CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DISTANCE LEARNING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract: Education continues even during the pandemic. Students learn from home, and the challenge forteachers in preparing learning by using existing opportunities. The purpose of this study is whatis the role of schools, parents, and the community in facing the challenges and opportunities of distance learning during the Covid-19 pandemic? This research uses a qualitative approach witha literature study methodology. The technique of collecting data is through book literature and relevant research results, with the instrument being the researcher himself (human instrument). The research analysis used inductive analysis. The result is that teachers develop their potential, learn a lot to master IT in order to innovate. Parents, apart from being second teachers, also supervise, prepare children's learning facilities, assist, and at the same time can communicate intensively between parents and children. Furthermore, the role of the community is to provide internet services for the smooth use of platforms that can be accessed, studied independently or through webinars and workshops.

Introduction

One of the heroes of education is Ki Hajar Dewantara. He was born on May 2, 1889 and on that date he was also enshrined as National Education Day in Indonesia. Ki Hajar Dewantara is known as a pioneering hero of education in Indonesia because of his brilliant ideas that have made his name remembered for all time. One of his ideas is the Tri Sentra Education (Three Education Centers), which says that education takes place in three environments, namely the family, school and community. The three centers have a role in the education process and complement and strengthen one another. The concept of the tri education center places great emphasis on the importance of integration, the togetherness of the three environments as a unified education system that provides educational experiences to children (Syahfitri & Ginola, 2021). The responsibility for education is not only the government alone, but families and communities are also responsible for education.In accordance with Law Number 20 regarding the System National Education that education is a shared responsibility of the government, family and society.During the Covid-19 pandemic, education must continue.Such as the explanation of the 1945

Constitution and Law Number 35 of 2014 article 9 concerning child protection. This makes teachers/lecturers and students have to face challenges in distance learning. The reality is that students have to study from home, the availability of the network is not completely sufficient, students and teachers/lecturers are not all ready for online learning, changing learning patterns take students and teachers/lecturers by surprise. This cannot be left alone, online learning is an option. E-learning is an open and shared learning area that uses the internet and the web to facilitate learning and build knowledge through meaningful action and interaction (Lubis, 2021). Presentation of learning using e-learning makes students have the opportunity to study in different spaces and times, learn independently, have freedom/varied ways in the learning process, can develop managerial skills and abilities in completing a task, as well as being able to practice directly, using computer technology in statistical analysis, and inviting students to be involved in compiling material or learning evaluation (Gusty & et al, 2020).

Students learn from home, and challenges for teachers in preparing learning by using existing opportunities. And the community also joins in to help so that education can run as expected. The challenge for teachers/lecturers is to develop their potential by having competencies related to the digital era through internet-based learning. In addition, teachers/lecturers in the industrial revolution 4.0 are required to have skills (ability to solve problems, think critically, be creative in teaching, be able to manage learning, be ready to coordinate, assess, make decisions), emotional intelligence, and cognitive flexibility (Simarmata & et al, 2020) . Teachers/lecturers must be able to choose the right learning model so that it can function effectively to achieve the expected learning objectives (Subakti & et al, 2021).

However, the implementation of online/e-learning learning raises new problems, due to the unpreparedness of parents/educational background and children/students in using IT and providing IT facilities in the form of laptops, credit/internet quota, and learning applications that are not yet commonly used. This challenge must be overcome by parents and students. Another challenge is that parents must accompany their children to study, provide enthusiasm for learning and children's learning mood, and share time to accompany children to study (Astuti & Harun, 2021). Several studies have been conducted relating to online or in-network learning during a pandemic. Several previous studies, among others, the effectiveness of online learning with the existence of a physical distancing policy through various internet applications in the Covid-19 pandemic era provide different advantages and disadvantages. There are those that are efficient at saving quota, such as WhatsApp and Discord. The biggest obstacle faced by students is expenses that are not balanced with income in the academic world(Zahra & Wijayanti, 2020).

Learning using video zoom cloud id in early childhood in the Covid 19 pandemic era is effective, interactive, supports distance learning, makes it easier for students to absorb learning material delivered by educators because it is more real time (Ismawati & Prasetyo, 2021). Educational evaluation is still being carried out, using digital learning methods today, using assignments, online tests, and/or other forms of remote assessment, even though the teacher is only a facilitator, the teacher still conducts assessments and has the right to provide the results as reports on student learning outcomes (Astriani & Marzuki,

2021). This research focuses on distance learning as a challenge and takes advantage of the opportunities that exist during Covid-19. The sub focus is the role of parents and students, schools, and communities in distance learning during Covid-19.

The purpose of this research is what is the role of schools in distance learning during Covid-19? What is the role of parents in distance learning during Covid-19? What is the community's role in distance learning during Covid-19?

Literature review

The goal to be achieved in this research is to describe the challenges and opportunities of the online learning process carried out for kindergarten children in Mamahak Besar Village, Research on the impact and opportunities of online learning has been widely researched, but there are several substantial differences from previous research and current research, including:

1. Research conducted by (Jamilah, 2020) with the research title Professional teachers in the new normal era: Review of opportunities and challenges in online learning. The results of the study show that various platforms are used in online learning, while teachers, students and parents are expected to continue to make adjustments over time. Various positive responses were conveyed by students regarding online learning because it felt more relaxed, fun, flexible, efficient, short, practical, fast, precise, safe, easy, time-saving, and energy-saving. Learning can be done remotely, so that parents can supervise their children's learning, make students become technologically literate, and more creative. The difference between this research and current research is the research method. Previous research used the Systemic Literature Review method, while current research uses the case study method.

2. Research conducted by (Al Hakim, 2021) with the research title The role of teachers and parents: Challenges and solutions in online learning during the COVID 19 pandemic. The research results show that various platforms are used in online learning. Various positive responses were conveyed by students regarding online learning. besides that teachers and parents also play a role in providing support and guidance to children's learning efforts. Teacher competencies and skills must be continuously enriched, supported by school policies that encourage teachers to continue learning. Related parties also need to evaluate online learning so that learning objectives can be achieved optimally. The difference between this research and current research is in the research subjects, namely research subjects in previous studies using all levels of education from kindergarten to university, while the current research focuses more on the elementary school level.

Method

Research **method** uses a qualitative approach with a literature study methodology.

Literary research is a type of research that is used in gathering information and sharing in-depth data through various literature, books, notes, magazines, other references, and relevant previous research results, to get answers and theoretical basis regarding the focus to be studied. Primary sources are the main data sources that are directly collected by researchers from research objects in the form of books/articles. Secondary sources are additional data which according to researchers support the main data, namely books/articles act as a support for primary books/articles to strengthen the concepts in primary books/articles (Yaniawati, 2020). Data collection techniques through books and relevant research results, with the instrument

being the researcher himself (human instrument). Research analysis uses inductive analysis, namely drawing a conclusion from the specific to the general, from real/concrete situations to the abstract.

Results and Discussion

Results

1.   Comparison of STEM Competence, Learning Products and Student Character

Figure 1. Comparison of Student Competence

Figure 1. Shows that the highest average student score is in the cultivation of student character with a total score of 5.34, where the highest score is in the ability to share aspect with a score of 5.8. The lowest score is the STEM competence of students with an average score of 4.99, the lowest aspect is in terms of getting to know the right cellphone features at 4.6.

2.   **Comparison of Competence Based on Gender**

Figure 2. Comparison of Competence Based on Gender The
figure above shows that in the two competencies, namely product and student character, female students are superior to male students with a comparison of the average score of 5.38 with 5.30 on student character and 5 .32 with 5.17 on learning products. In STEM competence, male students excel compared to women with a score of 5.11 to 4.89.

Discussion

From the results of the research above, information can be obtained that at the beginningof 2020 the world was shocked by the outbreak of the global corona virus disease 2019 (Covid-19) which infected almost all over the world including Indonesia. On March 9, 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) or the World Health Organization declared the corona virus a pandemic.This virus is spreading very quickly and widely. In general, the symptoms are mild, but for some people at high risk (the elderly and those with chronic health problems) it can cause serious health problems. The efforts of the Indonesian government in terms of suppressing the spread of the virus include, among other things, alockdown so that all formal and non-formal activities are at home. This is done to break the chain of distribution by avoiding crowds. The pattern of education has changed, where previously the teaching and learning process was carried out face-to-face, during the pandemic, schools had to adapt to conditions where learning was carried out remotely. Regulations issued by the government, in this case the Ministry of Education and Culture, are trying hard to find a way for students to continue to receive education during this pandemic. One of them is the school implemented by distance learning by using and utilizing information technology/IT.

The role of the Challenge School is so that students continue to study optimally during Covid-19 and take advantageof the opportunities for facilities provided by the government and the community so that learning during the pandemic continues according to learning objectives. how a teacher prepares learning materials, discussion forums, and assignments so that students can study independently and face-to-face virtual through asynchronous and synchronous activities in online (online) learning. Teachers can carry out asynchronous activities, prepare material in advance and not interact with students at the same time. The teacher's challengeis to prepare teaching materials other than textbooks/resources owned by students, also in the form of video learning media, or presentation slides that have sound, animation, and invite students to interact following the lessons that have been scenariod by the teacher.

Teachers can also carry out synchronous activities. Students are invited to have face-to-face discussions in their respective groups, if the teacher uses the zoom meeting application. Breakout room facilities can be used to place students into rooms as group discussion meetings. The teacher's challenge to carry out these activities should have been compiled Student Worksheet documents (LKPD), so that learningis truly directed towards achieving learning objectives. This supports the research results, that the teacher's role is needed in managing learning starting from planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating so that it can increase the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process when learning distance online and offline (Saifulloh & Darwis, 2020). Teachers can also take advantage of online platform application media in providing evaluations to students, so that students are motivated in learning and learning is fun. Among other things,the Kahoot and Quizziz applications, in the form of quiz games that are easy for students to access, and effective for teachers because they can correct quiz results. This supports research, that the application of online learning using the quizziz application in evaluating technology-based learning can balance and alignlearning in schools (Roysa & Hartani, 2020)

The readiness of teachers in online learning in terms of giving assignments must pay attention to the following three things: assignments are useful for students so that they motivate them to do them, assignments should relate to the reality of students, and contain

elements nowadays, in accordance with current conditions, for example the condition of the Covid-19 pandemic, there are many things that can be related so that students are interested (Ilham, 2020).

The role of parents

The role of parents is highly expected by schools in order to facilitate children to study at home, so that children can study well. Parents should provide a comfortable place to study, the tools used for learning, ensure that the internet connection runs smoothly, provide nutritious food intake so that they can study in peace, and direct their children to be able to focus on learning. This is in accordance with research results, that parents try to divide their time between work and accompany their children to study, invite children to learn in a fun way so that it has a positive impact on strengthening the relationship between children and parents (Astuti & Harun, 2021).

Parents provide oversight of children's learning, so that children study diligently and fulfill the assignments given by their school teacher. Besides that, parents should also be able to direct their children how to study well, how to be able to take advantage of learning resources that are around the house or on the internet. Parents facilitate learning resources, in the form of books, or other sources on the internet by providing data quotas so that children can access learning resources from the internet. Children can also be directed to take part in interesting activities in cyberspace or find their own learning resources via YouTube, Google, or others that have something to do with lessons. This shows the role of parents as second teachers for children while at home.

Community Role

The Covid-19 pandemic has required schools, parents and students to adapt to distance learning. This change in the way of learning is a challenge for the community to play a role in helping so that the implementation of education continues to run as expected. The use of technology in the learning process is a realization of the development of the digital 4.0 era which is then applied to education. Educational criteria that can be implemented include the existence of internet media with a learning approach using e-learning and distance learning using blended learning (Masrul, 2020). The smooth running of a network is needed when using internet media and distance learning accompanied by face- to-face in completing learning material. The community, in this case the internet provider, provides services so that internet access can run smoothly. In addition, Indonesia's geographical location determines the availability of network access. Furthermore, for distance learning to work, a platform is needed. Platform as a container in a hardware and software system that can be planned and executed. Platforms that can be utilized in education include Edmodo, Google Classroom (GCR), Schoology, Zoom Meetings, Google Meet, Moodle and others (Mastuti, 2020).

Conclusion

Distance learning during a pandemic challenges schools, parents and the community to play a maximum role by taking advantage of opportunities, including preparing teachers to develop their own potential, learning a lot to master IT so teachers can innovate so that learning takes place well and is fun. Likewise, the role of parents apart from being a second teacher, also supervises, prepares children's learning facilities, accompanies, and at the same time can communicate intensively between parents and children. Furthermore, the role of the community is providing internet services for the smooth use of platforms that can be accessed, studied independently or through webinars and workshops by teachers, other people parents, and

students in distance learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. The suggestion in this research is that the Covid-19 pandemic is a warning for humanity to do even better, distance learning which was previously restricted, is now a must to do so that education can take place. Therefore, support from schools for teachers and students, parents for children, and the community as the provision of services in distance learning should continue even though the Covid-19 pandemic is over.

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