Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities

The Implementation of Distance Learning During the Covid-19 Pandemic in The Mobile Classroom Community

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to reveal the implementation of distance learning in the mobile classroom community, to identify the social interactions that occur between students and teaching during distance learning, and to uncover the challenges and obstacles faced during the distance learning. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method, the data sources used are primary data sources using in-depth interview with students and teachers. There are three data analysis techniques used, namely data reduction, data presentation and data conclusion. The results of this study indicate that the process of the implementation of distance learning during the Covid-19 pandemic in the mobile classroom community went well and systematically. The interaction process that occurs during online learning between students and teachers is quite active and communicative. However, the implementation of distance learning in the mobile classroom community faces some challenges, it is including the availability of internet data both for students and teachers, the limitation of using information technology for learning, and the parents support for learning. These challenges and obstacles were impacted on students' motivation.

Keywords

Covid-19, distance learning, mobile classroom, student-teacher interaction

1 Introduction

Currently, the world is booming with the pandemic coronavirus or better known as COVID-19. Covid-19 is part of a large family of viruses that can cause various symptoms ranging from mild symptoms to severe symptoms. This virus was first discovered in the Wuhan area, China in 2019. In general, the symptoms of COVID-19 can be a fever of 38 °C, dry cough, and shortness of breath. The average incubation period is 5-6 days with the longest incubation period being 14 days (Direktorat Surveilans dan Karantina Kesehatan Sub Direktorat Penyakit Infeksi Emerging, 2020), and the worst impact on humans is death. On January 30, 2020, WHO declared the COVID-19 pandemic a health emergency that is troubling people from various parts of the world. Based on official data released by the task force for handling COVID-19, as of June 13, 2021, it was reported that there were 175,306,598 confirmed cases from a total of 223 countries. The global pandemic that is also endemic in Indonesia has made many parties seek to participate in overcoming and reducing this outbreak. In Indonesia, apart from the health sector, coronavirus had a fairly large impact in various other fields, such as the economy, tourism, social and education sectors. The Indonesian government issued a circular containing all indoor and outdoor activities in all sectors temporarily suspended in order to reduce the spread of the coronavirus.

On March 24, 2020, a circular was issued by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 4 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Educational Policies in the Emergency Period for the spread of COVID-19. In the circular it is explained that the teaching and learning process is carried out in their respective homes through a learning system in the network or distance (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2020). This policy applies from early childhood education until university. Distance learning is learning that emphasizes self-study (Abidin, Hudaya, & Anjani, 2020), by utilizing the internet network in the learning process. The platforms that can be used in the distance learning process include, through google classroom, google meet, zoom, WhatsApp group, and others. Distance learning is a form of education in which teachers and students are physically separated during the interaction and learning process (Simonson, 2019). Gikas and Grant in Firman and Rahman (2020) stated that "online learning in this implementation requires the support of mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, and

Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities 7: 00006 (2021)
Proceeding of Non-Formal Education International Seminar 2021

https://doi.org/10.29037/digitalpress.47396

laptops that can be used to access information anywhere and anytime.". Mobile Classrooms Community or Mobil Kelas Berjalan (MKB) is one of the educational programs that has agreed to an official decision from the government regarding the implementation of distance learning.

MKB is an educational program that was established in 2010. One of the missions of MKB is to provide educational services for students from non-formal education through equivalence education (Package A, B and C). In the mission it is implied about the implementation of the best education in order to achieve the vision of the institution. In an effort to achieve this vision, institutions must prepare and improve the distance learning process in order to provide the best educational services. The achievement of the objectives of this distance learning system cannot be separated from the role of various related parties. In the current pandemic, the concept of distance learning is very appropriate for students to use in the learning process, because the concept of distance learning is quite different from the concept of learning that is usually done in schools, this concept does not require educators and students to make direct contact. However, is this distance learning system already running well and able to increase students' learning motivation in supporting teaching and learning activities during the covid-19 pandemic.

2 Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. According to Sudaryono (2019), research is said to be descriptive because this research is intended to describe a phenomenon or situation as it is by explaining, illustrating in a sentence clearly and in detail through language that is not in the form of numbers. Qualitative descriptive research was chosen by researchers because through this approach, researchers will gain a deep understanding and it is possible to obtain the latest data and information related to the object being studied. This research was conducted in Kak Seto's Mobile Classrooms (MKB), South Tangerang City, Banten Province.

This study uses primary and secondary data sources. Sugiyono (2017), explains that primary data sources are data sources that are directly given to data collectors. The primary data sources in this study were sources obtained from interviews with the coordinator of the MKB program, 3 educators and 6 students. While secondary data sources are sources of data obtained by reading, understanding and studying which are usually arranged in the form of a document, book and literature. The secondary data sources in this study are books and literature that discuss distance learning and the covid-19 pandemic. Data collecting techniques in this study used observation, interviews and online documentation techniques aimed at teachers and MKB learning students. Researchers conducted data analysis through data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Implementation of Distance Learning

The process of implementing distance learning during the covid-19 pandemic in Mobile Classrooms (MKB) is carried out through auxiliary applications such as WhatsApp groups and google meet. In its implementation, there are several stages carried out in the learning process. The first stage is the stage before learning, in this stage there are several steps such as the formulation of learning objectives prepared by the teacher to determine the direction of the learning process that will take place. The formulation of learning objectives is usually carried out a week or a few days before the learning schedule takes place and refers to the 2013 curriculum that has been provided by the institution. The selection of learning methods used by teachers to prepare the way to be done in delivering learning materials.

In implementation, teachers often use different learning methods at every opportunity. The learning methods that are often used by teachers in the Mobile Classroom during distance learning are the lecture method, the discussion method and also the questions and answer method. This method is often used because it is considered quite simple and easy to understand by learning students. The way that students learn to adjust to the learning methods provided is by following the path given by the teacher and responding to the teacher well. Selection of materials and equipment that will be used in the learning process such as modules, stationery, gadgets, internet quota and good quality of battery power. In addition to teaching residents, to create a better learning atmosphere, there are materials and tools that must also be prepared by teachers to access the internet such as PPT, pictures, videos, cellphones,

Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities 7: 00006 (2021)
Proceeding of Non-Formal Education International Seminar 2021

https://doi.org/10.29037/digitalpress.47396

laptops, and other teaching materials. In implementing the distance learning model, the teacher acts as a facilitator who helps and directs the students. Meanwhile, students are directed to become active learners because they have been provided with teaching materials before virtual face-to-face activities are carried out with teachers.

The second stage is the implementation stage of learning in which there are several things such as management and control that occur during the learning process that takes place in the classroom. When conditions are normal, the teaching and learning process is carried out at Kak Seto's Homeschooling Building, Bintaro, South Tangerang. However, since distance learning has taken place, all learning processes have been transferred through distance learning media. Neither teachers nor students carry out activities in the building as usual. Even so, the distance learning process is still carried out every day. So far, the virtual classroom conditions during the distance learning process as a whole tend to be active and conducive.

Submission of learning information is done through several media, including WhatsApp, voice note, application google meet which is equipped with learning videos, PowerPoint media, and quizzes. The estimated learning time spent using the WhatsApp group is 120 minutes or 2 hours of complete lessons, while the learning time using google meet is usually combined with several media in turn, for google meet it is approximately 90 minutes for material presentation, 15 minutes for opening and 15 minutes the closing is done remains in the WhatsApp group. For video learning media, teachers usually use the YouTube application so that students can directly access the videos from the internet. For presentation media, such as the use of PowerPoint, teacher makes their own using references from the modules provided by MKB curriculum and materials, while for learning media, quiz teachers usually use the website from quizizz.com and kahoot.it.

The implementation of distance learning is carried out by considering the learning principles used to realize a lifelong education system (Armstrong-Mensah, Ramsey-White, Yankey, & Self-Brown, 2020). These learning principles are implemented from the learning preparation and when the learning process is in progress. Such as when the teacher gives assignments to the student, delivers questions and also when the student asks spontaneously to the teacher. An effective and efficient learning process is always coveted by teachers and students. In this case, there are several ways that teachers can be able to bring this up. it is by making the best use of time and reducing exposure to material that is difficult to understand so that there is more time to interact directly with students during the learning process (Fidalgo, Thormann, Kulyk, & Lencastre, 2020).

The third stage is the post-learning stage which is carried out after the learning process has been completed. The teachers assess the tasks performed by the students to be able to determine the level of understanding of the material from the students. In Mobile Classroom/MKB, the learning assessment is carried out in stages using a format that has been provided through Microsoft excel. First, the learning assessment is carried out when the teacher finishes giving material to the students. The second when the students collect their homework, and the third assessment is carried out after the mid-semester or end-semester examinations which then all assessments are accumulated and will be inputted into the odd semester and even semester report cards.

Then, the knowledge assessment carried out by the students on itself. but this assessment does not have a special assessment form, the students will judge that he has understood the learning material presented when he is able to answer every question given by the teacher, and vice versa. Teachers also do the teaching method assessment during the learning process. This is carried out to evaluate what things are good and need to be improved to be applied during the learning process. The assessment results are used to make plans for the upcoming meeting so that the learning process can run more effectively and efficiently.

3.2 Social Interaction of Learner and Teacher

Good communication will improve the quality of learning, good communication can be seen from the process of teacher interaction with students or vice versa. In teaching and learning activities, the interaction patterns between teachers and students are very diverse or varied. The distance learning process that takes place in the MKB uses a multi-way interaction pattern, where the communication that is built does not only involve dynamic interactions between teachers and students, but also involves dynamic interactions between students and others (Dewi, Widiana, & Dibia, 2016). This interaction process does not only take place during the learning process but continues until after the learning is completed. It is include asking each other for assignments, discussions about material that is difficult to understand and simple interactions while joking. Many of the students ask each other questions to the teacher or just respond to the delivery of the teacher. The students and teachers respond to each other in

order to create a pleasant learning atmosphere. In addition to the response given by the teacher to students, they also gave good responses to teachers during the learning process.

When the teachers deliver learning materials, the students are quite enthusiastic in responding to what is conveyed by teachers, such as scrambling to answer questions posed by teachers or simply responding to teachers with jokes. This interaction is quite well established, because there is a reciprocal relationship between one another. Students and teachers respond to each other quite enthusiastically. Djamarah and Zain (2010), explains that students are the main subject in education, because they determine the occurrence of interactions in learning. Student responses are needed so that teachers can provide appropriate action on student behavior, so that it is expected to provide effective learning.

3.3 Challenges and Obstacles During Distance Learning

The process of distance learning in MKB has been going on for almost a year. There are several challenges and obstacles encountered during the learning process. The challenges are regarding teacher preparation that has not been maximized and the availability of internet data that is inadequate. This is influenced by the condition of economic limitations of the students. Many students to equip with the learning support, such as the internet data or personal computer at their own home. The next challenge is the limited ability to use information and communication technology. Even though the students are quite capable of using technology to support the learning process, but their gadget sometime do not support the learning application used in virtual classroom, such as to download learning materials. The next challenge is regarding parents who need support from teachers on giving the explanation about the tasks given to students. Parents are always busy with their working live. Even so, they are still trying to improve their children's obligations as a student, such as studying and doing assignments.

The obstacle to the distance learning process reduced motivation of students during learning in the covid-19 pandemic. The covid-19 pandemic has made the learning process in schools is difficult in the first time, but now every student is required to adapt to the existing situation and conditions. In the midst of a pandemic situation, the distance learning system is the system that is considered the most suitable for implementing the face-to-face learning process through technology media. But in reality, every individual definitely needs interaction with other individuals directly and the distance learning system cannot fulfill that. Therefore, one of the obstacles in the distance learning process is the reduced motivation of students when compared to face-to-face learning. Likewise, with the students in the MKB, it is very clear that they are not enthusiastic about this learning, because they are only able to learn and communicate with teachers and other colleagues through the media. In fact, one of the successes in learning is related to the motivation of students (Schunk, 1995). Motivation is considered an important factor for successful learning, including distance learning (Fitriyani, Fauzi, & Sari, 2020).

Lack of motivation to learn can be seen from several things, for example students who are late in filling out the attendance list, late in sending assignments and the lack of responses given. Assignments are one of the mandatory things that must be given by teachers to students. It is hoped that the assignments given by the teacher can make students can study independently at home. However, during the distance learning process, it turns out that the tasks given by the teacher cannot be done on time by the students. This can be seen from the activities carried out by students after the teacher gives assignments. The activities carried out by students are resting, playing games and working.

The second obstacle is learning methods that are less varied. The distance learning system makes teachers choose which method can be used through the media. In MKB, teachers usually use several methods such as lectures, question and answer and group discussions. Determining learning methods in distance learning is not an easy for most teachers. Teachers are required to find methods that can make interactions in the classroom active but still enjoyable for students. Next obstacle is parents who unable to assist their students in learning. Parents often busy at work or doing household activity. In fact, parental assistance in the child's learning process, including providing support, motivation, supervision and learning facilities is very essential (Setyaningsih, 2020), despite the busyness of parents who cannot accompany their children, it turns out that there are several ways that parents can increase their children's learning motivation, such as reminding them of their study schedule, and encouraging their children.

3.4 Digital Literacy in The Distance Learning

The use of digital tools in teaching can motivate and facilitate teachers and students during distance learning. The focus of the digital era is not only on learning facilities, internet access, and online resources, but also on the readiness of teachers to be literate in digital literacy. In the implementation of

Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities 7: 00006 (2021)
Proceeding of Non-Formal Education International Seminar 2021

https://doi.org/10.29037/digitalpress.47396

distance learning carried out in MKB, it is undeniable that digital literacy skills, both the abilities of teachers and students will make it easier to follow each learning process. The students in MKB have the ability to connect their computer or mobile device to the internet network, both using mobile data and Wi-Fi access. Students are also able to access the software used for distance learning, such as zoom devices or google classrooms. This ability or digital literacy is a basic ability that MKB's students have in order to participate in online learning effectively. Digitally literate students will use digital technology to express creative ideas, examine information and think critically. With basic digital literacy, the students of MKB are able to interact and communicate during the learning process. For example, by using the microphone feature when they speak in the Zoom or Google Meet application and turning it back off when not in use to give the opportunity to speak for other students or for the teacher. Harjono (2019), argues that digital literacy is a combination of information and communication technology skills, critical thinking, collaboration skills and social awareness.

The teacher's role in mastering technology is also very important in the implementation of distance learning. The digital literacy competence of teachers determines whether or not quality learning resources are available for their students. Being digitally literate for teachers in supporting digital teaching is very important because of the possibility of teachers finding more creative, active, and collective ways of teaching in building and communicating knowledge through digital media (Laksani, 2019). For example, the teacher in MKB is able to present supporting text and images such as illustrations, graphics and videos so that students can get interesting learning information supplements. Sharma in Anggreani et al (2019) describes five skills as learning facilitators for teachers in implementing digital learning, there are networking skills, communication skills, thinking skills, nurturing abilities, and knowledge management. Furthermore, McLoughin in Andarini and Salim (2021), suggests that technological literacy is closely related to skills in utilizing the digital environment for student learning resources.

3.5 Sustainability of the Distance Learning Process

In various places, studies have shown that the current distance learning process cannot be called an ideal learning condition, but an emergency condition that must be implemented (Basar, 2021). Moreover, in the distance learning program implemented in MKB, the majority of students do not have adequate access to be able to participate in distance learning. This is because the majority of students come from low-income families, so inequality also occurs in distance learning practices. The Indonesian government through the Ministry of Education and Culture has actually designed steps to deal with the pandemic situation and is conducting distance education even though most regions in Indonesia do not have adequate internet access. Distance learning guidelines for educational institutions are provided through the Circular Letter of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 4 (2020) providing guidance on learning from home through distance learning, include; (1) provide a meaningful learning experience for students, without being burdened by the demands of completing all the achievements of the grade promotion and graduation curriculum; (2) focusing on life skills education, including regarding the Covid-19 pandemic; (3) providing a variety of learning activities and assignments for learning from home among students, according to their respective interests and conditions, including considering the gap in access/facilities for learning from home; (4) provide feedback on evidence or products of learning activities from home that are qualitative and useful for teachers, without being required to give quantitative scores/values.

However, not all of these guidelines can be implemented by educational institutions, including in Mobile Classrooms or MKB, especially with regard to distance learning applications used by teachers and students. Until now, teachers still use simple learning applications, such as the application Zoom, Google Meet and WhatsApp. In fact, the Indonesian government provides a variety of applications and distance learning content through various platforms, such as *Rumah Belajar*, *Quipper*, *Ruang Guru*, and *Zenius* for Elementary and Secondary Education levels. However, the teachers in MKB have not utilized this facility in the implementation of distance learning. Both teachers and students prefer to return to face-to-face learning if the Indonesian government has allowed return. This means that the sustainability of distance learning cannot be carried out by every education provider due to several things, including the lack of technological facilities and teacher competence in preparing learning media. In this case, the government needs to support various technology platforms for learning activities after the Covid-19 pandemic has ended. The provision of technology platforms in teaching can motivate and facilitate teachers and students during distance learning. The sustainability of distance learning can also occur if teachers can be more creative and innovative in presenting subject matter and giving assignments to students, so that

Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities 7: 00006 (2021)
Proceeding of Non-Formal Education International Seminar 2021

https://doi.org/10.29037/digitalpress.47396

learning activities are more meaningful and fun. In addition, distance learning can also be effective and sustainable if parents can accompany their children at home in learning.

4 Conclusions

The distance learning process is not a new educational model. However, in Indonesia, this learning model still tends to be common among the general public. The distance learning conducted at MKB went well and systematically. This can be seen from the series of learning process that take place very optimally starting from the preparation stage to the evaluation stage which is carried out properly and consistently. The interaction process that was built between teachers and students was quite active and communicative. This is supported by a good interaction process that is built between teachers and students. The distance learning process that takes place at MKB uses a multi-way interaction pattern, where the communication that is built does not only involve dynamic interactions between teachers and students, but also involves dynamic interactions between students and other.

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