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Curriculum Management Strategies as Efforts to Improve the Effectiveness of Early Childhood Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Anisa Mega Nur Safitri [1, *], Mustiningsih [1], Agus Timan [1], Dwi Kurnianing Ratri [1],

Ghasa Faraasyatul 'Alam [1], Hasan Argadinata [1], Ahmad Khoirul Rizal Fahmi [1]

[1] *Department of Education Administration, Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang, Indonesia*
[*] *Corresponding author. Email: anisamega777@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT
The aim of this research was to find out a suitable curriculum-management strategy as an effort to effective the online learning carried out by early childhood educators in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic in several cities in Indonesia. Data collected by using literature studies and conducted using survey approach of descriptive research method. The sample in this study were early childhood educators in several cities in Indonesia. Respondents in this study were 100 respondents and conducted from March to June 2020. Researchers used data collection techniques in the form of interviews and questionnaires. The effectiveness of online learning at early childhood institutions in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic has not been effective. From this research, we find that some of early childhood educators didn't carry out learning in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: effectiveness, early childhood educators, online learning, covid-19

1. INTRODUCTION

At early of 2020, the world was shocked by the incidence of severe infections with unknown causes, which originated by a report from China to the World Health Organization (WHO). There were 44 severe pneumonia patients in an area, namely Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, to be precise on the last of 2019 China. The initial allegation is related to wet markets that sells fish, marine animals and various other animals (Handayani, 2019). On January 10, 2020, the cause was identified and the genetic code was obtained, namely the new coronavirus.

In February, this virus began to infect Indonesian citizens. The impact of this virus had a major impact on people's lives, ranging from economic, social, religious, health and even education. The impact of this virus in the world of education could be seen in central to regional government policies. For the sake of student's health, major school in Indonesia decide to dismiss or temporarily suspend the learning process from kindergarten to tertiary education. This aims to prevent the spread of corona virus transmission to students. This requires educators to work harder and more creatively in carrying out online learning so that learning continues.

It is no exception that early childhood teachers must be demanded to be more creative in providing online learning. Steers (1985) explains that effectiveness is the range of efforts from a program as a system with certain resources and means to meet its goals and objectives without paralyzing the means and resources and without putting undue pressure on its implementation. Learning requires careful and perfect planning, make the learning tools, choose the strategies, media, techniques, learning models, and evaluate the learning process, all of which are mutually sustainable.

It is necessary to use effective and innovative learning models so learning process could be more varied and run smoothly. The use of the learning model also adjusted to the material to be taught so that the suitability between the two and all components is appropriate. One indicator of the effective learning is the achievement of a learning goal. Learning objectives are achieved maximally, it can be said that learning reaches its effectiveness. In addition, student's active involvement shows the efficiency of learning. The teaching and learning process could be effective if the learning can achieve the expected goals of the learning and students can absorb the subject matter also practice it.

Learning methods and strategies are now run into a shift that leads to paradigm shift in education. This could affect the function of educators as facilitators, mediators and motivators in the learning process. Teacher always been considered as the centre of learning, but now center of learning process are the students. The reasons of this turning are that the rapid progress of information technology requires a paradigm shift in the learning process carried out by all students (Despa, 2020).

According to Koran (2002) E-learning is any teaching and learning that uses electronic circuits (LAN, WAN, or the internet) to convey learning content, interaction, or guidance. Hartley (2001) explains that e-learning is a type of teaching and learning that allows teaching materials to be delivered to students using the internet, intranet or other computer network media. Rosenberg (2001) emphasizes that E-learning refers to the use of internet technology to deliver a series of solutions that can increase knowledge and skills.

E-learning can reduce learning durations and make the study costs less than before. E-learning facilitates the interaction between students with course's materials, teachers also with fellow students. Students can share information with each other and can access learning materials at any time and repeatedly, with such condition students can further strengthen their mastery of learning material. In E-learning, the teacher's role was monitoring and guides the electronic guides which designed by contents writers, E-learning designers and computer programmers (Syah, 2020).

The forced changes by Covid-19 have been so fast. It caused the preparation to face various changes couldn't be optimal. The business world, for example, has experienced a lot of decline due to late adjustment. Bankruptcy can be seen from the occurrence of massive layoffs (Oktavian & Aldya, 2020). This also happened in educational world. Readiness to face the online learning set by the government is almost non-existent. Schools, in this case teachers are required to create learning, so the learning process can keep going even though students are not at school. Students and teachers should become familiar with online learning. According to Christina, early childhood educators must have expertise in reflecting and analyzing their teaching and learning activities. These characteristics need to be developed to improve the ability of teachers to develop advanced plans (Meidawati, 2019). The learning planning process must also be carried out so that indicators of child development achievement can still be held accountability to parents. Learning implementation activities include opening, core and closing as stated in early childhood standards (Nurdin & Anhusadar, 2020). Covid-19 emergency period has made the community even more restless. No exception, early childhood educators who have to be extra in prepare everything for online learning needs. Education must ensure teaching and learning activities continuously, even though students are at home. The solution, educators are required to design learning media as an innovation by utilizing online media. This is corresponding with the education policies by Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture regarding Circular Number 4 of 2020 which concern of education policies implementation in emergency of Coronavirus Disease's spreading (Covid-19) (Astini, 2020).

There are many media that used for online learning. Various platforms have long provided this service. For example, Google Classroom, WhatsApp Group, Rumah Belajar, Edmodo, Google Suite for Education, Microsoft Office 365 for Education, Your School, Smart Class. This is what is called a micro-bloging platform (Basori, 2013). But it takes time to learn the learning system through this online learning platform. If understood, there is the possibility of having a positive impact on the learning process (Wisudawti, 2020). However, even some educators do not necessarily understand the use of these media. Moreover, parents with various backgrounds. Here is the problem, there is no time to learn everything together. Covid-19 has suddenly arrived and forced everyone to stay at home. The use of WhatsApp Group in learning activities from home in early childhood institutions can make the learning become easier and flexible. That make WhatsApp Group application has been selected as a popular media to facilitate interactions between teachers, children and parents, even though conditions are limited by distance, space and time. The features in the WhatsApp Group can be used in early childhood children's learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as text message features, voice messages, video calls, receiving and sending pictures, videos and file documents (Hutami, 2020).

The learning process from home through online learning ideally still be able to accommodate the learning needs of students to develop talents and interests according the level of education. To realize this, it requires the readiness of educators, an appropriate curriculum, the availability of learning resources, as well as the support devices and of stable networks, so the communication between students and educators can be effective. The current condition of online learning cannot be called as ideal learning, because there are still various obstacles to be faced. This obstacle is also a challenge in implementing online learning, considering that online learning is educational activities that should be held, so educational process is still running in the midst of the current pandemic emergency Covid-19. The obstacles that faced in the implementation of online learning include the readiness of human resources, lack of clarity in directives local government, the absence of an appropriate curriculum, and limited facilities also infrastructure, particularly technology support and internet networks. The readiness of resources human including educators (teachers and lecturers), students,

and parental support is the most important part of the implementation of online learning (Nurul, 2020).

Although online learning will provide wider opportunities to explore the material to be taught, early childhood educators must be able to select and limit the extent of the scope of the material and the appropriate application of the learning materials and methods used. Effective communication in learning is a process of transforming messages in the form of science and technology from educators to students, where students are able to understand the meaning of messages according to predetermined goals, thereby increasing knowledge and knowledge of technology and causing changes in behavior for the better. The teacher is the party most responsible for the effective communication in learning, so that lecturers as teachers are required to have good communication skills in order to produce a learning process.

2. METHOD

This research was conducted with survey approach of descriptive quantitative method. The data was collected by using literature studies and searching for relevant theoretical references, this method is almost the same as the descriptive method. The difference, the explanatory survey method, emphasizes the search for causal or causal relationships between the variables studied.

The method survey is a research where the main data source and information are obtained from the respondents as the research sample using a questionnaire as a data collection instrument. Respondents in this study were early childhood Educators in Malang City. Respondents in this study were 100 respondents and was conducted from March to July 2020.

Data collection techniques used online interviews and questionnaires. Data collection is done using google form. Data analysis in this study is to organize, sort, classify, code, and categorize. The activities of grouping, making a sequence, manipulating and abbreviating data are so that the data is easy to read. The analysis used is clear, that is, it is directed to test the hypotheses that have been formulated. The hypothesis in survey is that the effectiveness of online learning is in a good category. This research can be drawn through the Figure 1.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Mastery of Online Learning Applications

From the results of identification of literature studies in several journals that not all early childhood educators in Malang city have mastered online learning applications used in the learning process. The data above shows that 59.8% or 70 early childhood educators master

online learning applications and as many as 40.2% or 30 early childhood educators who have not mastered online learning applications. The need for mastery of online learning applications by early childhood educators in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic is very much needed so that educators can continue to teach professionally. Professional teachers who are characterized by four kinds of competences (pedagogic, personality, social and professional) as mentioned above are again questioned. Namely, whether the competency criteria are still adequate, or are no longer adequate, so it needs improvement.

In terms of the time the criteria were formulated, which was around 2008, which means that they were only 9 years old, it appears that the formulation of these criteria was compiled at a time that had entered the digital era. This assumption is true, because the criteria for pedagogy competence and social competence as mentioned above have included elements of digital technology.

3.2. The Suitability of Online Learning Implementation with RPPH

From the results of identification of literature studies in several journals, it can be seen that 80.3% or 82 early childhood educators carry out the online learning process according to the RPPH that has been made while 19.7% or 18 early childhood educators carry out the online learning process is not appropriate with RPPH that has been made. This data shows that there are still early childhood educators. The Effectiveness of Online Learning for Early Childhood Educators in the Middle of the Covid-19 Pandemic who carry out learning is not guided by the RPPH that has been designed so that indicators of achievement in aspects of child development cannot be measured.

As an early childhood educator, he must carry out the learning process in the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, so that aspects of child development are monitored continuously.

3.3. Online Learning Carried out by Educators

Online learning methods carried out by early childhood educators in Indonesia during Covid-19 vary, but what is more prominent is the assignment method. From the results of identification of literature studies in several journals that as many as 90% or 90 early childhood educators use the assignment method in carrying out online learning. As many as 4.2% or early childhood educators use the discussion method to conduct online learning while 6.8% or 6 early childhood educators use the lecture method to conduct online learning.
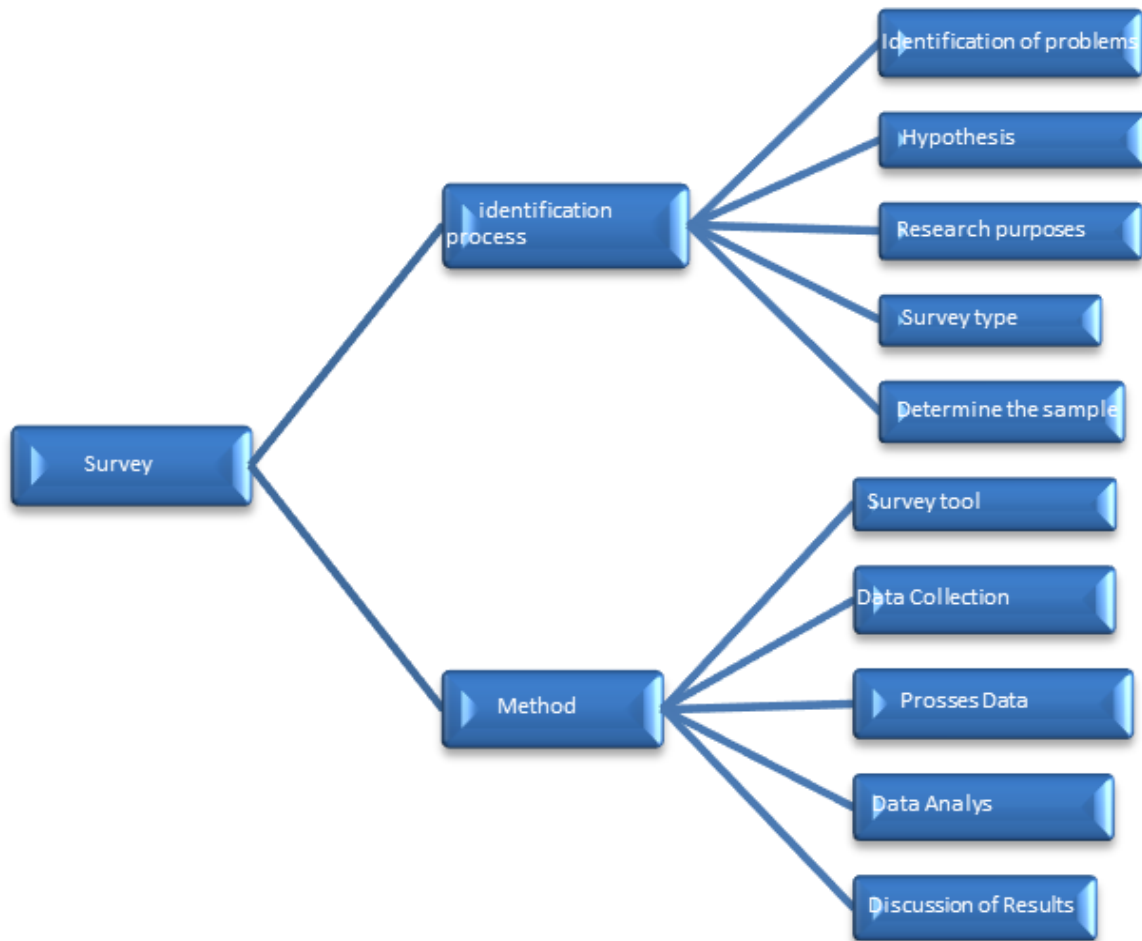
Figure 1   Research Chart

Some educators admit that online learning is not as effective as face-to-face learning, because some materials must be explained directly and more completely. In addition, the material delivered online may not be understood by all students. Actually, online learning requires a great deal of effort from teachers and parents, it is not as simple as it often happens. How not, teachers and parents are required to create an integrated learning environment and fulfilled various essential components of learning, namely discursive, adaptive, interactive and reflective (Oktavian & Aldya, 2020).

To realize effective learning, educators as the main figures in learning are required to be more creative in presenting effective online learning as well, namely educators who use the maximum teaching time, presenting material with various methods, monitoring programs and progress through student assessment, designing learning opportunities for students to apply learning experiences, being willing to repeat material when children do not understand it, setting learning targets for each child) (Setyosari, 2017).

Effective learning is characterized by a nature that emphasizes active student empowerment. Learning emphasizes mastery of knowledge about what is done, but emphasizes more on internalization, about what is

done so that it is embedded and functions as a conscience and life load and is practiced in life by students. It can be concluded that effective learning is a process of changing a person in behavior from the learning results he gets from his own experiences and from his environment which brings certain influences, meanings and benefits.

The results of Fakhrurrazi (2018) research found that the use of methods in achieving the desired learning outcomes, selecting, determining, and developing methods based on existing learning conditions. Learning can be effective if it achieves the desired learning objectives according to the achievement indicators. Teachers as guides are expected to be able to create strategic conditions that can make students comfortable in following the learning process. The teaching and learning process should the teacher be able to direct and guide students to be active in teaching and learning activities so as to create a good interaction between teachers and students and students and students. To improve an effective way of learning, the right strategy is needed so that learning can run optimally and effectively (Fakhrurrazi, 2018).

Early childhood educators who are creative in choosing learning methods that can be done between parents and children. Teacher creativity in the teaching

and learning process has an important role in improving the quality of student learning outcomes. Creativity is often defined as the ability to create a new product, either completely new or modified or changed by developing existing things. When associated with teacher creativity, the teacher concerned may create a teaching strategy that is completely new and original (original of his own creation), or it may be a modification of existing strategies to produce new forms.

Therefore, to support the learning process in teaching and learning activities, the creativity of teachers is needed in presenting the teaching and learning process related to methods, media and ways of handling students who have problems. For example, to support creative teaching and learning activities, teachers are required to make a medium in the form of attractive and multipurpose teaching aids in accordance with the characteristics of child development.

In addition to providing online learning, the learning methods used must also be in accordance with existing environmental conditions. Currently in Indonesia, especially Malang City, is experiencing an unwanted situation. The case of the Covid-19 outbreak does not stop learning, but learning must also continue. The policies that have been listed state that learning continues at home with online learning. This condition makes the learning process can be done online which requires an online application that can connect educators and students so that they can continue the learning process (Fitri, 2020).

Online learning or the application of e-learning in early childhood education has become a practical solution to the problem at hand (Nichols & McLachlan, 2006). Online learning has benefits such as building communication and discussions between teachers and children, children interacting with each other and having discussions with one another, making it easier for children to interact with teachers and parents, the right means to see children's development through parental reports with the aim that parents can see their progress first hand, teachers can easily provide material to children in the form of images, videos, and audio that can be downloaded by parents directly, and make it easier for teachers to make material anywhere and anytime (Nichols & McLachlan, 2006).

In order for online learning to run effectively, preparations are needed by the school and the parents of the students. The school provides facilities for teachers in the form of laptops or cellphones to teachers and the necessary internet packages. Meanwhile, the parents prepare mobile devices and internet packages as well as assistance for their children.

In this study, it was found that early childhood educators in Indonesia mostly use the WA grub application in carrying out the online learning process.

WA group is widely used in the learning process because this application is easy to use according to early childhood educators' statements that WA grub is easy to use, does not require a lot of data packages, more parents have WA, and WA grub does not need a strong network to be online (interview, 2020).

3.4. Applications used in Online Learning

From the results of identification of literature studies in several journals, it can be seen that 80.3% or 81 early childhood educators use the WA Grub application in the online learning process, as many as 10.3% or 5 early childhood educators use the zoom application in the learning process online, 1.1% or 1 educator uses email in the online learning process and others use other online applications and some remain face-to-face without using applications for learning. From this data, you can see an overview of the use of the WA group application as the application of choice for early childhood educators because it is easy to use and does not use a lot of data packages.

In online learning says it is more effective to use WhatsApp Group. How exactly is the learning process via this WhatsApp-Group. Most teachers assign specific assignments according to the regular learning schedule. This assignment can read the textbooks that you already have as well as do the existing exercises. Unfortunately, detailed explanations from the teacher through group messages, especially videos, are quite rare. Even though video explanations or tutorials can provide a better understanding than just being given training questions (Batubara, 2020).

4. CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of online learning at early childhood education institutions in Indonesia in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic on average has not been effective. From the results of the literatus study, there are still early childhood educators who do not carry out learning in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Early childhood educators carry out online learning without paying attention to the daily learning implementation plan (RPPH) that has been made so that learning indicators cannot be measured.

There are still many early childhood educators who are not yet proficient in using online learning applications. The learning method used is still dominant in giving assignments to students. Many early childhood educators disagree with online learning because it is not effective and not all parents have laptops or cellphones for online learning. On average early childhood educators use learning media with the WhatsApp Group.

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