E-learning situation children with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

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*Correspondence: Adelia Pramudita Monanda adeliapramudita94@mail.ugm. ac.id Purpose: Online learning or e-learning is the solution to the COVID-19 pandemic. With this condition, the parents must accompany their children with disabilities in e-learning at home. The research aims to explore the situation of e-learning in children with disabilities. Methods: This qualitative study used a case study approach. Participants were recruited through the purposive sampling technique. There were 11 main participants, parents or learning companions of students with disabilities, and four supporting participants who were the Head of the Kapuas Regency Office, the Principal of the SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas, and one of the teacher representatives in each SLB Negeri 1 and SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas. Results: In the process of e-learning learning activities at SLB Negeri 1 and SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas, very few parents of children with disabilities can provide gadgets and limited internet access in the area where they live. Therefore, learning activities during the COVID-19 pandemic for children with disabilities were implemented using WhatsApp groups and teachers visiting each student's house. Parents must know and maintain their children's learning mood, invite children to do learning activities in a pleasant atmosphere, and parents must be able to divide their time between work and accompanying children to study. Conclusion: In its implementation, the course encounters obstacles; the role of teachers and parents is also very influential, so the e-learning method can run optimally through good cooperation between teachers and parents in educating and motivating disabled students during learning at home.

Keywords: e-learning; pandemic period; parental constraints; students with disabilities

INTRODUCTION

The 2019–2020 Coronavirus pandemic is also known as the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the world. On February 12th, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially named the disease caused by the Novel Coronavirus as Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

On January 30th, 2020, WHO declared the outbreak an international public health emergency [1]. As of June 30th, 2021, 2,178,272 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in Indonesia; this information is based on data submitted by the SATGAS COVID-19. Indonesian health facilities are not ready yet to deal with COVID-19 (Ministry of Health, 2020). In Central Kalimantan, as of

June 30th, 2021, 25,741 positive cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed, and Kapuas Regency is second-ranked out of 14 regencies in Central Kalimantan recorded as of Tuesday, June 30th, 2021, with the confirmed number of positive COVID-19 of 2,447 cases (https://corona.kalteng.go.id/).

The Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim, said that with the COVID-19 outbreak, the Indonesian education sector needs to follow a path that could help schools in an emergency. Schools need to force themselves to use distance learning media. However, due to poor planning, most schools that use distance learning practices have problems. Distance learning adversely impacts students, especially those at lower economic levels, given that it has been implemented and is likely to impose additional burdens on families [2].

During the COVID-19 pandemic, immediately innovated learning systems in online form through the e-learning method [3]. With e-learning, students are expected to improve their development in their learning activities. The author has done a preliminary study in Kapuas Regency, Central Kalimantan. This is true in public schools that apply e-learning and special schools (SLB). There are two special schools in Kapuas Regency: SLB Negeri 1 Kapuas and SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas. From the results of interviews with teachers at the two special schools, many parents complained about the difficulties caused by the government's policy.

The current situation demands maximum parental involvement and more intense communication with teachers in reporting their children's progress while studying at home. Parents will be more active in working with teachers when accompanying children home. It can also be said that the COVID-19 pandemic situation has restored the value of children's education in the family [4]. Parents who have children with disabilities have their education and care for their children; it cannot be generalized to other parents. Children with disabilities are the same as most children in general, who have the same educational rights as other children. In this regard, the existence of online classes only slightly discusses the psychological impact on children with disabilities. Children with disabilities have higher learning difficulties in the current situation. Most online platforms are not compatible with assistive technologies used to teach visually impaired children or those with hearing loss [5]. It is essential to understand how the actual obstacles faced by children with disabilities and their parents who have been accompanying their children to study at home have replaced the role of teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic with the e-learning method.

METHODS

This study uses qualitative research with a case study approach to describe and answer various problems. The main participants are 11 people who were parents or learning companions of children with disabilities and four supporting participants who were the Head of Department at Kapuas Regency, the Principal of SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas, and one teacher in each SLB Negeri 1 and SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas. Data collection methods in this study were interviews, observation, and documentation.

RESULTS

Overview of e-Learning Situations

e-Learning method

The e-learning method with teacher visits is applied at SLB Negeri 1 and SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas, with teachers coming to students' homes twice a week every Tuesday and Thursday. Some middle- to upper-class families with cell phones prefer to learn via WhatsApp. This is stated by Ibu EM (32 years, female, 3rd participant) and Ibu.S (40 years, woman, 9th participant) in the quotation below:

"The teacher came to the house to help with learning, bringing printed sheets of paper and then asking us to answer them." (Mrs. EM, 32 years old).

"There were assignments from the teacher sent via WhatsApp because we also received books from the school. The material was sent to me via WhatsApp, and the teacher would take a photo of the pages to be completed." (Mrs. S, 40 years old).

The observations show that children teachers visit interact more effectively with them directly. Teachers can help children do assignments by directing them to write and answer them. While learning through WhatsApp, some parents help children do assignments and report assignments with photos or videos.

e-Learning media

The learning media used in SLB Negeri 1 and SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas schools use visual aids and audiovisual media. Statement of Ibu M (58 years old, female, 2nd participant) and Ibu A (43 years old, female, 6th participant) in the following quotation:

"For example, there were teaching aids; sometimes, the teacher made something in the module, such as creating a tree. They brought teaching aids in the form of toy trees, which could be made of paper or anything else, usually provided by

each subject teacher." (Mrs. M, 58 years old).

"The teacher sent photos of the material through WhatsApp or YouTube and asked the child to watch them. For example, today they watch YouTube, and the next day, the teacher gives questions based on the video." (Mrs. A, 43 years old).

The observations showed that the teacher brought some props, such as puzzles or toys, in paper form to support learning at home so that children with disabilities could more easily understand assignments and not get bored quickly during learning. The variety of material from the teacher through YouTube links and photos makes students more motivated to learn.

Process study of e-Learning

SLB Negeri 1 and SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas learning process by applied teachers who provide learning material as assignment sheets. Teachers help children with disabilities by teaching them writing, coloring pictures, bolding letters, and paper-cutting skills. Assignment sheets are taken directly to the school, and when they are finished, they are collected and returned to the school for assessment. This is stated by participant Mr. H (39 years old, male, 5th participant) and in the following quote:

"The teacher usually brought coloring sheets and markers for the children's activities. For example, in Indonesian language lessons, they brought sheets for tracing letters. Each teacher brought their materials according to the subject, such as Islamic studies, where they brought sheets telling Islamic stories and asked the students to listen while the teacher narrated." (Mr. H, 39 years old).

"Yes, the tasks were photographed, indicating which pages to complete, and then sent via the WhatsApp group. If it was through a friend, they would print the sheets, collect them, complete the assignments, and then submit them together." (Mr. H, 39 years old).

The observations showed that the visiting teacher brought several printed assignment sheets for students to fill in pictures, thicken the alphabet or numbers, follow the dotted-line drawings, and color sheets. Meanwhile, parents reported assignments by sending photos of answers from assignments or videos of children with disabilities working on assignments via the parents' WhatsApp group.

Obstacle of e-Learning

Overcomes child boredom

Several complaints from parents or learning assistants for children with disabilities are related to children who are not in the mood and do not focus during lessons. Participant Ibu EM stated this (32 years old, female, 3rd) in the following quote:

"So, if my child said they didn't want to do it, I would just leave it; instead, they would draw or play on their phone. If they still didn't want to, I would persuade them by saying, 'Let's study, and then we'll buy some candy,' and they usually agreed." (Mrs. S, 40 years old).

Parents overcome the boredom of children with disabilities while studying at home, parents or learning companions follow the child's wishes, and children are left alone. They cannot be forced if the mood is not good because children can have tantrums. Then, some children must also be persuaded to buy candy and even have to go out of the house for a walk.

Constraints of e-learning facilities

Parents or learning assistants for children with disabilities complain that not all have ownership of facilities such as cell phones; many parents or learning assistants for children with disabilities only have ordinary cell phones. In addition, the limited data plan and the internet that is not supportive at home are very influential; even a power outage, which disrupts the internet network while doing tasks, is also an obstacle. This is stated by participant Ibu.M (58 years old, female, 2nd participant) in the following quote:

"Most parents don't have a phone, and the distance from their homes to the school is far. Additionally, the network at home is poor, so the teacher has to come to the house." (Mrs. M, 58 years old).

The observation results show that some parents from middle to lower economies do not have an Android cellphone to support e-learning. In addition, several obstacles, such as low internet access coverage and power outages in their residence, can hinder the e-learning process.

Not having enough time to accompany their child

The main obstacle for parents or learning companions is the availability of time and doing other work when accompanying their child to study. In addition, parents hand over their duties and responsibilities to siblings, even to their housekeeper

in carrying out the learning process or when parents return from work routines to carry out the learning process. This is stated by participant Mr. H (39 years old, male, 5th participant) in the following quote:

"Because I am a parent, I am always busy. It's different from face-to-face learning, where the teacher is handling it. Learning happens outside of my busy times, for example, at night during my rest time or my wife's rest time." (Mr. H, 39 years old).

Observations results show that in e-learning at home, the parents who should receive assistance from the role of parents are replaced by brothers or sisters of children with disabilities because parents have other activities such as working, taking care of the household, or other urgent activities so they cannot accompany children with disabilities study at home.

Supporting Factors of e-Learning

Data plan subsidies for study

The government's policy in a data plan for each student can help online learning classes for students. This is stated by participant Ibu.S (40 years old, female, 9th participant) in the following quote:

"The school provided internet data for learning, possibly because it's a public school. Before the pandemic, we received other assistance like uniforms, stationery, shoes, bags, and even money." (Mrs. S, 40 years old).

The observations also show that some parents who use the learning method via WhatsApp use quota assistance from the government in the form of Telkomsel cards, which are shown by several parents and circulated through schools to carry out e-learning learning.

Teachers visit

Teachers at SLB Negeri 1 and SLB Negeri 2 must visit students individually to give face-to-face lessons at the students' homes, often referred to as visiting teachers. This is stated by participant Ibu.M (58 years old female participant Ibu. Y (46 years old, female, 1st participant) in the following quote:

"When the teacher came to the house, it was very helpful. My child responded quickly to the teacher's requests, such as writing or drawing. They were willing to do it right away." (Mrs. Y, 46 years old).

The results of observations also show the same thing: the presence of a teacher visit can directly motivate students to learn with various variations of material, such as props in the form of paper trees and sheets of paper that already contain pictures of animals so that students can color so they do not get bored quickly.

Parental Assistance

Parents or learning companions accompanied and helped the children with disabilities when doing chores at home. Besides that, it also helps to translate communication between children with disabilities and teachers because not all teachers understand what is meant by children with disabilities who are taught. This is stated by participant Ibu E (36 years old, female, 4th participant) in the following quote:

"My child rarely refuses when asked by me. If I tell them to do their homework and say, 'Sit down and study,' they sit right away and do it. For example, if the task is to practice singing a national song, they stand tall and sing the song, and I record a video of it." (Mrs. E, 36 years old).

The observations also show that parental assistance during the learning process at home influences children's learning outcomes. Parents always provide motivation when learning at home because children get bored quickly. Here, parents must be patient and be able to condition the learning process.

Parents Coping Strategies During e-Learning

Set the schedule to accompany their child

Parents who work from the middle to upper economic class or ASN said that during home learning, they help their children arrange study schedules at home by dividing study time for each child and accompanying children to study in their parents' free time, usually at night. In addition, parents who do not work or are homemakers, mainly from the lower middle class, say that they typically accompany their children to study after completing homework during the day or night. They feel more relaxed when children study at home compared to face-to-face at school because housewives can teach children to study while doing other homework. This is stated by participant Ibu E (36 years old, female, 4th participant) and participant Ibu S (40 years, female, 9th participant) in the following quotation:

"At home, I don't only teach one child but also their older sibling, who is in the third year of vocational school studying automotive. So, I divide my time, teaching the older sibling in the morning before work and my younger child in the evening during my free time or after work." (Mrs. E, 36 years old).

"It's actually more relaxed at home. My child learns while I do household chores. If they don't want to study, I just leave it." (Mrs. S, 40 years old).

The observations also show that some parents who work as ASNs accompany their children's learning activities at home during their free time, usually on Saturdays and Sundays, according to their parents' busyness. Meanwhile, parents who work as housewives teach their children at home because they can do other jobs while teaching their children; for example, children are drawing or writing, and parents are cooking while watching their children from the kitchen.

Help children learn to solve problems

A working parent or an ASN has the initiative to teach children by replacing the questions from assignments with multiple choice instead of essays so that children with disabilities can choose and understand the assignments given. This is stated by participants Ibu A (43 years old, female, 6th participant) and Ibu M (58 years old, female, 2nd participant) in the following quote:

"We don't know how much the child understands. If giving questions, it can't be an essay; there must be multiple-choice options so they can choose." (Mrs. A, 43 years old).

"For other activities, I take the initiative to teach skills, such as asking them to clean the house, wash clothes or dishes, fold clothes neatly, or cook rice or fish for themselves. I've told them not to leave the stove unattended when the fire is on, and they understand." (Mrs. M, 58 years old).

The observations also show that parents who work or are ASNs and their children are more independent in doing their assignments. Parents do not entirely do the tasks, but they always help translate the assignments so children with disabilities can be involved in answering and answering questions. Think to the best of your ability. Meanwhile, parents who do not work or are housewives also continue to help answer their children's tasks as best they can. They can assist, but not all understand the material. So, they teach more children house skills such as sweeping, mopping, washing, and folding clothes.

DISCUSSION

Overview of e-Learning Situations

Online learning is mainly done using the WhatsApp application [8]. In addition to WhatsApp, visiting teachers have obtained permission from the Central

Kalimantan Provincial Education Office. This is supported by several studies, which state that visiting teachers, also known as home visits, positively influence children's behavior, increasing motivation and learning achievement and improving parents' ability to stimulate children's development [9,10].

Sundayana's research states that anything that can be used to express a message stimulates the thoughts, feelings, attention, and willingness of students so that it can encourage the learning process is a teaching aid. In addition to teaching aids, learning strategies that can be done from home are e-learning strategies [11]. E-learning is an abbreviation for electronic learning, which is the delivery of learning materials using electronic media such as computers, cellphones, gadgets, and so on through audio, video, or other features provided [12].

Applying the "ge-je" (Guru kunJung) educational interaction can increase learning motivation in implementing PJJ during the COVID-19 pandemic. The most effective visit is a maximum of 2 hours of lessons. This aligns with research, which states that learning time is allocated for 2 hours of lessons during face-to-face learning. Belajar dari Rumah (BDR) learning activities are only conducted for 30 minutes for one visit [13]. The assignments the teacher gives to children through WhatsApp groups are not only in text but usually in the form of photos, and there is also voice recording [14].

Obstacle of e-Learning

Research from Ruhaena dan Ambarwati (2015) states that to overcome the problem of unmotivated children, mothers do not force them and try to persuade or advise their children. If the child shows emotional behavior, show how to deal with it and explain the consequences of the behavior, be a friend or a friend in sharing tasks related to self-regulation, for example, as a thinking partner in completing tasks and being a friend to ask questions [16].

Internet access is a key factor in the success of e-learning, which is carried out online. Given that the entire online learning process is internet-based, if there are areas with problems with the internet network, it will certainly make the learning process less optimal.

Children with disabilities cannot do anything without the help of the people around them in learning, starting from setting up mobile phones. In supporting the distance learning system, sometimes parents also hand over their duties and responsibilities. to brothers, sisters, and even assistants in carrying out the learning process because of the busy level of parents who are required to work in

meeting their needs so that they hand over their tasks to others or when parents come home from work routines carry out the learning process.

Supporting Factors of e-Learning

Bramastia's research states that the adequacy of data plan subsidies can be directly implemented in teaching and learning activities. This can be shown in the continuity of the online teaching and learning process. The convenience obtained in online teaching and learning is undoubtedly more helpful when the government facilitates it through free internet quota assistance. The built system could run optimally when supported by a free internet quota, so the teaching and learning process could occur optimally.

Research says this visiting teacher learning strategy involves a teacher visiting the student's residence to impart a lesson. Home visits can meet students' learning needs. They are an alternative that can be chosen to optimize offline learning during a pandemic [17]. Hakim's (2020) research states that the role of parents in BDR activities is to accompany and motivate children during activities at home. Collaboration between teachers and parents is essential because childhood still cannot receive instructions very clearly due to a lack of experience and knowledge of the online implementation process in early childhood. Schools and parents dealing with learning activities during the COVID-19 pandemic must carefully prepare to ensure learning activities run smoothly and effectively [18].

Parents Coping Strategies During e-Learning

Learning achievement with the learning system from home is more determined by the role of parents. Responding to this, parents must be able to give their best role. For example, scheduling in learning and applying more discipline [19]. High parental income can provide a broad environment so that it is easier to get opportunities to develop skills, whereas low parents pay less attention to their children's education [20].

Research states that each family system is unique and may have different coping strategies [21,22]. Abdulrahman believes that accompanying children to learn from home while parents do the work that must be completed from the office or home is a challenge. What needs to be remembered is that parents at home are not to replace all the roles of teachers in schools [23].

CONCLUSION

In the process of e-learning activities at SLB Negeri 1 and SLB Negeri 2 Kapuas, few parents of children with disabilities can provide gadgets and limited internet access in the area where they live. Therefore, learning activities for children with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic were implemented online and offline. The school enforces teachers' visits; besides, teachers monitor children's activities through WhatsApp groups and evaluate children through videos or photos sent by parents or study companions. Parents must know and maintain the child's learning mood, invite children to do learning activities in a pleasant atmosphere, and be able to divide time between work and accompanying children to study. The role of teachers and parents is very influential in e-Learning. It can be done optimally with good cooperation between teachers and parents in educating and motivating students with disabilities. Children with disabilities need teachers who match the linearity of their education with their disabilities because it affects the quality of learning. The researcher recommends to the Kapuas Regency Education Office that it is hoped that there will be additional CPNS teacher acceptance for children with disabilities in Central Kalimantan Province, especially Kapuas Regency, due to the large number of teachers who have retired and the lack of teachers by the field of disability in special schools.

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