

Research Article:

## **The Role of Elementary School Teachers in the Implementation of Online Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to determine the role of teachers, obstacles and solutions in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. This type of research is qualitative research with a fixed case study design. Data were collected through interviews, observation and documentation techniques. Data were analysed using interactive model analysis. The results showed that the role of elementary school teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic was compiling learning materials taken from the internet (Google), preparing a laptop device with an internet network connection using WhatsApp media, using video media in delivering material who need a concrete example, assess online learning by not burdening students, teachers participate in various online learning training both and independent learning, involving parents of students to be able to provide learning assistance for their children. Constraints faced by elementary school teachers in online learning include: difficulty getting an internet signal, lack of internet quota, students cannot access WhatsApp because not all students or parents have cellphones, parents do not assist their children, students do not understand the material given. Solutions to overcome these obstacles include: changing cellular card providers that have good signals, finding sources of learning materials in schools that have better signals, subsidising internet quotas from schools, communicating and motivating.

**Keywords:** the role of teachers, elementary school, online learning, the COVID-19 pandemic

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The COVID-19 pandemic is an obstacle for all people in the world and this is also a health crisis for humans. In the world of education, the COVID-19 pandemic has also had a tremendous impact. Many schools in the world are closed to stop the spread of COVID-19, based on a report by ABC News on 7 March 2020, dozens of countries closed schools to prevent the spread of the virus (Irwanto, 2020). To date, 188 countries affected by COVID-19 have been forced to close their education units. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture (updated June 2020), there are 646,192 education units, 68,801,708 students and 4,183,591 teachers and lecturers affected by COVID-19 and must carry out distance learning, both online and offline (Permana et al., 2021).

Under the Circular of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 4 of 2020 concerning the implementation of education policies in the emergency period of the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), it is recommended to carry out the learning process from home through online learning. The online learning system (in the network) is a learning system without face-to-face directly between teachers and students but is carried out online using the internet network. Teachers must ensure that teaching and learning activities continue, even though students are at home.

Saiful Mujani Research and Consulting (SMRC) released data on the results of a survey conducted between 5 to 8 August 2020 regarding online education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey results show that 92% of students experience many problems in participating in online learning during the corona pandemic (Yunianto, 2020). In addition, the survey data also shows several challenges for students studying at home. The survey was conducted by U-Report Indonesia with the title "Back to School Plans in the Covid-19 Period". This survey is spread across various regions in Indonesia with the largest distribution of responses from West Java. From the survey above, students face several challenges when learned and teach held at home. Of the 3,839 responses, 38% felt that they lacked guidance from the teacher. Other challenges are internet access that is not smooth, does not have adequate devices, cannot access online learning applications, and lacks assistance from parents (Jayani, 2020).

Research data from Jamaluddin et al. (2020) shows that 99.6% of respondents conduct online learning, and 86% are carried out according to the lecture schedule set by the faculty. Material information obtained through online learning is quite acceptable to students (65%). More than six learning media are used during online learning, and the majority (>60%) use Google Classroom. More than 60% of respondents are used to learning with the online system, so as many as 50% stated that the online system can facilitate the learning and mentoring process under certain conditions. Previous studies on online learning have been conducted by several researchers. The first research of Yanti et al. (2020) examines the use of the Ministry of Education and Culture's learning house portal as an online learning medium in elementary schools, the second research from Darmalaksana et al. (2020) about the analysis of online learning during the "work

from home (WFH) COVID-19 pandemic as a challenge for digital leaders of the 21st century. The third research from Widiyono (2020) about the effectiveness of online lectures for PGSD students during the COVID-19 pandemics where the majority of students use gadgets in online learning. Based on the results of this study, studies on the role of teachers, obstacles and solutions in online learning have never been carried out.

The phenomena, survey results, and several previous studies above showed that the role of teachers in online learning is very important. The role of the teacher is very important considering the learning process can no longer meet face to face. Teachers must make every effort so that students can understand the material presented online. Research from Jamal (2020) explains the readiness of teachers to be a factor that also affects the readiness to implement e-learning. While research from Ayuni et al. (2020) stated that 6 out of 10 kindergarten teachers are ready to face online learning, but four of kindergarten teachers are not ready to do online learning. This is influenced by inadequate facilities on the part of teachers and parents and the perception that online learning is difficult. The readiness of kindergarten teachers to conduct online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic is very much needed. Preparation starts from the lesson plan, communicating with parents, and other supporting facilities.

Based on some of the research findings above, it can be concluded that the role of teacher competence affects the implementation of online learning. Teacher competence in using technology in the learning process must be adequate. Teachers must be proficient in the use of technology because it affects the quality of learning. Teachers must be able to design appropriate methods in the online learning process. Communication is also an important aspect of the success of online learning. Teachers must be able to overcome all the obstacles faced in online learning, both the internal and external. Thus, to be able to carry out all tasks in online learning, it is possible to analyse several competencies needed by an online learning teacher.

The role of teachers with all their competencies is a challenge for teachers in preparing online learning. Moreover, elementary school teachers need more teaching skills in online learning due to the characteristics of students who still like to play and are not too familiar with online learning media. In this case, the competence of the teacher becomes a very important component to carry out its role. In addition to the teacher's role in online learning, the supporting and inhibiting factors are important aspects that must be studied in depth. For developing countries where electricity and internet networks have reached all regions, online learning is certainly not a difficult thing to do. It is different from Indonesia, which has unique geographical characteristics with the distribution of infrastructure and networks to support online learning is still very limited. According to data from the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religion (2020, as quoted by Sartono, 2020), there are still 46,143 education units or 17% that do not have internet access, where the figure is dominated by the elementary school level, which is 34,739. This of course makes online learning very difficult to do at this level.

The challenge of online learning is not only limited internet access in education units but also limited internet access in an area as a whole. Internet access in schools can be used by teachers, but it is not certain that all students can access the internet from their respective homes. Therefore, this study aims to identify and describe the teacher's role, constraints, and solutions in online learning. So, it is hoped that the response obtained can describe the process of implementing online learning in the midst of the current COVID-19 pandemic and be used as basic information for relevant parties in determining online learning policies.

## **Teacher's Role**

Teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing and evaluating students in early childhood education through formal education, basic education, and secondary education (Kunandar, 2016). Teachers are all people who are authorised and responsible for the education of students, both individually and classically, both at school and outside school (Sagala, 2009). Sutikno (2013) stated that teaching is a profession. Before working as a teacher, you must first be educated in a teacher education institution. In these educational institutions, not only learning science or fields of study to be taught, science and methods of teaching, but also being fostered to have a personality as a teacher.

Saifuddin (2015) mentioned the role of professional teachers as follows:

1. The teacher is a learning resources: The teacher as a learning resource is closely related to the mastery of the subject matter properly and correctly.
2. The teacher is a facilitator: The teacher's role is to provide services to facilitate students in the learning process activities. The teacher as a facilitator brings the consequent pattern of the "top-down" teacher-student relationship to a partnership relationship.
3. The teacher is a manager: As a learning manager, the teacher plays a role in creating a comfortable learning climate.
4. The teacher is a demonstrator: The teacher as a demonstrator is the role of the teacher so that he can show students everything that can make students better understand and understand every message conveyed.
5. The teacher is a guide: The teacher as a mentor is to maintain, direct and guide so that students grow and develop according to their potential.
6. The teacher is a motivator: In the learning process, motivation is one of the most important dynamic aspects. Teachers are required to be creative to be able to generate student motivation.
7. The teacher is an evaluator: As an evaluator, the teacher plays a role in collecting data or information about the success of the learning that has been carried out.
8. The teacher is a mediator: In the teaching and learning process, it is very necessary to have a teacher who can become a mediator.

## **Teacher Competence**

Competence is a unity of mastery of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are displayed, through performance, which is expected to be achieved by someone after completing an educational program (Sumardi, 2016). Competence according to Kunandar (2016), thing that describes a person's qualifications or abilities, both qualitative and quantitative. This understanding implies that competence can be used in two contexts, namely: first, as an indicator of ability that shows the observed actions. Second, as a concept that includes aspects of cognitive, affective, and action as well as the stages of implementation as a whole.

Teacher competence based on Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards Article 28 states that "Educators must have academic qualifications and competencies as learning agents, be physically and mentally healthy, and can realise national education goals". Teacher competence is the result of the incorporation of many types of abilities, which can be in the form of a set of knowledge, skills and behaviours that must be possessed, internalised and mastered by teachers in carrying out their professional duties (Musriadi, 2016). So it can be concluded that teacher competence is a form of action from the knowledge, skills and attitudes of a teacher who has the responsibility of educating, teaching, and guiding students both individually and classically.

The success of a teacher can be seen if the existing criteria have been achieved as a whole. If the criteria have been met, it means that a person's work is considered to have good work quality. The form of teacher performance is realised in the form of competence (Kunandar, 2016) namely:

1. **Personality Competence:** Personal abilities that reflect a steady, stable, mature, wise and authoritative personality, being a role model for students and having noble character.
2. **Pedagogic Competence:** Includes understanding students, designing and implementing learning, evaluating learning outcomes, and developing students to actualise their various potentials.
3. **Professional Competence:** A broad and deep mastery of learning material, which includes mastery of curriculum material for school subjects and the scientific substance that covers the material, as well as mastery of the structure and scientific methodology.
4. **Social Competence:** The ability of teachers to communicate and interact effectively with students, education staff, parents/guardians of students.

## **Online Learning**

Online learning is the implementation of online learning classes to reach a massive and broad target group so that online learning can be held anywhere and attended for free

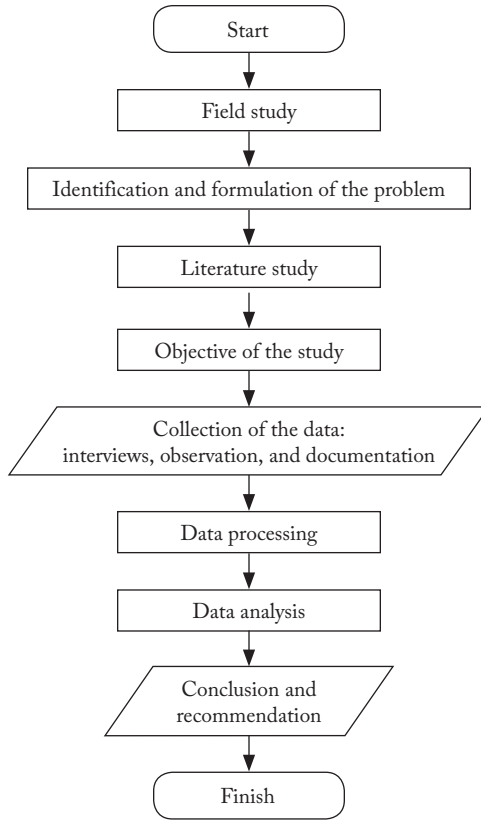
or paid (Bilfaqih & Qomarudin, 2015). Online learning is all learning activities that use the help of electronic technology, which can be applied in conventional education and distance education (Rusman, 2013). Online learning is a new learning method in the form of a combination of network technology and multimedia combined with pedagogy and andragogy (Sutopo, 2012). Online learning is learning that utilises the support of internet technology. In online learning, the teacher does not just upload learning materials that can be accessed online by students, but the teacher also evaluates, establishes communication, collaborates and manages other aspects of learning (Surjono, 2013).

Online learning has benefits such as building communication and discussions between teachers and children, children interacting and discussing with one another, making it easier for children to interact with teachers and parents, the right means to see children's progress through parent reports with the aim that parents can see direct development, teachers can easily provide material to children in the form of images, videos and audio that can be downloaded by parents directly, and make it easier for teachers to make materials anywhere and anytime (Sobron et al., 2019).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research is qualitative, namely research that intends to understand the phenomena of what is experienced by the research subject, such as behaviour, perception, motivation, action, etc. holistically, and by way of description in the form of words and language, in a special context that naturally and by utilising various natural methods (Moleong, 2016). The design of this research is a fixed case study. It is called a fixed case study if the main focus of the research has been determined from the beginning before the researcher goes to the field. Things that are not relevant to the problem are ignored, so the research is more focused, and the original design of the study remains by the initial formulation (Nugrahani, 2018).

Data was collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. When the interview activity took place, the researcher recorded the conversation and took photos of the interview between the researcher and the interviewed informant, namely the teacher at the elementary school. Interviews were conducted using the google form instrument. The documents collected are related to online learning activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, namely learning tools which include Annual Programme, Semester Programme, Syllabus, Lesson Plan, Minimum Completeness Criteria, and Google forms. This study uses a data analysis technique called interactive model analysis. Miles et al. (2014, p. 12–14) state that the analysis of this model consists of three components, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. This analysis is carried out in an interactive form through the data collection process as a cycle. The steps in conducting research can be seen in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Flowchart of research method

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this study, the informants were 6 (six) elementary school teachers from two different schools, as presented in Table 1.

The results of the research on the role of elementary school teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic will discuss three focus research problems, namely the role of elementary school teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, the obstacles faced by elementary school teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, and solutions to overcome the obstacles faced by elementary school teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 1.** Informant data

No.	Name	Position	School	Data collection technique	Data collection place
1	AS	Class 1 teacher	SD Negeri 1 Sawit, Boyolali	Interview	Informant's house (via telephone)
2	NK	Class 1 teacher	SD Negeri 1 Sawit, Boyolali	Interview	Informant's house (via telephone)
3	BS	Class 1 teacher	SD Negeri 1 Sawit, Boyolali	Interview	Informant's house (via telephone)
4	LS	Class 1 teacher	MI Muhammadiyah Talang, Bayat, Klaten	Interview	Informant's house (via telephone)
5	SM	Class 1 teacher	MI Muhammadiyah Talang, Bayat, Klaten	Interview	Informant's house (via telephone)
6	DH	Class 1 teacher	MI Muhammadiyah Talang, Bayat, Klaten	Interview	Informant's house (via telephone)

### **The Role of Elementary School Teachers in Online Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Learning conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic were conducted through an online learning system which is a learning system without face to face directly between teachers and students but is carried out through the internet network. Thus, the role of teachers is needed in supporting the online learning process so that during the COVID-19 pandemic, children's learning processes do not become neglected and they can still learn happily without feeling burdened in the learning process. The teacher's role can be seen from the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of online learning.

Preparations made by teachers in online learning are compiling learning materials taken from the internet (Google). This is as stated by informants in the following interview.

The learning materials can be taken from the internet. Usually, I will look for the material, because the material on the internet will make students confused due to the wide scope of the material. Between one page to another will have a different discussion according to the target and needs of readers with different age ranges. The material can be in the form of learning videos that are following the material in the lesson plans. (AS)

For the preparation of the material using the LKS book as a source of teaching materials. Besides that, it was also taken from google. For example, learning sports, oh the lesson of this chapter. There's a lot on Google that if you can get into the material, Ms. Now, we will send the link to parents to study and give to their children. (LS)



Usually the preparation for online learning that I have done so far is looking for material from the internet. I look for it according to the lesson plan that I have made, so I don't get confused about what material I take. (BS)

The learning materials that I prepare for online learning are taken from the internet. Because I think the internet is rich in material that can be taught to students. (SM)

Based on the information provided by the informants above, the teacher's role in preparing online learning is to compile learning materials taken from Student worksheet books and the internet (Google) that are adapted to the learning objectives in the lesson plans. This is supported by the results of research submitted by Yanti et al. (2020) that the preparation made by the teacher is like looking for material that is following the learning objectives. The learning materials used can be in the form of learning videos. 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. Saifuddin (2015) stated that the role of the teacher as a learning resource is closely related to the mastery of the subject matter properly and correctly. A professional teacher when he can master the subject matter well so that he acts as a source of learning for his students.

Teachers are required to be able to design online learning through presentations through videos, animated presentation slides, textbooks, presentation slides by utilising appropriate devices or online media and following the material being taught. Therefore, teachers must be able to prepare learning tools properly. The findings of this study indicate that teachers prepare laptop device that is connected to an internet network connection, while the learning media used is WhatsApp because the operation is very simple and easily accessible to elementary school students. This is as stated by informants in the interview as follows.

The online learning system that I use is through a laptop device that is connected to an internet network connection. .... I use WhatsApp more often because it is easier for elementary school children to use. (AS)

I use my personal laptop to carry out the online learning process at home. I happen to have a laptop that is adequate enough to be used for online learning. (DH)

...then we summarise and give it to the child via WhatsApp Group. (LS)

For 1st grade elementary school children, the right learning media platform to use is WhatsApp, because this media is easy to use and is often used for daily communication tools. (BS)

As the information conveyed by the informants above, the selection of media WhatsApp is also found in the results of research from Anugrahana (2020) that the reason teachers choose to use WhatsApp is that it is more practical, easier for children to understand, more effective because it does not require a lot of quotas in the learning process. Another reason is that it is easier and all parents and guardians can use it and it is not a strange thing. The advantage of using WhatsApp is that it is easier to operate and easier to send questions and materials. Even if you want to have a virtual meeting, the teacher can directly use the WhatsApp Video Call feature. WhatsApp is simple, effective, and efficient in its use.

In the implementation of online learning, the teacher uses video media in delivering the material which requires a concrete example. The informants reveal this in the following interview.

If there is a material that requires concrete examples, it will be easier if I share a video containing material that is following the lesson plans. I chose this video media because it can clearly show something that was initially impossible to see and dangerous, for example, the event of a volcanic eruption showing a volcanic crater filled with incandescent lava. In addition, with the video media, students will be more interested and not get bored easily receiving subject matter. (AS)

If this is a concrete example, Miss, for example, the practice of ablution is easy. Yes, we, myself, continue to practice it on video, Ms. Then it was distributed in the WhatsApp group and I also asked the children to practice it, Ms. (LS)

Ya, I also use video media that I share on WhatsApp. This video media is useful for conveying material that is difficult for me to explain, but because it uses this video media, learning material is easy to convey. (SM)

Kids are very happy if I give lesson material using video media. Because video media has motion pictures and sounds that can arouse students' enthusiasm and the learning atmosphere becomes more lively. (DH)

Based on the results of the interview above, this media was chosen because it shows something that was initially impossible to see and dangerous, besides that the video can be played back according to the needs of students. Nugrawiyati (2018) in his research conveys Learning video media is one of the developments of audiovisual media that can represent anything that the teacher is unable to say through words or sentences or more concrete examples. Students will like things that are new and more concrete than just listening and taking notes in class.

The teacher's role in online learning can also be seen in carrying out learning assessments. Assessments in online learning were delivered by informants in the interviews.

The emergency curriculum during the COVID-19 pandemic contains an evaluation or assessment activity that does not burden students. Assessment can be carried out according to the needs of the teacher, namely from attitude observations, knowledge tests, and presentations of performance or work/projects with an assessment rubric. Learning evaluation activities can also adapt from the types of assessments that have been used in K13, one of which is the assignment of assignments with portfolio assessment. If students study several themes for one week and the themes are studied from various subjects, students can submit assignments given within one week. Each teacher can provide a review and assessment of assignments submitted by students. The point of pressure does not have to be right or wrong for the given task, but more emphasis on the process and student learning outcomes. Thus, the assessment given is not as complex and complicated as the curriculum in normal times and conditions, the emphasis is more on mastering literacy, numeracy, and character development. (AS)

Our assessment is not too rigid with the answer from Ms. Because this is doing homework, ma'am, there are things that are done by their parents. And not purely the result of his workmanship. Judging from the writing, it's already different. The year is yes from the work collected on the weekends. Well, automatically the value is different, Ms. So from there, we are not too rigid in giving values to children. (LS)

Assessment in online learning is done by giving assignments to be done at each student's home. The tasks that I give can be done with the help of parents so that they better understand their duties. Of course, this assessment is different from learning during offline learning because online learning is difficult for students to accept. (NK)

From the information above, the online learning assessment is carried out without burdening students. Assessment does not emphasise right and wrong, but rather on the process and student learning outcomes, this is because students do assignments assisted by their parents or family. This is in line with the results of research from Asmuni (2020) and Murhadi and Ponidi (2020) that the online learning that is carried out does not burden students even the assignments given are not heavier than assignments during regular learning.

Evaluation of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic is also carried out on teacher performance. Teachers improve their ability in online learning through various training as revealed by the following two informants.

I am trying to improve my ability to do online learning. The effort I did was to follow distance learning technique guidance organized by the education office and LPMP (Institute for Quality Assurance of

Education). In addition, I am also more active in learning online learning tips on the internet, and improving my skills to learn using more varied learning media. (AS)

Seminar/training at one of the MAN in Klaten, Miss. Not long ago, Miss. Arabic teacher, Fiqh and History of Islam, madam. (LS)

Training from the Teacher Working Group through the WhatsApp group and given a lot of reading material, madam, we are asked to study it independently, madam. (BS)

Based on the interview above, efforts to improve teacher competence are carried out through training or technical guidance and self-study. As research results from Jamal (2020) state that the readiness of teachers in online learning is to attend training on e-learning, so school management needs to provide flexible time for teachers to take part in e-learning training. While research from Sari and Rini (2020) stated that technical guidance activities were carried out to increase the skills and competencies of elementary school teachers to provide an interesting and fun online learning experience.

The teacher's role in online learning is to communicate with parents to enable them to assist their children. This is as conveyed by informants following.

I always communicate with parents to accompany their children so that they can participate in providing an understanding of the material I convey, paying attention to their children's infrastructure facilities in online learning. I also suggest patiently accompanying the child so that the child feels comfortable with the assistance provided by his parents. In essence, this online learning also requires parental involvement. (AS)

Children can be guided by parents at home by listening to Juz-Amma 'or Al-Qur'an. (LS)

Before the online learning activities started, I communicated with the parents of the students to be able to accompany their children in learning. This communication is done so that parents can supervise their children to stay focused on participating in online learning. (SM)

Based on the research findings above, the teacher's role in online learning is to involve parents to assist in providing an understanding of the material to children and paying attention to online learning infrastructure. This is reinforced by the results of research from Yulianingsih et al. (2020) on the role of parents and children's learning assistance. Mentoring is done by helping children do their homework, as a place for children to learn, explaining and providing explanations about the material being studied, giving a good response to learning from school.

## **Obstacles Faced by Elementary School Teachers in Online Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Learning with the online system carried out by elementary school teachers certainly raises several problems that become obstacles. One obstacle experienced by teachers is the difficulty to get the cellphone internet signal during the rainy season. This signal difficulty also occurs to students because the students' residences are in the village. The following is an excerpt from an interview with informants that reveals the difficulty of the signal.

The only problem is the signal problem. So, once when I searched for sources on the internet, it took a very long time to load. Especially when it rains, the signal is very difficult. I'm looking for material sources using an internet provider from a cellphone, not like Speedy, which has a smoother signal. This problem is also faced by students. Many students complain when the learning signal is not good. I understand that because most of the students live in villages far from the cellular card provider towers. (AS)

The obstacle that I experienced while participating in online learning was an unstable internet network. Because there are some students who live in the village, the internet coverage there is not good so it is difficult for students to get a good signal. (DH)

In this village, the internet signal is not very good. Sometimes during the online learning process there are internet disturbances, communication is cut off. (NK)

This signal difficulty was also found in the research of Jamaluddin et al. (2020) which states unstable network is an obstacle in the online learning process. The existence of network facilities is the main thing in online system learning because it is related to the smooth learning process. The existence of students who are far from the city center or far from the reach of the provider network, especially during the rainy season, of course, cannot carry out the learning process smoothly. Sadikin and Hamidah (2020) stated that the weak internet signal is a challenge for online learning.

The other obstacle faced by teachers and students is lack of internet quota during the online learning process. This constraint was conveyed by the two informants in the following interview.

At that time I had to make video calls and show learning videos, so I needed more quota. My feelings at that time were disappointed, annoyed because suddenly the internet quota ran out. But I have to be patient and think of a solution. (AS)

It's just that some parents have complained because the quota is late. (LS)

Parents affected by COVID-19 will find it difficult to buy internet quota. Especially parents who are economically inadequate. It's also a pity for the parents, they have been burdened by being laid off by the company, and the burden of having to buy internet quota is also burdened. (BS)

Yes, actually, I got a quota subsidy from the government. But some parents complain that they can't be used. I don't know why Miss. Some ladies can, now what we can't exchange and confirm from the operator, Miss. But so far, there has been no follow-up. (SM)

Parents with lower income may find it difficult to buy internet quota. The availability of a quota requires a fairly high cost for students and teachers to facilitate online learning needs. The research findings related to the lack of internet quota during online learning above are in line with those conveyed by Satrianingrum and Prasetyo (2021) that one of the factors that affect online learning, namely internet quotas because internet quotas accommodate the smooth process of online learning. Sadikin and Hamidah (2020) in their research stated that to take part in online learning, teachers, and students had to pay quite a lot of money to buy internet data quota. Learning in the form of video conferencing has consumed a lot of data quota. The use of online learning using video conferencing is quite expensive (Naserly, 2020). Currently, the quota for students and teachers is still borne by the students and teachers themselves (Anggianita et al., 2020).

The other obstacle is that not all students can access using WhatsApp media because not all students have cellphones and have to borrow from their parents, even though not all parents stay at home because they have to work.

Not all students can access using WhatsApp media, because not all students have their cellphones. They have to borrow their parents' cellphones first if they are going to do online learning. Some parents think that elementary school children are not worthy to buy their cell phones. So for children who don't have their cellphones, they have to depend on their parents. Even though not all parents stay at home because there are parents who have to work outside the cellphone will also be brought by their working parents. (AS)

The problem with parents is related to being online... hmmm... there are parents who don't have cellphones, Ms. (LS)

The economic condition of parents causes not all students or parents to have cellphones. If one of the parents has a cellphone, they usually take it with them to work. (DH)

The findings above showed that not all students have their own cell phones. This is in line with the results of research from Anugrahana (2020) who stated that the obstacles of online learning included some children who do not have a smartphone, parents have cellphones but parents work all day outside the home so that parents can only accompany them at night, in addition to problems with signals and internet quota.

The next obstacle is that parents do not assist their children in online learning. This is revealed in the following interview.

The busyness of working parents also affects the lack of assistance provided by parents to children in online learning. (AS)

So student feel like you don't have enough monitoring from your parents, ma'am because his parents were busy just now. (LS)

Not all parents can accompany their children to participate in online learning. This is because parents are busy working outside the home. (NK)

The results of the interview above show that students do not get assistance from their parents because of their busy work. Most of the parents of students in Sawit Village, Boyolali and Talang Village, Klaten make a living as farmers and factory employees, where they generally work from morning to evening. Thus, parents can only assist at night, even though online learning is carried out in the morning until noon. This obstacle was also found in research by Wardani and Ayriza (2020) that parents do not have enough time to accompany children because they have to work.

Another obstacle faced by students in online learning is that students complain that they do not understand the material provided. This obstacle is conveyed by the two informants in the following interview.

The lack of understanding of students when carrying out the online learning process is an obstacle for teachers in conducting online learning to students. (AS)

There are children who do not understand the material as well, Miss. Maybe we have arrived at the next material, the child does the assignment and the result is good, but this child does not necessarily understand the material, Miss. (LS)

Children are used to offline learning, so when children have to take online lessons they have a hard time receiving lessons. This is natural because they usually meet face-to-face with their teachers and friends in class. (BS)

Constraints of students who do not understand the material presented can occur because students do not meet face to face with the teacher so that teachers find it difficult to monitor student learning progress. The findings of this study are reinforced by the results of research from Widiyono (2020) which states that online learning merely provides an overview of lesson, while it is less possible to enable an optimal understanding of the material.

### **Solutions to Overcome Constraints Faced by Elementary School Teachers in Online Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Some obstacles will certainly be found in the online learning process so that teachers generally have to find solutions to the obstacles they face. The solution to overcome the difficulty of getting an internet signal and lack of quota was conveyed by the informant in the following interview.

I changed to a cellular card provider with a good signal, such as Telkomsel. Sometimes I also look for the source of the material at school, because the school has a speedy with a better signal. (AS)

At that time what I did was my learning was transferred to the WhatsApp group chat. Because if you only chat, WhatsApp can still be used, so that's why I chose the unlimited internet package, so WhatsApp can still be used. I then immediately bought another internet quota. (LS)

From school, there is every month, miss (internet quota subsidies from schools). Then from A\*\*\* (the first internet brand), there is also Miss. Every month 50 thousand for each teacher. (SM)

Based on the results of the interview above, the solution to overcome the difficulty of getting an internet signal, the teacher replaces a cellular card provider that has a good signal or looks for sources of learning materials in schools that have speedy with a better signal. The solution to overcome the quota shortage when learning online is to transfer learning to WhatsApp groups and obtain internet quota subsidies from schools. In addition, the teacher immediately bought an unlimited internet package. Anugrahana (2020) stated that the teacher created WhatsApp groups so that all students could be involved in the group. The learning model carried out by the teacher is to send videos using WhatsApp groups containing greetings to students and continued by explaining the subject matter and assignments to be done that day. Meanwhile, Wahyono et al. (2020) in their research, provides solutions to obstacles in online learning, namely ensuring all online applications work on mobile devices in case a laptop is not available. The government should figure out how to buy or rent Wi-Fi hotspots and then have a plan to distribute the devices online and the hotspots.



The solution to overcome the obstacles of students who do not understand the material presented by the teacher is to communicate, motivate, and provide modules to students. This is as stated by the informant in the following interview excerpt.

Yes, I try to be patient and explain repeatedly if there are students who do not understand the material being taught. Communication with students is important so that I can find out what obstacles are faced by students, including students' lack of understanding of the lesson. (AS)

Yes ma'am, call (nod firmly). Because the mother is that if there is a problem with the child who doesn't want to do the task or anything, I was asked to call or use a voice note, Miss. Hehehe. (LS)

Regarding the difficulty of learning materials, teachers can distribute modules to students that contain brief subject matter for students to learn while studying at home. (DH)

From the research findings above, the solution to overcome the obstacles of students who do not understand the material presented by the teacher is to communicate and motivate students to find out students' misunderstanding of the lesson. This act of communication between teachers and students was also stated by Wahyono et al. (2020) in their research that teachers ensure all are well communicated. Teachers need to explain in as much detail as possible what can be expected from students about online learning in the next few weeks. Also ensure two-way communication lines (eg WhatsApp, e-mail, video calls). The teacher also distributes modules to students to overcome difficulties in understanding online learning materials. This is supported by the results of research from Permana (2016) that the module has facilities for students to more easily understand the material and students can study alone at home if the material discussed at school has not been completed. With the school module, it is helpful because the teacher who makes the module knows more about the condition of students while studying so that they can improve student achievement in the academic field.

The next solution that is done by teachers in dealing with online learning obstacles is that the teacher conducts home visits while still paying attention to health protocols. This was revealed by the informant in the following interview.

We and the school are also looking for solutions to overcome these problems. One solution is to do a home visit. Home visits can also be done by studying in groups so that the implementation of learning is more effective considering a large number of students. (AS)

Yesterday, there was homeschooling, Miss. But it's done at school. Because we also don't dare to go to Ms.'s house, and we have to get permission from several related parties. So the school took the policy to send a child to school once a week, the student went to school for an hour and a half. (LS)

I also carried out a home visit at the house of one of the students. So beforehand, my parents and I communicated to determine the schedule for the home visit. This activity is carried out in groups according to the proximity of the house distance between one student and another. (NK)

Based on the research findings above, through home visits, teachers can find out the difficulties faced by students. Home visit activities can be done with group learning so that learning is more effective. This is reinforced by the results of research from Sukanto (2020) that teachers can conduct home visits to check and assist in learning while still prioritising procedures for preventing the spread of COVID-19. Mokodompit (2020) stated that the implementation of home visits helped teachers in obtaining information about student and parent complaints during distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. While Rachman (2020) stated that doing learning from home wherewith the agenda in one month still holding meetings at schools to carry out active learning in class with accelerated school time while still implementing health protocols and updating home visits (home visits) by teachers to keep optimising learning.

Based on the results of the research presented above, the role of the teacher is very important in online learning so that learning continues even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Obstacles in online learning felt by teachers and students who live in areas with unstable signals, the economic conditions of parents who have difficulty buying internet quotas, and the condition of parents who are busy working as farmers so that they cannot fully accompany their children in learning require teachers to innovate learning as a solution to the obstacles faced by teachers, students, and parents of these students.

This is the uniqueness found in this study, that the COVID-19 pandemic condition forces teachers to innovate so that learning can continue. This innovation is carried out by the teacher by compiling learning modules whose materials are adapted to the characteristics of students as a solution to overcome the constraints of limited quotas and unstable signals because the majority of students live in villages and the livelihoods of their parents are farmers.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The role of elementary school teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic is compiling learning materials taken from the internet (Google), preparing a laptop device with an internet network connection using WhatsApp media, using video media in

delivering material who need a concrete example, assess online learning by not burdening students, teachers take part in various online learning training both and independent learning, involving parents of students to be able to provide learning assistance for their children.

Obstacles faced by elementary school teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic include difficulty getting an internet signal, lack of internet quota, students cannot access WhatsApp because not all students or parents have mobile phones, parents do not assist their children, students do not understand the material given. Solutions to overcome the obstacles faced by elementary school teachers in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic include changing cellular card providers that have good signals, finding sources of learning materials in schools that have better signals, subsidising internet quotas from schools, communicating, motivating and giving modules to students, conducting home visits.

Based on the conclusions above, suggestions that can be conveyed in this study are teachers should be able to improve their information and communication technology skills through training or technical guidance organised by schools, educational institutions, or independently. Parents also need to give appreciation for their children's efforts in doing assignments so that students are more motivated to learn. For schools, it is necessary to conduct online technical guidance on the online implementation process and carry out socialisation and parenting to parents and students through print media and social media regarding procedures for implementing online learning, concerning their roles and duties. 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 a curriculum and syllabus for online-based learning.

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