



Impact of Online Learning on Students in Community Learning Centre in Sabah, Malaysia

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Abstract. Covid-19 in early 2020 caused the distance learning policy for students in Malaysia, including the Community Learning Centre (CLC) in Sabah. Students of CLC in Sabah are children of Indonesian workers. In general, CLC in Sabah is divided into two categories, CLC Ladang (CLC that is located in a palm oil plantation) and CLC Non-Ladang (CLC that is not in the palm oil plantation area). The first purpose of this research is to describe the learning process of online learning. The second is classifying the impact of the online learning policy on CLC's students. This research applied a qualitative method; researchers did observation and interviews with teachers, students, and parents of CLC Ladang and Non-Ladang. This research showed that the learning process was done by completing online learning from home. The shortage of teachers causes teaching and learning not to be optimal, and this situation worsens during the lockdown and Movement Control Order (MCO) period. Online learning and interaction intensive in social media while MCO experiences impact the student's behavior.

Keywords: CLC, distance learning, pandemic Covid-19

1 INTRODUCTION

The long-wave migration of Indonesian labor to Sabah correlates with Malaysia's economic growth. Malaysia succeeded in increasing its economy, but in the 1970s, they have labor shortage issues [1]. That condition positively signals their neighboring countries, especially Indonesia and the Philippines, to decrease unemployment [2]. After independence in 1957, the issue of undocumented migrants from Indonesia was quite widespread until the 1960s. The migrants were "accepted secretly." Around the 1970s, the New Economic Policy (NEP) increasingly attracted waves of migrants; even around 1984, almost half a million migrants in Malaysia were undocumented [3]. In the 1980s, foreign labor in Malaysia increased, mainly from Indonesia, which works in the

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manufacturing, agriculture, and construction sectors that are uninteresting for the local people [4].

Malaysia is still among the most popular destination countries for Indonesian migrant workers. Data from the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency as of 1 January 2023 shows that Malaysia is the highest destination country for Indonesian workers, with 8,469 (33.2%) [5]. In addition, the issue of loose borders is one of the main issues of increasing population mobility to seek better livelihood opportunities [6]. There are two main routes for Indonesian undocumented workers to enter Malaysia, namely the western and eastern routes. The western route usually goes through the Riau Islands, Batam, Tanjung Pinang, Tanjung Uban, or Bawean Island. Meanwhile, the eastern route will go through Ujung Pandang or Balikpapan, then head to Tarakan or Nunukan, then enter Malaysia via Tawau [7].

Several studies have shown two main factors there are more undocumented workers from Indonesia in Sabah compared to the peninsular region of Malaysia. First, Sabah needs more labor in 5D (Dirty, Demeaning, Dangerous, Demanding, and Difficult) sectors with lower salaries [8]. Second, each Malaysian state has different policies regarding migrants, while in Sabah, migrants are allowed to bring their families with them [9].

The undocumented status of most Indonesian migrant workers prevents their children from having access to education in Malaysia. Children of undocumented migrant workers generally also have difficulty obtaining citizenship rights, as they do not have passports, identity cards, study permits, and other documents [10]–[12]. Undocumented children of Indonesian migrant workers cannot access formal education in Malaysia. While some of them can take part in learning activities organized by a non-governmental organization called Humana [13].

After going through a long process, bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia was finally able to impact Indonesian migrant children in Sabah positively. Joint Statement on Annual Consultations on 11 January 2009 between President Indonesia Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono with Perdana Menteri Malaysia Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi. The Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia then inaugurated the Community Learning Center (CLC) as a facility for education for the children of migrant workers [14]. This cooperation is also supported by oil palm entrepreneurs and workers' unions so that more and more CLCs are established in plantation areas and can positively impact education [15]. According to the management process, the Kota Kinabalu Indonesian School (SIKK) oversees all CLCs in Malaysia. SIKK and CLC are responsible for the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture [16]. The teaching process is delivered using Indonesian. CLC also uses the curriculum that applies in Indonesia [16].

Based on previous research, even though access to education is more widely, educators and students still face other obstacles. Based on previous research, even though management is adequate, support for improving infrastructure facilities is still much needed [15]. In general, many CLCs in Sabah and Sarawak still need more classrooms and teaching and learning equipment. These conditions affect the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process [17]. Even though the teacher dispatch program has been carried out, improvements are still needed [18]. Other

studies have also found that the management of Indonesian primary school and CLC teachers in Malaysia is still substandard and not systematic [19]. In addition, teachers are also faced with low student learning motivation [17].

Based on the previous explanation, it can be concluded that the education of migrant children in CLC still has many learning obstacles. These conditions became more challenging when they had to face Covid-19. Malaysia has set a lockdown and Movement Control Order (MCO) policy [17]. As a result, all school activities must be carried out from home through online learning (distance learning). Therefore, this research focuses on discussing the process and constraints faced by CLC while dealing with this policy. This is different from previous studies, which focused more on CLC before the presence of Covid-19. This research is essential to all CLC managing and designing strategies to face the learning loss indication of students after Covid-19.

2 METHOD

This research used a qualitative method to describe the CLC learning strategy and the obstacles along the distance learning policy in Sabah. The researcher interviewed the teachers, students, and parents of CLC Grace Centre, CLC Mawau, and CLC Cerdas to get the primary data and used triangulation sources. The data analysis is in three steps of Milles and Huberman's recommendation [20]. The first step is collecting the data. The researcher transfers the recording data to the transcript data. Second is reduction data, researcher mapping and categorizing the open, axial, and selective codes. The third is displaying data in a matrix table. The survey by open-ended questionnaire was also applied to support qualitative data and add the general perception. By combining both data, researchers can explain their experience more comprehensively.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Community Learning Centre

Overall, CLC provides formal education with the same curriculum in Indonesia, but structurally CLC is based on the Kota Kinabalu Indonesian School (SIKK). Based on data as of June 2023, the number of CLCs in Sabah has reached 344. CLCs are generally managed by several teachers. Teachers at CLC consist of Guru Bina (a teacher professional from Indonesia) and Guru Pamong (an auxiliary teacher). Guru Bina is a teacher sent by the Indonesian government, while Guru Pamong is an auxiliary teacher, most of whom are Malaysian citizens.

Based on its location, CLCs are generally divided into two types, namely CLC Ladang and CLC Non-Ladang. CLC Ladang is mainly established in oil palm plantation areas and is supported by related companies. Meanwhile, CLC Non-Ladang are generally located in non-plantation areas and usually erected in rental buildings such as shophouses, leased land, or places of worship. Therefore, the facilities owned by several CLCs are sometimes not sufficient.

This research was conducted in three CLCs. There are CLC Cerdas and Grace Center (non-palm oil plantation area), also CLC Mawau (palm oil plantation area). The three CLCs have elementary school students (grades 1-6) and junior high school students (grades 7-9). Based on data for July 2023, the three CLCs have the following number of teachers and students.

Table 1. Number of teachers and students

| No | CLC | Teachers | Total Students | Number Classroom |
|----|--------------|----------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. | Cerdas | 9 | 437 | 9 |
| 2. | Grace Center | 7 | 194 | 9 |
| 3. | Mawau | 4 | 93 | 4 |

Source: data from each CLC

Table 2. Average number of students in one class

| No | CLC | Elementary (1-6) | Junior High School (7-9) |
|----|--------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | Cerdas | 50 | 35 |
| 2. | Grace Center | 25 | 21 |
| 3. | Mawau | 12 | 5 |

Source: data from each CLC

Based on these data, it can be seen that teachers for each CLC are not sufficient. The school classroom facilities in the CLC Mawau are not sufficient. On the other hand, the number of CLC Cerdas's students per class is huge, almost twice that of a class in general. At the elementary level, generally, one teacher teaches one class for all subjects. Meanwhile, at the junior high school level, teachers take turns teaching students based on each subject. Those conditions generally lead to a very high teaching load. Based on observation, each CLC usually has only one teacher Guru Bina (a teacher professional from the Indonesian government). SIKK, as the central school in Sabah, also said that the number of Guru Bina was not insufficient for many CLCs because the procurement process sometimes takes quite a long time. Therefore, the role of Guru Pamong is needed for every CLC.

3.2 School From Home

The learning process not getting optimal when Covid-19 increases. Covid-19 has also worsened their condition because there are restrictions on face-to-face meetings, and they are increasingly pressured due to the economic effects on the family [15]. The lockdown began to be implemented in Malaysia in mid-March 2020, and the MCO

policy was obeyed by all residents [21]. From 2020 to 2021, the MCO is still very strictly implemented. During that time, the learning process was carried out from home. Mid-2021, Malaysia began conducting face-to-face learning, but these conditions were quite dynamic according to developments in the spread of COVID-19 in each region. The MCO policy itself be abolished in early 2022.

The entire learning process on CLC during the lockdown and implementation of the MCO was implemented online. Students and teachers are not allowed to hold face-to-face learning; all learning activities are carried out from their homes. In the early days of this policy, teachers felt shocked and confused because they were not ready to manage the online learning process. Teachers try to contact parents and transfer the online learning system via telephone and WhatsApp. WhatsApp is used more often because this media is more accessible for parents to accept. Furthermore, the teachers began to study using other online media, namely Zoom. They then tried to introduce Zoom to parents and students through chat instructions, voice notes, and tutorials directly via WhatsApp. Unfortunately, the teachers said they did not receive internet quota assistance, so they spent personal funds.

In general, students at CLC Ladang have more signal obstacles because of their location. However, their family's economy was relatively safe because they did not lose jobs in oil plantations. They are also safer because they live in the plantation area; people from the outside cannot enter the area without a permit. They also get other facilities from the company. On the other side, students at CLC Non-Ladang have various obstacles, not only signal but also depend on their family's economic situation. Most of their parents are undocumented migrant workers in low-paid and low- to semi-skilled sectors like housemaids, construction workers, workshop workers, and other sectors.

Online learning depends on each student's device and internet network at home. This condition is increasingly burdensome for parents as most lost their jobs during the pandemic. Learning devices at home generally only rely on parents' cell phones. The limited quota and access to the internet are other problems they have to face. Students also have to take turns with their parents and other siblings to use cell phones as a learning tool at home. This also makes online learning at home increasingly challenging to run optimally.

There are other obstacles during school from home. Students in the lower-age level are generally not familiar with using gadgets compared to upper-age level students. Therefore, their learning process is very dependent on parents or older assistants. According to the teachers' experience, some parents cannot accompany their children's learning process at home full-time. The teachers usually send material and assignment information through parents. Then they will convey it after they come home from work in the afternoon or evening. Therefore, the learning process for each student sometimes cannot be delivered simultaneously.

During school from home, SIKK also tries to assist all CLCs. There is socialization about media, information technology, and materials for teachers to face the online learning policy. SIKK also provides information or sharing for parents and students through Zoom meetings. But this condition is always constrained by the signals and internet quota. On the other side, teachers can't do home visits and group study during

the lockdown and MCO policy. During MCO policy, people are prohibited from leaving their homes, especially in locations indicated as Covid-19 hotspots [22]. Parents and students also dared not travel across regions because most were undocumented.

Some parents then try to buy additional cell phones. Parents strive for devices even though they have to borrow money to complete the needs of their children while studying online from home. Meanwhile, several CLCs provide cell phone loans for students, including the CLC Grace Center, but the facilities are limited.

3.3 Impact of Online Learning During Pandemic Covid-19

The impact of online learning that researchers describe in this study focuses more on changes in student behavior in general. This can be seen from the reflection of the teacher's experience after students studied from home for a long time due to COVID-19.

Some students cannot optimally absorb online learning from home. In general, they cannot get full and intensive assistance in the learning process from the teacher, so they have difficulty absorbing the material properly and optimally. For example, some students at the elementary level that not have parent assistance intensive usually are not fluent in reading, writing, and arithmetic. In addition, some students at the junior high school level also have difficulty accepting some material at their current grade level.

Some students also experience decreased discipline after studying from home for a long time. Some teachers have found that since some students have free access to cell phones, they are often late for school and late to turn in assignments due to addiction to online games. The parents of one of these students feel no longer able to control the child's behavior and asked the teacher to deal with the problem. This shows that there is a tendency where parents are no longer respected or feared by their children.

Some teachers also found some students that have bad attitudes toward language. They insert words that are not polite or rude while communicating. This is also influenced by their interactions with social media such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. Many students in lower grades have even accessed these media.

3.4 Analysis The Impact of Online Learning in CLC

The impact of online learning in CLC is not only in the learning loss aspect but also in the behavior of students. Students difficult to apply and continuing in new chapters or materials because of the decline of knowledge and skills [23]. On the other side, this condition is also followed by the decreased quality of attitudes. Students' experiences in different situations while school from home impact on socialization process that builds their understanding and behavior. Socialization is a process of absorbing the values and social norms to build capability adaptation in social life [24].

Students' socialization process while MCO transforming by the domination of online interaction process. Unfortunately, online interaction is not intensive from the learning process, but through social media. New media entrace their life with loose parental support. Parents generally tend to be permissive and have loose parental knowledge of using social media because their educational background is low. For that

reason, students feel social media addiction and dominantly absorb the values from their social media. As a result, students have many obstacles to applying their previous values and norms.

George H. Mead's theory of socialization takes from "I" first, and "me" develops by the preparatory stage, play stage, and game stage until they get generalized other [24]. Socialization is a reciprocal process between society and individuals; society determines what individuals become, but individuals also can shape the social environment by their ability, even in the larger society [25]. Based on this view, children in CLC cases are also capable of constructing their own and shared meanings as they acquire language skills and accumulate interactive experiences from online media. But, this ability is actually not already their control themselves. They need more accompaniment from parents and teachers after MCOs experience by resocialization process.

4 CONCLUSION

Covid-19 causes teachers, students, and parents to be able to adapt to technology and learning media in a short time. As a result, they experience cultural shock and various pressures while facing online learning. This is inseparable from various obstacles such as limitations in signal, technological skills, teachers' resources, the role of parents, government policies, and the family economy. This problem is increasingly preventing migrant children from obtaining proper education.

Teachers also must be prepared for further impacts, namely the learning loss experienced by students while studying from home. Post-school-from-home recovery is a challenge for teachers and the government. The limited number of teachers, facilities, and access makes achieving this even more challenging. Therefore, the researcher suggests the importance of programs such as the Kampus Mengajar, generally carried out in Indonesia, to help all CLCs in Sabah. The Kampus Mengajar program sends undergraduate students who have received special training to help schools improve student literacy and numeracy skills. The program is also given to provide socialization of government programs and improve the quality of learning through other assistance.

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