Distance Learning Management in Elementary Schools During the Pandemic

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the management of distance learning in elementary schools during the pandemic. This study is a phenomenological study conducted on distance learning conducted by primary school teachers during the pandemic. The subjects of this research are teachers who have conducted distance learning, students, and parents of students. Data collection is done by using interviews. The data analysis technique used is qualitative analysis through data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and data verification. This study concludes that the planning for distance learning during the pandemic is done by choosing important competencies to be conveyed to students by paying attention to learning situations that must be delivered remotely. In the aspect of implementing distance learning, various techniques used by teachers are found in managing their learning. However, in general, all these managements utilize technology assistance in carrying out their learning, both synchronous and asynchronous. To obtain information related to the achievement of goals, the teacher evaluates distance learning by utilizing online applications that can be run both on smartphones and computer devices. This is done to obtain the results of the learning evaluation compliant with the material that has been delivered during the process of implementing distance learning.

Keywords: distance learning management, elementary school, pandemic

Introduction

The emergence of the Covid-19 virus worldwide has caused many changes in various fields, including education (Edgar & Elias, 2020; Herwin et al., 2020; Saptono et al., 2021; Pujiastuti et al., 2021). The education sector is affected by the implementation of learning (Jogezai et al., 2021) where 1.7 billion students worldwide have stopped learning due to the Covid-19 virus (Dietrich et al., 2020). Learning must be done with a distance learning system. Distance learning is learning that is carried out by teachers and students without any direct interaction (Costa et al., 2020; Gribkova et al., 2020). The implementation of learning can be shifted from traditional learning to digital-based learning (Armstrong-Mensah et al., 2020). Learning utilizes technology as a learning medium to conduct interactions that are separated by distance and time (Brady & Pradhan, 2020: Burdina et al., 2019), but it is still certain that students are involved during learning (Schneider & Council, 2021).

The implementation of distance learning is not completely running well. A study stated that several obstacles were encountered during the implementation of distance learning (Lassoued et al., 2020). Problems that arise during distance learning are caused by the uneven readiness of all parties with the learning transition due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In distance learning, there are several problems, namely the lack of student comfort, low digital literacy skills, students have not been able to adapt to the new learning system, and there are no adequate learning tools. The lack of availability of supporting costs, the difficulty of students understanding the learning materials, and the low motivation of students to learn (Widikasih et al., 2021).

The description of the problems above emphasizes the ability to adapt to new conditions, especially the use of technology for learning. Human adaptation to the environment, especially to technology, is needed in the field of education (Asier & Ander, 2021), but this is still very difficult for

the community to do. The use of technology as a learning medium is one of the problems of distance learning because not all parents can facilitate their children's digital needs for distance learning (Danchikov et al., 2021; Foo et al., 2021). The availability of inadequate facilities is an obstacle to the implementation of distance learning. So, teachers need to share strategies and learning methods during distance learning because the learning strategies implemented by teachers will have a major impact on learning (Amini et al., 2018; Kaji & Ono, 2021)

Adequate facilities are one of the success factors in implementing distance learning. In addition, communication, cooperation, and parental support are also the success of learning during distance learning (Davis et al., 2021; Widiasih et al., 2018). This is because the characteristics of learning in elementary schools cannot be separated from good cooperation between teachers and parents. Moreover, the implementation of distance learning is mostly done by students at home, so that parents spend more time with their children (Lase et al., 2021). Elementary school students still need more extra guidance compared to other level students. The characteristics of learning in elementary schools emphasize the activeness of students involved in the learning process (Shirai, 2019).

The characteristics of learning in elementary schools can be better understood by teachers so that they can carry out distance learning optimally and according to student needs. A positive climate between teachers and students is one of the characteristics of learning in elementary schools that must always be developed during the implementation of learning (McLean et al., 2020). Characteristics of good learning in elementary schools paying attention to the implementation of objective learning, learning methods, learning materials, learning facilities, and active learning activities are important things that must be considered in learning in elementary schools (Sihotang et al., 2020). The existence of the right characteristics of learning in elementary schools like that then carried out the appropriate distance learning management. How is the management of distance learning by the teacher according to the article?

The implementation of distance learning in schools cannot be carried out without proper and correct management. The existence of various problems in the field that implements distance learning does not fully run well. Good and correct management during learning is needed to be able to determine the direction and objectives of the learning implementation to be achieved. Therefore, this study wants to find out how is distance learning management in elementary schools during the covid-19 pandemic?

Methods

This research is a phenomenological study to reveal the management of distance learning in elementary schools during the pandemic. This management is focused on three aspects, namely distance learning planning, distance learning implementation, and distance learning evaluation. This research was carried out in the Sleman District. The subjects of this study came from elementary school teachers as the main informants and were supported by students and parents of students. This study uses 12 teacher informants, 15 student informants, and 15 parents who have been selected purposively.

Data collection techniques were carried out by interviewing research informants. Data analysis was carried out by qualitative analysis in the form of data collection of data condensation, data presentation, and data verification. The conclusion is based on the results of the condensation and verification of the data. To ensure the validity of the data, data triangulation was carried out. For the validity of the data, this study applies source triangulation and time triangulation.

Results and Discussion

The results of this study are described based on three main focuses, namely distance learning planning, distance learning implementation, and distance learning evaluation. Any information on the focus is obtained through interviews with informants. The results of these interviews are then taken into consideration and analyzed to obtain research findings based on these aspects. The description related to the focus of this research is further explained as follows.

Distance learning planning in elementary school

One of the things that are highlighted in distance learning in this study is the planning aspect carried out by the teacher. This is very important to obtain information on the extent to which teachers are prepared to carry out distance learning in their classrooms together with students and other related

components. The results of the research on this aspect were obtained based on interviews and then data condensation was carried out. This is done to obtain a group of sub-themes that will be correlated to form findings on the distance learning planning theme that is the focus of this section. The findings related to distance learning planning in primary schools are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Distance learning planning

No	Sub-theme	Correlation between sub-themes
1	Distance learning planning is prepared by simplifying the basic competencies that will be conveyed to students	Distance learning planning is developed through the selection of important competencies based on the conditions faced by students in line with the material that can be delivered remotely
2	Distance learning planning is prepared by combining material between subjects that are suitable to be delivered remotely	
3	Distance learning planning is carried out tentatively by considering the needs of students at the previous meeting	

Based on the findings described in Table 1, shows that distance learning during the pandemic was planned differently when compared to conventional learning before the pandemic. During the pandemic, distance learning is planned by selecting only the essential competencies. This means that not all competencies are conveyed in detail remotely. The implementation of distance learning has an impact on planning adjustments that must be made by the teacher. Distance learning planning by teachers should consider the involvement of information and communication technology in the learning process to support distance learning (Yulia, 2020). Simplification of competence is an effort that must be made by teachers in learning planning so that teachers can convey materials that are considered more urgent to students (Herwin et al., 2021). This is based on the limited situation that does not allow teachers to convey all competencies remotely. Even though they are in quite a difficult situation, teachers must still try to make maximum learning plans for their learning programs. This is important because the ability to plan lessons is a form of teacher professionalism that must be mastered (Tjabolo & Herwin, 2020).

Distance learning implementation

Learning planning will be meaningful if it is supported by good learning implementation. In this section, the analysis continues on aspects of the implementation of distance learning carried out by the teacher together with the students. As in the previous planning component, information from the implementation of distance learning is obtained from the teacher and is supported by information from students and their parents. Information from all informants was then condensed to find sub-theme groups as the basis for determining research findings. The following Table 2 presents the research findings based on aspects of distance learning implementation.

Table 2. Distance learning implementation

No	Sub-theme	Correlation between sub-themes
1	The implementation of distance learning is carried out with the help of a learning management system in the form of Google Classroom.	The implementation of distance learning during the pandemic is carried out by utilizing online technology. Learning is delivered in two directions through the help of various platforms with synchronous and asynchronous techniques.
2	The implementation of distance learning is carried out with online meeting techniques that utilize zoom and google meet.	
3	Distance learning is implemented by relying on online modules designed based on core competencies and materials.	
4	The implementation of distance learning is carried out using WhatsApp Groups as a two-way communication platform.	

Based on the findings described in Table 2, shows that the implementation of distance learning during the pandemic was planned in a very different way when compared to conventional learning before the pandemic. During the pandemic, learning is carried out from the homes of both teachers and students. All learning activities are carried out remotely. In addition, various techniques used by teachers in implementing distance learning in their classrooms were found. Each teacher has a teaching style that is different from one another. But in essence distance learning is done with the help of online technology, both synchronous and asynchronous. The findings show that the various platforms that are chosen by

teachers such as Google Class, zoom meetings, online modules, and Google Meet to the use of WhatsApp groups.

The findings of this study are relevant to the findings showing that during the pandemic, teachers apply online learning platforms and media that vary based on considerations of strengths, student conditions, and learning objectives. Since the pandemic, the integration of technology in learning activities has become important in the implementation of distance learning (Ningrum et al., 2022; Hikmah et al., 2021; Senen et al., 2021). To realize these activities of course needed learning facilities that support them. This is very important because it is one of the important factors in the implementation of learning (Cindy, et al., 2022).

The two most common applications used in online learning are Zoom and WhatsApp Group because these two applications do not have access restrictions (Putra, 2020). WhatsApp has become an application in elementary schools to deliver material to students such as assignments, exams, and others even before the Covid-19 pandemic (Baishya & Maheshwari, 2020). WhatsApp is also considered a reliable and fast application because it can be accessed anytime in real-time (Cetinkaya, 2017). In addition, Google Classroom allows teachers and students to learn face to face in a class by providing learning materials in the form of PowerPoint slides, e-books, learning videos, and various assessments (Arizona et al., 2020). Some of these relevant findings strongly support the implementation of distance learning, especially in elementary schools.

Distance learning evaluation

A learning program will be successful when it can achieve the learning objectives that have been designed at the planning stage. This also applies to distance learning programs. To obtain information on how far the learning objectives have been achieved after carrying out the learning process is to evaluate learning. In distance learning, learning evaluation is carried out by having to adjust distance conditions between teachers and students during the pandemic. Following in Table 3, the study findings related to the evaluation of learning carried out by teachers in distance learning are described during the pandemic.

Table 3. Distance learning evaluation

No	Sub-theme	Correlation between sub-themes
1	Evaluation of distance learning is carried out using the help of applications such as Kahoot, Quizizz, and similar applications that run on smartphones and computers.	Evaluation of distance learning is carried out with the help of devices and technology applications to convey the results of assignments from teachers to students and the results of responses from students to teachers remotely.
2	The evaluation of distance learning is carried out using an online form to submit assignments and questions.	
3	Evaluation of distance learning is carried out using WhatsApp to send the results of work and observations to teachers via text messages, pictures, and videos.	

Based on the results presented in Table 3, it shows that the evaluation of distance learning is carried out in various ways. However, all these variations always refer to the learning process carried out remotely, where teachers and students are not in the same place. This is a form of following the government's advice to reduce crowds in terms of preventing the spread of the pandemic. Evaluation of distance learning during the pandemic relies heavily on technology applications. This situation is supported by various applications that can be used by teachers to deliver certain tasks to their students to evaluate their learning.

Assessment of learning activities is very important, even though it is carried out in distance learning (Ambarwati, et al., 2022). The pandemic has brought about a change in management in the education sector, including in the management of learning evaluation (Song et al., 2020). Assessment cannot be carried out as usual before the pandemic, it is necessary to consider the psychological development of students (Stifel et al., 2020) because the pandemic has an impact on the mental health of many people including students in the world (Camacho-Zuniga et al., 2021; Do et al., 2021). The assessment procedure must also pay attention to the learning system carried out (Ambarwati, et al., 2022). Because learning is carried out remotely, the use of information and communication technology is very much needed to evaluate learning.

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Conclusion

This study concludes that the impact of the pandemic on learning programs in primary schools should be carried out remotely. A program, of course, has a goal to be achieved. In this achievement, certain management is needed so that the program objectives can be achieved. Distance learning during a pandemic is a learning program managed by teachers based on planning, implementation, and evaluation. Planning for distance learning during the pandemic is done by choosing important competencies to be conveyed to students by paying attention to learning situations that must be delivered remotely. Remote conditions have an impact on not all competencies that have been outlined in the curriculum at the beginning before the pandemic can be conveyed to students.

In the aspect of implementing distance learning, various techniques used by teachers are found in managing their learning. However, in general, all these managements utilize technology assistance in carrying out their learning, both synchronous and asynchronous. Online meetings are becoming the most reliable technique to carry out synchronous activities. In addition, the use of online classes and WhatsApp groups is an option to deliver material asynchronously. To obtain information related to the achievement of goals, the teacher evaluates distance learning by utilizing online applications that can be run both on smartphones and computer devices. This is done to obtain the results of the learning evaluation in line with the material that has been delivered during the process of implementing distance learning.

The research findings show the results that distance learning carried out by teachers in elementary schools still needs to be managed more systematically. During the pandemic, teachers rely on their technological capabilities to manage distance learning. This is of course still not optimal considering that at first, the teacher's ability was not so ready to carry out distance learning. This situation becomes the basis for recommendations for teachers to improve the ability to learn management systems so that the implementation of distance learning can be more effective. This is also a recommendation to the government to provide services and facilities to every teacher to develop their competence in terms of mastering technology. This is very important to obtain better learning outcomes in the future. Although currently learning has returned to normal and is not carried out remotely, it is not impossible that someday the ability of teachers to manage distance learning will be very much needed.a

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