Readiness of Elementary School Teachers in Implementing Online Learning and "Merdeka Belajar" During Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government issued a policy to change learning and teaching activities offline to online. However, there are still many obstacles experienced by teachers and students in implementing online learning. The purpose of this study is to analyze and evaluate the level of readiness of elementary school teachers, especially low-grade teachers, in dealing with and implementing online learning and independent learning during the covid-19 pandemic. This research belongs to the type of evaluative research (evaluation study). The research data is in the form of verbal attitude statements from the subjects studied, namely elementary school teachers in low or early grades. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. The data that has been collected is then analyzed descriptively qualitatively. The results of the analysis of document study data and interviews showed that 70% of lower grade elementary school teachers as the research subjects tended to state that they were ready to carry out online learning and were free to learn for their students. This readiness is coupled with the expectation of the availability of online learning facilities for both teachers and students and training on the use of IT media for teachers to create smooth and innovative online learning. The implication is that even though learning is carried out online by adhering to independent learning according to existing provisions, the process and student learning outcomes will be maintained and carried out properly according to the expectations, which are also stated in the learning objectives.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic that has hit the world has been almost two years. It impacts changes in teaching and learning activities (Ali, 2020; Tamboto et al., 2021; Yulia, 2020). Various levels of education carry out this online learning practice from elementary, junior high, high school to university levels (Andarwulan et al., 2021; Ferri et al., 2020; Nugroho et al., 2021). This step is considered appropriate for the time being. However, without adequate preparation, as a result, many educators stutter to face this drastic change (Arizona et al., 2020; Windhiyana, 2020). This online learning that has not been properly prepared certainly impacts the learning methods used by educators (König et al., 2020; Shereen et al., 2020; Yuzulia, 2021). The acceptance of online learning by students is also very diverse. Often they do not understand the material or delivery from the teacher (Tchen et al., 2018; Yustika et al., 2019). Parents who are busy working are forced to accompany their children during online learning hours (Lau & Lee, 2021; Mansur et al., 2021).

Based on the results of observations made, it was found that elementary school students study at home, and when accompanying tutoring/studying students outside the home, it turns out that only a few teachers can adapt to this online education. The teachers who can be relied upon to carry out online learning as expected are those at the millennial age (König et al., 2020; Mailizar et al., 2020; Waruwu, 2020). This group of teachers is very adaptive and quick to follow changes and the spirit of online learning in the adaptation period of this new habit (Fitri & Putro, 2021; Stover et al., 2016). Teachers can use applications to support learning by using zoom, google meet, and google classroom (Lapitan et al., 2021; Simamora, 2020). The media can interactively involve tens or even hundreds of participants (Lapitan et al., 2021; Putra, 2021). However, in reality, not all parents can have a laptop or smartphone device that supports installing the zoom application (Arizona et al., 2020; Windhiyana, 2020). Several obstacles/barriers were also found during online learning, for example, economic constraints related to the availability of quotas, unstable internet connection constraints, coupled with unclear online learning methods (Asmuni, 2020; Herdiana et al., 2021; Sadikin & Hamidah, 2020). Educational activities are not just teachers giving questions, students answering, then being given grades. That is not really what online learning means. The facts on the ground that are observed are what they are. Online learning is only interpreted as giving the teacher questions, not building and growing students’ 4C skills as the hope of 21st-century education (Surata et al., 2020; Windhiyana, 2020).

Educational practices in the current digital era require continuous innovation and creation so that teachers and students are not easily bored and bored (Rahardja et al., 2019; Rusli et al., 2020; Zain, 2017). Online learning should not just give assignments and questions to students because it is not by independent learning (Azmil Abidah et al., 2020; Sugiarto, 2020). One of the fundamental changes that occur in all academic units is the idea of independent learning. Freedom to learn as a policy makes students learn more according to their abilities and wishes (A Abidah et al., 2020; Yamin & Syahrir, 2020). In the concept of independence, learning anywhere is a school, and whoever is in that place is a teacher. Learning is not limited to buildings, school grounds, and classrooms with teachers as the source of learning everything. This policy, psycho pedagogically, is correct. Piaget greatly contributed to a holistic learning perspective (further embodied in a thematic learning approach). According to the theory of the level of cognitive development, children aged 7-11 years (elementary school age) are at a concrete operational level (Febriani, 2017; Ferri et al., 2020). The main characteristic of children who are at the cognitive level is their view of the world around them which is holistic, concrete, so that students are unable to understand concepts without going through real and contextual things (Nießen et al., 2020; Öztürk et al., 2020; Pellas, 2014). That is why thematic learning (which creates experiences through the holistic integration of aspects of life) is by the characteristics of children.

The results of previous studies stated that the effectiveness of online learning stated that teachers were not ready to carry out online learning for several reasons alasan (Herdiana et al., 2021; Sindiani et al., 2020; Terás et al., 2020). First, teachers do not have sufficient competence in implementing IT-based methods. Second, there is a refusal to do online learning because not all teachers and students have the supporting facilities; too much preparation is required. The lack of teachers understanding of online-based learning and independent learning can reduce students’ motivation and learning outcomes (Sangswang, 2020; Yuzulia, 2021). Based on the reasons described above, a study on the readiness of teachers to be researched in implementing online learning and independent learning was carried out. So it is clear that the potential problems faced by elementary school teachers when implementing the 2013 special conditions curriculum began during this pandemic. Teachers need to have preparations related to guidelines for implementing the curriculum for special conditions that are clear, accurate, reliable about how to do learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and are free to learn. The purpose of this study is to analyze and evaluate the level of readiness of elementary school teachers, especially low-grade teachers.
2. METHOD

This study was designed as a reference qualitative research by Bogdan and Biklen (1982) and selected a qualitative research paradigm. This study examines the actions of teachers related to their readiness to implement online learning and are free to learn naturally. This research was conducted in three stages: the pre-field stage, the field stage, and the post-field stage. The subjects studied in this study were 90 teachers of low-grade public elementary schools in Denpasar City. The research data is a verbal statement of early grade elementary school teachers’ readiness to implement online learning and independent learning. Methods of data collection using questionnaires and interviews. Documents in the form of a questionnaire/questionnaire and the results of interviews that have been filled in then examined and analyzed descriptively qualitatively. In analyzing the data, a data analysis framework was used, which was adapted from the interactive model developed by Miles & Huberman, which was divided into three stages, namely the data reduction stage, the data exposure stage and the verification and conclusion stage (Ramdan & Fauziah, 2019). The results of data analysis in the form of documents are confirmed and strengthened by the analysis of interview data for further interpretation, formulation of results, and presentation. The percentage results are taken from the teacher's responses in the form of verbal statements and answers to several questions asked after being confirmed with the results of interviews with the subject, and after that, conclusions are drawn

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on the results of data analysis in the form of responses from lower grade elementary school teachers in Denpasar City on eight questions and/or statements submitted to the research subjects related to the readiness of teachers to carry out online learning and independent learning. The teacher’s answer choices for the eight questions and statements posed tend to choose strongly agree (SS) and agree (S). It means that teacher readiness to implement online and free learning during the COVID-19 pandemic tends to be high. However, from the research subjects totalling 90 teachers, several teachers chose the answer to disagree (TS), seen from the percentage in some questions and/or statements that were submitted were quite small, so that they were not significant enough to affect the conclusions obtained from this study. 24% of the teachers studied answered strongly agree that online and independent learning is multidimensional and humanistic, so it needs to be supported and implemented instead of offline or face-to-face learning. There are 73% of teachers agree, and only 3% of teachers disagree. Although the ability and skills in the IT field are lacking, teachers also choose to agree that during the COVID-19 pandemic, learning is carried out online, the percentage obtained from the results of data analysis is 43% strongly agree, 56% agree, and 1% disagree. The results of the analysis showed several 49% of teachers answered disagree. The answer is based on the facts on the ground, namely in elementary schools where the research subject is serving, which shows that the number of students per group/class still exceeds 25 people. It appears that 67% of teachers chose to agree with online learning. 29.2% of teachers stated strongly agree. Only a small proportion stated that they did not agree with various reasons, including the lack of facilities, the absence of online learning facilities, and the teacher's lack of understanding of various IT-related activities. In the following picture, the results of interviews on the readiness of teachers to conduct online learning are shown as confirmation of the data obtained from the document study.

Figure 1. Interview results

Looking at picture number 1, it appears that almost 100% of primary school teachers studied stated that they were ready to carry out online learning although there were some notes displayed as shown in the
red image, there were 12.4% of teachers stated that they were ready but unable/understanding IT. Furthermore, in the green picture, the teacher states that he is ready but is not supported by any facilities at school or home.

Discussion

In general, lower grade elementary school teachers have the same attitude and enthusiasm, namely being ready and not refusing and not allergic to online learning. The enthusiasm and high motivation of this teacher should not be ignored. The enthusiasm in carrying out learning activities must be followed by the concern of regional leaders to facilitate the various needs needed to support online learning activities (Asmuni, 2020; Karasmanaki & Tsantopoulo, 2021; Tiwery et al., 2021). High enthusiasm and motivation of teachers will affect the enthusiasm for learning and student learning outcomes (Ferri et al., 2020; Jampel et al., 2018; Saripudin et al., 2018). The results of this study also strengthen and support previous research, which explains that the impact of covid on the implementation of online learning in elementary schools can be carried out quite well (Hanik, 2020; Lase et al., 2021; Sujarwo et al., 2020) The impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of online learning in elementary schools can be carried out quite well if there is a collaboration between teachers, students and parents in studying at home (Dhawan, 2020; Yulia, 2020). It is done because lower grade elementary school students are still very dependent on their parents or adults (Arizona et al., 2020; Slovaček & Čosić, 2020). In general, the media used to carry out online learning is still not freely owned by lower grade students, so it is possible that online learning for lower grade students will face many obstacles (Ilkal et al., 2019; Shodiq & Zainiyat, 2020).

Various seminars and FGD activities for online-based elementary school teachers have indeed been carried out during this pandemic. These activities impact increasing the insight and skills of teachers in carrying out online learning as well as independent learning (Fitri & Putro, 2021; Lailatussaadah et al., 2020; Meulensbroeks, 2020). Various information obtained from the speakers and friends in charge made the teacher more open and always wanted to create new things for the expected results for their students, even though the teacher could not meet face to face with the students. Several teachers admitted that online learning was not as effective as conventional learning activities (face to face), especially for lower grade elementary school students. It is related to some subject matter that must be explained directly and more fully. Thus, teachers must design and design online learning that is light and effective by utilizing appropriate online devices or media and by the material being taught (Ardi et al., 2017; Raharja et al., 2019; Simamora, 2020). The simplest thing a teacher can do is to use Whatsapp groups and other appropriate media. Various media can help teachers teach and train their students’ skills in lower grades (Febizla & Okatariani, 2020; Mirawati, 2015). The implication is that even though learning is carried out online by adhering to independent learning according to existing provisions, the process and student learning outcomes will be maintained and carried out properly according to the expectations, which are also stated in the learning objectives.

4. CONCLUSION

Early grade elementary school teachers in Denpasar City tend to be ready and support the implementation of online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Researched teachers are also ready to support the implementation of an independent learning curriculum. Only a few teachers stated that they did not agree for several reasons, including not operating IT and the unavailability of online learning facilities.

5. REFERENCES


