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The Family Roles in Online Learning During the Covid 19 Pandemic Era

Syamsidah[1], Ratnawati T.[2], Hamidah Suryani[3], Amir Muhiddin[4]

[123]*Family Welfare Education, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia*
[4]*Faculty of Social and Politics, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Indonesia*

Abstract:

Background*: It is a descriptive study that aims to investigate how the poor families followed online learning, what reinforcement they received from the government, and what problems they faced in accompanying the children in online learning. The study was conducted in an alley in Tombolo Village, Somba District, Gowa Regency named Lorong Bambu, considering that in the area, a number of poor families with children in the school ages lived there.*

Materials and Methods*:The research population was all low-income families who had children studying in elementary school with a total number of 24. It is a population study because the total number of the population was fewer than 100. Data were collected using a questionnaire, interview, and documentation and analyzed descriptively*

Results*: The findings show that mothers were the main actors in the learning activities. They replaced the teachers who used to teach the kids at school directly. Furthermore, the most common media used for learning were Google Classroom and WhatsApp applications because they are easier to use, cheaper, and more familiar. Kinds of reinforcement given by the government were free internet data for students, cancellation of the national exam, teaching material, and some policies which could ease families during the online learning*

Conclusion: *Problems faced by families during accompanying their kids during online learning included financial issues and technical skills.*

Keywords*: Reinforcement; Families; Children A companionship; Covid 19.*

I. Introduction

To control the spread of Covid 19, The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia issued letter No. 4 of 2020 about the implementation of Education Policies in the Emergency Period for the Spread of Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19). One of the important points in the policy is that the learning activities should be conducted from home, and families or parents should assist their children in completing the tasks from teachers. Therefore, during the pandemic era, parents had an important role in taking over some of the teachers' duties that were usually performed at school like teaching knowledge, skill, and values. Thus, parents' involvement in the learning process determined the success of their children (Iftitah, S. L., & Anawaty, M. F. (2020), Barros, R. de S. N., Soares, A. B., & Hernandez, J. A. E. (2019).

Teaching and educating are not easy matters. Especially to accompany children to study replacing the teacher's role, parents need teaching knowledge and skills including pedagogic, professional, personal, and social competencies, which are supposed to be obtained from universities during some semesters. Those skills are very important for parents, especially women because they generally held the responsibility of learning assistance at home. Most families in Indonesia still adhere to patrilineal culture. In this case, men are believed to hold a bigger responsibility like performing tasks for the public and earning money for families, while women should complete the household task like nurturing and guiding children at home (Lippa, Richard A. 2005; Zahrok, S., & Suarmini, N. W. (2018).

Because of having limited teaching skills and knowledge of particular subjects, women often find it difficult to accompany their children to study. Therefore, they need reinforcement to to optimally replace the role of teachers and support their children to achieve the learning goals (Kurniati, E.dkk (2020), Peters, P.T.G., Mokrova, I. L., Carr, R. C., & Vernon-Feagans, L. (2019). Low-income families in Tombolo Village experienced the case described above. During the Covid 19 Pandemic, they got additional tasks to accompany their kids in completing their school assignments. Problems they faced were not only the limitation on the knowledge and skills to teach but also the unavailability of HP and laptop while the whole learning activities were based internet. As the problems urgently needed a solution, this study aimed to investigate the reinforcement given to families in online learning during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Based on the background, the study focused on: How the family followed the online learning in Tombolo village, Gowa regency, what reinforcement they received from the government to maximize their role accompanying their children completing the tasks from teachers, and what problems they faced in accompanying their children joining online learning during the Covid 19 Pandemic. Reinforcement refers to making a change for a better condition or quality. It can be given personally or institutionally through verb or nonverbal motivation. It can also be provided through regulation, organization, and the improvement of human resource quality (Kurniati, E. et al., 2020).

The reinforcement to families refers to the willingness to play a bigger role on tasks or responsibilities so that the families are better performing additional tasks, including assisting children to do the tasks from teachers. The reinforcement can be in the form of incentives or funding and facilities that can support the improvement of the activities of the smallest organization in the society, which is called family (Soekanto, S. (2014); Syamsidah and Amir,M (2022). Reinforcement is the response to an attitude causing it to be repeated. In line with that, reinforcement is any form of response (either verbal or nonverbal) on the modification of adults attitudes towards children attitudes which aim to deliver information or give feedback to the recipient related to the action they performed as motivation or connection so that children are more motivated to study (Ahmadi, Abu, 2014).

The study conducted by Resti, Miawijayanti, P.Y. (2020) concluded that during the covid 19 pandemic, families had the roles of guarding, guiding, developing, and supervising children. Besides that, parents we responsible for teaching and building self-regulation so that children can regulate themselves (internal). While according to Anugrahana, A. (2020), parents had four duties during distance (online) learning including: first, as the teacher to guide their children in the distance learning from home; second, as the facilitator for their children when learning, third, as a motivator to support their children when learning to achieve a better outcome; fourth as the influencer or director

II. Material And Methods

The study was conducted in Tombolo Village, Sompa Opu District, Gowa regency, in Lorong Bambu, considering that a number of poor families living there had school-age children who studied in the elementary school in Lorong Bambu, Tombolo village, Gowa regency. The population consisted of 24 families. It is a population study because the number of population was fewer than 100 (Sugiyono, 2014; Newman, WL. 2011; Wagiran, 2019). Data were collected using a questionnaire, interview, and documentation and analyzed through the descriptive technique

III. Result

One of the important points of government policy to control the spread of Covid 19 is the instruction to carry out learning activities form home and to give authority to families or parents to assist students doing the tasks from teachers. After distributing questionnaire and doing interviews, we obtained data about how families assisted their children in online learning, kinds of reinforcement from the government to maximize the role of families in accompanying children completing the task from teachers, and problems faced by families during accompanying their children in online learning. The data are explained below:

The Description of How Families Accompanied Children in Online Learning

One of the important points related to how families accompanied their children in online learning is who taught the children. The answers to this question can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Description of How Families Accompanied Children in Online Learning

No	Teachers	Sum	Percentages
1	Father	0	0
2	Mother	23	96
3	Other family members	1	4
	Total	24	100

Table 1 shows that among 24 respondents asked through a questionnaire about who taught their sons or daughters during online learning, 23 (96%) of them said mother, 1 (4%) said aunt and 0 (0%) said the father. It indicates that, in general, during online learning, children were assisted by their mother, meaning that the mothers were the teacher at home.

Table 2. The Most Frequently Media/ Application Used in Online Learning

No	Learning Media	Sum	Percentage
1	Watshap (WA)	10	58
2	Google Classroom	14	42
3	Others	0	0
	Total	24	100

Table 2 shows that among 24 respondents asked through a questionnaire about the kind of learning media used by their children in online learning, 10 (10%) of them stated WhatsApp (WA), and 14 (42%) answered Google Classroom. It means that, in general, children used Google Classroom and WhatsApp, and the proportion of the users was quite similar.

Table 3. The Most Common Place Used for Online

No	Places for Online Leanring	Sum	Percentages
1	Their own home	24	100
2	Neighbours	0	0
3	School	0	0
	Total	24	100

Table 3 shows that among 24 respondents asked using a questionnaire, all of them said that they studied in their own homes. No one studied in their neighbor's house or initiated to go to school to study together. It means that they believed that the house was the safest and the most comfortable place to study online. It is probably because the internet connection in that area was quite strong, and they hardly found barriers as students in the rural area commonly faced like sometimes they should go to the higher elevation or high building to get an internet signal.

Forms of Reinforcement from the Government

Table 4. Forms of Reinforcement from the Government

No	Forms of Reinforcement	Sum	Percentages
1	Policies	0	0
2	Internet data	24	100
3	Inviting teacher	0	0
	Total	24	100

Table 4 shows that among 24 respondents asked through a questionnaire about kinds of reinforcement from the government given to the societies, especially families who should help their children for online learning, all of them (100%) stated that they received free internet data. It means that the government was present and gave attention to the societies, especially to the children who had to study from home due to Covid 19 pandemic. Furthermore, it indicates that societies did not understand other forms of policies related to online learning. In fact, there were a number of policies issued by the government to support the families in taking over the role of teachers to conduct the learning at home.

Table 5. Teaching Materials for Online Learning From Government or School

No	Teaching materials	Sums	Perncetages
1	Guide Book	0	0
2	Text book	24	100
3	Others	0	0
	Total	24	100

Table 5 shows that among 24 respondents asked through a questionnaire if there was teaching material given by the government to reinforce the families in assisting their children in online learning, all of them (100%) answered yes. It was textbook. It means that the government was present in online learning and guaranteed the quality of learning, although it had to be carried out from home.

Barriers Faced During Online Learning
Types of problems met in assisting children during online learning are presented in the following table:

Table 6. Barriers faced by families in online learning

No	Problems	Sums	Percentages
1	No HP	7	29
2	No internet data	7	29
3	Students were lazy	5	21
4	Parents had low skills	5	21
	Total	24	100

Table 6 shows that among 24 respondents asked about problems they faced in assisting children in online learning during the Covid 19 pandemic, they gave quite various answers. Seven (29%) of them mentioned that they did not have a handphone, another seven respondents mentioned internet data (29%), 5 (21%) parents stated that their children were lazy, while the rests (5 parents or 21%) admitted that they had

limited skills. The data indicated that the unavailability of Handphone, internet data, and students' laziness became the problems of online learning at home.

IV. Discussion
Who taught children at home during online learning

As it has been mentioned before, among 24 respondents asked through a questionnaire about who taught their children during online learning, 23 of them, or 96% mentioned mother, and only 1 (4%) mentioned aunt, while none (0%) of them mentioned fathers. It means that most children were assisted by their mother in online learning at home. In other words, mothers generally replaced the position of teachers who previously taught their children at school. The mother has a very important role in educating their children. She is the first school *(Al -Ummu madrasah Al-ula)* and the first teacher for their children before they study to an expert teacher. Thus, mother's intelligence, tenacity, and behavior are dominant factors determining the children's future. Mother, through her sincere love, is a role model for children in stepping into their future. Children get warmth when they are beside their mother. A mother's smile and love will ignite the child's spirit. Mother's prayer is the key to a child's success in the future (Munir, D., (2012) ; Resti Mia Wijayanti, P. Y. (2020).

According to the description above, although the mother has many weaknesses, she has a very big role in online learning. Therefore, they should receive reinforcement in the form of spirit, appreciation, and facilities like internet data and fund assistance to fulfill their needs during the difficult situation due to the implementation of a number of policies to control the spread of Covid 19.

Learning Media / Application Frequently Used during Online Learning

As it is presented in table 2, among 24 respondents asked through a questionnaire about the learning media / application used by their children in online learning, 10 (.. %) of them mentioned WhatsApp (WA), and 14 (42%) mentioned Google Classroom. The data indicate that, in general, both Google Classroom and WhatsApp had almost the similar number of users. Those applications were the most familiar at the time because they were relatively affordable and easier to operate, especially for students and parents.

WhatsApp group was dominantly preferred because it was simpler and easier to use. Teachers can send materials, evaluation, and explanation using video or voice note. WhatsApp group can also facilitate two-way learning using video calls. This service allowed students and teachers to make face-to-face interaction in delivering material and task, although the number of students who could join was limited. A similar condition was found by Muhammad Hasbi Assidiqi in Semarang that digital platforms that can be used for online learning included whatsapp group, google apps (google classroom, google form, google meet), and zoom cloud meeting. Besides that, there were other applications like Edmodo, Rumah Belajar, Ruang Guru, Sekolahmu, Kelas Pintar, Zenius, Google Suite for Education, Microsoft Office 365 for Education. Other digital platforms that can be used include Whatsapp Group (WAG), Google Classroom (GC), Edmodo, and Zoom (Hartati, Sofia, 2005).

Wahyono, P., Husamah, H., & Budi, A. S. (2020) also found that WA and GC were the most common applications used by families in online learning. A similar finding was by Sun'iyah, S. L. (2020) that in online learning, teachers can use various features provided in Google Classroom like assignments, grading, communication, time-cost, archive course, mobile application, and privacy.

The Most Common Place Used For Online Learning

As it has been previously described, Table 3 shows that among 24 respondents asked through a questionnaire about the most common place used for online learning, the whole respondents (100%) mentioned it in their own home. None of them mentioned the neighbor's house or initiating to go to school together. The data show that the safest and the most comfortable places for online learning were in their own homes. It is highly likely that it is because the internet connection in the area was good and there were no serious barriers as students usually found in the rural area of Indonesia like they should go to the high elevation or building to get internet access.

Because the respondents living around Sungguminasa city, they could easily access the internet, and felt comfortable and safer to study online from home. The problem was that, based on the observation, the poor families' houses were less proper for learning because they were small and too many people lived there. Besides, there were no facilities to cool the air like a fan or Air Conditioner. It is undeniable that the house's condition should support the learning activities. However, the economic factor made them unable to complete the facilities. Here, parents held the responsibility to create a comfortable condition, especially the mother, as she dominantly involved in assisting children in online learning. Parents should create a comfortable and conducive environment for learning so that children can enjoy learning. The house should not become a scary and boring place to study, which causes children to prefer to play outside with their friends rather than studying at home

with their parents (Umar, M. 2015; Lutfiah, S., Z. 2020; Salahudin, Anas. 2011; Rahman, B. 2014; Trilling, B. & Fadel, C. 2019; Barros, R. de S. N., Soares, A. B., & Hernandez, J. A. E. 2019).

Forms of Reinforcement From the Government

Table 4 above shows that among 24 respondents asked through a questionnaire about forms of reinforcement they received from the government, they all stated that they get free internet data. It indicates that the government was concerned about society, especially children who had to study online at home because of the Covid 1 pandemic. The data also indicate that society looked not understand other forms of policies made by the government related to online learning. In fact, there were a number of policies issued to support the families to replace teachers' role in assisting students studying at home. First, the Government Regulation or the revision of Joint Decision Letter of 4 Ministries issued on 7 August 2020 referring to the Circular Letter of the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 40 of 2020 concerns on the Implementation of Policies of the abolition of the National Examination; changes to the School Examination system; changes in the regulation of New Student Admission (PPDB); and the implementation of learning from home (online learning).

Teaching Materials (Text Book) from the Government

Table 5 as it has been presented earlier, shows that among 24 respondents asked through questionnaire if there were teaching materials or textbooks they received from the government. 100% of them respondents said yes. It means that the government were concern on the online learning and tries to guarantee the quality of the learning activities although it had to be conducted from home. Teaching material is very important because it describes all learning materials, information, tools, and texts, which are systematically arranged and holistically presents the competencies that must be achieved by children. It is also needed in planning and reviewing the implementation of the learning activities. Forms of learning material include text book, module, handout, worksheet, model, audio, and interactive learning material.

The central government distributed textbook to guide parents assisting their children in learning considering that many of them did not have pedagogic skill. According to the *National Center for Vocational Education Research Ltd* in A Guide to the Development of Teaching Materials by the Ministry of National Education rewritten by Syamsidah (2018), teaching materials are any kinds of materials that can be utilized by teachers or instructors to carry out the learning activities in the classroom. They can be in either written or unwritten form. Learning material is a set of material arranged systematically both in written and in unwritten forms to create a condition that allows students to learn. Some experts said that learning materials refer to information, tools, and text required by teachers or instructors to design and review the learning implementation. In line with that, Wahyono, P., Husamah, H., & Budi, A. S. 2020; Hadi, Abdul, 2016) mentioned that learning materials are substances arranged systematically to be used by teachers and students in the learning process.

Problems Faced During Online Learning

Learning online conducted at home had some problems which actually had been predicted before like parents' low ability and the unavailability of facilities like a laptop, HP, internet data, internet connection, and students' motivation. The parents' ability which becomes the main pillar of online learning, can become a significant problem when it cannot facilitate the student's needs. It had been previously predicted as most families had low economic abilities and educational backgrounds, so they seemed difficult to take over the role of teachers. As we know, an ideal teacher should have good skills and competencies, including pedagogic, professionalism, social, and personality. Pedagogic competence refers to the ability to teach and educate students. It includes didactic and methodic skills in transferring knowledge, values, and skills. The professional competence is the teachers' ability to carry out the tasks from the country and are formally certified. Personal competence refers to the personalities of a teacher to be imitated by societies (A. Saidir Amir, 2019; Trilling, B. & Fadel, C. , 2019).

The parents' ability can refer to economic aspects. In this case, the condition of poor families was worsened by the Large-Scale Social Restrictions policy. It was even influential on the physical and psychological conditions causing parents to be desperate and ignorant. As a consequence, other family members, especially children also became ignorant and tended to be lazy. The unavailability of a laptop, HP, internet data, and internet connection were significant problems obstructing online learning. To support online learning, everyone was aware that the availability of facilities like Android phones, strong internet connection, and internet data was crucial. The price of internet data with strong connections was perceived as expensive by parents and students, especially because during the pandemic, their income significantly reduced. In fact, many teachers and parents complained about the learning system. The biggest problem was that many students did not have adequate facilities for joining online learning and did not understand the learning system.

V. Conclusion

1. The roles of families in online learning indicated that the mother holds the biggest responsibility by replacing the teacher. Furthermore, the most common media used were Google ClassroOm and WhatsApp because they were quite easy to be applied, cheaper, and more familiar. The most common place to use for online learning was in their own home, indicating that it was still the safest and the most comfortable place for online learning.
2. Forms of reinforcement from the governments to maximize the role of poor families in accompanying their children in online learning are the distribution of free internet data, flexibility to only choose curriculum which was proper with the need of the learning activities, the cancellation of a national examination, the distribution of learning material and other policies which supported the role of families in online learning.
3. Problems faced by the family in accompanying their children in online learning included the parents' low economic and technical abilities. The economic abilities determined the availability of facilities like a laptop, HP, and internet data. Although the government had distributed free internet data, it was usually not enough. Related to technical skills, parents were difficult to adapt to learning technology like the use of an application. Furthermore, they did not have pedagogic, professional, social, and personal competence. Lastly, children were usually lazy and bored to study at home.

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