



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WHATSAPP GROUP AS AN ONLINE LEARNING MEDIUM

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Abstract : This study aims to determine the effectiveness of WhatsApp Group (WAG) as an online learning medium. This is motivated by the rise of students, teachers and stakeholders in schools who use WAG as an online learning medium during the pandemic. The use of WAG is due to the unstable internet network in each area where students live and the ease of access for users. This research uses quantitative descriptive research. The data in this study were collected through a questionnaire with 62 respondents of grade IV students and 3 teachers of SD/MI in Rembang being randomly selected. In addition to using a questionnaire, the data collection technique used in this research is through interviews. Interviews were used to obtain in-depth information about the implementation of online learning for grade IV SD/MI during the covid-19 pandemic in Rembang Regency with principals and teachers involved in it. The results of the study stated that online learning in Rembang Regency for the SD/MI level, especially class IV, can be said to be running well. However, the use of WAG is less effective in being used as an online learning medium, so it is necessary to evaluate so that WAG can be used more effectively to support the effectiveness of online learning.

Keywords : Online Learning; The Covid-19 Pandemic; WhatsApp Group

A. INTRODUCTION

Education is one way to realize the progress of a nation. Education is as known as a process to prepare the next generation to guarantee the demands of life effectively and efficiently in the future.¹ This is enshrined in Undang-undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003, which states that "... national education functions to develop capabilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in the context of educating the nation's life ...".² However, the world of education is currently not doing well due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic that has been set since 2020 by WHO is due to the corona virus (Corona Virus Disease) which was first discovered in Wuhan, China. This virus then spread rapidly throughout the world. As a result, the activities both in government and education have to stop for a moment and let them turn into online activities.³ This change is not merely a game for high-class officials, but as an effort to break the chain of the spread of COVID-19.

One of the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic in the field of education as described above is that teaching and learning activities are carried out online. Online learning is one of the current learning trends by utilizing the internet to create various types of learning interactions.⁴

¹ Samoling, Irna Eltri, Bambang Ismanto, and Lelahester Rina. "Efektivitas Pembelajaran Daring Pada Masa Covid di SMAN 2 Salatiga." *Scholaria: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan* 12, no. 1 (Januari 28, 2022): 55-61, <https://doi.org/10.24246/j.js.2022.v12.i1.p55-61>.

² Minister of Education and Culture. "Undang-undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Nomor 20 Tahun 2003." Ministry of Education and Culture, 2003.

³ Muflikha, Fitri Farikhatul, Ika Ratih Sulistiani and Zuhkhriyan Zakariya. "Efektivitas Pembelajaran Daring di MI Sabilul Muttaqin." *JPMI: Jurnal Pendidikan Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* 4, no. 1 (2022): 96-104; Suwandayani, Beni Istanti, Dyah Worowirastri Ekowati, Sony Darmawan, and Ari Dwi Haryono. "Analysis of Planning, Implementation, Assessment of Learning from Home Strategies During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Private Elementary Schools." *Al Bidayah: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Islam* 13, no. 1 (Juni 2021): 109-124, <https://doi.org/10.14421/al-bidayah.v13i1.623>.

⁴ Dewi, W. P., et all. (2022). "Efektifitas Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Terpadu di Sekolah Dasar Selama Pandemi Covid-19 Berdasarkan Perspektif Guru." *Jurnal*

Online teaching and learning activities, hereinafter referred to as Learning from Home (BDR) is one of the policies of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology in Surat Edaran Nomor 4 Tahun 2020 starting March 24, 2020.⁵ All face-to-face learning activities (PTM) have been transferred to BDR activities from PAUD to Higher Education (PT) levels, including the SD/MI level, both in cities and regions.

BDR activities certainly did not run smoothly according to the expectations of stakeholders in this country. On the other hand, BDR activities have pros and cons in their implementation. How come the facts on the field show how difficult the internet network is, which is still not friendly and accessible in certain areas? Not only that, but the experience of parents in accompanying their children to carry out BDR activities is also lacking. It does not stop there, the role of teachers as facilitators of BDR activities also seems to have to be adjusted by following the ease of networking that can be accessed by parents and students. As a result, BDR activities are carried out using the WhatsApp (WA) application.

WA is a virtual communication application that has features for exchanging messages, locations, photos, and videos both individually and in groups. The reason for the ease and completeness of the features possessed by WA causes online learning to be carried out using WhatsApp Groups (WAG), which should not be one of the online learning platforms. BDR activities through WAG are limited to teachers

Cakrawala Pendas 8, no. 1 (Januari 22, 2022): 82-93, <https://doi.org/10.31949/jcp.v8i1.1918>; Damayanti, Bella, and Heni Pujiastuti. "Efektivitas Pembelajaran Daring Menggunakan Google Classroom Terhadap Minat Belajar Matematika Pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar." *Jurnal Pendidikan Matematika Undiksha* 12, no. 2 (Agustus, 2021): 63-72, <https://doi.org/10.23887/jjpm.v12i2.35574>.

⁵ Handayani, Rika Dwi, Kiswoyo, and Intan Rahmawati. "Analisis Pembelajaran Melalui Media Sosial Whatsapp Siswa Kelas V di SDN Kalikondang 4 Demak." *Praniti Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, & Sastra* 2, no. 1 (Januari 2022): 54-60, <http://jurnal.unw.ac.id:1254/index.php/praniti/index>.

sending video links from YouTube and materials that students have to learn on their own using textbooks. This certainly has an impact on the course of BDR activities and the output obtained by students during BDR. Therefore, it is necessary to further study the effectiveness of WAG as an online learning medium so that BDR activities can run better and more effectively, especially for the SD/MI level.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses quantitative description. The data in this study were collected through a questionnaire with the population of 4th-grade students and the 4-th grade teachers in Rembang randomly selected. The schools randomly selected to be sampled in this study were SD Negeri 4 Kutoharjo Rembang, MIN 1 Rembang, and MI Terpadu Al-Anwar Sarang Rembang. The selection of these schools was considered representative to represent the sample of the entire population of SD/MI in Rembang Regency. Meanwhile, this study focused on class IV of each school, with 62 respondents as the sample. Furthermore, the data obtained through the questionnaire instrument was then processed and analyzed using the following formula.

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

with

P: The percentage of respondents' answers from the questionnaire

f: The number of ideal scores obtained

N: the sum of the ideal scores of all items

The results of the questionnaire instrument assessment that have been obtained then interpreted by using the five-score criteria of the Benchmark Score Assessment (PAP) scale. The criteria for assessing the

percentage of the questionnaire in this study, using the PAP as stated by Budiyo, are shown in Table 1 below.⁶

Table 1 Assessment Criteria using PAP	
Percentage (%)	Category
$80 < P \leq 100$	Excellent
$60 < P \leq 80$	Very good
$40 < P \leq 60$	Good
$20 < P \leq 40$	Fair
$0 < P \leq 20$	Poor

In addition, in this study, the data was also collected by interviews. Interviews were used to obtain in-depth information about the implementation of online learning for grade IV SD/MI during the COVID-19 pandemic in Rembang Regency, with principals and teachers involved in it.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Online learning in Rembang Regency for grade IV SD/MI is carried out using the Google Classroom, e-learning, and WA applications. However, the e-learning application is still limited to elementary schools under the auspices of the Ministry of Religion. The most frequently used application for online learning is WA, especially WAG. This decision was chosen because it was influenced by factors that made it easier for students to follow online learning. This is in line with what was stated by the head of MI Terpadu Al-Anwar Sarang Rembang, M. Rizal Anas, S. Pd., that parents of students still find it difficult to operate smart phones, so the application WAG was chosen.⁷

Online learning for the SD/MI level in Rembang Regency, especially grade IV, begins with the preparation stage. At this stage, the

⁶ Budiyo. (2015). *Pengantar Penilaian Hasil Belajar*. Surakarta: UNS Press.

⁷ Interview with M. Rizal Anas, S.Pd. as the Head of MI Terpadu Al-Anwar Sarang Rembang on 14th August, 2021.

teacher prepares learning tools, ranging from lesson plans, medium, to assessment instruments. This is done to minimize differences in the teaching and learning process during PTM and online learning.

Furthermore, when online learning takes place, the teacher carries out teaching obligations as well as PTM activities in class. However, striking differences still appear when PTM and BDR. During BDR, teachers have limited space. It is difficult for teachers to explore students' abilities more deeply and it is difficult to explore learning materials. This can be seen when the BDR activity takes place, the teacher explains the material through writing on the WAG. As a result, BDR activities tend to be passive. This phenomenon was also confirmed by the fourth-grade teacher of SD Negeri 4 Kutoharjo Rembang, Zuhriyah, S. Pd., and the fourth-grade teacher of MI Terpadu Al-Anwar Sarang Rembang, Nur Inayah, that parental complaints during online learning vary widely and the use of WAG for learning SD/MI students online is very ineffective.

Departing from these problems, further research was carried out on the effectiveness of WAG as an online learning medium for the SD/MI level. This research was conducted in Rembang Regency with a total of 62 students who were randomly selected from three schools (SD Negeri 4 Kutoharjo Rembang, MIN 1 Rembang, and MI Terpadu Al-Anwar Sarang Rembang). The distribution of respondents in this study is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 The Distribution of Respondents

No	Affiliation	Number of Respondents
1	SD Negeri 4 Kutoharjo Rembang	19
2	MIN 1 Rembang	20
3	MI Terpadu Al-Anwar Sarang Rembang	23
Sum of Respondents		62

The data in this study were collected through a questionnaire, which was then processed and analyzed. Based on the data, the results

obtained an effectiveness of 68.99%. This result is in the very good category. The calculation of the effectiveness of online learning at the SD/MI level in Rembang Regency is described as follows.

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

$$P = \frac{3636}{5270} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 68,99\%$$

If we refer to these results, of course, it can be said that online learning for SD/MI levels in Rembang Regency has been carried out well. However, this result is still far below 70%. If we say good, of course we are talking about the advantages of WAG as an online learning medium. The advantage of WAG as an online learning medium is that students and parents are more familiar than other online learning platforms. Ease of access also makes one of the advantages of choosing WAG as an online learning medium. The features offered by WAG are also quite complete, such as the ease of sending learning materials, either documents or links, uploading photos and videos. Students can also easily take oral tests through the video call feature if requested by the teacher.

However, WAG is not always superior when used as a learning medium. The weakness of WAG has also become a boomerang for teachers, students and parents. For example, when collecting assignments via WA, the teacher finds it difficult to give deadlines. This problem was also mentioned by Istiqomah, S. Pd. I., as a class IV teacher at MIN 1 Rembang, that the obstacle when learning online is about the discipline of children in doing assignments.⁸ This is because some students still do not have personal devices. They use their parents' devices to participate in online learning. As a result, the assessment process that will be carried out by the teacher is hampered. This

⁸ Interview with Istiqomah, S.Pd.I. as the teacher of MIN 1 Rembang on 9th August, 2021.

statement is in line with what was stated by the Head of MIN 1 Rembang, Badrudin, M. Si., that there are some students who do not have a smartphone, so they still take turns with their parents.⁹ Sometimes, students also don't take online learning because their parents bring their gadgets to work. In addition, there are also students who take turns taking online learning with their older siblings, because they only have one device.

Another problem that appears to support the weakness of WAG as online learning is the unstable internet network. This statement is in line with the results of research by Adawiyah and Darwis, the obstacles that occur when students use WA for online learning include signal interference and the absence of internet data packages.¹⁰ This obstacle was also stated by the Head of SD Negeri 4 Kutoharjo Rembang, Djumiatur, S. Pd., SD., that the teacher who taught BDR had encountered students who had signal problems due to blackouts, and there were even students who forgot their internet quota had not been filled.¹¹

The inhibition of assessment and the unstable internet during online learning resulted in the learning outcomes obtained by students. The reason is, student learning outcomes are not always superior because learning is carried out online. This phenomenon was confirmed by all school principals and fourth-grade teachers who were respondents in this study. Student learning outcomes tend to be low; there is no significant increase when compared to learning outcomes during PTM.

⁹ Interview with Badrudin, M.Si. as the Head of MIN 1 Rembang on 9th August, 2021.

¹⁰ Adawiyah, Rabiatur, and Umar Darwis. "Efektivitas Whatsapp Sebagai Media Pembelajaran Daring di Kelas IV SD 101871 Sidodadi." *Pedagogi: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan* 8, no. 1 (January 5, 2022): 52-56, <https://doi.org/10.47662/pedagogi.v8i1.244>.

¹¹ Interview with Djumiatur, S.Pd.,SD. as the Head of SD Negeri 4 Kutoarjo Rembang on 9th August, 2021.

Based on the advantages and disadvantages of WAG as a learning medium that has been described, of course it is necessary to collaborate from various parties, both from stakeholders, teachers, students, and parents. This opinion is in line with the results of research by Rahayu, et al., which states that, in online implementation, it requires cooperation and daily attention from students' parents.¹² Furthermore, Rahayu et al., revealed that in the implementation of online learning, there were students who scored zero, so that the use of WA was less effective when learning online.¹³ Thus, it can be concluded that the use of WAG as an online learning medium is good enough, but not yet effective, so it is necessary to improve and cooperate with various parties.

D. CONCLUSION

Online learning in Rembang Regency for the SD/MI level, especially the 4th grade, is going well. The learning medium used by the majority of teachers and students is WAG. However, the facts on the ground state that WAG is less effective in being used as an online learning medium. Problems that arise when online learning are limited devices owned by students, unstable internet, and a lack of cooperation in making online learning effective. Thus, it is still necessary to evaluate so that WAG can be used more effectively to support the effectiveness of online learning.

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¹² Rahayu, Dewi Puji, Karlina Wong Lieung, and Ratna Purwanty. "Efektivitas Pembelajaran Daring di Sekolah Dasar." *Jurnal Basicedu* 5, no. 6 (2021): 6073-6078, <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v5i6.1847>.

¹³ Ibid.

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