The Role of Parents in the Online Learning Process for Sixth Grade Students at SDN Sari 1 Demak during the Pandemic

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the role of parents in the online learning process for sixth graders at SD N Sari 1 Demak during the pandemic. This research used qualitative research with descriptive method. This research was conducted at SD N Sari 1 Desa Sari Demak. The subjects in this study consisted of parents and sixth graders, totaling eight people. Data collection techniques and instruments employed in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis utilized in this research was data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results revealed that the role of parents in online learning at SD N Sari 1 Demak included parents carrying out two roles at once. The first was being a parent, and the second was as a teacher at home, including providing facilities and infrastructure, encouraging enthusiasm, giving motivation, and directing children according to each child’s talents and interests. However, parents’ difficulties in online learning at SD N Sari 1 Demak encompassed parents’ educational background, parents’ economic level, and difficulties in dividing time between children and work, which also affected parents in guiding children when studying at home.

Keywords: Role of Parents, Online Learning, Pandemic

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 virus that hit almost all countries has an impact on even the whole world. With the pandemic, some countries have implemented social distancing designed to reduce the spread of COVID-19. In Indonesia, with some considerations, WFH (Work from Home), social distancing, and online learning (in the network) policies are implemented. In this case, the use of learning media in the teaching and learning process is to increase the effectiveness and quality of student learning outcomes. Online learning aims to provide quality, massive, and open learning services to reach more and wider enthusiasts (Sofyana & Rozaq, 2019).

According to Umar (2015), this policy certainly makes a big change in children’s education, where parents play a vital role in learning at home. It is because learning is carried out at home without the presence of a teacher and study partner. This situation gives parents more roles as they are primarily responsible for their children's education in formal, informal, and non-formal institutions. Parents also play a role in determining the success of their children's education. Among the roles and responsibilities of parents are guiding the continuity of learning at home by supervising and establishing school assignment arrangements.

Regarding educating children, parents hold the responsibility. Parents also determine the future of their children. Family and environment are informal education pathways as in Law Number 20 of 2003. More specifically, according to Law Number 20 of 2003, it is explained that education is a conscious and planning effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students can actively develop their potential to have religious-spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by themselves, the nation, and the state. In addition, education with the teaching and learning process as an activity is a process of interaction between educators and students. From the interaction process, it is tied with interest and attention between the two.

The learning process will be effective and efficient if students have an interest in learning. Related to this, the family has a vital role in the children’s interests and achievements if the family, especially parents, is stimulating, encouraging, and guiding their children’s activities. It allows children to be interested in learning, more specifically in thematic learning and generally accomplishes high learning achievements (Imelda & Tulak, 2021). On the other hand, if parents are indifferent to their children’s learning activities, the children usually lack enthusiasm for learning. Here, the role and intervention of parents are expected to be a figure who maintains the family’s balance so that the family atmosphere always provides support to their children.

The current COVID-19 situation will actually demand maximum involvement of parents and require them to communicate with teachers more intensely in reporting their children's progress. Parents will also be more active in collaborating with teachers when accompanying children at home. It can also be said that the COVID-19 pandemic situation has restored the nature of children's education in the family. It is because the family is the first environment for children. In this environment, children get their first education. The main task of the family, especially parents, is to lay the foundation for the moral, religious, and character education of children (Iftitah & Anawaty, 2020).

Rahmi (2020) stated that the family has a crucial role in the children’s education since the family is the first and foremost educational process in the children’s growth and development. Strengthening the family in assisting children to study at home is vital. It requires parents to take care of their children's emotions, create a comfortable learning atmosphere, and accompany children to study at home. In addition, universally, parents are required to play a major role in thinking about and realizing the best education for their children (Lilawati, 2020).

This obligation is inherent in every individual parent because the presence of a baby is a successor to the hope and future of a family and a nation. Thus, through example, parents must ensure that their children become good in terms of personality, knowledge, and future. Second, the additional role of parents appears in line with social restrictions during
the COVID-19 pandemic. Studying and working at home is an inevitable solution. Therefore, parental participation is needed in the online school process, where they play a role in administering learning from the stage of children doing assignments, reporting assignments, and taking online exams (Zahara et al., 2020).

Based on observations with the principal, the phenomenon that occurred at SDN Sari 1 Demak is that parents were too busy with their work, so they forgot and did not pay attention to their role in children's education. Or, parents did not understand and realize their role, so they tended to assume that the task of education is entirely left to the teachers at school. In addition, the problem that emerged is that many parents complained that they could not work well. So far, parents have given the responsibility for their children's education to schoolteachers. In fact, looking at the current conditions, parents have a dual role in the online learning process at home. Aside from the responsibility of educating children, parents are also required to accompany children to learn online at home instead of face-to-face learning. Under these conditions, realized or not, parents carry out the dual role of education.

The research results on the role of parents have been widely carried out. Novrinda et al., (2017) investigated the influence of parental education in early childhood education. In addition, research conducted by Muthmainnah (2012) discussed how parents grew their children's personalities through play activities. Meanwhile, a study done by Martsiswati & Suryono (2014) explored the application of child discipline behavior by parents and teachers.

However, research explaining the role of parents in the use of the internet for education is still very rarely done. Likewise, the role of parents and teachers in building children's habits to use the internet in learning has not been examined yet. In fact, the role of parents and teachers is crucial, considering they are the people who deal directly with children in the family and school environment. This condition attracted the researchers to research the role of parents in the online learning process for sixth-grader students at SDN Sari 1 Demak during the pandemic.

**METHODS**

This research was conducted at SDN Sari 1 Demak, Gajah Sub-District, Demak Regency. The type of this research was qualitative. This research design used a descriptive approach. In addition, this study attempted to describe the role of parents in online learning and the difficulties parents face during online learning at SDN Sari 1 Demak. In this qualitative research, the researchers became the research instrument to obtain data directly from the source.

To determine the role of parents given to children during online learning at SDN Sari 1, Gajah Sub-District, Demak Regency, the researchers conducted observations and interviews with four parents in Sari Village, Gajah Sub-District, Demak Regency. Meanwhile, the description of the resource persons from the research can be seen in Table 1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Student’s Name</th>
<th>Parent’s Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>VAA</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Sari Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BSN</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>Sari Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Sari Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ASA</td>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Sari Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SHA</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Sari Village</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data of this research was qualitative, in which the data were presented in the form of verbal words, not in the form of numbers. The data sources used in this study focused on the role of parents in online learning and the difficulties they faced during online learning at SDN Sari 1 Demak. Meanwhile, the data collection method in this study employed observation, interviews, and documentation techniques.

**Table 2. Guidelines for Interviewing Parents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Aspects Observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>Guiding during online learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reminding to study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivator</td>
<td>Motivating children during online learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be a good example/role model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Facilitator
Providing necessities during online learning
Guiding online learning

Source: (Badria et al., 2018)

Testing the research data validity can be performed through checking. In this study, the data validity was carried out using triangulation techniques, a technique for checking the data validity utilizing something other than the data to check or compare the data. The triangulation method carried out by the researchers was source triangulation. Researchers made careful and detailed observations about the role of parents and the difficulties they faced during online learning by conducting interviews, observations, and documentation until the required data were sufficient.

In qualitative research, data processing, known as data analysis, aims to systematize and select data obtained from the field for further interpretation. This study employed a non-statistical qualitative analysis method, where the data reduction and data presentation components were carried out simultaneously with the data collection process after the data were collected. Therefore, the three analysis components (data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing) interacted. It aimed to answer the first research problem.

The data reduction stage was carried out to reduce the data obtained in the field. In this study, data from interviews, observations, and documentation collected were then summarized, and the unnecessary data were eliminated, focusing only on matters relating to the role of parents in online learning at SDN Sari 1 Demak.

After the data were reduced, the next step was to display the data. In qualitative research, data presentation can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts, and the like. Therefore, in this case, the researchers presented the data by selecting data in accordance with the role of parents in online learning at SDN Sari 1 Demak.

The third step is drawing conclusions. The researchers drew conclusions supported by valid and consistent data evidence when researchers returned to the field to collect data so that the conclusions put forward were credible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The Role of Parents in Online Learning at SDN Sari 1 Demak

The interview results with Mr. AS stated that,

“Peran orang tua dalam pembelajaran daring sangat penting seperti mengajari anak belajar. Orang tua siswa perlu memahami bahwa meski di rumah anak mereka harus tetap belajar”.

[“The role of parents in online learning is crucial, such as teaching children to learn. Parents need to understand that even at home, their child must continue to study.”]

In addition, the interview results with Mr. P stated that,

“Peran orang tua sebagai guru di rumah yaitu meskipun dalam keadaan bekerja saya sempatkan untuk mengajari anak beberapa materi yang di pelajari, meskipun terkadang saya sendiri merasa kewalahan”.

[“The role of parents is as teachers at home. Even though I am at work, I take the time to teach the children some materials they are learning, although sometimes, I feel overwhelmed.”]

It is one of the authoritative parenting characteristics, where children are independent, but parents still apply boundaries and control them. In this case, children felt pressured, so that they were not optimal in carrying out online learning. In fact, the role of parents is influential on children's learning, where children must be considered and given more understanding to be aware of the importance of learning at home and in the surrounding environment.

In addition, parents play a vital role in fostering their children's educational success. Specifically, during online learning, the role of
parents is needed, such as teaching and assisting children to learn, providing a comfortable atmosphere so that children focus on learning, encouraging children to learn, providing facilities for learning, and directing children according to their talents and interests.

The results of previous data descriptions have also shown that the role of parents in online learning includes the role of parents (1) as teachers, (2) as facilitators, (3) as motivators, and (4) as influencers. Parents can act as teachers, while teachers generally refer to professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students. The purpose of parents acting as teachers is an activity carried out by a person to assist others who are experiencing difficulties so that the person can cope on his own with full awareness. Educational and mentoring activities provided by parents to children are carried out from birth to adulthood by giving life lessons, religion, and general learning (Wardani et al., 2016).

This study’s results corroborate with research conducted by Cahyati & Kusumah (2020), with research results showing that the role of parents is indispensable for the child's learning process during this study from home. The role of parents is also necessary to provide education to their children who still do not understand about the pandemic, to stay at home so as not to get infected and transmit the virus. On the one hand, parents feel that learning at home is effective, but it does not mean that learning at school is not more effective than learning at home.

This research also aligns with a study conducted by Heriyan (2010), with the results revealing that in guiding children's learning, parents can act as educators, protectors, motivators, facilitators, and mentors. However, there are supporting and inhibiting factors for learning in class IV MA ARIF students in Rawalo Sub-District, Banyumas Regency, Central Java. It indicates that, in this case, the role of parents is essential in learning, considering that parents are teachers or educational facilitators during the pandemic at home.

**Difficulties Faced by Parents in Online Learning at SDN Sari 1 Demak**

Regarding the difficulties parents face in online learning, parents who were highly educated thought that education was essential and influential for their children. On the other hand, for parents with low education, most of them thought that education was less important for their children so that when learning was done online, they paid less attention to their children's education.

The interview results were delivered by the homeroom teacher of the sixth-grade students, Markolah, S.Pd. (June 7, 2021),

“Kesulitan yang dihadapi orang tua dalam pembelajaran daring seperti kurangnya siswa dalam memahami materi yang diterima pada saat pembelajaran daring dikarenakan karakter siswa berbeda-beda”.

[“Difficulty faced by parents in online learning, for example, is the lack of students’ understanding of the material received during online learning due to the different character of students.”]

In line with what the parents of ASA, AS (June 17, 2021) stated,

“Latar belakang pendidikan orang tua itu mempengaruhi proses pembelajaran. Karena setiap orang dengan latar pendidikan yang beda pasti tidak semua menguasai bidang ilmu yang sama dan disitulah kesulitan akan timbul”.

[“Parents' educational background affects the learning process. Everyone has a different educational background so definitely not all master the same field of science, and it is where difficulties will arise.”]

For parents with low education, paying attention to their children's education depends on each parent’s awareness level of the importance of education for one's survival. In addition, another factor is the economic condition of the family. Parents who have an established economy will pay more attention
to and guide their children in learning. It allows the parents concerned to fulfill the online learning facilities needed by their children in learning. Besides, a well-established economy allows parents to concentrate on guiding their children in learning since they do not need to feel disturbed by the urge to earn a living/work to fulfill their daily needs.

However, even though they are included in the mediocre economic category, not a few parents in fact still have more opportunities to guide their children's learning at home. Such parents do not need to wait for economic conditions to be established. For them, the most important thing is how to meet their children's needs for guidance in studying at home, even though in terms of fulfilling children's learning facilities, they encounter quite heavy difficulties. It is because, sometimes, children need learning facilities that are quite expensive and not affordable for them, especially with online learning conditions that require the use of internet networks with quite expensive quotas (Dewi, 2020).

It is in accordance with interview results with the sixth-grade homeroom teacher, Markolah, S.Pd. (June 7, 2021).

"Kesulitan yang dihadapi orang tua dalam pembelajaran daring seperti keterbatasan fasilitas terutama dalam hal kuota".

["The difficulties faced by parents in online learning are the limited quota. Even though the price is high, if it is for the purpose of children's education, I will buy it. The parents work, so the attention to children is reduced. It is because not all parents can supervise or guide their children every day.""]

Some parents can work as well as supervise their children. However, whether it has an effect or not depends on the awareness of parents. As stated by Friezka Hayuningtyas' parents, Risminah (September 8, 2020),

"Kesulitan yang dihadapi orang tua dalam pembelajaran daring seperti kurangnya perhatian orang tua, karena perhatian orang tua terbagi-bagi antara pekerjaan dengan anak".

["Difficulty faced by parents in online learning such as lack of parental attention is because parents' attention is divided between work and children."]

No matter how busy parents are with their various activities, they should still take the time to communicate and provide guidance in various matters, especially in online learning (Valeza in Wibawa & Wihartanti, 2021). As conveyed by the sixth-grade homeroom teacher, Markolah, S.Pd. (June 7, 2021),

"Kesulitan yang dihadapi orang tua dalam pembelajaran daring adalah waktu, biasanya mempunyai keterkaitan dengan pekerjaan orang tua."

["The difficulty faced by parents in online learning is time, usually related to the work of parents."]

In addition, the interview results with parents of VAA, S (June 16, 2021),

"Apabila dalam satu atap ditempati dengan jumlah anggota keluarga yang terlalu banyak maka akan membuat suasana rumah menjadi gaduh, sehingga sulit bagi anak yang belajar
secara daring dalam berkonsentrasi pada pelajaran yang sedang dipelajarinya. Orang tua mempunyai pekerjaan yang berbeda-beda, sehingga ada orang tua yang dapat membagi waktu dengan baik dan ada pula yang selalu merasa dikejar-kejar waktu.”

["If there are too many family members under one roof, it will create a noisy atmosphere in the house, making it difficult for children who study online to concentrate on the lessons they are studying. Parents have different jobs, so there are parents who can divide their time well, while some others always feel like they are being chased by the time”.

In this case, the family is the smallest unit of society, consisting of the head of the family and several people who are gathered and live under one roof with a state of interdependence (Prabowo et al., 2020).

From the research results at SD N Sari 1 Demak, the researchers can conclude that from every interview, observation, and documentation regarding the difficulties faced by parents in online learning, some parents experienced similar difficulties.

The difficulties faced by parents in online learning, for example, are the students’ lack of understanding of the material received during online learning requiring parents to study not their field material, limited facilities, especially in terms of quotas, time division between work and accompanying children during online learning, and a noisy house due to too many people making it difficult for children to concentrate when learning online. In addition, the results of the previous data description showed that the difficulties faced by parents in online learning include (a) the educational background of the parents, (b) the economic level of the parents, (c) the type of work of the parents, (d) the available time, and (e) number of family members.

These results are in line with research conducted by Wardani & Ayriza (2020), which showed that, in general, the obstacles parents face in assisting children to study at home during the COVID-19 pandemic are the lack of understanding of the material by parents, the difficulty of parents in growing children's interest in learning, not having enough time to accompany children as they have to work, impatience in accompanying children while studying at home, parents’ difficulties in operating smartphones, and obstacles related to the internet service coverage.

This study is also in accordance with Cahyanto & Eka (2021) with research results uncovering that the obstacles faced by parents include (1) managing children's emotions, (2) the lack of parental understanding, (3) parents' economic factors, and (4) the parents’ type of work. From their research, the sixth-grade students' minimum completeness criteria (KKM) achievement from daily and practice grades exposed that in online learning, sixth-grade students at MI Ma'arif Wadas, Kandangan Sub-District, Temanggung Regency, could exceed the target, where more than 85% of students achieved the KKM. It also indicates that the role of parents in online learning has a major influence on children's KKM achievement.

CONCLUSION

The researchers can conclude based on the description of the research results and discussion. (1) The role of parents in online learning at SD N Sari 1 Demak was different compared to conventional learning. Parents carried out two roles at once, being both parents and teachers at home. In addition, parents provided facilities and infrastructure for children, encouraged enthusiasm, gave motivation, and directed children according to their talents and interests. (2) The difficulties faced by parents in online learning at SD N Sari 1 Demak included the educational background of parents in educating children, the economic level of parents in influencing the online learning process, especially in terms of facilitating children's online learning, difficulties in dividing time between children and work, and the number of family members in affecting parents in guiding children in learning at home.

From the research results, discussion, and conclusions above, the authors can convey some suggestions. (1) Parents are expected to guide their children according to their needs in
online learning. (2) Class teachers are expected to monitor and work well with parents. Thus, the learning objectives can be achieved even though it is carried out online. (3) Students are expected to have enthusiasm and take part in online learning well to achieve maximum learning outcomes.

REFERENCES


