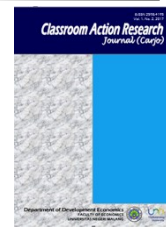




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Effectiveness of Online Learning Using Whatsapp in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

In this era of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers are forced to do online learning; one of the media is WhatsApp. Many online learners in high school use WhatsApp. The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of online learning using WhatsApp media during the COVID-19 pandemic. We can find how technology can improve activities during the pandemic COVID-19.

How to Cite

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INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 is a disease that has spread all over the world. One of the countries experiencing the impact of the spread of the Covid-19 virus is Indonesia. In Indonesia alone, patients identified as Covid-19 or commonly called positive patients reached 470,648 people, with 395,443 recovered patients and 15,296 dead patients. The number of Indonesian citizens who have contracted this virus has caused the government to urge the Indonesian people to *work from home*.

Work from home means that Indonesian people are encouraged to work at home with the aim of reducing physical contact with other people. No exception with learning. The government through the Ministry of Education and Culture urges schools or universities to carry out *online learning*. The application of online learning aims to break the chain of the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia.

Changes that tend to be fast cause preparations to deal with changes that are happening at this time are not optimal. This has been felt by the world of education today, especially in Indonesia. Readiness to carry out online learning activities that have been set by the government is almost non-existent. The inequality that occurs between the government and the school causes teachers to create learning so that they can continue to study even though they are not in school. Teachers also inevitably have to look for new learning media, namely online learning media.

In this easy internet era, there are many media that can be used to carry out learning. Various platforms have even issued products for learning for a long time. For example, Google Classroom, Learning House, Edmodo, Zenius, Teacher Room, Microsoft Office, etc. (Basori, 2013). However, it still takes a lot of time to learn these various learning platforms. However, if it is understood it is likely to have a positive impact on the learning process (Wisudawati et al, 2020). However, it is also possible for even teachers or lecturers to not understand the use of learning media. Especially parents with various backgrounds.

From this a new problem arises, which needs time to learn everything together. The emergence of the Covid-19 virus which suddenly forced everyone to stay at home. Therefore, teachers must be able to use media that are familiar to teachers, students and parents. The use of this familiar media aims to make it easier for various parties, both from teachers, students and parents who supervise their sons or daughters. Learning media that is easy to use is *Whatsapp*.

The COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the world since the end of 2019 has forced all sectors to make major adjustments, including the education sector. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Education and Culture responded to this emergency by implementing a school from home policy through an online learning system. This sudden change left most schools and teachers unprepared, both in terms of infrastructure and competence in utilizing digital learning technology (Darmawan & Istiqomah, 2020).

Amidst limited access and uneven digital capabilities, many teachers choose to use WhatsApp as the main media in implementing online learning. WhatsApp is considered the easiest platform to use because it has simple, lightweight features, and is commonly used by students, teachers, and parents. WhatsApp also allows sending text messages, images, voice, videos, and documents, as well as group

discussions through the group chat feature (Pertwi, 2020). However, this ease of access does not necessarily guarantee the effectiveness of the learning process.

Research conducted by Darmawan & Istiqomah (2020) revealed that out of 50 students who were respondents, only 25.4% felt that the use of WhatsApp was effective in supporting their learning activities. Meanwhile, 45.3% of respondents stated that WhatsApp was ineffective, and 33.3% doubted the effectiveness of this media. These findings indicate a gap between the availability of technology and the achievement of learning objectives.

In the context of online learning, direct interaction between teachers and students is very limited. Text-based WhatsApp is often not enough to explain complex subject matter, especially at the high school level. This can reduce the effectiveness of learning and reduce students' learning motivation (Bao, 2020). In addition, learning that focuses too much on giving assignments without adequate guidance makes students feel burdened and lost.

In terms of infrastructure, another problem that arises is limited internet access and digital devices. There are still many areas in Indonesia that do not have a stable internet network, and not all students have personal devices to support online learning. According to UNESCO (2020), around 50% of students in the world face serious obstacles in accessing the internet during the pandemic, and this condition is most prevalent in developing countries.

In addition, another challenge comes from the role of parents in accompanying their children in learning. Many parents do not have the educational background or sufficient time to help their children during the online learning process. This is exacerbated by increasing economic pressures during the pandemic, disrupting the learning atmosphere at home (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020).

In a theoretical study, Rasheed et al. (2020) classified challenges in online learning into three dimensions: technological challenges (such as connectivity and devices), pedagogical challenges (such as learning design and interaction), and psychosocial challenges (such as learning motivation and students' emotional burden). WhatsApp, although superior in terms of accessibility, has not been able to optimally answer the challenges in the other two dimensions.

Based on this background, research on the effectiveness of using WhatsApp as an online learning medium is very relevant. This study is not only important to evaluate the use of technology in education during the crisis, but also to formulate a better approach in integrating technology into the education system in the future. The results of this study are expected to be a consideration for educators, policy makers, and developers of learning media in determining effective, inclusive, and sustainable online learning strategies.

Whatsapp which is a social media based on text messages or short messages. The use of *Whatsapp* as a learning medium will certainly make it easier for teachers, students and parents. This is very reasonable because almost all Indonesian people use *Whatsapp* to communicate. *Whatsapp* has various features including private

messages, *voice calls*, *video calls*, besides that there is a group chat feature. The group chat feature is a feature to communicate using text messages with many users. The use of Whatsapp groups as a learning medium is very widely used among high school students.

Therefore it is important to know how effective the application of *WhatsApp* is. Researchers here will explore how the learning system works through *whatsapp media*. Therefore, research on the effectiveness of using *Whatsapp* needs to be done. So it is hoped that the response obtained from the description of the online learning process in the current Covid-19 pandemic era can be used as a basis for information for related parties, especially educational institutions.

METHOD

This study uses a type of field *research learning media WhatsApp* This study uses descriptive qualitative research in which researchers will utilize qualitative data and then describe it descriptively. Researchers used observation, interviews, and documentation studies to obtain data. This observation is where the researcher sees firsthand how the online learning process is at the basic level. Interviews are being conducted to students and teachers who carry out learning activities.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Online learning in all schools in Indonesia is a compulsion. The Covid-19 pandemic that hit and spread so quickly in Indonesia forced the Government in Indonesia to close activities in schools with the aim of reducing the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Starting March 16, 2020, the Government of Indonesia has instructed schools to close schools ranging from elementary schools to universities (CNN, 2020). Although online learning readiness is not yet mature.

There are many things that hinder this online learning, for example the internet network is not evenly distributed in the territory of Indonesia, there are even areas that have not been able to access the Internet network at all. Large urban areas such as Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, Yogyakarta, and other big cities do not experience significant Internet problems. Coupled with a wide selection of internet service providers that can be used.

It is very different from remote areas, borders, and remote parts of the country. The internet is a luxury that is not easy to obtain (Laoli, 2019). On Halmahera Island, North Maluku, internet access is very difficult. Likewise in the Pinang Belayer area, especially in the village of Ketenong, Lebong, Bengkulu Province, for example, it is very difficult to access the Internet, even accessing mobile phone signals is difficult (Arhando, 2019). Although getting a signal is difficult to reach the 4G network. This is what causes the internet to become a luxury item because not everyone can access it.

Not to mention the Internet speed in Indonesia which is relatively low in the world. According to Ookla, the speed of wired internet in Indonesia is only 15.5 Mbps while the average internet in Indonesia is 54.3 Mbps (CNN, 2019). Realizing this, the current Minister of Education, Nadiem Makarim, was shocked, because Learning Houses could not be used in certain areas. Finally, on April 13, 2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture held a lesson through the national television network, TVRI (Dikdas, 2020). However, this TV is not evenly distributed because it can only be accessed in big cities.

This inequality continues to force schools to implement online learning policies. In accordance with the. In accordance with the Circular of the Minister of Education No. 14 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Education Policies in the Emergency Period for the Spread of *Coronavirus Disease* (Covid-19). So there is no other way for teachers other than increasing creativity, new skills in the field of learning. There are even teachers who are willing to teach students from house to house because they cannot study online. Vice versa, there are students who come to the teacher's house to study. The teacher also tries to adjust the region, the condition of the parents, and others.

Actually there are platforms that can do face-to-face even though they are face-to-face even though they are in different locations. Examples are *Zoom Meeting*, *Google Duo*, *Google Meet*, *Skype* support applications *video call* that can be used. However, the weakness of the platform above is that it requires a very large internet quota and must require a stable internet. This means that online learning is not easy to implement, because it is constrained by a weak internet network and even difficult to access (Atsani, 2020).

There is another alternative for online learning, namely the use of *Whatsapp Groups*. If it is used for *texting*, there is no need to spend a large internet quota. In addition, *Whatsapp* can be used to send pictures, *voice notes*, documents, to videos. *Whatsapp* is also the application with the largest total users in Indonesia (Pertiwi, 2020). In Indonesia alone in 2019 it was reported as many as 143 million active users (Wardani, 2019). So, *WhatsApp* was widely used by teachers to carry out learning and communication between teachers and students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

From a survey that has been carried out by researchers with 50 students as respondents in various high schools in the city of Malang, the results show that all use the *Whatsapp Group* media as a medium of communication and online learning. When the researchers examined the effectiveness of using *Whatsapp* as a learning medium, 45.3% concluded that it was not effective. 33.3% doubted its effectiveness. Only 25.4% believe in the effectiveness of *WhatsApp*.

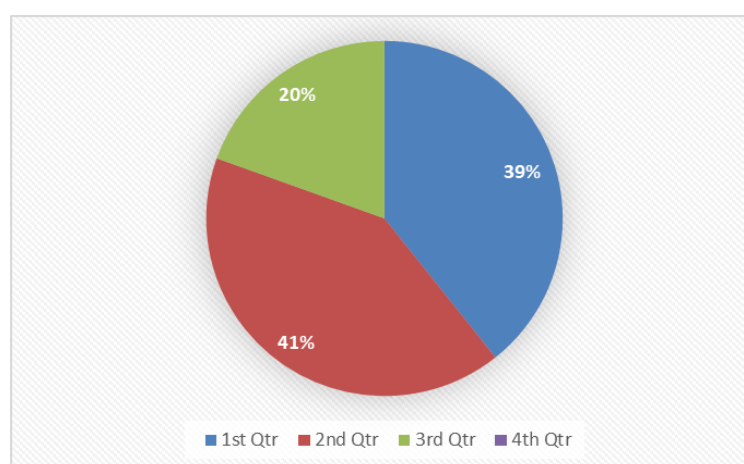


Figure 1. The Effectiveness of *Whatsapp* as a Learning Media

This is a hard slap for schools, especially teachers, for distrust of learning using the *Whatsapp Group*. This means that teachers are considered less creative in finding or using learning media. But in reality, the application of online learning

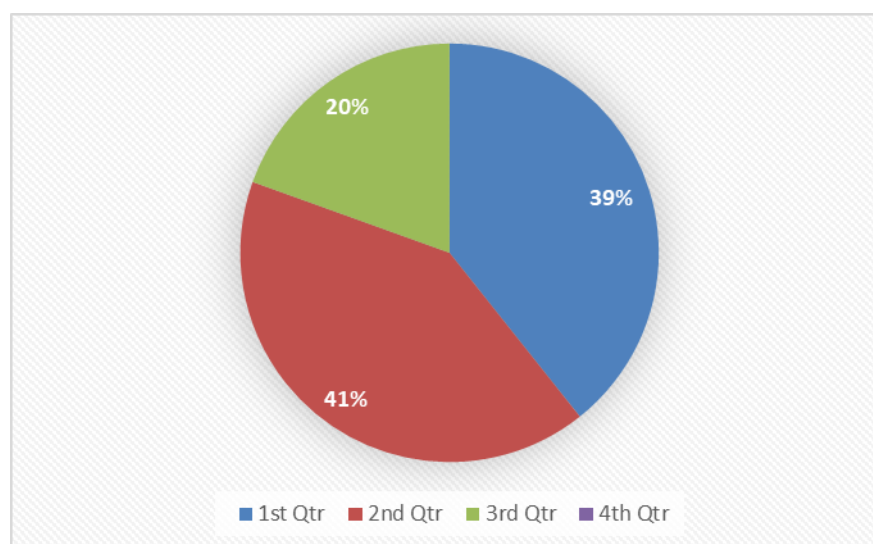
shows the creativity of the teacher. Some only collect assignments according to the schedule that has been given, thus giving the impression that the teacher is dead in this online learning. It is undeniable that not all teachers can use other platforms to carry out learning.

Other researchers upload different research results. According to research from Dewi, it is stated that online learning in schools is quite well implemented, although there are other factors that influence it such as the learning environment and the learning media used (Dewi, 2020). Sobron et al stated that learning using the Edmodo learning media had a significant impact on improving learning outcomes (Sobron et al, 2019). The use of Learning House learning media from the Ministry of Education and Culture also has a positive impact on the learning process during this pandemic (Yanti et al, 2020). This means that the application or *platform* has a different impact depending on its use in the learning process.

When reviewed online learning requires *effort* from the teacher. Teachers are required to create an integrative learning environment and fulfill various essential components of learning, namely adaptive, interactive, reflective and discursive (Oktavian & Aldya, 2020). Of course, all of this begins with an understanding of the learning applications that will be used. media *Whatsapp*.

Learning to use *Whatsapp* gives too many assignments to students who have to be on schedule. The tasks given include reading books, doing practice questions that have been given by the teacher. Unfortunately, the detailed explanations that teachers usually give in offline learning are rarely given when using *Whatsapp*. Even though giving an explanation via video will be of little help compared to giving assignments or practicing questions only (Coal & Batubara, 2020). From the results of interviews, researchers 85% hope that the teacher provides an adequate explanation for the given task. Some researchers suggest *video calling* while others suggest sharing videos. Video sharing has a better aspect because it is more flexible than *video calls*.

Another problem is the boredom of students studying every day without friends. Studying with friends certainly has a different taste compared to studying alone or with parents. Positive competition between peers encourages students to learn better. In addition, peers have a considerable influence on various student



behaviors (Lestari et al, 2020). Even though studying at home does not have friends, it gives more time. This makes students more comfortable studying at home.

Figure 2. Implementation Of The Learning Process

Comparing studying at school with studying at home, the researchers got the results of 39.3% of students more agreeing to study at school, 41.2% of students preferring to study at home, while the rest are confident of 19.5%.

However, it should be noted that learning at school is of course in accordance with the curriculum structure. In Indonesia itself the curriculum is very dense and detailed. The 2013 curriculum is still very far from its implementation nor is it ideal (Damanik, 2013). It's different when at home, the teacher seems to simplify learning. Therefore, learning at home feels shorter than at school.

This seemingly short learning process is less internalized. Online teaching which emphasizes more on cognitive aspects causes the neglect of affective and psychomotor aspects. Even though the school has assigned them to carry out certain religious or worship activities, help parents, and so on, they are reported continuously. But not many emphasize only on the cognitive side. Even if there are affective and psychomotor aspects, its effectiveness is doubtful (Oktavian & Aldya, 2020).

However, it is actually the result of a parent's misunderstanding of his behavior. Internalization of behavior or building character is also the task of parents (Daheri & Warsah, 2019). The example of parents is an important aspect in this regard (Abdurrahman, 2019). Moreover, when children cannot go to school, affective and psychomotor tasks are automatically handed over to parents. Parents during a pandemic are like *role models* or role models for their children (Kurniati et al, 2020).

It can be concluded that the importance of schools, especially the teachers, is to evaluate learning and related to themselves, parents also play a role in educating their children. In addition, the school, family, and environment must be designed so that they can support children's education in the future. All environments have an influence on students' educational attainment.

Some of the main barriers to using WhatsApp as an online learning medium include:

1. Lack of pedagogical interaction

WhatsApp is basically designed as a messaging application, not a learning platform. Its limited function in supporting interactive learning makes it difficult for teachers to deliver material comprehensively. This is in line with a study by Adedoyin & Soykan (2020), which emphasized that online learning requires two-way interaction, fast feedback, and media that support synchronous and asynchronous learning.

2. Emphasis on cognitive aspects

Teachers tend to only give assignments via text, without verbal or visual explanations. This causes learning to tend to only focus on cognitive aspects, while the affective and psychomotor dimensions are neglected (Bao, 2020). Online learning with minimal variation can reduce student motivation and understanding.

3. Infrastructure limitations
Unequal access to the internet is still a major obstacle, especially in remote areas. According to UNESCO (2020), around 50% of students in developing countries do not have stable internet access. Indonesia as an archipelagic country faces similar challenges, as explained in the Ookla report (2020) that Indonesia's internet speed is below the global average.
4. Suboptimal parental involvement
Not all parents are able to accompany their children to study at home, either due to limited time, understanding, or economic factors. Donnelly & Patrinos (2021) noted that the imbalance in parental support in online learning increases learning loss among students from vulnerable families.

CONCLUSION

The use of *Whatsapp* as an online learning media is considered less effective in achieving learning objectives. This is due to several factors, including the lack of explanations given by the teacher, low psychomotor and affective aspects of learning, unstable internet signal, busy parents. In the future, it is hoped that this online learning will be evaluated thoroughly. Teacher capacity and parental ability. The capacity of teachers and parents needs to be taken seriously. It takes serious efforts from all parties to achieve effective and efficient online learning. In addition, low-quality online learning systems are tolerated during the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, it is not known when this pandemic will disappear.

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