Learning obstacles during pandemic at the elementary school level

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic provides an opportunity for teachers to innovate in learning. This is done to ensure that learning continues. The research aims to identify the obstacles that teachers found in online learning during the covid-19 pandemic at the elementary school level. The study used qualitative methods of phenomenology by retrieving data through interviews. The results showed that there were many obstacles experienced by teachers and students during online learning. Among the obstacles experienced by teachers and students when online learning arises are the limitations of infrastructure facilities and still low understanding of the use of technology in learning.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, learning obstacle, online learning

INTRODUCTION

Since Covid-19 was designated a global pandemic, all countries have made various efforts to break the chain of the covid's spread In Indonesia, the covid-19 pandemic that emerged in early 2020 made the government take strategic steps in preventing the transmission of covid-19. The virus that quickly spreads should be avoided with the right steps. The step taken is physical distancing, which is a rule for maintaining distance between individuals. Covid-19 poses a threat to physical health worldwide. For this condition, all sectors of activities must be temporarily stopped, in addition, people are required to always use and get used to using masks, always wash their hands, and keep their distance. This rule is presented all sectors including the education sector. This results in learning should not being done face-to-face but must be done from home. The global pandemic conditions of Covid-19 are rapidly changing the learning environment in a social and revolutionary manner (Minhas et al., 2021). In such pandemic conditions, learning activities must still be carried out. Learning activities must be supported by supporting media. The learning adaptation process must be done with the use of media in learning (Lubis et al., 2020).

Learning from home policy is an effort to limit activities involving crowds. Based on these rules, regional heads in Indonesia make a circular about instructions to study at home. In West Java Province, the circular appeared on March 15, 2020, this began with the establishment of West Java as a standby status. Based on the circular, the learning agenda for students of all levels must be done at home. In these conditions, online learning becomes an alternative that is done and must be followed well by teachers and students. Students should stay abreast of learning and always be active during learning.

The adaptation of the learning process is carried out at all levels, whether elementary, junior high, high school, or equivalent to it. Provision of supportive media to ensure that learners remain served their rights. In this case, the teacher as the element responsible for the underserved rights to the education of his students is required to take a series of steps in the learning process. Online learning provides new experiences for teachers and students to jointly design learning to keep learning opportunities for students (Butnaru et al., 2021)

Online learning has become an important part of the higher education system in various countries (Munir et al., 2021). Online learning is learning that is done not directly between the teachers and learners but is assisted by the media to carry out teaching and learning process activities.

The Elementary School level, for researchers, becomes an interesting level to research. This is because the elementary level which is in the age range is still young and then required to adapt. At the middle or upper level, of course, the learning adaptation process will look easier. But at the elementary level will certainly see various images that appear and their uniqueness following the character of learners at elementary school age. By looking at the unique characteristics of learners at the elementary school level, researchers will identify various problems that arise in online learning during the pandemic period.

However, the implementation of online learning has challenges/obstacles, both in terms of human resources, infrastructure, and technical implementation (Wahyono et al., 2020). (Prawiyogi et al., 2020) this distance has several obstacles, one of which is that not all parents can guide learning at home because of their business.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses qualitative research methods through phenomenological approaches. A phenomenological approach is an approach in research that will explore the experience experienced by the subject in-depth (Moustakas, 1994). The choice of phenomenological method to explore the experience of teachers teaching online experienced teachers themselves during pandemic.

The location of this study is an elementary school in Garut Regency, selected snowball samples of as many as 34 teachers. The teacher is spread in several sub-districts in Garut Regency, West Java Province. The subject in this study was elementary school teachers, as the research was devoted to exploring the experience of elementary school teachers, then the teacher was chosen to be the respondent. A total of 36 teachers were considered relevant to the theme studied.

The process of retrieving data in this study is using structured interview techniques. This is to the opinion (Moustakas, 1994) that structured interviews could be an option to dig up the data from the source. Interviews are conducted face-to-face by meeting with teachers as well as using health protocols. But some respondents were done online because it was still during the covid-19 pandemic.

Structured interview techniques are conducted by researchers to dig up data related to teaching experience teaching at the elementary school level. The researcher first intruded with an open interview. The purpose of the open interview is that respondents are given the freedom to give answers. In addition, researchers also conduct ethics in research by first asking for approval to be able to engage in this research. The data obtained is then analyzed using data analysis techniques using the Cresswell analysis model that goes through the stages of data retrieval, data reduction, and data interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on research conducted, some findings of the obstacles faced by teachers in online learning are as follows.

Limitations of infrastructure facilities
The findings in this study show that there is limited ownership of means when learning online. In this study, the majority of teachers used the WhatsApp platform for communication between students and teachers related to whatsApp media learning to be the most popular choice in the use of learning media at the elementary level in Garut. Whatsapp is one of the applications

installed on android smartphones. Because smartphone ownership is becoming a very common one. Therefore, the Whatsapp (WA) platform was chosen to be one of the media to meet between learners and teachers online. In technical use of Whatsapp is the creation of a WA group that consists of teachers and students or parents of students. In the group, teachers provide teaching materials or assignments to students. Teachers and students communicate with each other such as students collecting assignments through capturing learning outcomes against their teachers. It can be seen from the picture above that assignment through WA is the most preferred alternative for teachers.

In practice using the WhatsApp platform many of the students do not have a supportive smartphone device. In addition, there is still little ownership of smartphones for some so some students use their parents' smartphones. Very few people have smartphones. Because at the elementary school level the majority use their parents' smartphones. In addition to the ownership of smartphone devices, signal limitations are also still a problem that interferes with the effectiveness of learning. The geographical condition of the Garut regency has mountains which become a barrier to signal access for some areas. Because at the elementary school level the majority use their parents' smartphones. Apart from owning a smartphone device, signal limitations are also still a problem that interferes with the effectiveness of learning. The geographical condition of Garut Regency has mountains which are a barrier to signal access for some areas.

> *"Little children don't have cellphones yet, so to communicate, we use cellphones belonging to parents, brothers, or relatives so that the learning process can still be carried out,"* as stated by one of the informants.

Common obstacles faced by students certainly need to find solutions including internet quotas, internet connections, and the availability of teaching resources. Although there are obstacles and shortcomings in the learning process, other facts illustrate that students' learning outcomes are achieved well (Novita et al., 2021). Learning at home is also considered to have a greater impact on spending, namely for pulses and internet connections, and requires parents to be literate on technology to support the learning process at home. (Rahmatullah, 2021).

Limited capabilities in operating media

In addition to the limitations of media facilities owned by students, many students and parents are not very capable of their operation. Some respondents have tried to use zoom, meet and google classroom but are still constrained in the ability of students and parents to use it. WhatsApp is considered to be the easiest platform to use compared to other platforms that will ever be used by teachers.

> *"We know on Whatsapp, because we use it often, when we have zoom or online meeting, we only know about it, so we find it a little difficult."*

The pandemic situation has forced educational institutions to suddenly switch from online teaching and learning modes on campus to online, and this has raised fears among students because the unavailability of resources is one of the critical factors, especially for those with no experience using these resources for online learning (Al-Maroof et al., 2020).

The results emphasize that the success of online learning and active learning of students rely heavily on motivation and cognitive skills. Therefore, it is recommended to have a strong IT infrastructure and create a well-thought-out IT integrated curriculum to develop students' cognitive problem-solving skills and increase psychological motivation. In this case, teachers are required to develop their potential (Ely Novianti, Alda Rizka Fatkhia, 2020).

Teacher limitations in monitoring processes and learning

In interviews conducted by researchers with teachers, the teacher said that the learning process during this pandemic caused difficulties for teachers in assessing learning achievement, not infrequently each student's task was done by a sibling like his brother or even his parents.

Learning during the pandemic is very likely for teachers to find it difficult to monitor the learning process and learning outcomes. The learning process that is identical to assignments at home can not be ascertained if the task is done by students. In addition to the process, learning results are also not maximal. There has been a decline in the quality and learning outcomes of students during the pandemic period. Some challenges to online education, challenging online technology resources, and adapting to new things include tough tasks. At the elementary school level, a thematic curriculum is applied so that presenting thematic learning requires special skills for teachers. The pattern of the student center that is his trademark also does little to make teachers confused in managing their classes because they have to make changes that were previously more to the teacher center.

Discussion

With all the limitations that become obstacles in the learning process of the pandemic period. Teachers are very trying to find solutions to keep learning done. For students who are constrained by learning devices and media, teachers make group visits based on the location of adjacent homes. Internet quotas are a problem for some teachers and students, but there is a quota assistance policy for learning. So that learning is helped. Obstacles in the learning process arise from various factors either from human facilities or resources (Wahyono et al., 2020).

Parental involvement becomes important in the learning process during pandemics. Micro-environment in the family needs to provide support in the learning process (Fatonah, 2020). Parental involvement becomes one of the determinants of success (Sun'iyah, 2020) Psychological motivation in online learning is one of the core components of academic engagement and encourages students to achieve multiple goals (Oudeyer et al., 2016). The education sector is considered a driving force that directs students to learn) and achieve academic targets (Liu et al., 2012). According to (Novita et al., 2021) the teacher's skills in operating the media, stimulating thinking skills through asking questions, and explaining learning becomes the key to success. Supported by other skills that make learning more meaningful.

CONCLUSION

Learning at the elementary school level continues. Elementary school teachers continue to carry out their duties in learning. Students still get their rights. Most pandemic learning processes use Whatsapp. This is done to minimize contact between individuals. In addition, due to many obstacles, especially the limitations of ownership of facilities, media, and signals, some respondents conducted limited face-to-face learning. The learning process uses group learning.

Learning about the pandemic is more through the assignment. In this case, the teacher cooperates with parents to be able to help their children in learning. Pandemic learning has many challenges, including teachers must be able to teach with a creative model by looking at various characteristics of students (Herliandry et al., 2020). Teachers should also be quick to respond when students have obstacles in learning. Teachers have challenges and opportunities to be able to master learning technologies that encourage teachers to do better. Elementary teachers are challenged to improve the ability to master technology but online learning inhibits the effectiveness of learning due to limited mastery of teacher and student technology, inadequate facilities, and infrastructure, limited internet access, and lack of budget provision at the beginning.

Online learning also provides challenges and opportunities for elementary teachers to provide teaching by utilizing technology so that it is encouraged to learn it. Learning innovation in elementary school can be realized if teachers can be technologically literate and even master to be utilized in learning-related learning activities that are taking place during the teaching and learning process. Online learning is done with various learning media such as google classroom, e-learning, zoom, youtube, google meet, and other learning media. the learning platform makes it easier for educators to provide materials to learners so that learning can be done well. Although many of the benefits of online learning are not completely perfect with the many obstacles such as poor signal strength, the devices used do not support learning, internet quotas and packages, and learning in-effectiveness (Hanifa, 2020).

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