

AUGUST 5TH, 2021

FIRST SUBMISSION

FRONTIERS OF EDUCATION

(SJR Q2)

The struggle is real: Constraints of online education in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced millions of Indonesian children to shift their educational situation from offline to online (Wiguna et al., 2020). Around 60 million primary to upper secondary school students and 8 million students have to study at home and rely on online technology since the government decided that schools are indefinitely closed (JPNN, 2020). However, social problems raised since a significant percentage of school students do not have access to online teaching and learning facilities (Wahyono et al., 2020).

Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia has prepared for the scenario to study online until the end of 2020 (Pradana et al., 2020). However, the infection number keeps rising, and per December 2020, Indonesia is now among the top 20 countries with the highest numbers of cases (around 650,000 cases). Hence, there is a high probability that schools are closed until mid-2021.

There is already some talks of government plans to reopen schools and start face-to-face learning in 2021. Parents are given the option to choose whether they want their children to participate in this face-to-face learning activity. In its implementation, local governments, schools, and parents will be given full authority. However, health researchers, such as epidemiologists, argue that this decision is counter-productive in limiting the coronavirus's spread (Viner et al., 2020).

The positivity rate is the first reason why it is still unsafe to reopen schools in Indonesia. It is relatively safe to reopen schools when the positivity rate is at least 5 percent or below (WHO, 2020). A lower positive rate also indicates the number of people tested and adequate contact tracing. However, Indonesia's positivity rate test is still above 10 percent until December 2020, which shows the severity of COVID-19 pandemic in this country (Wiguna et al., 2020).

Struggles of students and their parents

On the other hand, there is a necessity to organize classroom learning for students who have difficulty accessing digital learning facilities during the Coronavirus pandemic. A significant number of Indonesian students face the problems of not having cell phones or being unable to buy internet data plan to access the internet. The effectiveness of online education at home during the COVID-19 pandemic period has been monitored by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI). According to a survey conducted by the commission in 34 provinces of Indonesia, online learning constraints are becoming a serious consideration (Satryo, 2020).

The Coronavirus pandemic has put heavy pressure on groups of society who live under poverty. When teaching and learning activities cannot be face-to-face, children from low-income families

do not have the facilities to access digital learning. Indigent parents have difficulties in affording cellular credits, let alone buying internet data plans. Since the middle of 2020, the ministry of education distributed subsidies in the form of internet data plans. However, it was not a sufficient answer to Indonesian social problem (Fakhri et al., 2020).

We also conducted our social survey on 1,700 school students and their parents as respondents, focuses on several constraints in carrying out online learning process during the coronavirus pandemic. Most students or the students' parents complain about the internet data plan subsidy, which is not evenly distributed to Indonesia's rural areas. There was 43 percent of total respondents complaining about that constraint.

Other 29 percent of the respondents explained that the subsidy was of no use for them since they do not have computers, laptops, nor smartphones. This group of parents rely on laptops or smartphones that they borrow from families or relatives. The rest, around 18%, are those who do not have everything. We should also consider that around 70% of the respondents complain that they keep having internet connection problems.

Struggles of the school teachers

The previous section recognizes the main problem that online education cannot be equally applied in all parts of Indonesia. For dealing with these issues, several teachers have been taking the initiatives to come to their students' homes and carry the learning process in groups with a maximum of five students (Taufiqurrahman, 2020). These teachers agreed that online learning online at their places did not go smoothly. The reason they often faced is that many students do not have smartphones or other required gadgets. They also had difficulty controlling the activities of students since they did not have classroom interaction (Wahyono et al., 2020).

At the students' residences, the visiting teachers realized that there are many parents who do not have personal computers, laptops or smartphones. Those who do are facing difficulties in purchasing internet data packages and acquiring decent internet signals. Therefore, it has now become common that teachers, especially in underdeveloped villages, decided to visit their students' homes one by one and bring various kinds of books for the students to read and study (Wahyono et al., 2020).

All of the situations we depicted in this essay are bitter reality. It is obvious that we are still unable to predict the end of the pandemic, but education cannot be postponed. The Indonesian government should be more aware about the gap in social welfare of Indonesian society and focus on specific solutions on the mentioned constraints of online education.

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AUGUST 30TH, 2021

EDITOR'S RESPONSE AND REVIEW

FRONTIERS OF EDUCATION

(SJR Q2)



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The struggle is real: Constraints of online education in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic

MAHIR PRADANA* and Syarifuddin Syarifuddin

Opinion, *Front. Educ. – Educational Psychology*Received on: 16 Aug 2021, Edited by: [Mert Bastas](#) ✉

Manuscript ID: 753776

Research Topic: [Digital Transformation of Education in the Covid-19 Process and its Psychological Effects on Children](#)

Keywords: Education, COVID-19, Indonesia, policy, School

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A I R A

Reviewer 1

Independent review report submitted: 22 Aug 2021

Interactive review activated: 23 Aug 2021

Final report submitted: 29 Aug 2021

Recommendation for the Editor: Revision is required

Final Evaluation

Q 1 Final comments to Author (optional):

No answer given.

Q 2 Do you ENDORSE THE PUBLICATION of this manuscript in its current form?

Reviewer 1 | 29 Aug 2021 | 13:15

— Yes

EVALUATION

Q 1 Please summarize the viewpoints expressed in this opinion.

Reviewer 1 | 22 Aug 2021 | 05:49

#1

This article depicts information related to constraints of online education in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic. As this is an opinion article, the authors already provide enough evidence to support their arguments. The authors need to provide more details according to the reviewer's comments, make sure follow the writing guidelines, and check the typos.

Corresponding Author: MAHIR PRADANA | 27 Aug 2021 | 18:04

#2

We have double-checked the typos.

**Q 2** Check List

Reviewer 1 | 22 Aug 2021 | 05:49 #1

- a. Is the English language of sufficient quality?
– Yes
- b. Is the quality of the figure and/or table satisfactory?
– Not Applicable
- c. Does this manuscript refer only to published data? (Unpublished or original data is not permitted for this article type.)
– No
- d. Is the opinion supported by evidence?
– Yes
- e. Is the presented interpretation absent of any objective errors or fundamental flaws?
– Yes
- f. Does the study follow ethical standards and conventions in the field?
– Yes
- g. Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?
– Yes

Corresponding Author: MAHIR PRADANA | 27 Aug 2021 | 18:04 #2

We appreciate the comments. We did not provide data as we have described the result of our short survey in teh article

Q 3 Please provide your detailed review report to the editor and authors (including any comments on the Q2 Check List):

Reviewer 1 | 22 Aug 2021 | 05:49 #1

1. The number of keywords in the abstract section (Keywords: education, COVID-19, Indonesia) is different from the number of keywords in the information section about this article (Keywords: Education, COVID-19, Indonesia, policy, School). Please make it consistent.

2. Please make sure all in-text Citations and Bibliography already follow the guidance of Frontiers in Education (kindly check this link:
https://www.frontiersin.org/files/pdf/Frontiers_Reference_styles.pdf).

INTRODUCTION SECTION

1. The authors stated that "Around 60 million primary to upper secondary school students and 8 million students have to study at home and rely on online technology since the government decided that schools are indefinitely closed (JPNN, 2020)". Please make sure what level of education for "8 million students" because it seems to be missing. Are they university level/college? Please provide more details about it.

2. The authors stated that "A lower positive rate also indicates the number of people tested and adequate contact tracing." Please elaborate more about this sentence. Positive rate is the number of people who are COVID-19 positive (case) compared to the number of people who were tested. A lower positive rate does not always indicate adequate contact tracing, but it reflects how successful the prevention of COVID-19 was. This is because even though the contact tracing is adequate, it could lead to a higher positive rate if the prevention program was failed. Therefore, please relate the positive rate with the effort on prevention programs such as preventive measures (wearing masks, hand washing, etc.), which not only focus on contact tracing.

SUBSECTION: Struggles of students and their parents

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"Indonesian social problem" in this sentence seems to be too general because social problems during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia was not only related to education but also economic, public health, politics, etc. As the authors focus on the internet data plans from the ministry of education, it will be better if the details about "social problem" focused on the educational problem.

2. The authors mentioned that "We also conducted our social survey on 1,700 school students and their parents as respondents, focuses on several constraints in carrying out online learning process during the coronavirus pandemic." Can you provide brief detail about the survey methodologies? (data collection methods, inclusion criteria, as well as geographical characteristics of respondents). This is essential to make sure that the sample is representative. Another issue is related to the data collection system for this survey. Is that use an online survey? If so, it will be biased because it could not reflect the real situation, especially among students and parents that still did not have access on smartphones and the internet.

SUBSECTION: Struggles of the school teachers
No comment. Already good.



Corresponding Author: MAHIR PRADANA | 27 Aug 2021 | 18:04

#2

1-2. Keywords and reference formatting have been revised

introduction:

1. We have provided more detailed information about which type of school we meant (8 million students of vocational school)
2. We decided to omit the statement about positivity rate to avoid misunderstanding.

subsection:

1. We revised 'social problem' and changed in to 'problems of online education'
2. We have provided details about the survey.

[Review supporting file - 179400](#)

▼ **QUALITY ASSESSMENT**

Q 4	Opinion encourages constructive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q 5	Interest to a general audience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q 6	Quality of the writing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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The struggle is real: Constraints of online education in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic

MAHIR PRADANA* and Syarifuddin Syarifuddin

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Received on: 16 Aug 2021, Edited by: Mert Bastas

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Research Topic: [Digital Transformation of Education in the Covid-19 Process and its Psychological Effects on Children](#)

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Reviewer 2

Independent review report submitted: 18 Aug 2021

Recommendation for the Editor: The manuscript can be accepted

EVALUATION

Q 1 Please summarize the viewpoints expressed in this opinion.

Reviewer 2 | 18 Aug 2021 | 06:15 #1

The Coronavirus pandemic has put heavy pressure on groups of society who live under poverty. At the students' residences, the visiting teachers realized that there are many parents who do not have personal computers, laptops or smartphones. Those who do are facing difficulties in purchasing internet data packages and acquiring decent internet signals. Article summarizes the current situation in Indonesia.

Q 2 Check List

Reviewer 2 | 18 Aug 2021 | 06:15 #1

- Is the English language of sufficient quality?
– Yes
- Is the quality of the figure and/or table satisfactory?
– Not Applicable
- Does this manuscript refer only to published data? (Unpublished or original data is not permitted for this article type.)
– Yes
- Is the opinion supported by evidence?
– Yes



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SUBMIT

f. Does the study follow ethical standards and conventions in the field?
- Yes

g. Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?
- Yes

Q 3 Please provide your detailed review report to the editor and authors (including any comments on the Q2 Check List):

Reviewer 2 | 18 Aug 2021 | 06:15 #1

Article summarizes the current situation in Indonesia. No tables exists. Believe that it will contribute to discussion of covid in different countries

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 4 Opinion encourages constructive

Q 5 Interest to a general audience

Q 6 Quality of the writing

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Pradana Mahir <mahir.pradana@gmail.com>

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Journal: Frontiers in Education, section Educational Psychology

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Authors: MAHIR PRADANA, Syarifuddin Syarifuddin

Manuscript ID: 753776

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Manuscript ID: 736883

Authors: Shi Peng Fei, Lu Xiao Jing, Zhou Yi, Geng Biao and Hu Hua

Journal: Frontiers in Psychology, section Personality and Social Psychology

Article type: Original Research

Submitted on: 06 Jul 2021

Edited by: Nora J Rifon

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FRONTIERS OF EDUCATION

(SJR Q2)



The Struggle Is Real: Constraints of Online Education in Indonesia During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Mahir Pradana* and Syarifuddin Syarifuddin

Department of Business Administration, Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia

Keywords: education, COVID-19, Indonesia, policy, school

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced millions of Indonesian children to shift their educational situation from offline to online (Wiguna et al., 2020). Around 60 million primary to upper secondary school students and eight million vocational school students have to study at home and rely on online technology since the government decided that schools are indefinitely closed (JPNN, 2020). However, social problems raised since a significant percentage of school students do not have access to online teaching and learning facilities (Wahyono et al., 2020).

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STRUGGLES OF STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS

On the other hand, there is a necessity to organize classroom learning for students who have difficulty accessing digital learning facilities during the Coronavirus pandemic. A significant number of Indonesian students face the problems of not having cell phones or being unable to buy internet data plan to access the internet. The effectiveness of online education at home during the COVID-19 pandemic period has been monitored by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI). According to a survey conducted by the commission in 34 provinces of Indonesia, online learning constraints are becoming a serious consideration (Satryo, 2020).

The Coronavirus pandemic has put heavy pressure on groups of society who live under poverty. When teaching and learning activities cannot be face-to-face, children from low-income families do not have the facilities to access digital learning. Indigent parents have difficulties in affording cellular credits, let alone buying internet data plans. Since the middle of 2020, the ministry of education distributed subsidies in the form of internet data plans. However, it was not a sufficient answer to the problems of online education (Fakhri et al., 2020).

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We also conducted short social survey on 1,700 school students and their parents as respondents. The survey focused on several constraints in carrying out online learning process during the coronavirus pandemic. We distributed the questionnaire in Indonesian main islands, which are also the most populated (Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua). However, due to limited time and budget, we only managed to distribute the survey online. To make sure that respondents from each island represent the population, we distributed the survey proportionally from the most populated island (Java) to the least populated one (Papua).

The result showed that most students or the students' parents complain about the internet data plan subsidy, which is not evenly distributed to Indonesia's rural areas. There was 43 percent of total respondents complaining about that constraint. Other 29 percent of the respondents explained that the subsidy was of no use for them since they do not have computers, laptops, nor smartphones. This group of parents rely on laptops or smartphones that they borrow from families or relatives. The rest, around 18%, are those who do not have everything. We should also consider that around 70% of the respondents complain that they keep having internet connection problems.

STRUGGLES OF THE SCHOOL TEACHERS

The previous section recognizes the main problem that online education cannot be equally applied in all parts of Indonesia. For dealing with these issues, several teachers have been taking the

initiatives to come to their students' homes and carry the learning process in groups with a maximum of five students (Taufiqurrahman, 2020). These teachers agreed that online learning online at their places did not go smoothly. The reason they often faced is that many students do not have smartphones or other required gadgets. They also had difficulty controlling the activities of students since they did not have classroom interaction (Wahyono et al., 2020).

At the students' residences, the visiting teachers realized that there are many parents who do not have personal computers, laptops or smartphones. Those who do are facing difficulties in purchasing internet data packages and acquiring decent internet signals. Therefore, it has now become common that teachers, especially in underdeveloped villages, decided to visit their students' homes one by one and bring various kinds of books for the students to read and study (Wahyono et al., 2020).

All of the situations we depicted in this essay are bitter reality. It is obvious that we are still unable to predict the end of the pandemic, but education cannot be postponed. The Indonesian government should be more aware about the gap in social welfare of Indonesian society and focus on specific solutions on the mentioned constraints of online education.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

MP and SS wrote the manuscript together and approved the submitted version.

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