



## Parents' perception on grade 5 students' learning activity using WhatsApp

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Various educational applications have been provided by the government that can be accessed and used by teachers or students as support for the online learning process. Most of the educators in elementary schools only use the WhatsApp group application.

**Purpose:** This study aims to determine how parents respond to online learning through Whatsapp groups during the pandemic.

**Design and methods:** This study uses a narrative analysis method with a qualitative approach. The population of this study were 20 parents of grade 5 students at SDN Tajur 01. The data were collected through indirect interviews in the form of a digital questionnaire distributed via WhatsApp. To find out the validity of the information from the questionnaire results, it was analyzed then summarized and arranged regularly. The questionnaire information is considered legal because it comes from the parents of elementary school students.

**Results:** The results of this study reveal the responses of parents, namely: 1) The majority of parents of grade 5 students said that it was true that teachers only used the WhatsApp application as an online learning medium in elementary schools; 2) The learning process via WhatsApp group starts every morning by providing learning materials and certain assignments through audio, voice and text according to the learning schedule; 3) The rarely detailed video explanation of the lesson given by the teacher causes the child to have difficulty understanding the subject matter; 4) Through WhatsApp groups, which are felt to quickly bore children studying at home; 5) The activeness of children in online learning can be seen by always working on assignments via the WhatsApp group. This research includes only one school in Citeureup. The use of the WhatsApp application as a learning medium for teachers and students should be re-evaluated.

**Keywords:** perception, learning, WhatsApp

### Introduction

At the end of 2019 and early 2020, the world was shocked by the presence of an international epidemic caused by a virus, namely the coronavirus. This virus by the World Health Organization (WHO) referred to as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 or SARS-CoV-2 and the name of the disease is referred to as Coronavirus Disease 2019 or Covid 19. The virus first emerged in Wuhan, China with its transmission from human to human (Relman, 2020).

In a short time, the virus spread to various parts of the world, including in Indonesia. The COVID-19 problem in Indonesia was found to coincide on March 2, 2020, when 2 Indonesian were confirmed to be infected by a Japanese visitor. Entering December 2020, there have been more than 600,000s people in the country who have positive test's result as the infected one from the virus. It was also noted that more than 500,000s people recovered

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and there were 18,000s people who died as a result of being infected with COVID-19 (Liputan6.com, 2020, December 13).

The COVID-19 pandemic period is a time when new changes are clearly seen as a result of the impact of a disease outbreak. One of the areas affected and requiring change is the field of education. Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Culture directly delivers instructions from the central government so that all of the students learn from home and not go to school listed in Circular Number 4 of 2020 concerning policy implementation education in an emergency the spread of COVID-19. The policy of learning from home ultimately results in learning that must be implemented with an online learning model, this policy exists so that learning activities can continue. According to Arsyad (2011) online learning media is a medium that supports education but is not a substitute medium for education. Therefore, this online learning policy is believed to be able to provide more convenience in learning, and can speak directly so that the material is easily accepted.

Wicaksono, Afif, & Herlina, (2020) explained that some of the things that can be tried during online learning are conversations and discussions online between educators and students. The government also provides various educational applications that can be accessed and used by teachers or students to support the online learning process. So that later the use of this online education system can be an effort that can be tried to overcome problems and make it easier for students to access educational material. Based on the explanation above, the conclusion is as stated in circular number 4 of 2020. The hope is that with the existence of this online learning system, it can make it easier for students to learn from home and be able to share meaningful learning experiences for students, without being burdened with task demands like completing all curriculum achievements for class upgrade or graduation.

Learning that is carried out in elementary schools also uses network or distance learning through parental guidance. This online learning adjustment led to the adoption of a policy that in the midst of a pandemic, Ministry of Education and Culture (2020, 7 August) submitted curriculum adjustments to teachers and principals according to their concepts. Online learning has been running for more than 7 months and of course education using this system has problems experienced by students, parents, teachers, especially school principals. The implementation of online learning is not as easy as expected, there are various problems and problems faced such as facilities and infrastructure owned by schools and students who are not all ready to accept in a short time for online learning.

Gusty & et al (2020) said that on the online learning process or e-learning, teachers can apply various online learning applications in the world of learning during the pandemic. The educators are made to think hard about strategies, procedures or methods that can be used to carry out fun distance education and provide meaningful experiences. However, in reality most of the educators in elementary schools only use the WhatsApp group application. Of course, because there are various considerations.

However, the use of WhatsApp groups is only for assigning assignments, without face-to-face online, while the teacher should master if the learning styles of children are different. Not only doing the assignment, but also needing to look at the description from the teacher. Because of the piling up of the workload, the conclusion is that the students are tired of doing the work and finally the parents do the work. Therefore, the lack of use of varied learning methods in presenting online learning has an unpleasant impact on learning, so students feel bored quickly and do not understand the learning material.

One of the schools affected by the pandemic was SD Negeri Tajur 01 in Citeureup District. Following the direction of the government, this school requires all students to study from home. In its implementation, students still get learning and assignments from the

teacher. Parents or guardians play a role in assisting this process. From the implementation of learning at home, according to the conditions of each parent, they gave different responses. Based on the research problems described above, the purpose of this study is to find out how the responses of parents of students about online learning through WhatsApp groups during the pandemic in grade 5 SDN Tajur 01.

## Methods

The research method uses a narrative analysis method with a qualitative approach. Narrative analysis methods or narrative research are carried out to express one's views on online learning by referring to the narrative that is told. This research was conducted by researchers at SDN Tajur 01. As explained in the previous section, online learning only uses the WhatsApp application in elementary schools. In other words, a number of educators in elementary schools only implemented one application to support the online learning process, namely through the WhatsApp group. However, to find out the truth, it is necessary to obtain data from the parents of students. Therefore, to obtain data fast enough in this study, it was carried out through indirect interview techniques.

Indirect interviews were conducted by distributing digital-based questionnaires containing questions about the WhatsApp group learning media to parents of students in grade 5 SDN Tajur 01 through class teachers. The questionnaire was designed using a form and distributed via WhatsApp Messenger. This was done because the research subjects consisted of many people so that direct interviews were not possible. The research population comprised 20 parents of all students in grade 5 SDN Tajur 01. The information was collected using a convenience sampling method by considering the zoning of the population area. Convenience sampling categorized as Non Probability Sampling (members of the population do not have the same chance of being selected as a sample) (Sya & Helmanto, 2020).

What was revealed in the questionnaire were: 1) Whether to only use WhatsApp Group in online learning during a pandemic; 2) How do teachers deliver learning materials / assignments on WhatsApp Group; 3) Does online learning through WhatsApp Group make it difficult for children to understand the subject matter; 4) What obstacles do children feel in the online WhatsApp group learning process; 5) How active are children in learning online through WhatsApp groups. The results of the questionnaire were then analyzed to determine the validity of the information. Questionnaire information is legal if it comes from parents of elementary school students. After that, the data that has been analyzed are then summarized and arranged in an orderly manner. Then the final result is a conclusion about the response of the parents of students regarding online learning through WhatsApp groups during the pandemic.

## Findings & Discussion

The outbreak that occurred on a global scale in 2019-2020 is an epidemic that is of serious concern to the world. In elementary schools in Indonesia, online learning is actually compulsion. The time of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was so fast, spread so widely that almost all countries in the world forced the government to quickly close schools.

### *Findings*

Research that has been carried out from indirect interviews via questionnaires to 20 student guardians or parents of grade 5 students who are attending state elementary schools in Tajur 01. The results show that all parents respond that it is true that only using WhatsApp groups

as a medium for online education for their children. All research subjects were the parents of grade 5 elementary school students at SDN Tajur 01.

As schools are also asked to be closed immediately by the government starting from the same time as March 16, 2020 (CNN, March 14 2020) (Nufus, March 14 2020) (Purnamasari, March 15 2020). Although in fact there is almost no readiness for online learning.

The changes demanded by COVID-19 have been very quick. Causes preparations to undergo various changes so that it is not optimal. There are many things that limit online learning, starting from the unreachable internet signal, the cost of quota which is not cheap, especially some who do not have internet access at all.

On the other hand, the government is clearly requesting that schools always provide education even from each house (Atsani, 2020). In accordance with the Circular of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 4 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Learning Policies in an Emergency for the Spread of COVID-19. Until there is no other path, great creative power is also the demand of a teacher. There is learning carried out by teachers who come directly to students' homes who cannot learn online voluntarily. In addition, there are also teachers who ask students to come to their homes and others. Getting used to the local situation is carried out by the teacher as an effort, the ability of parents and so on (Kuswanto, Luh, & Suban, 2020). On the other hand, an understanding of various online learning media for parents becomes a difficult demand for teachers. Actually Google Meet, Skype especially the latest Facebook Messenger and the like can be used as learning applications that can be used as teachers so they can speak directly even though they are different regions. But it must require quite a lot of quota and normal. This means that in some areas online education is not easy, because the internet that is owned has a low signal to empty (Atsani, 2020). If there is also, it can also be burdensome for teachers and even parents during the COVID-19 period which destroys the economic situation. Not only that, internet stability in Indonesia is very incomplete.

Even so, there are other routes, namely WhatsApp Group. If you only communicate with text, it only requires low costs because the quantity needed is small. Through WhatsApp, you can not only send photos, sounds to videos. The online learning media with a very high number of users is WhatsApp (Pertiwi, February 13, 2020). It was also reported that 143 million Indonesians in 2019 used the WhatsApp application (Wardani, 18 November 2019). Parents of students and teachers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic ended up communicating a lot using the WhatsApp application.

### ***Discussion***

How is the actual learning process via WhatsApp group? Parents of the students answered that the learning material and certain assignments had been prepared by the teacher according to the regular learning schedule given every morning via parents cell phones, in this case it meant that what the students were doing could be known and monitored by parents (SN, Interview / 7 December 2020) . The assignment given can be in the form of doing exercises in the textbooks he already has. By explaining lessons through audio voice and text on WhatsApp group (AJ, Interview / 7 December 2020). But even so, students rarely get detailed explanations via video from their teachers. Meanwhile, compared to only being given practice questions, video tutorials or explanations can provide a better understanding (Batubara & Batubara, 2020). From the results of the interview, it is reasonable that 15 out of 20 students' parents stated that adequate explanation for the assignment given by the teacher is expected. Parents of students also said the teacher's explanation was very limited and learning was only one way (YB, Interview / 7 December 2020). Even though there has

been no preparation such as lack of understanding about technology, parents are also required to always guide their children (Mastura & Santaria, 2020).

Online learning process through WhatsApp group in understanding subject matter. Some parents said their children had difficulty understanding the lessons given, but on the other hand some parents said the subject matter sent via WhatsApp group was very easy to understand. In this matter, the varied backgrounds of parents are also a natural difficulty. Elementary school level is not too difficult to guide their children in learning for highly educated parents. Parents also cannot guide their children in all subjects because there are certain subjects that are not easy for parents to learn and guide their children. Some normal parents complain about this. With the various activities that the parents have, the parents have a dilemma so that they are forced to spend more time on their children's studies. One of the students' parents also said that conditions should be able to make parents happy with distance learning, but on the other hand, it makes parents need to be extra in accompanying children which sometimes even becomes frustrating for both parents and children (SN, Interview / 7 December 2020).

Activeness in online learning is also a problem. One of them is without friends, children become easily bored studying every day at home. Studying only with father and mother, of course, feels different when studying with peers. What can encourage children to learn better is encouraging positive competition between peers. Not only that, children's behavior is quite influenced by peers (Lestari Suci & Budiman, 2020). Even though it doesn't last long while learning at home, the assignments given by the teacher are still done in a few hours. The parents of grade 5 students also said that thank God my child's teacher is always active and willing to do all the assignments given by the teacher (I, Interview / 7 December 2020).

Academic lessons will certainly fit the curriculum structure when studying at school. Still a very dense curriculum structure in Indonesia. If we talk about ideal implementation, the 2013 curriculum is still far from this (Damanik, 2013). The teacher makes learning simplification at home, this is a very visible difference between at home and at school. Children's learning time is also shorter when at home.

In this matter the most significant aspect is the exemplary parents (Abdurrahman, 2019) (Wulandari, 2019). Parents all automatically get assignments regarding this matter, especially when the child does not go to school. The role of parents as role models for their children is highly expected, especially during this pandemic (Kurniati, Nur Alfaeni, & Andriani, 2020).

At the end, there are some very important things. Especially at school, the teachers need to evaluate their performance as material for self-evaluation. The parents substitute the teacher role in educating their children should also be assessed. Various limitations mean that children's education cannot be fully delegated to schools, so this matter remains the obligation of parents. The roles of various stakeholders are highly expected in children's education. For children's education in the future, it must be supported by various environments ranging from schools, families and communities which are designed accordingly. Therefore, the success of children's education is greatly influenced by all environments (Daheri, Juliana, Deriwanto, & Amda, 2020).

From the various data exposures above, the researchers got a general picture of the response of parents to online learning via WhatsApp during the pandemic. From the interview data, it is known that the majority of parents of grade 5 students say that it is true that children only use the WhatsApp application as an online learning medium in elementary schools. The learning process via WhatsApp group starts every morning by providing learning materials for specific assignments according to the learning schedule. By explaining lessons via audio voice or text in the WhatsApp group. However, an adequate explanation

for the assignment ordered by the teacher is expected by almost all parents. Because most of the parents say that their children have difficulty understanding the subject matter. This is due to the lack of detailed video explanations for the lessons given. But there are also parents who state that the material provided is very easy for their children to understand. So in this case, the varied backgrounds of parents also greatly affect children's learning abilities. Another obstacle to learning online through WhatsApp groups is the feeling of getting bored quickly by children studying at home every day without friends. Finally, it makes parents have to be extra in accompanying children. That way the majority of parents say that their children's activeness in learning online through the WhatsApp group can be seen by being always active and willing to do all tasks.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of qualitative research with indirect interview techniques through digital questionnaires, it can be concluded:

Online learning in elementary schools only uses the WhatsApp application, this is confirmed by parents of grade 5 students as evidenced by the research at Tajur 01 Elementary School. the fact that the use of the WhatsApp application as an online learning medium is not optimal, which is due to the lack of detailed explanation of the subject matter from the teacher via video. Finally, it raises obstacles and difficulties experienced by students. So this online learning, especially the WhatsApp application learning media, needs to be evaluated in the future. So that there are no more teachers who are not maximal in providing explanations of subject matter. Especially when this pandemic ends, no one knows.

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