

ONLINE LEARNING JOURNEY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL: WHAT ARE WE TODAY AND WHAT'S NEXT?

Sarlita D. Matra¹, Dwi Agustina², Sayyidatul Karimah³

Universitas Pekalongan, Indonesia

¹starlighta_unique@yahoo.com, ²Tina50@yahoo.co.id, ³Sayyidatul.karimah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

COVID-19 Outbreak has caused widespread all school level closures for an unknown duration. Teachers are scrambling to find ways to support students from afar through distance and online learning. Elementary school teachers now have access to a dizzying array of Online Distance Learning (ODL) experiences. The method used in this study is the survey method. According to Yuliansyah (2016) the survey is one method used to gather information about a group of people or phenomena that occur in the social environment. Survey research is very suitable to be used by researchers in uncovering perspectives related to online learning conducted by teachers in a COVID-19 pandemic. This study would contribute the literature of online collaborative learning between teachers, parents, and schools that impact student success. Pranajaya and Matra (2021) said that the success of online learning in Indonesia during the COVID-19 Pandemic was determined by the readiness of technology in line with the national humanist curriculum, support and collaboration from all stakeholders, including government, schools, teachers, parents and the community.

Keywords: COVID-19, Elementary Teachers, Online Distance Learning (ODL)

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 Pandemic outbreak across the world has profoundly altered almost all aspects of life, including education, and Indonesia has not been an exception to these inevitably changes. The transition from traditional to distance learning is one of the shifts that has occurred. If a learner does not rely on himself in order to completely understand, distance learning is unsuccessful. Learners and their learning environments, on the other hand, are a significant determinant of distance education performance, especially for elementary school children. As a result, For elementary school students, distance learning is ineffective. This is because parents are not only interested in learning but also in putting pressure on their children. Both parents are uninvolved and seldom know what is going on. As a result, parents and the community are needed to help build

a conducive learning atmosphere and understand the intent of schools providing good education.

The focus of online teaching and learning is on learning resources and the use of technology as a teaching and learning medium. Online teaching and learning should use technology that is well incorporated. Planning, execution, progress, and teaching and learning assessment should all be covered. As a result, electronic devices and the internet are needed for conducting teaching and learning. The traditional approach, which uses less technology, is not being used at this time because all potential teaching and learning is now focused on information and technology. Since they are required to study independently without direct physical contact, students who enrol in online teaching and learning need a high level of motivation and support. Wardhani in her

research (2020) said that online teaching and learning show that teachers cannot fully control the students at the online class. The teachers do not know whether the students do their tasks themselves or their parents. The goals of this study are to explain the efficacy of online teaching and learning from the perspective of elementary teachers, as well as to provide solutions to problems that arise in online teaching and learning, in order to enhance and improve the teaching and learning process.

METHODOLOGY

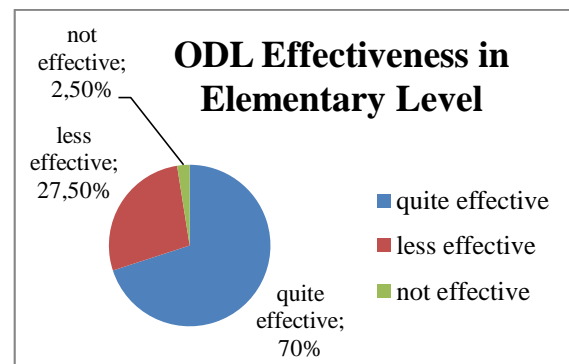
This research took a quantitative approach. According to Creswell (2010), the quantitative approach is a method of measuring data using quantitative and objective statistics obtained from a sample of people or residents who are asked to answer questions about the survey in order to assess the frequency and percentage of their answers. According to Yuliansyah (2016) the survey is one method used to gather information about a group of people or phenomena that occur in the social environment. Survey research is very suitable to be used by researchers in uncovering perspectives related to online learning conducted by teachers in a COVID-19 pandemic. The participants in this study were 40 elementary school teachers from different Pekalongan schools. In this analysis, a survey was used as the instrument. The questionnaire for the survey in the form of open and closed questionnaires was created in Google Forms so that the teacher could easily access it. Data analysis in this study was conducted as follows: 1) accessible questionnaire analyzed using inductive content analysis; at this point, the researcher takes notes on the various responses that the respondent gives, groups the responses by categorizing them based on the themes that emerge, and creates a general overview based on the categories that have been obtained. The answer is calculated using descriptive statistics

(percentage) after the content analysis process is completed, and the results are then analyzed in detail, and 2) a closed questionnaire is calculated using descriptive statistics (percentage) and the results are then analyzed in detail.

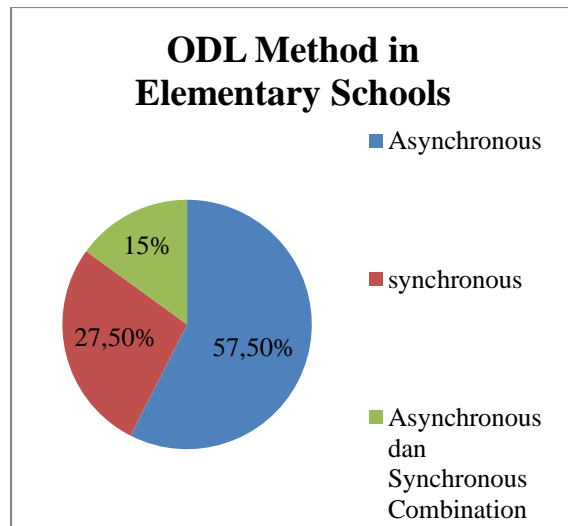
FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. What We Are Today

Most big respondents said that implementing ODL at the elementary level was very successful. Over 40 teachers from 16 elementary schools said PJJ was very effective in their classrooms, with 70% saying it was very effective. The remaining 27.5 percent reported that ODL is less effective in school, and 2.5 percent stated that ODL is not effective in school. When presented in a pie chart, the comparison of the response of respondents that can be seen as follows:



Furthermore, ODL approaches are used in elementary school, often in the form of an asynchronous system in which teachers and students do not communicate directly or at the same time. 57.5 percent of respondents agreed with this statement. Meanwhile, 27.5 percent of respondents said they used the Synchronous approach (direct contact between teachers and students), while 15% said they used a mix of asynchronous and synchronous methods. Comparison of the use of the method is that is can be seen in the pie chart below.



WhatsApp (37.5 %), Microsoft (30 %), Google Classroom (20 %), Google Form (17.5 percent), and social media are among the software used by teachers in primary schools to incorporate ODL (2.5 %). The primary reason for primary school teachers choosing a learning application is because it is simple to use and are already used to (67,5 %), easy to communicate with students (15 %), easy to handle class (7.5%), easy to summarize the importance (7.5 %), and because of the comprehensiveness of the features (2.5 %). Meanwhile, when it comes to the difficulties of teaching online courses, the basics are the most difficult in elementary school teachers conveyed a number of challenges in their class.

Challenges such as sequence presented in the table below.

Table 1. Problems in Online Learning at the Elementary Level

No.	Problems in online learning at the elementary level	Response	%
1	Students lack motivation and interest in online classes	19	47.5
2	Students lack independent learning skills	16	40

3	Lack of interaction between students and teachers	15	37.5
4	Limited internet quota	13	32.5
5	Less sure about the effectiveness of ODL	12	30
6	Students are not active in learning	11	27.5
7	The home environment is less supportive	10	25
8	Bad signal or internet connection	10	25
9	Students do not have a supporting gadget	8	20
10	Learning feels boring	8	20
11	Lack of skills and experience in using technology	7	17.5
12	Students do not like the task given	6	15
13	Gadgets are less supportive	4	10
14	Lack of motivation in teaching	2	5

From the table at the left, it is clear that primary school teachers face a slew of issues when introducing ODL or online classes. If considered carefully, the five key concerns raised by the teacher are students' lack of motivation and engagement in the classroom online, students' lack of independent learning skills, and less contact between students and teachers, the limited quota of the Internet, as well as the lack of confidence of teachers will be the effectiveness of ODL.

Among the five concerns, the main one is student motivation, which has become a major source of concern among elementary school teachers in Pekalongan.

This is very useful knowledge for the school in Pekalongan to be able to pay attention to the encouragement to learn participant learners at the primary school level.

In terms of a lack of ability to learn independently, it should be noted that the elementary students who took part in the study were young and still needed intensive help from teachers and parents to learn. With the introduction of ODL, which came as a surprise due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it's understandable if students' readiness to learn independently is not 100% optimal. The third problem, a lack of interaction between teachers and students, can be explained by the fact that teachers chose an asynchronous learning process, which means that teachers and students do not communicate at the same time. Particularly for elementary school students, the gadgets that are most commonly used by students are the gadgets of people who are older, so that parents who received the assignment first then asked the students to do the task, might be in the other day.

The next issue is restricted internet quotas. While there is already a government relief quota in place, elementary school teachers are also concerned about the internet's apparently restricted quota. The issue is complicated because teachers do not have to pay for transportation to classes, but to facilitate online learning, there is no charge for internet access which are sufficiently granted by the government.

The other issue is that teachers would be less trusting in ODL's efficacy. Thirty percent of respondents admitted to this. It was shown that the instructor had reservations about whether or not ODL would be useful in grading them. To put it another way, teachers are skeptical about how well ODL would be enforced and handled. If the problem described above is followed by a slew of others, then any problem must seek a way out. Furthermore, according to the report, the average elementary school teacher has more than

one problem in the classroom. As a result, it can be concluded that the respondents in the study have encountered certain issues that have not been resolved despite the fact that they have learned online over one year.

2. What's Next

There are still a number of unsolved issues that obstruct successful distance education. For instance, a teacher's function as a change agent is agent. The problem is that, since this is about elementary school, where the child sometimes does not have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, it is difficult to draw a hard and fast line between the impact of distance learning and the student's subsequent motivation to compare the full-time and distance modes (Keeagan, 2013). Another impediment is that most advances in distance learning are still in the experimental stage. We can no longer track at least one student's entire virtual education journey (from elementary school to university admission) since most services are only available for a limited time. Furthermore, the issue of bridging the distance between student and instructor relationships is seldom addressed. In disregard of technology progress, teachers continue to play the role of a facilitator and cannot have full control over the student during the online session.

Most of the teaching learning processes use WhatsApp, YouTube, google meet, and google form for the media of teaching and learning and evaluation. WhatsApp is used to announce the schedules and tasks that should be done by children with the parents' guidance. The parents are demanded to get involved in the group. They are expected to have roles in monitoring their children to access the online class, do the tasks, and motivate their children during the pandemic so that saturation can be avoided. The roles of parents nowadays is becoming more crucial as their children cannot meet their friends,

play outside the house freely, and have social gathering outside the house. Thus, game and YouTube becomes the media for children to have happiness at home.

The existence of gadgets and a variety of appealing games offered without much thought encourage children to become addicted to them and to use them as a means of escaping boredom. As a result, parents should devote a significant amount of time to accompanying their children to school and play. The stress levels of children can be reduced with parental guidance. The second medium is YouTube, which is used to distribute the online class content. Google Meet is the third medium. Students use it to communicate with their peers and to discuss class materials with their instructors. The final option is to use a Google form to collect feedback at the end of the online class session. Children who are unable to embrace change will find it difficult to adjust to their new surroundings. Then there's the rejection from the kids. Children who are unable to embrace change will find it difficult to adjust to their new surroundings. Then there's the rejection from the kids. The awareness of parents on children education is important, specifically consider the family and parents involvement are the main factors that determine the success or the failure of education for children.

One of the most critical issues in distance learning is defining the teacher's position and effects on its effectiveness. Teachers often struggle to find their place in the world of technology or the best way to teach elementary school students online. The needs of students are identified through communication, which provides a direction for the development of new curricula. Respondents said they'd like to continue learning in a format where student-teacher contact takes place immediately during the lesson, rather than after it's done. According to research, distance learning, like conventional full-time education, is no

longer just about education. As long as elementary school students' critical thinking skills aren't high, they need not only a home tutor, but also an instructor to mentor them in their problem-solving and self-motivation skills.

CONCLUSION

One of the difficulties of distance learning is that you and your students are no longer in the same space to address common misunderstandings together. Instead, activities that require a high degree of self-direction would inevitably consume the majority of learning time. As a consequence, keeping it simple is crucial. Designing distance learning experiences with very simple instructions and just one or two tools is important. Where appropriate, include tools such as readings as PDFs that students can access at any time. Keep in mind that even simple structures can necessitate a lot of effort: As students find out what to do within given constraints, tasks with few instructions frequently lead to the most higher-order thought. Distance learning should encourage educators to consider how they can provide new knowledge in a leaner and more succinct manner.

When it comes to developing distance learning experiences, efficiency is crucial. Planning can take longer and necessitate a high degree of attention to detail. When kids are disengaged, you won't be able to quickly fix errors or pivot. To maintain teacher's sanity and time, prioritize longer, student-driven assignments and activities that give teachers time to prepare future units while still getting the students off the computer. Concentrate on developing long-term projects that give students autonomy and a simple set of checkpoints and deadlines to meet. Develop opportunities for students to discuss what they're learning with their families whenever possible, and provide a component of student choice to really engage them.

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