The Perceptions of Student Parents towards Teacher Performances and the Implementation of Blended Learning Approach in the Learning Period of COVID-19

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Abstract

Online learning is the only learning method proposed and approved by the Indonesian Government during the Covid-19 Pandemic that happened in Indonesia one year ago. However, parents find difficulties and obstacles while accompanying their children during the learning process in their homes. This research aims to show parents' perception and evaluation of teachers' performance and teaching methodology. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative to describe parents' opinions and reveal their arguments and suggestion for the ideal teaching and learning progress in the Covid-19 Pandemic. The instruments used for data analysis are in the form of a survey using a *Google Form.* The data were taken at the beginning of the second semester of the 2020/2021 academic year. The results show that most parents prefer the blended learning method to the online one in the pandemic situation.

Keywords: Education Evaluation, Online Learning, Blended Learning

Introduction

There have been no significant changes and developments in Indonesia's education for decades. Due to the global Covid-19 pandemic in almost all parts of the world, learning activities have begun to change from conventional methods to a new mode of learning because of the government policy about a ban on face-to-face learning. It, therefore, inevitably demanded significant changes that teachers must make as education actors at the macro or micro level so that education can continue to run generally in the pandemic situation that is still ongoing today.

After almost a year since the first Covid-19 case was discovered in Indonesia, on March 2, 2020 (www.Indonesia.go.id), the number of positive cases in Indonesia has reached 1.2 million people as of February 12, 2021 (www.covid19.go.id). Although the figure indicates a decrease until today, it seems that the pandemic has not yet reached its peak, and there is no sign that it will end. On the other hand, the effects of this pandemic have had a real impact on all sectors, especially health, the economy, and the education sector. In response to this, the Government implemented Distance Learning (PJJ), or Online Learning. This learning approach was implemented in mid to late March 2020 and continues to be applied until the pandemic condition in Indonesia ends or has a significant downward trend. This online learning system has been used at all levels, from kindergarten to high school. During the online learning implementation, several problems have arisen, especially in Indonesia, which has a heterogeneous region from Sabang to Merauke. Inequality of infrastructure development from the west to the east of the island in Indonesia, causing this online learning system to encounter obstacles including uneven internet access, technology media used, not all students having media to access online learning, the lack of parental roles in learning assistance at home, the unpreparedness of teachers and stakeholders in organizing online.

Given the ongoing pandemic period and the uncertainty of when it will end, it is necessary to provide flexible learning alternatives, even though the Government has been running the vaccination program. Flexibility in learning allows parents/guardians of students to have direct contact with students at home and teachers and schools as the leading education service providers before the pandemic breaks out.

This study explores the perceptions of parents/guardians as the first party to replace the role of the teacher at home. In addition, the research results are also expected to offer suggestions about the most appropriate learning approach and system to be applied during the pandemic.

The research data were taken through surveys and observations conducted in an elementary school on the outskirts of Semarang with approximately 160 students. The school chosen was MI Darus Sa'adah, an Islamic Elementary School located on the outskirts of Semarang City. Most students are from the lower middle class. The limitations of learning facilities that students faced had been the obstacles and problems, such as only parents with devices to access the internet. In addition, economic factors that require both parents to work during study hours in

the morning were also an obstacle preventing students from participating in online learning at the same time as face-to-face learning can be done at school.

For this reason, it is necessary to find a solution to overcome the limitations encountered in the field. Previously, various learning approachs have been implemented in this school, such as online learning using Google Classroom, E-learning school, and WhatsApp. In addition, at the beginning of the odd semester, this school also implemented a blended-learning system, i.e., combining face-to-face and distance learning. With the implementation of several of these learning approachs, it will be explored and seen which one is the best and most suitable to be continued for the long term during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Although the sample was taken from only one school respondent, it is hoped that the strategic steps from the results of this study can also be applied to other schools that have almost the exact characteristics of the school community.

Several researchers have conducted several studies on learning methods during the Covid-19 Pandemic. This sub-chapter will explain what previous research has done and the results and implications for learning approachs in the next pandemic.

Syaiful et al. (2021), in early 2021, examined the effectiveness of online learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic at the high school level. The research method used is qualitative, which includes observation and interviews. His research shows that learning carried out during the pandemic using media applications is WhatsApp and Youtube not very effective in achieving learning objectives and encounters several obstacles. These constraints are generally internet network problems and lack of access to information. Rosali (2020) also examined online learning activities at the higher education level during the Covid-19 Pandemic Period. The research uses a qualitative descriptive method with lecturers and students as the object of study. Unlike the primary and secondary education levels, the applications used in higher education are more complex and varied, such as Class, Until meet, Zoom, WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Classroom, YouTube, Facebook, and Messenger. However, less than ideal, the implementation of learning runs smoothly with varied learning outcomes. The obstacles are almost the same as learning at the secondary primary education level.

Changes in learning media during the pandemic have also been studied by Atsani (2020). In his writings, Atsani describes several transformations of learning media used during the pandemic, including personal computers (laptops) connected to the internet. However, due to the effects of the pandemic not only at the higher education level but at all levels of education, the media used are also increasingly diverse, including using cell phones. Likewise, the learning approach is enough to use social media, including WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, or meeting or conference apps like Zoom or Google Meet.

The problems of online learning carried out during the Covid-19 Pandemic Period were also investigated by Asmuni (2020) at the high school level. This research was conducted by studying literature or literature collected through textbooks, e-books, websites, Perppu, and other relevant sources. This study indicates that online learning has various problems that are directly faced by teachers, students, and parents. Mastery of the use of information technology experienced by teachers, limited internet access, and time owned by parents are also the main problems found in his research. In line with what Asmuni wrote, Mansyur (2020) also examined the impact of the pandemic on the dynamics of learning in Indonesia, including offline (face-to-face) learning to online learning, the transformation of the use of technology-based learning media, adjustment of learning evaluations for grade promotion and graduation, and demands for the collaboration of the role of parents of students as a substitute for teachers in providing teaching guidance.

Megawanti et al. (2020) examined students' perceptions of distance learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic. His research involved 155 respondents from elementary to high school students in different locations in Jakarta. The results indicate that most respondents prefer to learn from school compared to learning from home (BDR). It is obtained from the reality that the absence of a teacher who directly guides students makes them not get a direct explanation. In addition, the lack of guidance and teaching can be obtained as what is obtained from studying at school.

At the elementary level, Anugrahana (2020) examined the obstacles, solutions, and expectations for the implementation the online system by elementary school teachers. In his research, the obstacle faced by parents was the lack of time they had to assist students in learning. Meanwhile, teachers encounter obstacles in using technology in the teaching process, and in a short time, they must get used to involving technology in their work.

Unlike previous research, Nurcahyawati and Alfisyahrin (2020) examined the quality of learning using distance learning during the pandemic. Their research uses an R&D (Research and Development) design. Their study aims to determine the readiness of PJJ in terms of policymakers, infrastructure, and human resources, in this case, teachers and students. At the end of her research, Nurcahyawati revealed that the system distance learning or PJJ is more likely to develop technology and produce creative and productive graduates without being oriented to the material alone.

Methodology

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to describe in detail the perceptions and evaluations of the methods and performance of teachers during emergency learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic in an elementary school. Research results will be displayed in descriptions derived from observations of research subjects, data, and document analysis. Qualitative research is research conducted to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects, for example, behavior, perceptions, motivations, and actions, holistically employing descriptions in the form of words and language in an exceptional natural context and utilizing various natural methods (Barlian, 2016). Denam and Lincoln (1987) suggested that qualitative research is used to interpret phenomena and is carried out using various existing methods (Barlin, 2016).

The questionnaire used in the survey consisted of 10 questions with a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. In addition, this survey also explores data on which learning approachs are more recommended by parents/guardians at the elementary school level and why. The research instrument is used to implement and provide solutions for what kind of learning approach is most appropriate to the conditions of the school, considering that the Covid-19 Pandemic is still happening and will not end shortly. The studies in the discussion will find solutions that can be used as references or guidelines for policymakers to make future decisions.

The data is taken from a survey via Google Form and distributed to parents/guardians of students at the elementary school level. This survey was distributed to parents/guardians at MI Darus Sa'adah Semarang at the end of the odd semester and the beginning of the even semester of 2020/2021.

Findings and Discussion

The number of respondents who gave their opinions and suggestions was 160 from an institution, i.e., the Islamic Elementary School in Semarang City. This subchapter will be described descriptively, and several types of questions will also be presented as diagrams.

The questions given in the questionnaire are in the Google Form of 10 questions consisting of multiple choice with four answer choices and several numbers in the form of questions with descriptive answer types. In this type of descriptive question, the researcher explores the opinions and suggestions of parents/guardians about the most flexible learning system to be applied in the school. Several methods have been applied during the Covid-19 emergency response period, which continues to date, two semesters in different academic years, i.e., 2019/2020 and 2020/2021. In the even semester of the 2019/2020 academic year, from March 2020 to June 2020, the learning system and approach used were purely asynchronous online learning. The learning strategies used at the beginning of this pandemic period were by providing materials and exercises on the messaging application WhatsApp until the end of the 2019/2020 school year and closed with an online year-end assessment. This application was chosen considering all parents of students who used it, and the consumption of internet quota was the lightest. This application is used to send material in the form of videos, links to Youtube, or make video calls to monitor students conducted by the teacher.

Entering the start of the new academic year 2020/2021 in July, asynchronous online learning was still being used through more Google Classroom. At the beginning of the use of this online learning mode, it is necessary to have brief training on how to use it. The features provided by Google Classroom are pretty simple; however, because the users are the parent of the student where they operate it, it takes time to get used to its use. Of course, this application will be more accessible if used at a higher level of education, namely junior high school and high school level. After being used for approximately one to two months, the school conducted an evaluation. The result was that most students could not follow and send their learning results due to the difficulty of using the learning application mode Google Classroom. For this reason, entering the third month of the 2020/2021 academic year, namely September 2020, the school applies the blended learning method.

This learning method is to combine face-to-face learning with online learning. Online learning is reused with WhatsApp, and face-to-face learning is carried out 2-3 times a week. Of course, face-to-face learning during this pandemic is carried out with strict health protocols and has received approval from the local Covid-19 Task Force Team. Of course, because the parents of these students have experience using several learning methods, they will be able to determine which method they think is the most suitable and appropriate to be applied in the following semester.

The first question asks what method was used during the odd semester of the 2020/2021 school year. Even though the method was a blended learning method, a mixture of face-to-face and online learning, as many as 71.1% of respondents answered that the learning was online. Meanwhile, those who answered according to the conditions in the field, the blended learning, amounted to 27.8%, and the rest answered not all. This means that only a quarter of the students' parents are aware of and paid attention to the mode of learning in the last semester. Face-to-face learning was carried out during the pandemic only 2-3 times a week, so parents believed that the primary learning was still conducted online, and face-to-face learning was only a choice.

1. Bagaimanakah sistem pembelajaran yang dilakukan di Madrasah putra/putri
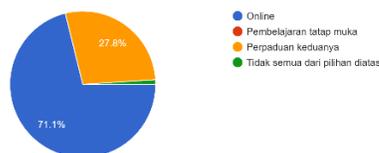pada semester ganjil 2020/2021?
97 responses

● Online
● Pembelajaran tatap muka
● Perpaduan keduanya
● Tidak semua dari pilihan diatas

Diagram 1. First Question

The second question is about the mode of learning used during the implementation of the online learning approach. Applications that have been used include the messaging application WhatsApp and Google Classroom. Both were chosen because the applications were the simplest and had a small data consumption. In addition, generally, parents only have one device and are used for online learning for several children, so the two applications can be used simultaneously for more than one child in different schools. Meeting applications such as Google Meet and Zoom are not used because they have extensive data consumption. This could burden parents/guardians because, during the semester, the quota subsidies from the Government were not evenly distributed. A total of 74.2% of respondents answered that the application was WhatsApp, 13.4% answered Google Classroom, and 12.4% answered a combination of the two. This means most parents took online learning through the main application WhatsApp; the rest did not access the materials and assignments the teacher gave in the application Google Classroom.

Next is the question of student satisfaction with the learning approach applied during the Covid-19 emergency response situation. A total of 47.4% of respondents stated they were not satisfied with the learning approach used, 41.2% answered that they were satisfied with the learning approach, while 8.2% did not know what the students felt. The rest answered very satisfied but with a very minimal percentage, as shown in the following diagram:

3. Bagaimana performa peserta didik selama pembelajaran darurat Covid-19?
97 responses

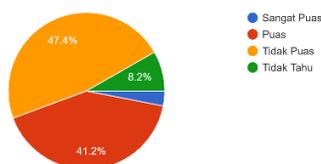
● Sangat Puas
● Puas
● Tidak Puas
● Tidak Tahu

Diagram 2. Third Question

The fourth question is an evaluation of the students' parents concerning assisting the online learning process at home. Almost all respondents answered it was necessary, 75.3% answered very significantly, and the rest answered importantly. This question was asked as reflective material for parents so that they could still guide their children to study at home during the pandemic. This question was essential to ask, considering that before the pandemic, most people fully surrendered the responsibility for learning and educating their children to teachers.

The fifth question was a descriptive question about the obstacles faced by students' parents during online learning. The answers to this question were very diverse and are classified into several aspects as in the following table:

Aspects Constraints	Number of respondents
Limited facilities (devices and Internet connections)	15
Time owned by parents	14
Attitudes of students when studying at home	28
The ability of parents to guide students	19

| Atmosphere and conditions of the home (external factors) | 14 |
| Others | 11 |

Table 1. Categories of Obstacles encountered during learning in the Covid-19 Emergency Response Period

The answers described in the fifth question vary and have almost the same number between several categories. Among all the answers, the aspect that becomes the highest obstacle is students' attitude when studying at home. This is related to the second-highest aspect that becomes an obstacle, the ability of parents to accompany their children to study at home. The two become intertwined in a causal relationship. The attitudes of students with the attitudes displayed in classrooms at school were different considering the situation and condition of the home as a place of learning prone to many distractions. This situation and condition were also one of the obstacles that many parents complained about, considering that most students come from the middle to lower economic class. This, of course, affected the condition of the house where usually there was no particular place to study for their children. In addition, many family members living in the same house also affect the interest and motivation of students to learn. The next obstacle was also psychologically influenced by parents with many jobs outside and inside their house, which affected how they guided their children at home. In addition to parents' limited time, obstacles also came from limited learning facilities. Limitations of gadgets or cellular devices and internet quotas were the obstacles faced by parents because these cell phones or gadgets were used by parents for themselves (work) and also had to share for their children's learning facilities. Not just one child but sometimes more and they went to different places.

The sixth question was a closing question related to the next question. In this question number, parents are asked to give their opinion on the kind of learning approach most suitable for future application. The considerations used at this time are the downward trend of positive patients, the vaccination program has started (although it is not evenly distributed and reaches all circles), but there is still no official regulation from the Government on when schools can officially open. Based on these three considerations, as many as 64.9% of respondents answered that the blended learning approach that combines online learning and face-to-face learning is the one that can best accommodate the current educational needs of primary school age. Of course, this answer follows the blended learning experience they have received in the previous semester for 2-3 months. In addition, the next question is also asked about the application or learning mode that can be used and the time of face-to-face learning at school. The result of the combination of the two questions is that online learning can be continued with messaging application media such as WhatsApp and face-to-face Learning three times a week with limited hours of 4 JMP (subject hours). However, as many as 48.3% of respondents want face-to-face learning daily with a minimum hour of 2 JMP.

6. Mengingat situasi pandemi yang belum berakhir dan masih banyak yang terpapar, bagaimana menurut Anda sistem pembelajaran yang perlu diterapkan pada semester genap ini?
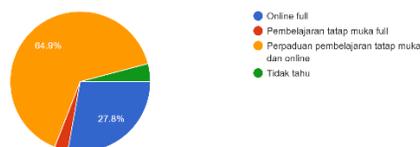97 responses

- Online full
- Pembelajaran tatap muka full
- Perpaduan pembelajaran tatap muka dan online
- Tidak tahu

Diagram 3. The Sixth Question

At the end are perceptions in the form of suggestions, impressions, and messages given by respondents on teacher performance during the Covid-19 emergency response period learning and expectations desired by parents of students. The answers given were heterogeneous and were divided into categories in table 2 below:

Types of Parents' Perceptions of Students	Number of Respondents
Have a good opinion/satisfied with the performance of teachers and learning approachs	42
Have a lousy opinion/dissatisfied with the performance of teachers and learning approachs	4

Hope the pandemic ends quickly	10
Provide suggestions for further learning methods	19
Give complaints about the obstacles	7
Conduct a review of the learning approach	14

Table 2. Parents' Perceptions of Students' Performance and Blended Learning Methods

From the data above, it was found that the students' parents thought that the blended learning implemented in the previous semester was sufficient to facilitate the educational needs of students during the Covid-19 period. Satisfaction with the learning outcomes was worth 43.75%, while those who give opinions are not satisfied or judged less well on the method that has been applied only 4.2%. Almost half of the respondents provided opinions and suggestions to continue the blended learning approach implemented in the school. The second-highest percentage of 19 respondents, or around 19.79%, gave pragmatic or more practical advice during online learning. Those opinions include:
a)   before giving assignments to students, the homeroom teacher should make a video about the lesson;
b)   the message is that if the child's answer is wrong, please tell the correct answer so parents can know which answer is the right one;
c)   at the time of learning, more specifically using the application Google Meet only;
d)   try something new to approach with students so that learning is not monotonous.

Conclusion

The results and discussion presented in the previous sub-chapter show that the student's parents, as respondents representing elementary school-age students, were generally satisfied with the blended learning approach applied last semester. They hoped that the schools could continue to use this learning method until face-to-face learning is allowed again by the Government.

Blended learning accommodated the problems faced by the students' parents while accompanying their children to study at home. The obstacles faced were a combination of the ability of parents to guide their children regardless of the conditions in the environment where they live and the students' attitudes while learning from home. In addition, the lack of free time from the students' parents and the limitations of devices and internet connections also became obstacles but were not the primary ones. In principle, the students' parents preferred blended learning to online learning only when applied during the Covid-19 pandemic as an emergency.

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