School Readiness in Online Learning: Impact of Implementation of Education Policy

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Abstrak

Dampak pandemi Covid-19 telah menjadi isu global yang menjadi perhatian khusus dunia pendidikan termasuk di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kesiapan kebijakan pembelajaran online di unit sekolah sejak merebaknya pandemi Covid-19 di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode survei dengan pendekatan kuantitatif yang telah menyebarkan kuesioner kepada 367 SD dan 64 SMP. Penggunaan analisis data menggambarkan hasil statistik pada angket yang telah dibagikan ke sekolah. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa sebanyak 365 (99,46%) sekolah dasar memilih pembelajaran online. Sedangkan untuk SMP, 64 (96,88%) sekolah memilih pembelajaran online. Namun, pelaksanaan pembelajaran online memiliki kendala yang harus menjadi perhatian. Kondisi kesehatan mental dan sosial ekonomi masyarakat untuk membiayai sekolah anaknya semakin meningkat sementara saat ini sedang mengalami krisis kesehatan dan ekonomi. Ini merupakan upaya pemerintah selanjutnya mengevaluasi kebijakan untuk tidak hanya merespons pandemi Covid-19 tetapi juga mengatasi permasalahan baru yang muncul dengan kebijakan pembelajaran online.

Kata kunci: Kebijakan Pemerintah, Pembelajaran Online, Kesiapan Sekolah

Abstract

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has become a global issue that is of particular concern to the world of education, including in Indonesia. This study aims to analyses the readiness of online learning policies in school units since the Covid-19 pandemic broke out in Indonesia. This study used a survey method with a quantitative approach which has distributed questionnaires to 367 elementary schools and 64 junior high schools. Data analyzes use describes the results of statistics on questionnaires that have been distributed to schools. The results of this study indicate that as many as 365 (99.46%) elementary schools choose online learning. Meanwhile, for junior high schools, 64 (96.88%) schools chose online learning. However, the implementation of online learning has obstacles that should be a concern. The mental health and socio-economic conditions of the community to pay for their children's schooling are increasing while currently experiencing a health and economic crisis. This is the government's next effort to evaluate policies to not only respond to the Covid-19 pandemic but also to overcome new problems that arise with online learning policies.

Keywords: Government Policy, Online Learning, School Readiness

1. INTRODUCTION

In the efforts of the Indonesian government to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic, all sectors have undergone changes in terms of policy, including the education sector which has been implemented online/remotely (Abel Jr, 2020; Ferri et al., 2020). Responding to the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Education and Culture through Circular Letter Number 4 of 2020 regarding the Implementation of Education in the Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) Emergency Period (Ismail et al., 2021; Tesar, 2020). There are three policy points related to online learning, first, online/distance learning to provide a meaningful learning experience, without being burdened with the demands of completing all curriculum achievements for grade promotion and graduation. Second, it can be focused on life skills education, including regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. Third, learning activities and tasks

may vary between students, according to their individual interests and conditions, including considering the gap in access/learning facilities at home (Handarini & Wulandari, 2020; Wahyuni et al., 2021).

All levels of education from Elementary School/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah to Higher Education (Universities), both those under the Ministry of Education and Culture and those under the Ministry of Religion, are all affected because students are forced to study from home online or online because face-to-face learning activities are abolished (Azizah et al., 2020; Safrizal et al., 2021). In the application of online or online learning, distance communication cannot be separated from the use of electronics (Maqsood et al., 2021; Parmin et al., 2021), such as mobile phones, tablets, or laptops as well as internet connections that are used as part of learning activities. With that, its increasing popularity and use in the education sector is also undeniable (Abbasi et al., 2020). The implementation of online education depends on infrastructure that supports the operation of online learning, including internet connections, quotas, laptops, and mastery of technology. The socio-economic background of students also greatly influences whether distance learning activities through various online devices (zoom, google meet, webex, etc.) can be optimally carried out.

The diverse assessment options that can assist in utilizing online must take into account the issues in the educational environment that are unique to the pandemic situation (Chick et al., 2020; Rashid & Yadav, 2020). Apart from several online platforms available for assessment with unique advantages and limitations (Daniel, 2020; Day et al., 2021). There is a need to use Learning Management System (LMS) features which make online reviews more reliable (Khan & Jawaid, 2020). However, in Indonesia, public schools in urban areas or private schools that have input from students from the upper middle socioeconomic class will have no difficulty in carrying out online learning. There are no problems related to access to the internet and technological devices. However, it is inversely proportional to public schools in rural areas or private schools whose student inputs come from families with low socio-economic classes. The difference in these conditions is a problem in implementing the Distance Learning policy so that there is a gap that underlies this research (Efriana, 2021). It is not only technological infrastructure that is only a problem, but also the socio-economic conditions of the community.

It is in line with a study from previous research that conduct a survey of 45 elementary school teachers in Banten showed that teachers care about online learning because it is what is needed during the health crisis, despite facing many difficulties (Fauzi & Khusuma, 2020). Furthermore, the result show difficulties found including low facilities, use of internet connection, planning, implementation, and evaluation process of learning with parents (Fauzi & Khusuma, 2020; Sundari & Leonard, 2020). Other study also add that these problems and obstacles must be faced not only on the island of Java which is infrastructure superior, but also in various regions in Indonesia which are still considered lacking in infrastructure (Sujarwo et al., 2020). Meanwhile, schools must re-transform learning methods that previously carried out face-to-face meetings.

This had also happened in schools in Blitar Regency which have been trying to implement face-to-face online learning. However, based on several studies that had explained how the implementation of the policy caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, it is necessary to follow up on the readiness to implement face-to-face online learning in schools in Blitar Regency. Therefore, this study would like to analyses school readiness in carrying out online learning. In addition researcher also take consideration for evaluating school readiness in implementing online learning which can have an impact on students in doing well in learning.

2. METHODS

This study used a quantitative approach (Sukamolson, 2007). Collect numerical data, in which quantitative data is collected through the distribution of questionnaires and the analysis is based on mathematics. Data analyzes is an important element in quantitative research methods because it is through statistical tests. However, this study does not use hypothesis testing, but describes the results of statistics on questionnaires that have been distributed to schools in Blitar. In the quantitative approach, the construct of the questionnaire designed is an instrument in this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) so that the statement items made can be understood by the respondents.

The total sample that has been obtained is 367 elementary schools and 64 junior high schools. With such a large sample, this research can be considered sufficient when it is representative of the total population, namely 668 primary schools and 107 junior high schools. To measure the readiness of educational units in carrying out face-to-face learning processes, this study presents the process of data collection which can be seen in Figure 1.
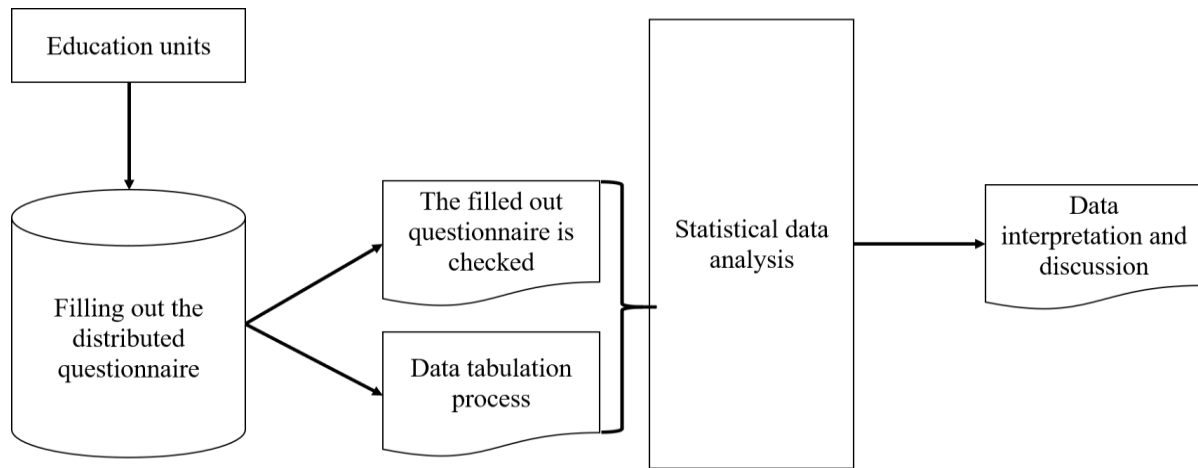

Figure 1. Data Collection Process

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study analyzes the data that has been collected from a series of data collection processes through related questionnaires regarding the readiness to implement policies from the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding Distance Learning or online learning for all school units in Indonesia. The total number of primary school level education units in Bliter Regency is show in Table 1.

Table 1. Selection of Online VS Offline Learning Process

Education Units	Answer Online Learning		Answering Offline Learning	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Elementary school	365	99.46	2	0.54
Junior high school	62	96.88	2	3.13

Base on Table 1 show totaling 367 schools that have answered the questionnaire distributed and shows that as many as 365 (99.46%) elementary schools choose to do online learning and only 2 (0.54%) schools choose to do offline learning (face to face). While at the junior high school education level, 64 schools chose online learning 62 (96.88%) and the remaining 2 schools (3.13%) answered offline learning (face to face). The measurement of statement items distributed and answered by school units in Blitar Regency is show in Table 2.

Table 2. Measurement of Research Questionnaire Items

Item	Mean
Adequate technology infrastructure for the use of online learning	4.05
Internet access can support teachers in providing material to students through online learning	4.08
There is an internet connection problem when online learning takes place	4.10
Teachers and students adapt quickly in adapting to changes in learning from face to face to online	3.49
Teachers are more comfortable attending and asking questions during online learning when compared to face-to-face learning	3.21
Through online learning, it is easier for teachers to monitor learning assignments for students	3.33
Parents can cooperate with teachers to monitor students	3.97
Students participate more actively (question and answer) when online learning is compared to face-to-face	3.69
It is easier for teachers to assess the results of assignments from students	4.48
Online learning is more effective and efficient than face-to-face learning	3.05
Parents can meet the needs of educational services for students for online learning (smartphone/laptop/computer needs and internet access)	3.15

Base on Table 2 the results of descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS can determine conclusiveness which has the main goal of describing a certain characteristic, especially in this study the ease and difficulty experienced during online learning. Based on the results of the analysis presented above, it shows that the average answer is more directed between "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree". For example, the statement "Technology infrastructure is adequate for the use of online learning" which has an average answer of 4.05 which indicates the answer leads to "agree". It is indeed agreed that the existence of technology can provide convenience from a job. However, the statement "Online learning is more effective and efficient than face-to-face learning" has the lowest average, which is 3.05, which means that the answers lead between "strongly disagree" and "agree".

Discussion

The influence of information technology on various aspects of our lives today has a great impact, and society cannot deny the role of advanced technology. This is the role of current technological advances so that it can help accessibility to various aspects that can facilitate work or needs (Arizona et al., 2020). Even though the existence of technology has become disruptive, in certain situations and conditions, if understood, it actually has a positive influence on the sustainability of activities (Arizona et al., 2020). Students are required to conduct online learning guided by the teacher through various available platforms (M. D. W. Ernawati et al., 2021; Wilkinson et al., 2021). Internet access and technology are dependent on the success of the learning process. With that, the Ministry of Education and Culture has issued and passed new regulations and policies for conducting online learning.

Overall, however, there were no measurable differences in learning outcomes and test scores between normal face-to-face classes and teaching in emergency conditions (Collings et al., 2018; Day, 2015; Krane et al., 2007).

Changes in the learning process have various responses from students who experience interference during learning, such as less optimal understanding of the material, activity, and interaction (M. D. Ernawati et al., 2021; Natalya & Halim, 2021). Nevertheless, mental health issues are a concern that should be observed and anticipated during online learning (Albashtawi & Al Bataineh, 2020; Renes & Strange, 2010). Because of course it will affect students' comprehension in terms of being able to understand the material presented (Dhahri et al., 2020; Dong et al., 2020). Coupled with economic problems which are also the impact of changes in learning methods, this adds to the cost of online learning equipment and internet quotas despite the assistance from the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding this. In addition, various regions have different technological infrastructures that are difficult to reach, such as research findings from (Sujarwo et al., 2020).

It is in line with previous study that found there is a wide "digital inequality" that exists in society (Mukhtar et al., 2020). One cannot assume that all students, as well as educators, will have access to internet connectivity and related state-of-the-art devices outside of their university, to be able to communicate. Affordability is another factor for limiting access to online learning with students from weaker parts of the economy facing a greater burden. The impact of accessibility and affordability can have serious implications on students in the education system unless there are student-friendly government policies that can ensure internet affordability and accessibility for students. Moreover the other study state that free internet program distributed by various internet providers as well as the Ministry of Education and Culture has not significantly addressed this problem (Ulyah et al., 2021). Discussing online learning, the determinant is the learning media, namely smartphones or laptops or computers. Ownership of the media for people with low economies has not been able to facilitate their children to easily follow the lessons.

The implementation of the Ministry of Education and Culture's policy needs to be evaluated as in public policy, of course evaluation is needed to achieve the target program that has been set. The government as the policy maker plays a central role in the welfare of the people in accordance with the 1945 Constitution that welfare is upheld. So with that, Circular Letter Number 4 of 2020 regarding the Implementation of Education in the Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) Emergency Period must be evaluated whether online learning is still valid considering that there is a tightening of health protocols that has also been set as a regulation by the Ministry of Health.

For suggestion in some areas with the number of Covid-19 cases that are not severe, face-to-face learning processes can be carried out while still complying with health protocols. Other alternatives, such as face-to-face learning processes are still held but with restrictions on the number of students or even on certain days can be considered. However, developed and developing countries have very different technological infrastructures so that the application of online learning is still an obstacle for developing countries. Especially in Indonesia, where each region and archipelago is also different in terms of its technological infrastructure.

4. CONCLUSION

The online learning policy by the Ministry of Education and Culture is the result of the increasingly severe spread of the Covid-19 virus in various regions. Online learning policies have been implemented in various schools so that learning for students continues in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, online learning can be seen as an effective

learning solution in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, in developing countries like Indonesia, which are still in terms of infrastructure and economy, there are inequality in various regions. Similar to the location of this research in Blitar Regency, it also showed that online learning actually adds to the burden for parents and students who have difficulty adapting learning methods. There are many schools, teachers, and students are still not well adapted to the shift from face-to-face learning to online. Online learning policies provide new problems for the community so that it is necessary to evaluate policies for the success of education and student learning in Indonesia.

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