher to students, so the learning process is not carried out entirely through the Whatsapp application. After students receive assignment information from the teacher via WhatsApp, students then close the application and then work on their assignments independently or in groups with their friends.

Students then open the application when they want to send assignments to the teacher. In the online learning process, teachers give assignments in the morning using the WhatsApp application and collect them in the afternoon or evening, sometimes even the next day students submit their

assignments in face-to-face learning activities. If we look closely at the phenomenon of the learning process via Whatsapp, the Whatsapp application is not fully used in the learning process. This application is only used to send and receive assignments, because in reality on the ground students study independently or in groups in their respective homes without using the WhatsApp application fully. This is different from the learning process using zoom applications and so on, where these applications are used during the learning process.

Actually, SDS Bunga Tanjong teachers want the learning process to be face-to-face, of course by complying with health protocols. However, when carrying out a face-to-face learning process in a pandemic era like this, feelings of fear often arise because everything is prohibited, fear that a third party will report that there is face-to-face learning at the school.

Supervision in Online Learning

The supervision process in the online learning process is not like supervising the face-to-face learning process. As stated by Rigianti (2020), when learning takes place face-to-face, teachers are used to organizing learning. However, there is an obstacle when learning takes place online. Teachers must choose learning materials with extras so that there are no misconceptions between teachers and parents or students when studying the material. Management, especially in supervision during the online learning process, is more limited. In learning through applications that allow teachers and students to meet face to face, supervision is only visual on one side, because the teacher can only see students from their gadget or computer screen.

The supervision of the learning process using the Whatsapp application is more limited compared to the Zoom, Jitsi and similar applications, because the Whatsapp application only presents the learning process using verbal chat or motionless visual photos. Of course, if you use chat media and photos, the teacher cannot supervise. It is true that teachers occasionally assign students to make videos or send voice messages so they can carry out supervision, although it is still limited, but quite a few parents refuse because sending assignments using these media will use up a lot of quota.

A Teacher and Student's Response to Online Learning

With online learning like this, it is certainly a challenge for teachers. Teachers who are used to face-to-face learning must get out of their comfort zone to try to learn and practice the online learning process at school, especially at the elementary school level. Learning conditions during a pandemic like this are very difficult, initially teachers thought that this phenomenon would be over in a short time, and at the same time teachers tried to apply the process of using online learning in elementary schools. But who would have thought, it turns out the pandemic never ended so the online learning process was extended. Teachers have to rack their brains and adapt to conditions like this which have only recently occurred where learning has had to be done online for months.

Parents' responses also varied, but the majority of them wanted normal (face-to-face) learning. This does not mean that parents are calm when the face-to-face learning process takes place, but they feel anxious because they are at risk of contracting the virus when they go to school. In online learning, parents have to set aside more funds to buy their child's quota so they can take part in online learning. Some parents even have to buy a gadget first to be able to install the WhatsApp application. The students' responses regarding online learning initially welcomed online learning because students wanted to try learning at home without having to go to school. But after a few months, Students feel bored with online learning and want to return to normal learning as usual. Their longing is to meet friends and teachers and carry out learning as before before this pandemic disaster. Meanwhile, the response from class V students at SDS Bunga Tanjong stated that students also felt bored and fed up during online learning because there was no direct interaction with the teacher and friends and students had difficulty understanding the material delivered by the teacher online and then added to the assignments every day.

Barriers and Advantages of Online Learning

The advantage of the online learning process using the Whatsapp application is that it is used by the majority and is familiar to the Kalipasung village community so that the learning process can be carried out at school. These results are as stated by Astini (in Rahmawati, 2017). Whatsapp groups are chosen and used by teachers because they are more familiar to parents or

accompanying students. In Banjarnegara, 100% of elementary school teachers in Banjarnegara choose to use the Whatsapp application as an online learning tool (Rigianti, 2020).

Apart from that, the Whatsapp application has many features used in Whatsapp learning, namely chat, images and occasionally using videos and voice messages as stated by Yensy (2020) Whatsapp in its use as a digital chat media which includes text messages, images, videos, and can to make telephone calls into a complete unit to help people establish communication in all parts of the world. The obstacle is that the Whatsapp application is not fully used in the learning process at SDS Bunga Tanjong, because the application is only used to receive and send assignments, while the learning process is carried out independently or in groups without using the Whatsapp application. It is not uncommon for students to receive assignments via the WhatsApp application, but when sending the assignments students go directly to the teacher's house or vice versa. This certainly reduces the role of the WhatsApp application as an online learning medium at SDS Bunga Tanjong.

As for the solution to the problem above, according to Kristina (2020), in online learning, teachers should use a variety of online learning applications, by combining two online learning in providing learning materials and assignments, for example using the Whatsapp application and then occasionally using the Zoom application. Apart from that, other obstacles in downloading video, image, audio and other features certainly use up a lot of quota, which often makes it burdensome for students' parents. As stated by Dewi (2020), using the Whatsapp application certainly has its drawbacks, one of which is that communication using videos, images and large files can affect data usage (costs).

4. CONCLUSION

The qualitative research conducted using the case study method at SDS Bunga Tanjong sheds light on the profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector, particularly on the learning process conducted by teachers. The transition from traditional in-person learning to online learning presents significant challenges, especially for elementary school teachers and students. Teachers at SDS Bunga Tanjong have experienced difficulties in adapting to online teaching methods, citing concerns regarding the effectiveness of online learning for elementary school-aged children. Limited optimization of learning materials and inadequate utilization of online learning media further exacerbate these challenges, hindering the delivery of comprehensive education. Moreover, students express boredom and disengagement with online learning, attributing their reluctance to the monotonous nature of daily assignments. Consequently, late assignment submissions impede the assessment process, posing additional challenges for teachers in evaluating student progress effectively. Despite these obstacles, several supporting factors aid in facilitating online learning, including the widespread availability of mobile phones, sufficient data quotas, and stable internet connections. Teachers leverage these resources to monitor student engagement and progress in online learning activities. However, significant barriers persist, such as disparities in student access to technology and parental work commitments, which hinder effective implementation of online learning. Recognizing the crucial role of parents in guiding and motivating students, efforts to involve parents in the online learning process are essential for fostering student enthusiasm and engagement. In conclusion, while online learning serves as a vital solution to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the education sector, its efficacy and implementation remain contingent upon addressing the identified challenges and leveraging supportive factors effectively. Collaborative efforts among educators, parents, and policymakers are imperative to optimize the online learning experience and ensure continued educational progress amidst the ongoing pandemic.

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