



## Working Mothers' Efforts In Online Learning Assistance for Elementary School-Age Children During the Pandemic Covid-19

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### ABSTRACT

This study discusses the role of working mothers in accompanying elementary school children during online learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic. At SDN 198 Mekarjaya, Bandung City, working mothers face time constraints in assisting children to learn from home, which has an impact on the child's learning process. The purpose of this study was to determine the mentoring efforts made by working mothers. The study used a descriptive quantitative method with an online questionnaire distributed to 35 respondents from classes I, II, and III. The results showed that working mothers most often ensure children's learning readiness and check the class group, apply learning discipline in a relaxed but firm manner, provide rewards and attention to motivate children, and provide learning facilities and guide the use of devices. Recommendations from this study are the importance of building communication with teachers, providing interactive learning resources, and creating a special learning space at home.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since March 2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia has issued a policy that teaching and learning activities must be carried out online or commonly referred to as Study From Home. Online learning is learning that is carried out to streamline distance and time and minimize physical contact and direct interaction. The process is carried out using various internet-based digital platforms.

Parental assistance in children's online learning process is an effort by parents to accompany, aid in overcoming children's learning problems, provide motivation, support, supervision, and provide facilities for children so that children are enthusiastic about learning. An explorative study conducted by several Pelita Harapan University lecturers stated that for children in grades I - III, parental assistance is still needed to accompany learning at home, at least to provide online learning tools such as devices and internet connections before online learning takes place (Purwanto et al., 2020).

For a working mother, online learning certainly causes a mother to be required to do everything multitasking. This condition is certainly very tiring and can increase stress. The reasons behind the actions of mothers choosing to work and become career women are due to certain motives that underlie their need to work outside the home (Nurhidayah, 2008).

Assistance efforts can be made by parents, such as checking the assignments given by the teacher, knowing the obstacles experienced by children, and communicating with teachers regarding the obstacles experienced in assisting children to learn from home (Kusumaningrum et al., 2020).

Student guardians, especially mothers from the lower grades, namely grades I - III of SDN 198 Mekarjaya, Bandung City, almost 50% of mothers from each class have other jobs besides being housewives since this pandemic. The problem that occurs with student guardians (especially mothers) at SDN 198 Mekarjaya Bandung City is that they neglect their children because they do not have enough time to accompany their children to study online at home.

Elementary school-age children need to be guided and assisted in terms of how to learn well, time use issues, how to take notes, various ways to overcome learning difficulties, how to study together, develop learning motivation and others. Parents also need to provide facilities and infrastructure that support children's learning process at home. These facilities and infrastructure include a comfortable place to study, books and learning resources that support. Based on this description, the author intends to find out more about the efforts made by a working mother in assisting online learning activities for elementary school-age children during this pandemic.

## 2. METHODS

The type of research used is descriptive research with a quantitative approach. The focus of the research used by the author is to obtain data on the efforts of working mothers in online learning assistance for elementary school-age children. The population in this study were working mothers who had elementary school-age children in grades I, II, and III and the children themselves attended SDN 198 Mekarjaya Bandung City. The sample used in the study was a saturated sample. The sample was 35 working mothers who have children in grades I, II, and III of SDN 198 Mekarjaya Bandung.

## 2.1. Research Instruments

The research instruments used in this study are as follows:

### 2.1.1. Questionnaire

The questionnaire used is a closed questionnaire in the form of multiple choice questions equipped with alternative answers consisting of four options to find out the efforts of working mothers in assisting online learning in elementary school children in grades I, II, and III at SDN 198 Mekarjaya Bandung.

### 2.1.2. Interview

The interview method is used as an initial data collection before the research takes place, namely to find out the problems that occur at the research site. The interviewees include teachers of class I, class II and class III of SDN 198 Mekarjaya Bandung City.

## 2.2. Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis used in this study is the percentage of each answer to the questions that have been filled in by respondents with data processing. Data verification is carried out to check the questionnaire collected for the completeness of the respondent's answer to each question item in accordance with the filling guidelines. Data tabulation is carried out to predict the answers regarding the frequency of each option item in each item, so that it is clear the frequency of respondents' answers. Respondents are allowed to choose more than one alternative answer. The answer adjusts to the activities that are often carried out by respondents.

Percentage data is a calculation used to see the size of the frequency of research instruments given by respondents, because the number of respondents' answers is different. The formula used to achieve the percentage as follows:

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100\%$$

Description:

P = Percentage (number of percentages sought)

f = Frequency of respondent's answer

n = Number of respondents

100% = Absolute number

The percentage of data that has become the average is then categorized using the limits put forward by Ridwan (Ridwan *et al.*, 2023). The percentage of data can be seen through the **Tabel 1.**

**Table 1.** Data Percentage Criteria

No.	Percentage	Criteria
1.	75% - 100 %	Very High
2.	50% - 75%	High
3.	25% - 50%	Low

No.	Percentage	Criteria
4.	1 % - 25%	Very Low

The criteria in **Table 1** were used as a reference adapted to this research in the following language:

75% - 100% : Working mothers' most frequent effort.

50% - 75% : Efforts made by working mothers are frequent.

25% - 50% : Working mothers' efforts are rarely made.

1% - 25% : Working mothers' efforts are very rare.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings were obtained through a closed questionnaire in the form of selected questions equipped with alternative answers consisting of four options. The data was collected from 35 working mothers who provide online learning assistance to elementary school-age children in grades I - III where the children themselves attend SDN 198 Mekarjaya Bandung City.

#### 3.1. Working Mothers' Efforts in Tutoring Activities

The most frequent efforts made by working mothers in their children's online learning activities, most working mothers make sure the children are ready to learn and check the children's class groups on telecommunications media.

Homeroom teachers revealed that they often get complaints from parents about their children who do not want to study if they are not accompanied directly by their mothers. The mother has to go to work, so the mother must first make sure whether the child wants to study independently or not (Researcher Data, 2021).

The children's class group includes all information related to learning activities, from lesson schedules, materials, to the assignments that teachers will give to their students. The third grade teacher at the school mentioned that all learning activities at SDN 198 Mekarjaya use Whatsapp groups as the main medium for online learning activities (Researcher Data, 2021).

Efforts that are often made in guiding learning activities, more than half of working mothers try to wake up as early as possible so that all work can be handled properly and discuss all children's learning activities after work.

The mother's busy schedule at work certainly drains the time between mother and child. By trying to wake up as early as possible, working mothers can handle all their work well. Then, working mothers can discuss with their children about their learning activities after work. Efforts made by parents in overcoming obstacles to children learning at home are to arrange time to continue to guide children even though they are very busy (Nurbaety, 2016).

Efforts that are often made by working mothers in guiding the next learning activities are giving examples of how to do assignments painstakingly, guiding children in understanding the subject matter and providing time requirements for gadget use.

During this Study From Home period, mothers temporarily replace the role of teachers in accompanying and guiding children's online learning activities at home. Parents need to create new rules at home, one of which is by regulating the use of gadgets, as an effort to

prevent children from being addicted to playing gadgets (Kurniati *et al.*, 2020). Giving examples in doing assignments and guiding children in understanding the material, as well as giving time requirements for gadget use, in this study these efforts were quite often carried out by working mothers despite being busy with their work.

Less than half of the working mothers made efforts to discuss their children's learning activities with their assistants. Discussing with the child's companion when the mother is busy working and taking the time to check the child's schoolwork after work is one of the good ways to guide children's learning activities even though they are busy working. Children still need direct attention and guidance from parents, especially mothers during learning activities (Nurbaety, 2016).

Efforts that are very rarely made in online learning assistance in guiding children's learning activities, a small proportion of working mothers try to check children's tidiness, discuss learning activities and discuss school assignments with their teachers directly.

Since the Study From Home period, some children feel that school from home does not require a morning shower, or they can wear sleepwear. Not bathing and using nightclothes when schooling at home is a bad attitude because it will reduce the seriousness of children in learning (Mahmudah, 2020). The results of this study show that quite a number of working mothers ignore the tidiness of children when studying online at home. School conditions that do not use video conferencing during online learning activities are also a factor that supports a working mother's indifference in paying attention to children's tidiness when studying online at home.

During Study From Home, the ones who interact most directly with children are parents, therefore parents need to communicate intensely with teachers to discuss difficulties experienced by children and parents during online learning activities. The results showed that working mothers could not establish intense communication with homeroom teachers regarding the process of their children's learning activities at home. Grade II homeroom teachers revealed that parents who are both workers rarely communicate with teachers. Many factors can be the reason why working mothers cannot communicate intensely with homeroom teachers, one of which is because they are busy working and taking care of the household (Researcher Data, 2021).

### **3.2. Working Mothers' Efforts in Forming Study Habits**

The most frequent efforts in shaping children's study habits are most working mothers who apply learning discipline to children in a relaxed but firm manner. Applying learning discipline casually but still firmly is one of the good efforts to be applied to children. Disciplining children in their studies in a relaxed but firm manner will create learning habits that do not burden children. When parents listen to their children's ideas, they will feel valued and more committed to implementing the rules. Children will tend to be more accepting and follow the rules or schedule because it is made according to the child's agreement (Kusumaningrum *et al.*, 2020).

Efforts that are often made by working mothers in shaping study habits are discussing with children about fun learning activities. Fun learning activities will make children enthusiastic in carrying out their online learning activities. Fun learning activities can be carried out by working mothers after work, one of which is like inviting children to play question and answer

as an exam simulation. How to educate children with fun learning activities can help children to more easily absorb information in lessons.

The next effort often made by working mothers is to involve children in determining study and play time and discuss making a study schedule with children. Discussing with children about the division of time between learning and playing and what the best consequences are that can be applied together. With this active involvement between mother and child, the hope is that teaching and learning activities can be scheduled and routine. So that the time used for teaching and learning at home becomes efficient.

Less than half of working mothers make efforts to give direction to their children with patience and attention. The third grade homeroom teacher said that students whose parents work tend to have declining achievement since the online school period. Parents' busyness is a major factor in the lack of attention and direction given to children during online learning activities at home (Researcher Data, 2021). Parents who are busy working will have an impact on children's learning motivation due to the lack of guidance and attention given by parents when children study at home (Nurbaety, 2016).

Involving children in making study rules is an effort that is rarely made by working mothers in shaping children's learning habits. Rules in learning need to be applied, especially in online learning activities for elementary school-age children. The use of gadgets for children aged 7-12 years will be vulnerable to addiction, because for them gadgets or cellphones are an exciting thing rather than learning (Swatika, 2020). Rules made by involving children directly can later make children disciplined in learning and create good learning habits in children. However, the results showed that these efforts were rarely made by working mothers.

Efforts that are very rarely made in shaping children's study habits by working mothers are trying to always monitor children's learning activities and discussing the duration of children's study time so that they do not get bored and bored quickly. Discussing the ideal duration of study time for children can be discussed with homeroom teachers or other family members, even with the children themselves. Effective study time for children is 30 minutes per subject (Purwanto et al., 2020).

Most working mothers at SDN 198 Mekarjaya Bandung are unable to establish good communication with homeroom teachers. The lack of good communication between working mothers and homeroom teachers has an impact on the efforts given by working mothers in assisting online learning, especially in activities to form children's learning habits.

### **3.3. Working Mothers' Efforts in Developing Children's Learning Motivation**

Efforts that are often made in online learning assistance in activities to develop children's learning motivation, more than half of working mothers try to give full attention when children "confide" about their complaints. The action of a mother who always listens carefully to her children's stories and complaints even though she is busy with her work is a very good effort in helping to develop children's motivation, especially in learning. Taking the time to really listen to the problems faced by children, and supporting them in their efforts to overcome their problems, will be very beneficial for children (Tumbage et al., 2017).

Providing quality time between mothers and children during holidays, encouraging children and giving praise are efforts that are often made by working mothers. Playing and recreation with children will rejuvenate children's enthusiasm, especially in online learning activities. Even though mothers are busy working, there are many ways to encourage

children. One of them is an effort that is often also done by working mothers, namely giving a short vacation to children.

When mothers praise children for their efforts in doing something, children will be encouraged to try new things and improve their abilities independently. Praise can increase self-confidence and self-worth in children. However, this does not mean that praise should be given every day or too much. One thing that parents, especially mothers, need to pay attention to in giving praise to children is the timeliness and points conveyed in praise. Praise will be more effective if it refers to the child's effort in doing something, not just the result. With sufficient and appropriate praise, children can gain a number of positive benefits.

Less than half of working mothers make an effort to reward their children every time they successfully complete their schoolwork. There is nothing wrong with rewarding children in order to motivate them to study harder. However, the most important thing is that giving awards must be educational, motivating, and reinforcing behavior and able to encourage children to take the initiative and enthusiasm for learning. In this study, there were quite a number of working mothers who were unable to give awards when their children succeeded in learning.

Very rare efforts are made in activities to develop children's learning motivation, a small proportion of working mothers try to provide interactive books so that children do not get bored quickly. Varied learning resources will foster children's enthusiasm and motivation in learning during Study From Home (Sobron *et al.*, 2019). In this study, many working mothers chose to use only the learning resources provided by the teacher. Whereas giving children interactive books can foster children's enthusiasm for learning and increase a sense of fun learning.

Discussing with teachers in creating a pleasant learning situation is an effort that is rarely done by working mothers in developing children's learning motivation. Whereas during this online learning, there needs to be a strong synergy between teachers and parents in ensuring the success of children's education during this pandemic. Especially elementary school students who still need direct assistance from parents. The second grade homeroom teacher of SDN 198 Mekarjaya also revealed that communication between teachers and parents, especially those whose parents work, was very lacking during this Study From Home period.

### **3.4. Working Mothers' Efforts in Providing Children's Learning Facilities**

The most frequent efforts made in providing children's learning facilities, trying to always provide the needs needed by children and guiding children to use gadgets. This online learning period requires parents to facilitate children's online learning needs at home. It is important to provide children's needs during online learning to support children's learning success (Kusumaningrum *et al.*, 2020). Online learning needs do not escape the use of gadgets which have positive and negative impacts on children. For working mothers, it is very important to provide and supervise the use of gadgets in children.

Efforts that are often made in providing children's learning facilities, more than half of working mothers give warnings to children regarding the negative impact of excessive use of gadgets. Mothers who are busy working can leave messages to caregivers or other family members so that children can be monitored and supervised for the use of their devices. This is a good way to prevent children from getting addicted to devices during this online learning period.

The next effort that working mothers often make in providing learning facilities is providing nutritious food and drinks and giving enough pocket money to children. Children's nutritional needs during a pandemic like today need to be considered by families (Ali & Murdiana, 2020). The fulfillment of children's nutritional needs during the online learning period at home will certainly support the smooth process of children's online learning activities. Giving pocket money to children should also not be too excessive. Giving enough pocket money is the right effort that working mothers have made in meeting children's needs, so that children are not too consumptive.

Efforts that are very rarely made by working mothers in providing learning facilities for children are providing a special room for children to study during the online learning period. The results of this study show that many working mothers do not pay attention to the room for children to study online. Even though this is one of the very good efforts to be made by busy working parents so that children are comfortable learning online at home. Given, in online learning the child's view will focus on the screen. Learning activities for elementary school-age children if carried out in the bedroom are considered less conducive, because it is important for children to associate the situation or atmosphere with the use of places (Ali & Murdiana, 2020).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The conclusions that can be presented from the research results with the title "Working Mothers' Efforts in Online Learning Assistance for Elementary School-Age Children during the Covid19 Pandemic" are as follows: Most working mothers work on activities to guide children's learning activities, especially in: ensuring children are ready to learn and checking children's class groups, and guiding and giving examples when doing homework after work. Most working mothers put effort into shaping their children's study habits, particularly in: applying relaxed but firm discipline, discussing and involving their children in making study schedules, and determining study and play time. Most working mothers put effort into developing their children's motivation to learn, particularly in: giving attention and quality time to their children, encouraging and praising them, and providing vacations when they are off work. Most working mothers put effort into providing learning facilities for their children, particularly in: providing learning needs and nutritious food and drink, guiding and warning children about the use of gadgets, and giving children sufficient pocket money.

In addition, the research findings highlight the importance of social support systems in helping working mothers balance their dual roles during online learning periods. Support from spouses, extended family members, or neighbors was found to significantly ease the burden on mothers, allowing them to manage both work and their children's educational needs more effectively. This underscores the need for programs and policies that promote shared caregiving responsibilities within households and provide community-based support networks, especially during times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, the study suggests that the role of schools and teachers is crucial in supporting working mothers by providing clear communication, flexible learning schedules, and accessible learning materials. By maintaining open lines of communication and offering guidance on how parents can assist with online learning, schools can help reduce the pressure on working mothers and ensure that children continue to receive quality education despite

the challenges. Going forward, it is essential for education stakeholders to integrate parental needs into online learning strategies, recognizing that effective parent-school collaboration can play a key role in supporting children's academic and emotional development.

#### **AUTHORS' NOTE**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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