

**THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE EDUCATIONAL  
SYSTEM IN INDONESIA**

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**Abstract**

*The COVID-19 pandemic has spread throughout the world, impacting and paralyzing sectors, including education. The education system, especially in Indonesia, has become unstable due to the pandemic. New policies in learning have been initiated by the government still encounter difficulties in their implementation. However, almost all elements of education have been complaining about this. The psychological impact is not only experienced by students, but educators and parents but also experience mental health problems caused by the pandemic. Nevertheless, the responsibility cannot be imposed by the government only, all layers of the existing educational elements must be able to work hand in hand, with the same conditions and unpreparedness. Therefore, education in Indonesia will be able to recover and operate again as it should, even though it must implement a new learning policy to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Education, Learning Policy, Psychology, Indonesia

**A. Introduction**

Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a disaster. It has been as a pandemic and has spread to many countries worldwide. Printed and electronic medi have consistently reported on the concern of this pandemic massively. They have become trending topics discussed in almost all social media and have persisted for quite a long time. The COVID-19 has disrupted the entire world order of human life and has paralyzed every segment of life. Health and the economy are the most affected segment and followed by education. Many countries, as well as Indonesia, have decided to foreclose all schools, colleges, and universities. However, Indonesia is in unprepared condition. This decision must enforce to break the spread of COVID-19.

The government of Indonesia, especially the Ministry of Education and Culture, is trying hard to find the best solution for the sustainability of education. Many parties believe education in Indonesia must continue to operate for the sustainability of the world of education, educators and students. Therefore, in the

shortest possible time, the Ministry of Education and Culture must immediately find a solution suitable for the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, the Ministry of Education and Culture created a new learning policy in the form of Distance Learning. In the process of implementation, this Policy has not been fully successful. Even though distance learning is something that has often been implemented in education in the world, but for Indonesia this is something new and will experience difficulties for teachers and students in its application.

The new learning policy set by the Ministry of Education and Culture has an adverse impact that results in certain parties experiencing the same thing. In its implementation, distance learning, must be online, and it needs testing for its success. Educators, students, and guardians of students who live in remote and remote villages must experience difficulties and confusion because the technology and information infrastructure are still far from perfect. Besides, the psychological impact cannot be underestimated. Mental health is a new problem that must be faced, not only for students and educators but also for parents.

## **B. Method**

A qualitative case study research approach was selected since the uniqueness of the phenomena drew the researcher to explore. According to Creswell (2009), a case study allows researchers to investigate a case, a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals in deeper process. In conclusion, a qualitative case study is more likely to deeply explore a phenomenon and provide the most comprehensive knowledge of a research subject based on substantial data collection (Creswell, 2008). Qualitative case study research is how individuals comprehend social or human problems and derive meaning from them (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

## **C. Discussion**

### **1. Impact of COVID-19 and the New Learning Policy**

Schools were places of learning expected to make students comfortable studying. School provides an actual picture for students not only to learn in class but automatically have social interactions with teachers and other students, which can improve their social skills. Going to school is not only about learning subjects teachers teach in the classroom. In other words,

students also continuously improve their integrity abilities, skills, and sense of sensitivity towards fellow students and teachers (Baharin et al., 2020). The implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions in Indonesia due to the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the closure of learning places, especially schools. All activities related to school suddenly stopped, which has an impact on the learning process in schools that it affects the productivity of students.

An article describes in detail how teenagers in Sweden have a different number of days preparing for this test. Such differences are random and conditional (Carlsson et al., 2015). Teens in Sweden then increased their study hours for ten school days, and the result was that their scores on tests of knowledge increased. The same understanding conveyed by Jonsson (2017) that coming to school and attending class will increase the memory capacity of students. Referring back to Carlsson, et al. (2015), if on the knowledge use test, it is assumed that every time not attending school or not attending class for 10 days is 1% of the standard deviation, then in 12 weeks or 60 days, the school will lose 6% of the standard deviation. If this problem occurs in Indonesia, this conditional can no longer be considered a trivial problem.

Lavy (2015) formulates the same regarding the impact on learning due to differences in teaching time across countries in the world. The simulating total weekly teaching hours in math, language, and science is 55% higher in Denmark than in Austria. It must be considered because there is a significant difference in the score test result of 6% from the standard deviation as described. Whatever the deviation, it is accepted by students in Indonesia that the loss of learning time at school will end in losses students in the field of knowledge directly obtain.

Several studies focused on the impact of COVID-19 on education state that there are four ways the COVID-19 pandemic is changing the way we educate future generations. First, educational processes around the world are increasingly interconnected. Second, redefining the role of educators. Third, teach the importance of life skills in the future. And, fourth, to broaden the role of technology in supporting education (Luthra & Mackenzie, 2020). The

same research was also conducted by Tam & El-Azar (2020), who stated that the COVID-19 caused three fundamental changes in global education. First, changing the way millions of students are educated. Second, new solutions for education can bring about much-needed innovation. Third, a digital divide causes recent shifts in educational approaches and can widen the gap.

Based on the references above, each of them shows how the impact of the COVID-19 has forced education around the world, especially in Indonesia, to transform more quickly than before. This transformation is an attitude that must take immediately. Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim, in a short time through the Ministry of Education and Culture Circular No. 4 of 2020 regarding the Implementation of Education in the Emergency Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), changing the learning pattern that was previously conventional face-to-face-based in schools to distance learning or online.

## **2. Distance Learning**

The new learning policies that the ministry of education has set do not then make it easy to implement immediately. Besides, it is still something new for education in Indonesia. The technology and information infrastructure factors that are not evenly distributed and adequate in Indonesia, as well as social and economic disparities, are a big challenge in their implementation. The keyword in optimizing online learning is accessed. Lembani, et al (2020) stated that open distance learning increases opportunities for access to education because of the availability of online material. However, this condition is influenced by various variables such as age, access to computers, the internet, and the digital divide. Therefore, adequate facilities and access for students, educators, education personnel, and all elements of education must be an issue that deserves attention to the distance or online learning process.

Research conducted by Arsendy, et al. (2020) shows that the use of offline learning media is more dominant in Indonesia. Only about 28% of parents state that their children do distance learning using online media, either using learning conference media or online learning applications. Conversely,

using offline learning media using student books and worksheets is the more dominant method, with around 66% used by teachers. The rest, about 6% of parents, said there was no learning activity as long as students asked to study from home.

Referring back to Arsendy, et al. (2020), when examined more deeply from several provinces in Indonesia, the more remote the region is, the smaller the percentage of students who get online learning. For example, 40% of respondents in East Java stated that their children received online learning. In West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), distance learning is less than 10%, and in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) less than 5%. The rest through offline, student books, and worksheets.

### **3. Psychological Impact**

Mental health needs to handle appropriately. The psychological impact created during the pandemic also creates problems for education, not except in Indonesia. Students, teachers, and parents with pandemic conditions, new learning patterns that are still unfamiliar, new habits, and psychosocial situations, can cause real psychological disorders (Taylor, 2019). Therefore, the Indonesian Association of Clinical Psychologists strives to base mental health services experienced by the general public on MHPSS (Mental Health Psychosocial Support) or MHPS (Mental Health Psychosocial Support). Because, after all, mental health is deemed necessary to be one of the core treatments to help the continuity of education in Indonesia.

Siswadi (2020) reveals that the problems faced by each student, teacher, and parent are different, so handling them must also be given according to their needs. Clinical Psychologists, Psychiatrists, and Mental Nurses, Doctors, and other health workers, with cross-professional cooperation with Teachers' Organizations, Schools, or education and technology experts. It can help to make a more comprehensive diagnosis. The government is the determinant and policymaker, assisted by formal and non-formal forces that can mobilize to handle mental health and welfare together. By implementing PSSMHFT (Psychosocial Support for Students' Mental

Health, Families, and Teachers), hopes that it could help to handle the psychological impact as much as possible to make it more effective.

#### **4. Solutions and Strategic Steps**

Dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education in Indonesia is not easy, but all levels of education elements should have the same responsibility. All must understand each other with conditions that are not okay. There are several things that each party should pay attention to;

a. Government

As a policymaker, the government has a fundamental role such as the allocation of funds-must be done as soon as possible. Those must allocate to school parties in need. The local government also has an important thing to do in mapping schools that still need assistance in implementing distance or online learning processes. Because as is well known, there are still many schools that do not have adequate internet access. Especially for schools that have limited access, the government must have a concrete solution for all the children that come from unwealthy families will be increasingly marginalized because they do not get their rights in the field of education (Afriansyah, 2020).

b. Parents

Parents' participation in education during a pandemic is urgently needed. As primary educators for their children, parents are expected to be able to assist children in learning. Despite that, not all parents can have the opportunity to work from home due to work factors. Parents must be wise in dividing the roles of fellow parents to accompany their children that the distance learning process can be more optimal.

c. Teacher

The new learning policy requires teachers to design distance learning methods as innovative as possible. Each teacher has their way in this pandemic situation. Teachers must be more observant in choosing teaching methods and learning designs to be applied. Fun teaching designs and methods arouse enthusiasm for learning and hone students'

creativity so can be more independent in learning. All teachers need to pay attention to those problems and innovations.

d. School

Closing schools are the right decision during this pandemic to stop the spread of COVID-19. The school and institution have to facilitate and escort its students in the distance learning process implemented. The programs and policies of the school must implement correctly. Learning from home emphasizes the students must perform as well and as conducive as possible. However, there are still many schools that have limited facilities for accessing the internet and inadequate information technology infrastructure. Therefore, there is no excuse for school institutions to release responsibility for their students.

**D. Conclusion**

The COVID-19 pandemic and distance learning policies are putting pressure on the world of education in Indonesia. There are lots of distractions faced by students, teachers, and parents. Circumstances and problems suddenly make it difficult for the government to handle them. Some less prepared policies make policies less effective or useless. All elements of society, especially in the education sector, encounter different problems. New habits, changes in behavior, economic pressures, and always having to maintain health by social distancing make things even harder. Mental health disorders also need to be considered to reduce the psychological impact that can interfere the learning process. The education sector in Indonesia must recover quickly and get back up as soon as possible. The government, parents, teachers, and students have their respective roles. It is no longer the time to stand idly by and leave everything to the government. The government not only has a big responsibility, but all have their respective roles. Finally, everyone must be able to synergize in covering Indonesia's education world.

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