



Risk Mitigation Strategy; Parental Involvement to Enhance Learning in Management Perspektif

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Abstract

Parental involvement is significant in early childhood development, especially when dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic. This study aims to analyze and understand Covid-19 risk mitigation through parental involvement in early childhood learning activities. This study used a qualitative approach in a case study research design in several early childhood education institutions in Probolinggo District. The study results showed that the kindergarten applied the same method in learning activities during the Covid-19 pandemic. They use familiar and straightforward electronic media that involve parents actively in enhancing student learning. In addition, the parental involvement strategy incorporates two-way communication between teachers and parents, which opens up opportunities for solving student learning problems. The findings of this study are collaborative parenting in making learning activities in schools more effective. This research has implications for the importance of parent-teacher cooperation in making learning effective to achieve predetermined goals.

Keywords: *risk mitigation; covid-19; parental involvement*

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Introduction

Since early 2020, the world has identified the spread of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), known as Covid-19. The virus comes from Wuhan, China, and has been detected since December 2019. Around sixty-five countries have contracted with it (Yuliana, 2020; Rifqi, 2021). In China, there were over 90,308 people infected as of March 2, 2020. More than 3,087 people, or 6%, died of it, while 45,726 recovered (Nadeem, 2020). The coronavirus infects the human respiratory system and is sensitive to heat. The virus can be deactivated by disinfectants containing chlorine (Huilai, 2020; Liming, 2020).

With no exception, Indonesia is impacted by the virus. The government has taken strategic and tactical economic, social, cultural, and political policies (Sunı, 2020). The educational sector was also included in the government's effort to overcome the risk of Covid-19. The effort covers social and physical distancing policy, particularly in public places (Suppawittaya et al., 2020; Samat et al., 2020; Adham & Mahmudah, 2021; Mathew & Chung, 2021).

The Ministry of Education and Culture issues social and physical distancing policies in educational activities through learning at home and working from home. This is done to mitigate the risk of the spread of Covid-19 in schools. Teaching and learning activities in schools turn out to be done through distance, utilising online media and other relevant various applications (Derani & Naidu, 2016; Sim, Sim, & Quah, 2021). The Minister of Education and Culture also issued regulation No. 3 of 2020 regarding preventing coronavirus disease (Covid-19) in education units. The regulation explains the obligation of each team and level of education to always be vigilant and prepare facilities and infrastructure to avoid the dangers of Covid-19 and comply with existing health protocols. In addition, educational institutions are asked to optimize the role of school health efforts and always coordinate with the health office. Furthermore, regulation No. 4 of 2020 explains that the government provides policies for educational institutions to carry out learning activities from home through online learning to provide meaningful education to students. In addition, the regulation also explains the technical implementation of national exams, school exams, and the class promotion system, and other technical performances in the field of education.

This situation certainly has a significant impact on educational institutions, especially kindergarten educational institutions, where online learning cannot be directly given to students but must be through the active participation and involvement of parents in their learning activities, especially in Raudlatul Atfal (RA) educational institutions, such as RA. Al-Iman, which is located in Kraksaan District, Probolinggo Regency, East Java, RA. Irtiqoiyah, which is situated in Krejengan District, Probolinggo Regency, East Java Regency, and RA. Masyitoh, located in the Leces District, Probolinggo Regency, East Java, Indonesia, is this research site.

To mitigate the risk of the spread of Covid 19, these educational institutions follow government regulations that recommend the involvement and participation of parents in student learning. For instance, the schools form a group of student guardians to provide information on structured and unstructured assignments, collection of tasks, and other online learning activities delivered through WhatsApp applications and the like.

The online learning carried out by the three kindergartens is an organized educational process bridging the separation between students and educators and mediated by the use of technology through face-to-face meetings (Bester & Brand, 2013; Irwansyah, 2018; Muali et al., 2018; Suwidiyanti & Anshori, 2021). For this reason, the use of IT in learning is a breakthrough in increasing students' understanding (Arseven et al., 2019; Hamedoğlu, 2019), and creating a comfortable and pleasant learning atmosphere for motivating students (Usman, 2017; Islam et al., 2018; Livingstone, 2019). This applies a concept and mechanism of teaching and learning based on Information Technology, termed e-learning (Hakim, 2016; Fauzi et al., 2018; Ahmed et al., 2018; Alzain, 2019).

Considering the characteristics and age of students at the three institutions, online learning is not possible to be directly given to students as they do not have smartphones and are not familiar with the use of mobile applications. Moreover, they do not read fluently as adults do. Therefore, the participation and involvement of parents are necessary for online learning as part of mitigating the risk of spreading Covid-19.

Several experts have done research on participation and parental involvement, including Umar (2015), explaining that children's education is the responsibility of parents. Jane & Tunjungsari (2015) state that parents have positive perceptions about their involvement. Kurt & Taş (2018) suggest that the role and participation of parents are needed to meet the basic psychological needs of children, although according to Newman et al. (2018), their involvement can arouse a different perception.

Qurrota A'yun (2015) says that the family has a vital role in instilling this positive character. Parents can apply homeschooling methods for children. Đurišić & Bunijevac (2017) add that parental involvement positively impacts children if there is a partnership with the school in parenting activities. Avnet et al. (2019) state that parental involvement can improve

children's academic achievement. To achieve this, Zeynep (2016) suggests that parents need to be supported by their involvement and role in directing children's learning activities.

Novrinda (2017) explains that parental education affects children's learning. Meanwhile, Chalim & Anwas (2018) suggest that the family and school environments are required to be conducive to getting them used to the internet positively, especially for learning.

Based on the above research, this study has uniqueness and novelty in parental involvement in the risk mitigation of Covid-19 in kindergarten educational institutions, where the involvement is adjusted to the characteristics and age of students in learning activities. The researchers analyse the risk mitigation of Covid-19 conducted by the three kindergartens through parental involvement in early childhood learning activities.

Methodology

This research was conducted at three Kindergarten educational institutions, namely (1) RA. Al-Iman, Kraksaan, Probolinggo, East Java, (2) RA. Irtiqiyah, Krejengan, Probolinggo, East Java, and (3) RA. Masyitoh, located in the Leces, Probolinggo, East Java, Indonesia, applies a qualitative approach to research within a case study design. The researchers selected the three Kindergarten educational institutions due to their innovations in dealing with the pandemic Covid-19 through e-learning as compliance and support for social distancing and physical distancing policies. Besides, the researchers saw the enthusiasm of parents who participated in supporting learning activities during the pandemic Covid-19.

To get accurate data about the themes studied, the researchers conducted interviews with several informants who were taken using a purposive technique. Eight informants consisted of principals, teachers, and guardians of students whom researchers reviewed to obtain information and an overview of parental involvement in online learning activities during the pandemic. Furthermore, researchers conducted observations and documentation of learning activities carried out by teachers online, the involvement and role of parents when helping and assisting children in their learning, and the results of education carried out through parental assistance. Other data that strengthen the study results were taken from students who have completed their work at home, such as those who could sing new songs, show the results of the drawing, and so forth. The data analysis was conducted circularly, starting from the data display as a whole, followed by data reduction. The data were collected by a predetermined theme and ended with the withdrawal of the research conclusion as a research finding.

Results and Discussion

The three Islamic kindergartens (Al-Iman, Irtiqiyah, and Masyitoh) are formal educational institutions under the auspice of the Ministry of Religion, Probolinggo Regency. In their learning practices during the pandemic Covid-19, the three educational institutions follow government regulations to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 and organise social and physical distancing in their learning activities by involving parents to participate in children's learning use of online media actively.

The results indicate that parental involvement in learning activities at the three institutions is carried out through:

Two-way Communication

Two-way communication in learning activities at the three kindergarten educational institutions is necessary. This is understood as two-way communication between the institution and the parents of students actively through media intermediaries so that a complete understanding of what is conveyed emerges. As a result of the spread of Covid-19, which impacts education, especially in Al-Iman, Irtiqiyah, and Masyitoh Islamic Kindergartens, Probolinggo, East Java, the learning that should be done face-to-face in the school environment is now carried out from homes of students.

In dealing with the existing problems, the three educational institutions make policies to conduct online learning for students. The simple learning media chosen is adjusted to the economic, social, and cultural characteristics of student guardians, namely WhatsApp social media. The learning design as such is done through active parental involvement in conducting tutorials for children.

KHT, a classroom teacher of Irtiqoiyah, Krejengan, states: "We have intense communication with the guardians of students. This is done so that they understand what we want, related to children's learning at home. Through this interactive communication network, the guardians of students and schools have the same perception of learning activities during the pandemic Covid-19. The teacher instructs students through the guardians of students. Students in early childhood education are not yet familiar with existing social media".

DIF says, "Communication with student guardians and students must be done with all my heart and confidence so that it can be felt directly by students. Communication carried out has a deep meaning; there is guidance, direction, and guidance in it". FTR states, "Communication with students during the pandemic Covid-19 is carried out through the active participation of parents in teaching and learning activities at home. The teacher gives instructions to parents via WhatsApp; then parents accompany the child's learning process according to the direction of the teacher. RML continues, "it is not easy for parents to continue to guide their children every day at home. Therefore, we continue to provide parents with an understanding of Covid-19 risk mitigation activities carried out by educational institutions. By providing clear information, student guardians can accept and understand what is happening and become the desire of teachers and educational institutions for the common good".

It can be understood that parents are the main working partners for teachers in children's education. Therefore, effective communication between parents and teachers is needed to avoid misperceptions and meanings in the communication process. Both must work hand in hand and help each other in children's education and learning activities to achieve their goals, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Learning Facilitator

Parental involvement in learning activities at the three institutions comes to facilitate learning. Learning in this way is interpreted as an essential role in assisting children to understand and solve various problems in online learning activities.

KHT suggests that the role of parents in online learning activities is vital, considering that early childhood is unable to know and understand the material delivered by the teacher through WhatsApp media. Therefore, parents, in this case, are positioned as facilitators and mediators in online learning during the pandemic Covid-19. According to FDL, the communication in current learning activities is positioned as an intermediary to materials delivered by the teacher to his son.

DIF says that the WhatsApp application is one media currently used in early childhood learning activities involving parents in it. This simple medium proves to be effective in online learning activities during the pandemic. According to RML, the teacher first gives the material and the instruction to parents, so there is no miscommunication, and parents and children quickly understand the learning. These instructions are shared with parents in the form of video or sound. Parents convey the learning instructions to their children to be done immediately at home. The student performance results are sent to the teacher via WhatsApp media either in the form of images, sound recordings, or videos.

The informant's statement shows that parental involvement as part of Covid-19 risk mitigation in learning activities in early childhood is manifested in the active role of parents as facilitators in learning. Parents are positioned as a medium that facilitates learning activities to gain knowledge and understanding of their learning.

Parental involvement in the form of facilitators and mediators Al-Iman, Irtiqoiyah, and Masyitoh Islamic Kindergartens aims to invite and bring students to actively participate in learning activities. All students with all their characteristics can be moved and stimulated by parents to participate in learning activities and through the instructions given by the teacher via the media that has been determined together.

Communication Technician

A form of parental involvement in learning activities, as part of Covid-19 risk mitigation, is Communication Technician. In this case, parents are directly involved in providing technical communication services for their children to get information from the teacher. Being involved in providing technical services, according to KHT, parents must be active in communicating with teachers. They need to be disciplined in finding information related to learning activities provided by the teacher and actively providing information to their children at home.

Parents are given the task and responsibility to explain and describe the information and assignments given by the teacher to their children so that children can do the tasks they receive. FDL states that parents as technicians in communication ought to be competent in managing the information they receive so that it turns out to be intact. It is through this information that parents can deliver the materials to their children. Technicians in communication significantly affect the message to be conveyed to others. In other words, parental involvement becomes important in absorbing information conveyed by the teacher through WhatsApp.

Technically, DIF suggests that the provision of learning by teachers involving parents needs to be efficiently conducted. The media used ought to follow the characteristics and abilities of student guardians. Still, the obstacle is that parents do not understand how to use the WhatsApp application media and the existing network/signal is poor. This is the barrier to online learning. In contrast, KHT attempts to overcome signal/network problems by providing materials that are not too long in duration so that every parent can understand them without relying too much on network/signal quality.

The involvement of parents as technicians in communication provides a vital role in the success of learning activities during the pandemic Covid-19. Teachers in Al-Iman, Irtiqoiyah, and Masyitoh Islamic Kindergartens are optimistic about their role in conducting teaching and learning activities. They also understand the limitations and constraints of the use of information and technology in learning.

Problem Solver

Parents need to be able to solve any problem of learning faced by their children. Problem solver, in this case, is focused on the role of parents as children's learning partners to help them overcome problems together. Parents need to provide direction and solutions to their children's problems with learning. KHT explains that in solving learning problems, teachers, parents, and students collaborate. They need to become part of the strategic planning team in that case.

In their role as problem solvers, parents need to teach their children the ability to solve their problems. As stated by DIF, parents need to teach and educate their children to solve their learning problems independently. The child's independence in solving problems is evidence of the success of parents in educating their children. Parents do not create super-children without mistakes but teach them to be skilled in their life.

Teachers and parents in Al-Iman, Irtiqoiyah, and Masyitoh Islamic Kindergartens need to work together in developing children's potential and development so that children are guided to solve their problems. Besides, two-way communication needs to be done, and hence it can advance the education and learning of children.

Parental involvement in education can be identified in several different patterns, such as collaboration between parents and children at home, helping with homework (Echaune et al., 2015; Kusaeri et al., 2018), attending school events, or communication and partnerships between parent-teacher as to children's behaviour and development (Price-Mitchell, 2009; Lovlyn Ekeowa, 2017). Parental involvement can also be linked to other indicators such as school success (Zhou, 2014), low repetition rate, lower drop-out rate (Orkin, 2011), high graduation and timeliness of study, as well as participation in higher education programs (Rahmawati & Ariati, 2015).

Parental involvement also deals with psychological processes that support student learning achievement (Assefa & Sintayehu, 2019). Psychological aspects include motivation (Engin, 2020), cognitive, social, and student behavior, which are essential aspects of student learning processes (Larson et al., 2018; Muali et al., 2019). Psychological aspects that influence student learning include awareness of personal competence, attitudes, and attention to learning (Selvi, 2010), including adaptive behavior, involvement in school, and beliefs about the importance of education (Siregar, 2016).

Along with the times, the involvement of parents is directly related to the progress of science and technology (Lin, 2018), especially information technology which has positive impacts on the progress of the world of education, formal, informal, and non-formal education (Bansal & Misra, 2018). It has even become a way of life (Neal & Miller, 2013). Educational institutions can enjoy information technology facilities from simple to sophisticated, ranging from software and hardware, providing many offers and choices for the world of education to support the learning process (Sole & Anggraeni, 2018; Rana & Rana, 2020). The advantages offered to lie in the speed factor to get information and multi-media facilities that can make learning more engaging through interactive visuals (Ariani, 2018; Savchuk et al., 2019).

Many learning activities can be done with these developments by utilising this technology (Miskiah et al., 2019; Erkan, 2019), also known as e-learning (Sohrabi et al., 2019). E-learning is a revolutionary form of conventional learning, from face-to-face systems to online use of internet technology (B Al-Juda, 2017; Fatahi & Moradian, 2018; Chung et al., 2020; Rahiem, 2021). This system can be used in distance learning (M. Rahman et al., 2015; Kilis & Uzun, 2020).

The need for e-learning globally will always increase (Alshehri et al., 2019), especially in learning activities during the pandemic Covid-19, which requires social and physical distancing. E-learning is used as an alternative medium in implementing education and as a tool to achieve the formation of competitive competencies in education (Kanuka & Kelland, 1969). E-learning has several advantages in the case of flexibility, accessibility, preciseness, and cheapness (Dwijonagoro & Suparno, 2019). The emergence of e-learning has a significant impact on education (Tunmibi et al., 2015), where students feel a different learning sensation than conventional classes (Divayana, 2017; Lubis, 2018; Afify, 2018; Giannikas, 2020). Their access to information has also increased dramatically. Besides, students can choose the way of learning that feels best suited to their personality when attending e-learning classes (Kisanjara et al., 2017).

The utilisation of e-learning as risk mitigation for Covid-19 in RA. Al-Iman, Kraksaan, Probolinggo, RA, Irtiqoiyah, Krejengan, Probolinggo, and RA Masyitoh, Leces, Probolinggo, show the importance of parental involvement in the success of early childhood learning activities in the pandemic. The role of parents in children's education is required to understand how much they must be involved and how they must interpret the form of involvement in children's learning at home (Kim & Barrett, 2019). Participation impacts aspects of children's knowledge, attitudes, and skills and strengthens the commitment of parents to play an active role (Rahman, 2014). The more parents show a positive attitude toward science, the better the child will get knowledge (Diadha, 2015a).

Parents also benefit from their involvement in children's education, including confidence and satisfaction in caring for their children, adding insight and experience in caring

for and educating children, and increasing their skills in parenting (Diadha, 2015b). These benefits can significantly help parents in carrying out their duties as parents.

Conclusion

The risk mitigation of Covid-19 conducted by the three kindergartens through parental involvement is effective enough to facilitate students' learning during the pandemic. Although the learning is done through limited strategies and media, it is draining and mindful for both parents and teachers. Children are not familiar with any online media, so parents dominantly play an active role in learning activities. Nevertheless, it turns problematic as most parents have limited ability to operate online media, time, and funds to purchase a smartphone as a learning media used. This study has implications for the importance of understanding the characteristics of students in mentoring students, from which the expected goal of learning can be achieved effectively and efficiently.

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