

# Education Pollemic During Covid-19 Pandemic: Creating Participatory Learning During Pandemic

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**Abstract:** The Covid-19 pandemic has brought major changes in the global order of human life. In the world of education in Indonesia, the impact caused by this pandemic has brought the Indonesian people to the introduction of a new civilization or era related to mastery of communication and information technology through the application of online learning. However, the readiness of the community in recognizing the use of new technology and applying it in online learning has become a problem in itself during the pandemic period until now. This research uses descriptive qualitative methods and emphasizes data collection through interviews, observation and documentation study. The results reveal the main factors causing stagnation in online learning, namely the low level of community participation in the use of the latest technology as a result of their unpreparedness to accept sudden changes, lack of digital literacy, lack of income for economic needs, and the mentality of students who do not want to study for a long time of pandemic period. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the unstable economic conditions of society lead to unpreparedness in accepting online learning models through modern learning applications on the internet, including the mentality of people who do not want to accept changes quickly and accelerate in the changes themselves.

**Keywords:** Covid-19 Pandemic, Online Learning, Participatory Learning.

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## Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has consumed a lot of attention, energy, resources, and the financial side of human life in the world. Why not, all the concentration and budget diversion is focused only on the prevention, control and care of people affected by Covid-19 and the constant search for antidotes or vaccines to cure those who are infected (Sarip et al., 2020). Many people are infected, cared for, and many are having to breathe after fighting this pandemic for so long. Rizal (2020) mentions at least three adverse effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Indonesian society, namely the high mortality of health workers (doctors and nurses) as the frontline for handling the pandemic, an economic recession in various fields, and a change in the new learning paradigm as a result of the existence of fields, and a change in the new learning paradigm as a result of the existence of a

field of community activity, namely the application of distance learning (online).

Several important aspects of human life, especially those that affect the lives of many people, are also affected and do not make a positive contribution to fulfilling the needs of human life (Livana et al., 2020). For example, the aspects of health, education, business and industry (DUDI), government and private institutions, as well as basic human activities, are limited and do not support human needs themselves. The constraints faced by the community are precisely based on efforts to fulfill their needs and require free space, in fact they must be limited by the demands of physical distancing and social distancing health protocols. This condition has emerged in several major cities of the world, with the fancy term, Lockdown, or in Indonesia regulated in Government Regulation Number 21 of 2020 with the term Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB).

In this paper, the authors highlight the aspects of education and implementation of learning in the midst of the Covid-19 outbreak by emphasizing the readiness and enthusiasm of students through the use of electronic media and online media as learning support facilities. By taking a locus of attention on the application of online learning in Sikka Regency, NTT, the author wants to illustrate that even if faced with the Covid-19 Pandemic situation, learning through electronic media and online media can be a way out for students so that they continue to learn from home even in conditions of readiness. and the participation of students cannot be said to have been maximal.

### **Material and Methods:**

#### **Pandemic and Community Stability**

When talking about the impact of a pandemic on the stability of society, in the opinion of the author, there are several aspects affected as outlined in the introduction above. The pandemic has caused a decline in the people's economy, which is known as an economic recession. Launching Forbes, (15/7/2020), a recession is a significant decline in economic activity that lasts for months or even years. During a recession, the economy struggles, people lose their jobs, companies make less sales and the country's overall economic output declines. Experts say a recession occurs when a country's economy experiences the following things, namely negative gross domestic product (GDP), an increase in the unemployment rate, a decrease in retail sales, a measure of income, and manufacturing contracts for a long period of time. A recession is considered an inevitable part of the business cycle that occurs in a country's economy (Shalihah, 2020).

Indonesia officially experiences a recession because economic growth in the third quarter of 2020 is still experiencing contraction. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) noted that economic growth in the period July 2020 to September 2020 was minus 3.49% yoy. The recession was indicated by a contraction of minus 2.03% yoy (Virdita, 2020). In hindsight, Indonesia's economy in the second quarter of 2020 was recorded at minus 5.32% yoy.

The economy in that quarter was under pressure due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In Indonesia, the impact of the pandemic on the stability of society, especially economic stability, can be seen in the side effects of the global economic recession. The pandemic has taken away jobs and incomes. Unemployment due to stopping work or layoffs causes new social problems. The high rates of poverty, violence and crime also characterize the social life of the community. Everyone is looking for their own way to fulfill their daily needs, or even just to survive.

The pandemic creates chaos in people's lives and disturbs the stability of society. According to Ian Stewart (Piliang, 201), chaos refers to a situation of disorder or chaos of objects (objects, economics, social, political, cultural and security), whose patterns cannot be predicted, and occur everywhere but are difficult to explain. However, the chaotic situation created by this pandemic has also on the other hand led to order. The resulting chaos should lead to a new paradigm, a change in behavior patterns, and a new world order. Chaos does not have to be a thing that refers to disorder, because behind its irregular side, it fills in another situation which is said to be order (stable). Chaos because of the Covid-19 Pandemic also simultaneously gave birth to a new social stability and a return to the actual rules and regulations (Wardiono, 2012).

#### **Methods**

The research method used in this research is a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The research location was determined at several senior high schools in the city of Maumere, namely SMA Negeri 2 Maumere, SMK Negeri 2 Maumere, and SMAK St. John Paul II Maumere. The reason the researchers chose this school was because during the Covid-19 Pandemic, these schools continued to carry out indirect learning activities through the internet network. Even though there are obstacles in the implementation of online learning activities, these schools are still consistently implementing online learning activities based on modern learning support

applications. The time of carrying out the research occurred from August to December 2020.

Data collection techniques using field observation techniques, documentation studies, and interviews. Field observations were made to schools that were the target of research activities. In addition, researchers also observed the online learning process carried out by teachers at school and learning from home (BDR) activities by students. Documentation studies are carried out by

studying documents on student learning outcomes during the pandemic period in addition to photos and videos of learning activities prepared by the school. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted with school principals, teachers and students. Taking into account the covid-19 pandemic situation, the selection of respondents was limited in number.

Table 1. Respondents Data.

Number.	Respondent Name (Initials)	School	Profession	Role
1	AK	SMK Negeri 2 Maumere	Headmaster	Key Informants
2	YAM	SMA Negeri 2 Maumere	Headmaster	Key Informants
3	FD	SMAK St. John Paul II Maumere	Headmaster	Key Informants
4	MY	SMK Negeri 2 Maumere	Teacher	Key Informants
5	YAP	SMAK St. John Paul II Maumere	Students	Key Informants
6	GMDC	Dinas PKO Kabupaten Sikka	Head of Department	Informan Tambahan

The data analysis technique used data analysis by Miles and Huberman. According to Miles and Huberman (1992: 16) the analysis consists of three activity streams that occur simultaneously, namely: data reduction, data presentation, conclusion / verification. In general, the data analysis procedure according to the two experts can be seen in the following chart:

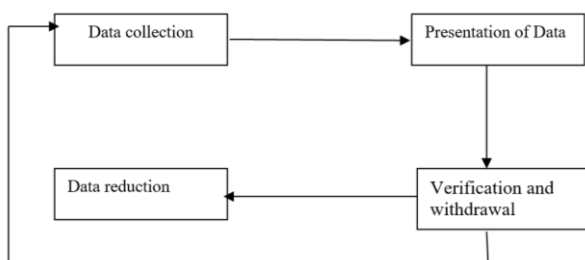


Chart 1. Data Analysis Flow According to Miles and Huberman

### Results

In Sikka Regency, one of the districts in the NTT Province and located in the central part of Flores Island, the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic has also been felt by the community in various fields of

life. The pandemic has taken away freedom of activity, whether working, studying, or other activities that support people's lives. In the field of education, schools were closed for an uncertain period of time according to the appeal of the task force to accelerate the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic. The high number of positive confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the NTT region in general and in the Sikka Regency area in particular is a serious threat to the implementation of education and teaching in schools.

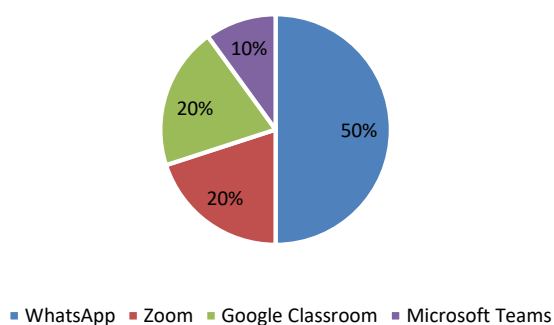


Figure 1. An increasing trend of Covid-19 cases in NTT as of September 14, 2020 (nttprov.go.id)

The local government limits learning activities in schools by implementing the Learning From Home (BDR) policy. Each school is given the authority to regulate educators (teachers) and students to apply distance learning patterns according to the level of needs and conditions in the field. Learning From Home is the right choice to keep the school situation (education process) running as it should. The teacher can give practice questions and assignments after carrying out teaching activities in turn for each group of students with a certain number limitation. Each study group that is assisted is at least 10 students. These conditions and learning practices are usually found in schools located in remote or hinterland areas of Sikka Regency.

In contrast to schools in villages (inland or rural areas), schools in the city of Maumere (the capital of Sikka Regency) have started to apply learning patterns with internet networks as a way out to overcome stagnation in education and learning in schools (Safitri et al. , 2020). In observations made by researchers (September 2020), learning activities in several schools in the city of Maumere can be carried out through several online learning applications with varying numbers or frequencies of use. Users of online applications for learning Zoom 20%), Google Classroom (20%), WhatsApp Group (50%), and Microsoft Teams (10%). In some of the schools that were observed, they chose the application of online learning considering that the supporting learning facilities and facilities were quite adequate. The use of virtual learning is seen as a way out for distance learning (Argaheni, 2020).

**Graph 1. Percentage of online application usage for learning secondary schools in Maumere**



When teachers carry out bold learning activities, teachers use electronic devices or media in schools to facilitate coordination by the principal so that teaching activities of teachers and students can be monitored effectively. Some schools that implement full learning are SMK Negeri 2 Maumere, SMA Negeri 2 Maumere, and SMAK St. John Paul II Maumere.

Based on the researcher interview with the principal in October 2020, that the teachers were still present at the school under supervision and implementing strict health protocols. In schools the teachers get a bold teaching schedule in turns according to the number of classes available. Here the principal acts as the manager of learning activities, can study the development of courageous learning activities, participate in and monitor activities, and determine the proportion of student studies based on reports on learning progress by classroom teachers.

*"We implemented online learning after the local government (Pemda Sikka) designated Sikka Regency as the red zone for the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Therefore, since April 2020, we have stopped face-to-face learning activities in class. Our students are required to stay at home while waiting for further instructions. Initially we still gave written assignments and the teachers monitored the students separately through communication media. On the way, considering the school facilities are quite adequate in terms of electricity supply and internet access, we decided to use IT-based virtual learning. Our school has been very familiar with the Zoom application for some time now."* (AK, 12/10/2020)

YAM (13/10/2020) explains the same thing, which emphasizes the participatory aspects of students during online learning with applications. The teacher has tried to prepare learning materials that can be accessed via cellphones or laptops, but if students are not ready to learn, the teacher's efforts will be in vain.

*"Teachers are always reminded not to be negligent and careless in preparing learning materials that can be accessed by students through digital platforms. Basically, almost all of our teachers are ready. However, what is worrying is the level of student participation in online learning with applications. Not all students will be present virtually in every learning activity organized by the teacher."* (YAM, 13/10/2020)

Of course, the application of online learning does not always run smoothly. There are advantages or advantages and disadvantages that are found at any time. The advantages that can be

used in online learning include students and teachers who are more familiar with digital network-based knowledge because almost all knowledge information today is more easily accessible through various IT tools and online media platforms. However, one of the shortcomings in efforts to familiarize themselves with the online digital world, including in efforts to promote online learning for students, is precisely what most likely happens is that teachers and students tend to access knowledge and other information beyond the demands of learning materials that must be followed. More students are getting off track from real online learning because devices in the form of cellphones, gadgets, or the like are more widely used to exist in the need for self-recognition in the online digital world. Students become bored in learning activities and do not like to be "taught" without having to meet directly with the teacher.

For example, in an interview with FD (2/11/2020), it was explained that the use of online media platforms as online learning media has not been fully utilized by teachers and students at the school. One of the most widely heard reasons is that students do not have the media or tools for online learning; let's say they don't have a cellphone. In addition, one reason that does not make sense is the availability of data pulses to be able to access online learning. Of course, this second reason cannot be tolerated, considering that most students in these schools are very active in online social media networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram. Not to mention, the level of supervision of subject teachers and homeroom teachers is not as efficient as in face-to-face learning in general, considering that students can only attend virtually from their respective telecommunication devices.

*"Students simply make this pandemic situation a vacation time because learning activities in schools are automatically eliminated. We hope that online learning from home can keep students active and participatory. However, students actually ignore the urgency of online learning activities. They make it*

*a long holiday period and don't care about online learning activities. The main reason is not having a cellphone or not having sufficient data credit for internet access. "* (FD, 02/11/2020)

It is different with students as participants in online learning activities. The reasons for not having a cellphone or laptop and not having sufficient data credit for internet access are common reasons that teachers hear. If you look at this reason, actually the role of parents is very important in facilitating the learning needs of students in this modern era. However, returning to the main issue of the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, that economic problems are very crucial to discuss when they are related to the main cause, namely the Covid-19 Pandemic.

*"How can we participate in online learning activities, if we don't even have a cellphone, let alone a laptop. Even if we have a cellphone, we don't necessarily have sufficient data credit for internet access. Our parents couldn't afford to provide that many needs. "* (YAP, 30/09/2020)

On the other hand, teachers who carry out online learning activities also complain about the same thing. Of the total number of students in one class, only a part of them participated in online learning so that it greatly affected the teacher's assessment process on the absorption of the material being taught.

*"We have difficulty when most students do not participate in virtual lessons. Even though we have tried to give our best by willing to sacrifice time and energy to teach students online. If the reason is not having a cellphone and data credit, the government has provided assistance for a special social safety network to overcome the impact of this pandemic. So the key is actually in the character of the students and the motivation of parents in supporting students to learn from home"* (MY, 02/10/2020)

Based on the data collected by researchers at one school regarding the level of student participation in online learning, the number of students accessing online learning materials was very low. The data on the state of student participation can be seen in the following table.

**Table 2.** Description of Student Participation Level in Online Learning.

Number	Description	Assessment (√)				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Students do not have learning devices such as cellphones and laptops		√			
2	Students have cellphones but do not have internet data credit		√			
3	Students do not participate in or attend virtually any learning activities	√				
4	Students attend virtually but are not serious about learning	√				
5	The economic capacity of parents is not sufficient to provide online learning support	√				
6	Most of the subject matter is well absorbed by students				√	
7	Many students make the pandemic situation a long vacation period		√			
8	Students feel bored in participating in online learning		√			
9	Students misuse the data package provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture to access knowledge and other information outside of learning		√			
10	Students want to go back to school and study face-to-face as usual		√			

This is a brief description of the situation in the application of the concept of Learning from Home in the district of Sikka, NTT, both in the form of structured assignments and online learning via telecommunications devices (cellphones / smartphones). Of course, this condition is an important reflection for all stakeholders related to policies that are qualified to apply the concept of Learning From Home that is fair, situation sensitive, and adaptable in the Covid-19 pandemic situation.

### Discussions

#### Participatory Learning in Collaborating with Technology, Information, and Communication After the Pandemic Covid-19

Talking about the readiness and participation of students in online learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic, of course based on basic reasons related to meeting personal needs for access to information and communication, as well as the character of the

students themselves. Why? The first reason that was raised in this discussion, was the level of income of the parents or guardians of students which tended to decline during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Almost all fields of work experience stagnation and activity slowdown because everyone stops working or stays at home to avoid being exposed to the Covid-19 outbreak. Many workers have been dismissed and some have even been laid off from work because the company or workplace is experiencing a budget deficit and continues to lose money due to reduced turnover.

Of course, the economic recession situation globally and nationally has affected the income level for everyone who has a permanent job. The choice to work from home (work from home) does not guarantee that someone can work optimally and achieve the expected targets. Morale is declining under the shadow of Covid-19 which lurks and also affects everyone's work productivity.

The reduced income of each family of course affects efforts to fulfill basic (primary), secondary

and tertiary needs. This includes efforts to meet the demands for children's education in every household that cannot be avoided. There is an option for each child (student) to learn from home, requiring parents to prepare additional funds to buy communication devices (cellphones) and data pulses for their children to use digital platforms as learning media.

Of course, there is a demand for the readiness of parents to facilitate the learning needs of their children, which often contradicts the real situation. Many parents complain that they are not able or financially ready for their children to take lessons online. In addition, the mentality of children who are easy going, instant, and lazy to know is one of the obstacles for parents and schools in implementing digital platform-based online learning.

Responding to this condition, the government is helping the community by providing social safety net assistance in various forms and schemes. In the world of education, as reported on the website of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (2020), the government has launched data credit assistance, in the form of internet quota for PAUD level students of 20 GB per month, primary and secondary education levels of 35 GB per month, for educators at the level of education. PAUD to primary and secondary education is 42 GB per month, and for students and lecturers is 50 GB per month. Everyone gets a general quota of 5 GB per month, the rest is for the study quota. This program is continued until 2021 with details of internet quota for PAUD level of 7 GB per month, basic and secondary education level of 10 GB per month, PAUD level educators to primary and secondary education of 12 GB per month, and for lecturers and students of 15 GB per month (2021).

*"As a government representative in charge of education issues, of course the impact of the pandemic on education is unavoidable. Students and teachers are separated by distance when conducting online-based learning. To overcome various limitations in the application of online learning, the government allocated quite a lot of funds for internet quota assistance for students and teachers, increased teacher capabilities in the IT field, improved online learning support facilities, as well as continuous socialization and*

*implementation of the Merdeka Learning program as a way out for quality lags. our education. " (GMDC, 02/11/2020)*

The second reason, so far it can be questioned, is whether this home learning activity program has been very efficient and effective in being implemented in all schools. In the author's observation, apart from inadequate IT mastery of senior teachers and students (Sari, et.al., 2021), home learning activities using digital platforms are not effective. One of the causes is the characteristics of students to be actively involved in learning. Even though the government has helped with internet quota assistance for learning, not all students participate in learning activities. Many students wrongly or mistakenly use internet quota assistance to do other things and are not used for online learning purposes. From the author's interview excerpt with several teachers, it was explained that most of the students in each class that had online learning were held, only some of the students joined in the link of learning activities. Various reasons were given, including because the network access was difficult, the internet was unstable, or even the electricity network did not exist so that telecommunication equipment could not function properly.

The conditions based on the two reasons above are the conclusion drawn by the author if the implementation of the home learning program by the government and the school, in the context of the place in the Sikka Regency area, cannot be carried out optimally. This is due to the inadequate financial readiness of parents and students and the level of active participation of students in online learning is not optimal.

## Conclusions

The problem of implementing online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic was often raised repeatedly by many parties involved in the world of education. The problem of efficiency and effectiveness of online learning programs is the most highlighted thing, considering that socially and economically, the community is affected and cannot facilitate the education of their children properly. Of course the government is not standing

still and provides a lot of social safety net assistance for the recovery of the national economy.

Based on the data description and explanation above, the researcher recommends several things to consider in the application of application-based online learning. Among them are as follows: 1). The need to increase the capacity and capability of facilities and infrastructure to support online learning in schools; 2). Increase the capacity and professionalism of teachers in the field of IT-based learning; 3). Encouraging national economic recovery through community empowerment programs in the field of education for parents or guardians; 4). Increase the frequency of learning with online applications so that students become familiar; 5). There needs to be a commitment with the school and parents or guardians to provide social, economic and psychosocial support to students so that students' enthusiasm and motivation to learn are maintained.

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