

Literacy-Based Blended Learning in Early Childhood Education in the New Normal Era

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Abstract

Learning in early childhood education institutions during the pandemic generally encounters many obstacles and obstacles. One of the efforts made to overcome these obstacles is through blended learning. Using a blended learning model by combining online learning and face-to-face learning during the Covid-19 pandemic can increase the effectiveness of learning and the enthusiasm for learning of students because in addition to getting online learning materials, they also still receive direct assistance from teachers in the teaching and learning process by observing strict health protocols. This research is a qualitative descriptive research because it produces qualitative data. Data collection using interview, observation and documentation models. Analysis techniques using description techniques with the analysis model of Miles and Huberman's interaction with the flow include data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusions.

The results of the study were concluded, first, literacy-based blended learning planning applied in wadas kelir playgroup includes preparing a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) and preparing blended learning supporting facilities and infrastructure. Literacy-based blended learning in wadas kelir playgroups during this pandemic is carried out with the provision of one day of online learning and one day of offline learning with a maximum capacity of 10 students per class with a duration of 30 minutes every meeting hour. The learning evaluation system includes Self Assessment questions, Video Calls, and home visits that have been planned by teachers using various media.

Keywords: blended learning, Literacy, KB Wadas Kelir.

1. Introduction

The world is currently faced with thorny problems regarding the Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) pandemic, including Indonesia. Covid-19 is one of the viruses from the large family of SARS diseases found in Wuhan, China in December 2019. This virus was later named Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV2) and caused Corona Virus Disease-2019 (Covid-19). On February 12, 2020, WHO officially determined this Corona virus disease in humans as Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19). On March 2, 2020, Indonesia has reported two confirmed cases of Covid-19. On March 11, 2020, WHO has designated Covid-19 as a pandemic (World Health Organization / WHO) through the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia.

Covid-19 has an impact on various aspects, one of which is the education aspect. The policy taken by the Indonesian government, namely closing all teaching and learning activities, makes the government and educational institutions have to find ways to keep learning activities going on even during a pandemic. With the Covid-19 pandemic, this condition requires all educational institutions to carry out learning innovations that are usually carried out in schools/madrasahs. The implementation of learning must be carried out online (Syah, 2020). The use of advances in learning technology during the Covid-19 Pandemic is a form of sensitivity for educational institutions in responding to environmental changes. The ability of

institutions to respond to changes in the environment of the outside world is the main factor that determines the performance of institutions (Kuratko, et al., 2001). Teaching and learning activities that were previously carried out in schools / madrasahs, changed to learning at home through online learning. Online learning is carried out using various applications such as whatsapp, google meet, google classroom, and e-learning.

Online learning has become a demand of the world of education since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, so more complete learning facilities are needed by utilizing technology and information. In the implementation of online learning, coordination between all parties is needed to run optimally. Through online learning, a learning environment will be created in the new normal era, in order to avoid the emergence of Covid-19 transmission in school / madrasah clusters and reduce the number of Covid-19 victims in Indonesia.

Adjusting learning during this pandemic is certainly not an easy thing, especially in early childhood education institutions. Early childhood education institutions are pre-school institutions where students are still in the age range of 3-6 years. This age is the age of children who are required to learn concretely, this is because children learn through direct stimulation, namely from what they see, hear, and feel. Thus, learning in early childhood education institutions must be carried out by considering the nature and characteristics of their students. This condition requires teachers in ECCE institutions to innovate in learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the efforts to overcome learning in the COVID-19 pandemic situation is through online learning. At the beginning of the implementation of online learning, students were very enthusiastic about participating in learning because they used gadgets. However, the practice of learning carried out online after a week has seen various complaints that began to appear. Complaint after complaint does not only come from educators, but also from students and also parents or guardians of students. Thus, the learning carried out in early childhood education institutions, especially in wadas kelir playgroups, runs less optimally.

Obstacles faced by students during the online learning process, such as: limited supporting facilities including smartphones, internet quota, and internet networks that not all children and regions have the same access. Not to mention the limitations on the side of parents of students who find it difficult to accompany their children to learn from home both in terms of knowledge and time. With the obstacles described above, there needs to be a role from other parties in helping the online process run during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, there is a need for innovation and future projections to answer these learning challenges so that they can play a role in contributing to learning.

One of the learning innovations implemented in the Wadas Kelir playgroup is to use a blended learning model, which is one of the learning models implemented by combining online and offline learning. This learning model is carried out by following the direction of the local education office, namely by implementing strict health protocols by paying attention to the percentage of the number of students who enter. Thus, students will leave in turn, which is 50% face-to-face and the rest carry out online learning.

Blended learning can improve learning outcomes equal to or higher than learners who learn conventionally or completely offline, although success rates vary between disciplines (Heinze, 2008: 35). Therefore, it is not surprising that many schools or universities have implemented or considered blended learning models. This is also supported by Graham's opinion (2006: 7) which states: "we can be pretty certain that the trend toward blended learning systems will increase" (Bibi & Jati, 2015). According to Thorne, blended learning is an opportunity to integrate the innovation and technology offered by online learning with the interaction and participation of conventional learning. Blended learning activities are characterized by combining conventional and online learning. The incorporation of learning is adjusted to the learning objectives to be achieved, (Wicaksono & Rachmadyanti, 2016).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, teaching and learning activities must continue even though they are not as optimal as before the pandemic. Educational institutions, especially the Wadas Kelir playgroup continue to strive to provide the best educational services, and the Covid-19 pandemic is not a reason for the decline in educational services to students. The current government has compiled rules about the new life order or commonly called New Normal where people can still carry out activities in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak by always implementing health protocols, namely using masks, washing hands with soap, and maintaining distance.

New Normal is implemented or can be called the New Order Era during the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, all elements of society inevitably still have to implement a new lifestyle in accordance with the standard health protocols determined by the government. Including educational elements, ranging from lower to higher education. Therefore, it takes an innovation in the learning process to remain in accordance with standards if applied in the New Normal era, then the implementation of the blended learning model is considered more suitable to be applied in the New Order Era. In addition to participating in online learning, students can also still take part in offline learning through face-to-face learning trials, where the implementation continues to apply health protocols in accordance with the Ministerial Instruction No. 1/2021 concerning the Socialization Movement for the Implementation of Health Protocol 5 M, namely using masks, washing hands with soap, maintaining distance, staying away from crowds and reducing mobility, so that new clusters of COVID-19 transmission do not occur. Based on the direction from the head of the Wadas Kelir playgroup and the foundation, the practice of implementing the blended learning model is carried out intermittently, one day of online learning then one day of limited face-to-face learning alternately, some students study at home online some study at madrasah alternately with a capacity of 20 students per class

and 30 minutes every meeting hour or carried out conditionally adjust the zone status of the area. Alternative options for implementing blended learning in one week, online learning and face-to-face learning are carried out alternately.

Realizing the urgency of implementing blended learning-based learning during the Covid-19 pandemic and its main task in producing quality students, the Wadas Kelir playgroup always makes efforts to provide the best service to students, both through programs implemented and other student guidance services. Blended learning-based learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic is used in the world of education as an effort to create better educational services, both in the aspects of infrastructure, student learning processes, increasing the professionalism of human resources educators (teachers) and quality graduates.

To find out the position of the research that the researcher carried out, the researcher has conducted a review of previous research. Here are some previous studies that researchers used to map the position of this research and also enrich the research repertoire related to the blended learning model. First, research conducted by Albiladi (2019) entitled "Blended Learning in English Teaching and Learning" states that the blended learning model is a model that combines online and traditional learning so that it is effectively used to improve learning outcomes in students. Blended learning combines online and face-to-face learning directly so that it can increase student interest in learning. Second, research conducted by Harahap, Nasution, & Manurung (2019) entitled "The Effect of Blended Learning on Student's Learning Achievement and Science Process Skills in Plant issue Culture Course" states that blended learning significantly increases student skills and achievement. Based on this research, it can be concluded that the blended learning model can significantly improve student learning outcomes because it makes students active in learning.

This research was conducted to answer the problems that are being faced together, namely, learning in early childhood education institutions in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this paper focuses more on researching learning using a blended learning model with literacy-based in the wadas kelir south purwokerto playgroup. Starting from the results of observations of learning activities in wadas kelir playgroups, as well as the reality that occurs in learning in general during the Covid-19 period and as the findings of previous researchers, researchers felt interested in conducting research on "Literacy-Based Blended Learning in Early Childhood Education in the New Normal Era".

2. Research Methods

This research is a qualitative descriptive research. According to Moleong (2010: 6), qualitative research is research that intends to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action holistically, by means of description in the form of words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods. The reason why researchers choose qualitative descriptive research is because researchers try to describe the situation of the learning process using literacy-based blended learning in the Wadas Kelir playgroup.

The techniques used to collect data in this study were interviews, observation and documentation.

1. Interview

According to Moleong (2006: 4) interview is a method used to explore information or data by asking directly to respondents related to the desired data in a study. In this study, interviews were conducted with the Head of KB Wadas Kelir, the Foundation, students, homeroom teachers, and educators to obtain related data.

2. Observation

Tersiana (2018: 12) defines observation, which is the process of thorough observation and observing behavior under certain conditions. In this study, researchers went to the field to obtain data and find out how literacy-based blended learning was applied in wadas kelir playgroups both in offline learning and online learning. In addition, researchers made observations on the school environment and the facilities and infrastructure used in learning.

3. Documentation

Documentation according to Sugiyono (2015: 329) is a method used to obtain data and information in the form of books, archives, documents, and information that can support research. The documentation used in this study includes photo documentation of activities that illustrate the implementation of learning, sound and video recordings. In addition, documentation is also in the form of RPP and field notes.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the Miles and Huberman model data analysis. According to Miles & Huberman (1992: 16) analysis consists of three lines of activity, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing / verification.

3. Results and Discussion

Literacy-based blended learning during the pandemic in the Wadas Kelir playgroup is a learning model that combines or combines face-to-face learning models and online learning. The blended learning model requires suitable media in the learning process (Sandi, 2012). The media used in this blended learning model is electronic media (e-learning). One type of application of electronic learning (e-learning) used in wadas kelir playgroups is whatsapp, google meet, and zoom meeting.

Literacy-based blended learning applied in the Wadas Kelir Playgroup is carried out on all students with learning activity steps that have been prepared by the teacher by adjusting the material to be taught so that students can still understand the material delivered both online and offline. The steps of learning activities with a literacy-based blended learning model applied in the Wadas Kelir Playgroup, include: planning stage, implementation stage, and evaluation stage.

3.1. Literacy-Based Blended Learning Learning Planning

Women are known to be weak creatures when compared to men which causes the subordination of women in physical form. Subordination occurs due to the physical helplessness of women (Mu'minin, 2012). Data on the collection of short stories '*Bukan Permaisuri*' by Ni Komang Ariani which shows the existence of physical subordination is contained in the short story entitled 'Nyoman Rindi'. This short story tells the story of a woman named Nyoman Rindi who is almost 40 years old but has never been married. Rindi felt in her life that she did not need a man as a life partner. She felt that she could do everything in her life without a man. Note the following excerpt.

The first blended learning implementation planning is to prepare a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP). The main task of a teacher in the learning process is threefold, namely making lesson planning, carrying out learning activities and conducting learning evaluations (Hidayah et al., 2016).

In implementing blended learning, all teachers have made plans through several stages. First, the teacher and the foundation discussed and formulated the formulation of the right learning model carried out by the Wadas Kelir playgroup during the pandemic, then after the formulation was found, the teacher prepared a literacy-based learning implementation plan. Of course, those who have compatibility with learning that is carried out in a blended learning manner.

Learning planning is inseparable from facilities and infrastructure. Learning facilities and infrastructure are one of the factors that affect student learning motivation (Jannah & Sontani, 2018). Physical facilities and infrastructure are very effective for learning and academic achievement of students (Akomolafe & Adesua, 2016). Whether we realize it or not, these facilities and infrastructure are important factors that cannot be left alone in the learning process.

A good blended learning-based learning model cannot be separated from adequate facilities and infrastructure. Therefore, the availability of learning infrastructure which is the main supporting factor in the blended learning-based learning process in the form of classrooms in ECCE institutions, tools that support the learning process by learning. One of them is mobile phones, children's reading books, activity books, and so on.



Figure 1. Video Shooting of Reading Books

In preparing learning in a blended learning manner, especially to facilitate students who are at home, teachers make videos every week reading books. This is because, before the pandemic, the Wadas Kelir playgroup had implemented literacy-based learning, especially by reading picture story books to children. After the pandemic, this literacy activity program was not eliminated, but innovated by making videos reading books to students.

3.2. Implementation of Literacy-Based Blended Learning

Blended learning in the Wadas Kelir playgroup during this pandemic was carried out with the provision of one day of online learning and the next day face-to-face learning and so on alternately. However, in its implementation, the time provisions are flexible, may experience changes according to the applicable situation and regulations related to the implementation of learning during the pandemic because basically the government imposes learning provisions or distance learning or online learning.

In learning activities in the Wadas Kelir playgroup, teachers will send messages through the students' Whatsapp groups. The message contains greetings and asks the readiness of students to take part in the virtual which will be carried out with whatsapp media. After feeling ready, the teacher will share learning videos for students to see and learn, besides that the teacher will also carry out discussions on previous learning, because every week, children are given a package of literacy bags containing children's reading books, children's activity sheets, and so on.



Figure 2. Preparation for the distribution of literacy bags to parents

One of the excellent programs in the Wadas Kelir playgroup is the implementation of literacy-based learning. Every week, the teacher will distribute 1 literacy package that is put in a bag to the parents. This package contains picture reading books for children (which later, parents are asked to read books to children), children's activity sheets that children must do during the learning process at home, and also assessment sheets for children's learning activities that can be done by parents at home.

In addition, to streamline learning so that the material can be delivered optimally, teachers also facilitate students with home visit activities, namely by visiting students' homes one by one to see the development of each student, of course while still complying with health protocols.

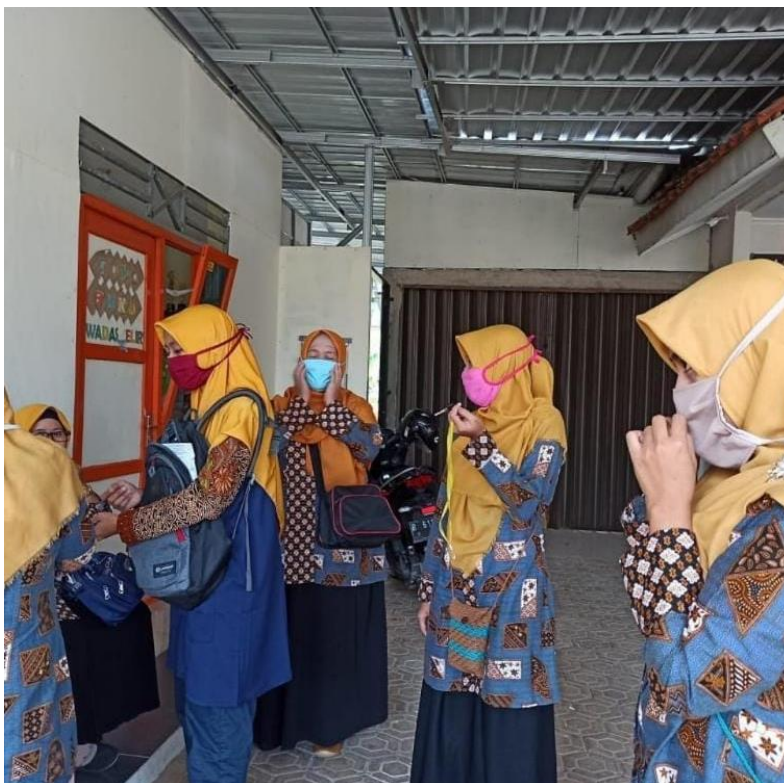


Figure 3. Home visit preparation for KB teacher Wadas Kelir

One of the transformations carried out in the Wadas Kelir playgroup is a home visit activity. Continuing to move is one of the commitments of educators in the Wadas Kelir Play group. Teachers visit students' homes one by one while still complying with health protocols. This is done by teachers to monitor the development of students who study online at their respective homes. In addition to monitoring the development of students, this activity is also used as a means of friendship between teachers and parents. Thus, the relationship between the two to focus on educational goals that have been formulated will be achieved optimally.

3.3. Evaluation of the Implementation of Literacy-Based Blended Learning

Evaluation is an important part of the learning process, this activity is intended to be able to determine the level of achievement of the learning that has been done. Learning with blended learning as the data obtained that evaluates learning through google forms and voice notes.

The learning evaluation system by utilizing existing platforms has been commonly used by educators, even Gusvita revealed that the use of google forms in learning evaluation can help teachers and students to save more energy and time, related to the opportunity for help from people around students can be helped by having students send their videos when working on the given assignments (Gusvita et al., 2020). While the delivery of activity videos is used for evaluation of learning that has been practiced by students at home.

The evaluation carried out by teachers during the implementation of literacy-based blended learning in early childhood education institutions is carried out through several evaluations:

- 1) Self-Assessment or commonly referred to as self-test. That is, independent competency assessment by doing literacy-based activity sheets prepared by teachers for students to do.
- 2) Test by the teacher, which is an assessment of the achievement of learning outcomes carried out by the teacher after students complete one or several learning activities through video calls.

4. Conclusion

Based on the collected data and the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that literacy-based blended learning management in the wadas kelir playgroup is as follows; First, planning the implementation of literacy-based blended learning that must be prepared first, namely the teacher preparing a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP), second, preparing adequate learning infrastructure as a supporting factor in the blended learning-based learning process.

Second, literacy-based blended learning in wadas kelir playgroups during this pandemic is carried out with the provision of one day of online learning and the next day of face-to-face learning and so on alternately.

Third, a learning evaluation system by utilizing the google form platform, whatsapp video call and also parents. Thus at least every development of students will be well monitored.

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