

## **The Role of Social Media as a Learning Platform in the Covid-19 Pandemic**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Educators as human resources must be able to adapt to various advances in science and technology. As a professional, educators must be able to plan, implement, and assess the learning that has been done. By taking advantage of the opportunity to increase the intensity of the use of social media during the pandemic, educators must also be ready to learn to continue to increase their creativity and innovation in planning interesting learning. The purpose of the study was to determine the role of social media as a learning platform in the era of covid 19. The results showed that by utilizing social media, especially whatsapp as a supporter of the learning process, it was able to have a positive influence, especially during the current covid-19 pandemic. Both as teaching staff and students feel the use of WhatsApp social media itself, in exploring their abilities, especially in using the media in creating assignments and materials in learning.

**Keywords:** Social Media; Online Learning; Covid 19.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Currently Corona is a hot topic of discussion. In any hemisphere, corona still dominates the public sphere. In a short time, his name became a trending topic, discussed here and there, and was reported massively in print and electronic media. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV-2) better known as the corona virus is a new type of coronavirus that causes infectious disease to humans (Khan et al., 2020; Lai et al., 2020; Ye et al., 2020). Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered type of coronavirus (Bolotov et al., 2021; Chakraborty et al., 2021; Radu et al., 2020). Although it mostly attacks the elderly, this virus can actually attack anyone, from infants, children, to adults. This corona virus can cause mild disorders of the respiratory system, severe lung infections, and even death. Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was first discovered in the city of Wuhan, China at the end of December 2019. This virus spreads very quickly and has spread to almost all countries, including Indonesia, in just a few months. So the WHO has declared this outbreak a global pandemic.

This has made several countries set policies to impose lockdowns in order to prevent the spread of the corona virus. In Indonesia itself, a Large-Scale Social Restriction (PSBB) policy

was implemented to suppress the spread of this virus. Because Indonesia is currently implementing PSBB, all activities carried out outside the home must be stopped until this pandemic subsides (Ivanka, 2020; Suraya et al., 2020; Toharudin et al., 2020).

Some local governments have decided to implement policies to leave students and start implementing online learning methods (online) or online (Duchi et al., 2011; Ni, 2013; Oncu & Cakir, 2011). This government policy began to be effectively implemented in several provinces in Indonesia which was also followed by other provinces. But this does not apply to some schools in each region. These schools are not ready with an online learning system, which requires learning media such as mobile phones, laptops, or computers (Elcock, 2013; Pastor & Veronesi, 2012).

The online learning system is a learning system without face to face directly between teachers and students but is carried out online using the internet network (Su & Cheng, 2015; Wu et al., 2010). Teachers must ensure that teaching and learning activities continue, even though students are at home. The solution is that teachers are required to be able to design learning media as innovations by utilizing online media (online). This is in accordance with the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia regarding Circular Letter Number 4 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Educational Policies in the Emergency Period for the Spread of Corona Virus Disease.

The learning system is carried out through a personal computer (PC) or laptop connected to an internet network connection. Teachers can do learning together at the same time using groups on social media such as WhatsApp (WA), telegram, Instagram, zoom applications or other media as learning media. Thus, the teacher can ensure that students take part in learning at the same time, even though in different places. All sectors are feeling the impact of corona. The world of education is one of them. Judging from the surrounding events that are happening, both students and parents who do not have cellphones to support online learning activities feel confused, so the school is looking for solutions to anticipate this. Some students who don't have cellphones study in groups, so they also carry out learning activities together. Start learning through video calls that are connected with the teacher in question, being asked questions one by one, to taking attendance through VoiceNote available on WhatsApp. The materials are also provided in the form of videos that are less than 2 minutes long.

The problems that occur are not only in the learning media system (Sharples et al., 2010), but the availability of quotas which require quite a high cost for students and teachers to facilitate online learning needs. The quota purchased for internet needs has soared and many parents are not ready to increase the budget in providing internet networks. This is also a very important issue for students, what time do they have to study and what data (quota) they have, while their parents are low-income or from the lower middle class (poor). Until finally things like this are charged to parents of students who want their children to continue to follow online learning.

Online learning cannot be separated from the internet network (Hamid et al., 2020; Mabururi & Hamzah, 2021; Suryaman et al., 2020). Internet network connection is one of the obstacles faced by students whose place of residence is difficult to access the internet, especially those students who live in rural, remote and disadvantaged areas. Even if someone uses a cellular network, sometimes the network is unstable, because the geographical location is still far from the cellular signal coverage. This is also a problem that often occurs in students who take part in online learning so that its implementation is not optimal. Many on social media share the experiences of parents while accompanying their children to study, both positive and negative. For example, it turns out that there are parents who are often angry because their children are

unruly so that they can't stand it and want their children to go back to school. This incident gave awareness to parents that educating their children was not easy, it required a lot of knowledge and patience. So with this incident parents must be aware and know how to guide their children in learning. After getting this experience, it is hoped that parents will learn how to educate their children at home.

It should be realized that the unpreparedness of teachers and students towards online learning is also a problem. The shift from conventional learning systems to online systems is very sudden, without proper preparation. But all of this must be carried out so that the learning process can run smoothly and students actively participate even in the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic. The stuttering of online learning is evident in front of us, not just one or two schools, but throughout several regions in Indonesia. Very important components of the online learning process need to be improved and improved. First and foremost is a stable internet network, then a capable device or computer, an application with a user friendly platform, and online socialization that is efficient, effective, continuous, and integrative to all education stakeholders.

The solution to this problem is that the government must provide a policy by opening free online application services in collaboration with internet and application providers to assist this online learning process. The government must also prepare an online-based learning curriculum and syllabus. For schools, it is necessary to conduct online technical guidance (bimtek) on the online implementation process and to disseminate information to parents and students through print and social media regarding the procedures for implementing online learning, in relation to their roles and duties. In the online learning process, it is important to add educational messages to parents and students about the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak. Thus we find the same learning with face-to-face but online-based. The effect is very good, the program is right on target, and the learning outcomes are achieved.

Several teachers at schools admitted that online learning was not as effective as conventional learning activities (face to face), because some materials had to be explained directly and more fully. In addition, the material delivered online may not necessarily be understood by all students. Based on online teaching experience, this system is only effective for giving assignments, and it is likely that the results of working on these assignments are given when students are about to enter, so it is likely to accumulate.

Observing the experience of some of these teachers, the teacher must also be ready to use technology in accordance with the times. Teachers must be able to make models and learning strategies that are in accordance with the character of students in their schools. The use of several applications in online learning is very helpful for teachers in this learning process. Teachers must be accustomed to teaching by utilizing complex online media that must be packaged effectively, easily accessible, and understood by students.

Thus, teachers are required to be able to design and design online learning that is light and effective, by utilizing appropriate online devices or media and in accordance with the material being taught. Although online learning will provide wider opportunities to explore the material to be taught, teachers must be able to choose and limit the extent of the scope of the material and the application that is suitable for the material and learning methods used. The simplest thing a teacher can do is to use WhatsApp Groups. The WhatsApp application is suitable for novice online students, because the operation is very simple and easy for students to access. As for online teachers who have more enthusiasm, they can improve their abilities by using various online learning applications (Allo, 2020; Bahasoan et al., 2020; Hendrawaty et al., 2021).

But again, choose an application that suits the needs of the teacher and the students themselves. Not all online learning applications can be used just like that. However, it must be considered according to the needs of teachers and students, the suitability of the material, the limitations of device infrastructure such as networks. It is not very effective if the teacher teaches using the zoom meeting application but the network or signal in the area where the student lives is not good. The success of teachers in conducting online learning in this Covid-19 pandemic situation is the teacher's ability to innovate in designing, and concocting materials, learning methods, and what applications are in accordance with the materials and methods. Creativity is the key to the success of a teacher to be able to motivate students to stay enthusiastic in learning online and not be a psychological burden.

In addition, the success of online learning during the Covid-19 period depends on the discipline of all parties. Therefore, the school/madrasah here needs to make a scheme by developing good management in regulating the online learning system. This is done by making a systematic, structured and simple schedule to facilitate communication between parents and the school so that their children who study at home can be monitored effectively. Thus, online learning as an effective solution in learning at home to break the chain of the spread of Covid-19, physical distancing (maintaining a safe distance) is also a consideration for choosing this learning. Good cooperation between teachers, students, parents and the school/madrasah is a determining factor for more effective online learning. The world is currently facing a global pandemic caused by the spread of Corona Virus Disease or better known as Covid-19. Indonesia also experienced a fairly serious impact from the spread of this disease. In response to the global Covid-19 pandemic, the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia has issued Circular Letter Number 4 of 2020 regarding the implementation of education policies during the emergency period of the spread of Covid-19. One of its contents is a policy to implement the Learning from Home (BDR) process. One of the media that can be used to implement BDR is using social media. Currently, many social media have been used by the community including Whatsapp, NGOs, Google Classroom, Zoom.

## **METHOD**

This research is a descriptive research, which aims to present a complete picture/exploration and clarification of a phenomenon or social reality regarding the role of learning media as a learning platform during a pandemic. The research uses a librarian study where the researcher draws conclusions from various research results conducted by previous researchers.

The research method used is a qualitative research method. Qualitative methods seek to understand and interpret the meaning of an event of human behavior interaction in certain situations according to the researcher's own perspective. Research that uses qualitative research aims to understand the object under study in depth. Aims to develop the concept of sensitivity to the problem at hand, explain the reality related to grounded theory and develop an understanding of one or more of the phenomena encountered. Informants in the qualitative method continue to develop (Snowball) purposively until the data collected is considered satisfactory or saturated (redundancy). This research is a qualitative research. Qualitative research is research that emphasizes the quality or the most important thing from the nature of a product/service. Qualitative research is carried out because researchers want to explore phenomena that cannot be quantified that are descriptive, such as the process of a work step, the formula of a recipe, the

notions of a variety of concepts, the characteristics of a product and service, pictures, styles, procedures for a culture, the physical model of an artifact and so on.

In conducting in-depth interviews, the authors determine several sources or informants that are considered the most representative to answer questions regarding the focus of the research. Determination of informants is based on position, experience and understanding of the object under study.

To explore the current state of affairs around the world. Researchers carry out summarizing activities, choosing main things, focusing on important things and looking for themes and patterns. When the data has been collected, the reduced data will provide a clearer picture and make it easier to carry out further collection and search if needed. Findings that are considered foreign, unknown, and do not yet have a pattern, then that is the concern because qualitative research aims to find patterns and hidden meanings behind visible data. The data that has been reduced then the next step is to present the data. Presentation of data as a set of structured information that gives the possibility of drawing conclusions and taking action. Data presentation is used to further improve understanding of the case and as a reference for taking action based on understanding and analysis of data presentation. Research data can be presented in the form of a description supported by a network matrix.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The development of extraordinary gadgets in our society certainly has positive and negative impacts, especially in its use, this gadget is not limited by age, so that gadgets can be owned from children to parents. Likewise, it cannot be separated from teenagers or students. If a student is wise in using it, of course, many benefits will be obtained. But unfortunately the gadgets owned by students are often not used to support their learning but are used for negative things that can harm the students themselves. The forms of social media that are currently familiar to us include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Pinterest, YouTube and blogs. This social media can be used for education or learning and there are several benefits including (1) it can be used to interact and communicate between teachers and students. With this social media we invite students to interact either using social media or messaging applications, (2) can be used to provide learning materials. Here, educators can use social media and messaging applications to provide learning materials as we do today by using WhatsApp groups, Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Forms. (3) can be used as a learning resource, (4) support learning materials. Here social media can help identify additional content to strengthen or expand learning materials. Through YouTube to help provide audio-visual videos for students when needed to clarify learning materials. (5) can be used for learning evaluations such as google forms.

### **How to use Social Media as a Learning Media**

During the pandemic, learning is done online using social media. Educators can upload learning materials that have been prepared in the form of videos, pictures, or recorded explanations which students can then study independently through their respective social media. It was further explained that the use of social media as a learning medium would form a more independent learning pattern. The use of social media as a learning medium aims to provide a meaningful learning experience for students. The use of social media as a learning medium is considered effective for delivering material to be more accommodating and fun so as to improve the quality and learning outcomes. This learning experience can be obtained by way of students practicing the theory they have learned through the work and structured tasks given by the

educator. The provision of structured assignments is a means for students to develop their competencies and skills. In general, the structured tasks that can be given taking into account the achievement of 418 learning subjects in each of the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Programs are described as follows:

### **Giving Work Assignments in the form of Video**

The use of social media, such as Instagram and Youtube, requires users to be able to produce videos and images with the best quality if they want to attract the attention of other users. Therefore, in addition to preparing material in the form of videos that students will study, educators can optimize its use by preparing structured tasks that students must complete as a medium to show their talents and skills. Assignment is one way to obtain information related to student competence if it is designed systematically and sustainably. The provision of structured assignments must pay attention to indicators of achievement of learning competencies for each subject. Therefore, it must be planned properly in order to measure student competence. The task that the student does is then transformed into a work in the form of videos, images, or infographics according to the topic to be assessed. Video is one of the media that has been used in learning. One of the characteristics found in learning videos is that it can develop students' thoughts, opinions, and imaginations as well as grow their interest and motivation to learn. Thus, the use of social media as a learning medium during the pandemic is expected to be carried out optimally to provide a learning experience for students. In addition, giving assignments in the form of videos is expected to be able to reduce student boredom during the study period from home. In addition to videos, student structured assignments can also be realized in the form of images, either in the form of infographics, posters, or other forms of visual media. In compiling infographics or visual media, students must seriously study the concepts or theories that will be informed in order to produce interesting and quality infographics.

### **Challenges of Using Social Media as a Learning Media**

The development of science and technology and changes in various educational policies will continue to occur. Plus the disaster of the COVID-19 pandemic which is not yet certain when it will end. To be able to continue to grow and develop following the flow of growth, educators must be able to adapt in preparing learning that is more flexible and in accordance with the needs of students. One of them is by using social media as a medium of learning because social media is an inseparable part of student life today. Social media has become a necessity for students. Social media has shaped student behavior patterns in interacting and communicating in new ways that are considered to provide various conveniences, including in the field of education.

The digital transformation of the education sector in Indonesia is not a new discourse, various discussions, supporting regulations and concrete efforts to implement digital transformation in universities and all levels of schools in Indonesia. Previously, various discourses, supporting policies, and socialization about the industrial era 4.0 had not succeeded in making the education industry (universities, institutes, high schools, polytechnics, academies, and elementary schools) achieve significant progress in the digital transformation of Indonesian education, Covid-19 or Corona Virus. actually have a tremendous impact in this aspect. Judging from various aspects, it is clear that Covid-19 is a disaster that has a negative impact on almost all sectors of human life. Especially efforts to prevent the spread of Covid-19 through Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) or Lockdown with various appeals at home, work from home, Learn From Home, Stay Home and others. However, it is undeniable that the calamity through the

Covid-19 pandemic also brought various positive impacts, such as better natural conditions, and in the field of education it turned out to be a trigger for the acceleration of the digital transformation process of Indonesian education. All universities and schools in Indonesia have stopped face-to-face teaching and learning activities. However, of course the teaching and learning process should not stop, now all have to run online learning. Like it or not, maybe you can't, feel clueless or not clueless. The result is currently dominant lecturers, teachers, students and students are starting to become proficient in using various devices and media to support online learning. Although it may face various obstacles and various limitations. However, this is a progress that is worth being grateful for and getting used to using technology in the learning process.

The Challenge of Using Social Media as a Learning Media Webinars are an abbreviation of web seminars, namely seminars conducted through internet-based applications such as zoom, google meet, jitsi and others. With webinars, it is possible to transfer knowledge without limitation of distance and space. Since the restriction of social activities for the prevention of Covid-19 in Indonesia, many lecturers and educators have conducted webinars, there have been so many webinar activities that have been carried out. There are paid webinars and many offer quality webinars for free. This is certainly one indication of positive developments for the digital transformation of education in Indonesia. Education 4.0 can be seen as a creative response in which humans use digital technology, open source contents and global classrooms in the application of lifelong learning, flexible education systems, and personalized learning, to play a better role in society. . On the other hand, the new normal of e-learning is not the answer to a question, but an adaptation of a condition that everyone is "forced" to do. After the Covid-19 pandemic later, the new normal education that has begun should be continued and refined until it meets the concept of blended learning, which is an educational concept that combines face-to-face lecture methods in the classroom with e-learning, and in turn, the world of education will truly are in the era of education 4.0. Regarding e-learning in universities, if the measure is "can be done", then it cannot be denied that all campuses can do it. Teachers and students are encouraged to understand at least the use of digital technology. On the other hand, students are also forced to explore information technology and channel their creativity through innovations in the tasks given. There are various information technology platforms that have the opportunity to be used to support online learning activities and at the same time have the opportunity to force lecturers to be information technology literate. Some of them are as follows: e-learning, Learning house, Edmodo, EdLink, Moodle, Google Classroom, Schoology online class.

a. E-learning is an information and communication technology to enable students to learn anytime and anywhere. E-learning has two types, namely: first Synchronous. Synchronous means at the same time. The learning process occurs at the same time between educators and students. This allows direct interaction between educators and learners online. Synchronous training is a picture of a real class, but it is virtual (virtual) and all students are connected via the internet. Synchronous training is often also referred to as a virtual classroom. Second, Asynchronous means not at the same time. Learners can take different learning times with educators providing material. Asynchronous training is popular in e-learning because students can access learning materials anywhere and anytime. Students can enforce learning and complete it at any time according to a predetermined schedule. Learning can take the form of readings, animations, simulations, educational games, tests, quizzes and task collection.

b. Edmodo is a safe application to be used by both teachers/lecturers and students/students. Jeff O'Hara as a learning platform to collaborate and connect between students and teachers in sharing

educational content, managing projects or assignments and handling notifications of each activity. In another definition, Edmodo is a safe and free social network-based learning that makes it easy for teachers to create and manage virtual classes so that students can connect with classmates and teachers anytime and anywhere. Another definition of Edmodo is that Edmodo is an educational application with a social media platform and a cloud like Facebook that can be used in learning. Edmodo was created using a concept similar to Facebook, where the purpose of its creation was specifically for the field of education that could support the online learning process.

c. EdLink is an android-based application that is devoted to the world of education to help lecturers and students in the lecture process. Some of the benefits of Edlink for lecturers are to save time, keep classes organized, improve communication with students and many others. Not only helping lecturers but also very useful for students where students can be more updated about campus information, and also make the lecture process easier.

d. Moodle is a learning platform specially designed for educators, admins and students. Moodle actually stands for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. This platform is classified as a CMS but specifically for educational purposes.

e. Google Classroom atau ruang kelas Google merupakan suatu serambi pembelajaran campuran untuk ruang lingkup pendidikan yang dapat memudahkan pengajar dalam membuat, membagikan dan menggolongkan setiap penugasan tanpa kertas, Afrianti ( dalam Yustianti dan Novita, 2019). Google Classroom digunakan untuk memaksimalkan proses penyampaian materi kepada peserta didik tetapi dilakukan secara online sehingga materi bisa tersampaikan secara keseluruhan. Google Classroom adalah layanan berbasis internet yang disediakan oleh Google sebagai sebuah system e-learning. Service ini didesain untuk membantu pengajar membuat dan membagikan tugas kepada pelajar secara paperless.

f. Google Classroom or Google classroom is a mixed learning platform for the scope of education that can make it easier for teachers to create, share and classify each paperless assignment, Afrianti (in Yustianti and Novita, 2019). Google Classroom is used to maximize the process of delivering material to students but it is done online so that the material can be delivered as a whole. Google Classroom is an internet-based service provided by Google as an e-learning system. This service is designed to help teachers create and distribute assignments to students paperless.

g. Zoom is a free HD meeting app with video and screen sharing for up to 100 people. Zoom is a communication application using video. The application can be used on a variety of mobile devices, desktops, to phones and space systems.

h. Whatsapp is one of the most popular communication media used today, WhatsApp is an application that is used to carry out conversations using text, voice, or video. Whatsapp to stay connected with family friends, anytime and anywhere. WhatsApp is free and offers a simple, secure, reliable messaging and calling experience, available on phones all over the world. Furthermore, According to Niken, secretary-general of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, WhatsApp is the application that people are most interested in communicating via the internet.

### **Human Resources Creativity**

Educators as human resources must be able to adapt to various advances in science and technology (Adler & Ghadar, 2012). As a professional, educators must be able to plan, implement, and assess the learning that has been done. By taking advantage of the opportunity to increase the intensity



of the use of social media during the pandemic, educators must also be ready to learn to continue to increase their creativity and innovation in planning interesting learning. Creativity and innovation of educators is one of the skills of Human Resources that must be continuously improved. To be able to compete in the flow of science and technology progress and the industrial revolution, Indonesia needs to improve the capabilities and skills of its human resources in order to have high productivity. The use of social media as a learning medium during the pandemic is expected not to reduce the learning experience that will be obtained by students even though learning is carried out online. In practice, educators may encounter various obstacles in utilizing social media as a learning medium. During the implementation of online learning, various obstacles were reported that became a challenge for educators, including network limitations, lack of training, and lack of interest and awareness of educators in preparing for learning well. It is hoped that these obstacles can be overcome, one of which is the use of social media as a learning medium. In accordance with the purpose of using learning media, social media is expected to facilitate the learning process so that it becomes more effective and efficient. Because the optimal use of interactive media can accelerate student absorption and understanding of learning materials. Thus, the creativity of educators as human resources is the key to success in the use of social media as learning media. It is said that because educators are lesson planners so that the creativity and innovation of educators in regulating the pattern of using learning media will affect the achievement of learning objectives (Vahdat, 2021).

## CONCLUSION

By utilizing social media, especially whatsapp as a supporter of the learning process, it is able to have a positive influence, especially during the current covid-19 pandemic. Both as teaching staff and students feel the use of WhatsApp social media itself, in exploring their abilities, especially in using the media in creating assignments and materials in learning. The students of the basic education study program also gave a positive response in the use of social media whatsapp itself, motivating students to be more optimal in modifying each task or exercise in accordance with the learning material provided. They also know more about the functions used in social media Facebook, so they are able to explore students' ideas.

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