



Synergy of Teachers and Parents in Learning Activities for Early Childhood during Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This study describes the synergy between teachers and parents in learning activities for early childhood during the Covid-19 pandemic. The formulation of this research problem is the obstacles faced by teachers in the learning process during the Covid-19 pandemic, the attitude of parents in carrying out the role of accompanying children learning from home and the synergistic form of teachers and parents of early childhood in learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. This type of research uses qualitative methods with survey approach. The results found that the obstacles faced by teachers in learning during the Covid-19 pandemic are the low skills of teachers in using information technology, the lack of readiness of parents to be companions of children learning from home, and cooperation between teachers and parents/guardians in learning during the Covid-19 pandemic is well-known amid existing limitations but has a commitment to carry out learning for children effectively and efficiently. The conclusion of the study is that there is a positive synergy between teachers and parents/guardians in learning activities for early childhood during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Synergy of Teachers and Parents, Covid-19 Pandemic

I. INTRODUCTION

The existence of Virus 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) which is more familiar with the name Corona Virus is a new type of Coronavirus that infects humans. The virus indiscriminately attacks anyone, transmits rapidly and infects almost every country in the world. Indonesia also did not escape the exposure of covid-19 virus, even soared to become the country with the highest exposure victims in Southeast Asia, as many as 218,382 positive victims with the death toll reaching 8,723.

With this situation, the government through the Minister of Education and Culture based on Circular Letter No. 4 of 2020 on the Implementation of Education Policy in the Event of Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) Emergency Policy makes the policy one of which is the process of learning from home through online/remote learning. Then through the Circular Letter of the Secretary-General No. 15 of 2020 on Guidelines for The Implementation of Learning from Home during Disaster Emergencies (Covid-19), which is the purpose of the implementation of learning from home are:

1. Ensuring the fulfillment of the child's right to receive education services during covid-19 emergencies
2. Protect citizens of education units from the adverse effects of COVID-19
3. Prevent the spread and transmission of COVID-19 in the education unit
4. Ensuring the fulfillment of psychosocial support for educators, students and parents/guardians. After the release of the circular, the learning process from the higher education level to PAUD must be carried out from home.

Home learning through an online system set by the government, aimed at all levels of education ranging from PAUD, kindergarten, to college. The provision of this alternative is due to the development of information and technology (IT) in the era of 4.0. The rapid development of learning methods that support the implementation of online learning system from home, because online learning is a learning that eliminates time and distance with the help of internet-based digital platforms that are able to support learning to be done without any physical interaction between educators and learners. With the government's policy of studying at home online, the role usually performed by education units through teachers, has now shifted to family institutions through parents. This means that the house is now a hub of activity for all family members. This can have a positive impact, because the activity center goes back to its origin, namely home. However, if all activities are only done at home, it will also cause Psychosomatic, i.e. physical disorders caused by psychiatric factors and piles of emotions that can cause shocks in a person in society, such as anxiety, stress, social environment that affects many negative thoughts, such as due to news hoax and so on.

Many education experts agree that early childhood education is very important and should be done from the moment the child is born. This is reinforced by the results of research that proves that providing early education will affect the child's brain development, child health, and readiness of children attending school, better social and economic life in the future, when compared to children who are less educated at an early age.

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Parents are one of the important and main factors that influence the development of motivation of the child in learning, the need for direct contact that can be realized in the form of parental support in the child. Especially in early childhood children are children whose age range is between 0-6 years. This age becomes a very urgent moment for a child's potential to develop, where toddlerhood is a golden age for humans that cannot be repeated, because it becomes the most important moment as the shaper of character principles, thinking capabilities, intellectuals, creativity, and the ability to socialize.

The role of parents in providing education to early childhood is influenced by several factors. The factors that influence the role of parents in a child's education according to Friedman in Slameto, among others :

- a. Social status factors are determined by elements such as education, employment, and income;
- b. Family form factor;
- c. The stage factor of family development starts from the ongoing marriage that brings together two different personalities, followed by the preparatory stage of parenthood;
- d. Role model factor.

Almost all schools are off, the initially face-to-face learning system (TTM) is replaced by an online system, doing school work at home under parental supervision. The mechanism is that teachers assign tasks for several days and tasks are collected directly to the teacher each day via online. This step follows the decision of Minister of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) Nadiem Anwar Makarim in order to anticipate the spread of Covid-19 in the environment of educational institutions.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted in Kendari City of Southeast Sulawesi Province. Research uses qualitative methods with survey approach. The subjects of the study were teachers and parents/guardians of Kendari City. Data obtained through interviews is virtually strengthened by questionnaires for teachers and parents/guardians of children. This research uses miles and hubermen model data analysis techniques. The results of the study are presented in the form of diagram images.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Early Childhood Education Definition (PAUD)

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) and primary education are important foundations for the process of developing education at the next level. As a starting point, PAUD is a level of education that needs to get more attention when compared to the next level of education.

According to Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System Article 1 Number 14 states that Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth up to the age of six that is carried out through the provision of educational stimuli to help the growth and development of physical and spiritual so that the child has readiness in entering further education.

Vulnerable early childhood under Article 28 Paragraph 1 of Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System is 0-6 years. While according to the study of paud scientific clumps and their implementation in several countries, PAUD is carried out from the age of 0-8 years. Paud implementation of formal education pathways in the form of kindergarten (kindergarten)/Raudhatul Atfal (RA) and other equivalent forms, which use programs for children aged 4 – ≤ 6 years. While the implementation of PAUD non-formal educational pathways in the form of Childcare Park (TPA) and other equivalent forms, which use programs for children aged 0 – < 2 years, 2 – <4 years, 4 – ≤ 6 years and parenting programs for children aged 0 – ≤ 6 years; Play Group (KB) and other equivalent forms, using programs for children aged 2 – < 4 years old and 4 – ≤ 6 years.

Paud Service Activities are grouped based on the age of the child :

- a. PAUD activities for the age group 0 - < 2 years.
- b. PAUD activities for age group 2 - < 4 years.
- c. PAUD activities for the age group 4 - ≤ 6 years.
- d. Parenting activities age 0 - ≤ 6 years performed after activities a, b, c are completed.
- e. Childcare activities age 0 - ≤ 6 years are carried out by combining activities a or b or c with d.

Indonesia's first development priority for 2019-2024 is human resources development, where the leading sector is in the Educational Institution. As a system, Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is the foundation in human resources development in Primary Education, Secondary Education and Higher Education. Therefore, PAUD as the laying of the basic education is very strategic in determining the quality of further education.

3.2 The Legal Foundation of Early Childhood Education

In amendment to the 1945 Constitution Article 28B Paragraph 2 it is stated that:

"Every child is entitled to survival, growth and development and is entitled to protection from violence and discrimination".

In Law No. 23 of 2002 Article 9 Paragraph 1 on Child Protection it is stated that:

"Every child is entitled to an education and teaching in order to develop his/her personal and intelligence level according to his interests and talents".

Then in Article 28 of Law No. 20 of 2003 further states that :

1. Early childhood education is held before the primary education level.
2. Early childhood education can be conducted through formal, informal, and/or informal education pathways.
3. Early childhood education on formal education pathways in the form of kindergarten, Raudatul Athfal (RA), or other equivalent forms.
4. Early childhood education on non-formal education pathways in the form of Play Group (KB), Taman Penitipan Anak (TPA), or other equivalent forms.
5. Early childhood education on informal education pathways in the form of family education or education organized by the environment.
6. Provisions regarding early childhood education as referred to in paragraphs (1), (2), (3), paragraphs (4), and (5) are further regulated by government regulations.

In addition to the above laws and regulations, early childhood education is also mentioned in:

1. Government Regulation No. 17/2010 on The Management and Implementation of Education. In Chapter 1, Article 1, Paragraph 3 states that :
"Early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth up to the age of 6 (six) through the provision of educational stimuli to help physical and spiritual growth and development in order to have readiness in entering further education".
2. Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia No. 58 of 2009 on Early Childhood Education Standards.

Various challenges faced by early childhood educational institutions in this pandemic period, inevitably, like it or not, all parties starting teachers, parents, and students must be ready to live a new life through a learning approach using information technology and electronic media in order for the teaching process to take place properly. Currently the world of education around the world is experiencing the same problems, at all levels ranging from the level of early childhood education to college. But the complexity of the problem at the early education level is more complicated than the level above, because the level of independence of the child, focus, behavior and discipline requires extra attention from teachers and parents.

3.3 Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic

With the presence of Covid-19 forced to get out of the comfort zone, challenged to find a new atmosphere, various innovations are appropriately used by paud education unit in conveying the material, so that the message of the material can reach the child as a learner. For some apathetic teachers, immediately succumb to the situation. Meanwhile, optimistic teachers will not give up on the situation. But looking for a new atmosphere of innovation and new breakthroughs, use various media to support creativity in learning.

Emergence of a new sense of empathy towards the teacher profession, where parents feel importance of presence of teachers that can't be replaced by parents.

The quality of learning is certainly impactful, sacrificed, but adaption investment arises. Although offline learning systems are much more effective and quality, with the community of running an online learning system in the future will be a new awareness in enriching the learning model and no less important is the investment of adaption run by teachers so that new creativity is applied to students and parents.

3.4 Teacher Problems and PAUD Education Unit

The problems faced by teachers are a serious obstacle in supporting learning during this pandemic, especially in schools based on urban communities. These issues include:

- a. The ability to master information and technology (IT) teachers who are still low can be said not maximally in utilizing IT therefore need to be done upgrading. However, all teachers must be faced with the condition of utilizing online technology, even if they do not have an early preparation. Not to mention PAUD which is in a plural community in remote/rural areas, certainly has more severe challenges in the use of IT, and the age of teachers who are above productive (age range 50 years and above) has a low level of adaptation in the use of technology and information in the delivery of teaching.
- b. There are no definitive guidelines in remote teaching that can be used at all levels of PAUD schools which makes it difficult for the government to make reference material guidelines and difficult to adapt by PAUD as a whole. PAUD has different characteristics and uniqueness, for example PAUD that prioritizes character, spiritual, or skill as a school brand, and is carried out in accordance with the direction of development carried out by paud organizing body.

- c. Parents in general do not understand paud learning so many parents experience problems, feel depressed, so the results are not in accordance with expectations. This indirectly burdens teachers because teachers don't get help even teachers feel new challenges from the parent aspect.
- d. It is difficult for teachers to create narrative reports of children's development because they cannot see the child's development authentically. The child's development must be photographed directly by the teacher, but in the midst of this pandemic, the child's development is only obtained from the task report sent by the parents to the teacher, so that the learning tasks are not as good as the offline imposed.

The role of teachers is very important considering that the learning process can no longer come face to face.

Teachers must do their utmost to make sense of the material submitted online. The role of teachers is realized through:

- a) The role of teachers from face-to-face teaching is now transformed into a consultant for parents, as parents convey more of the difficulties experienced during online learning when handling children to teachers and teachers portray themselves as consultants for parents;
- b) Help parents explain the importance of playing for the child at home. Teachers play a role in explaining to parents the importance of playing with the child;
- c) Help parents do things with children making creations from simple materials that are in the house.

The question then, then what can be done by the teacher in the frame of carrying out his duties and functions as a teacher:

- a) Teachers can provide variants of activities that children can do with parents that place more emphasis on the character of the child.
- b) If parents do not have internet access or even have limited mobile phone usage, then teachers should be able to communicate to visit students if the distance is still not too far by keeping in mind and instilling the importance of health protocols to parents and children at home.

But the most important thing is that teachers and parents minimize as possible not to stress during the adaptation of this pandemic condition, they should always be happy and think positively, because if stress occurs then new creativity becomes hindered and tends to be resigned to the situation, so that no more innovation can be made in providing services to early childhood.

This pandemic should be seen as a challenge to be more creative, innovative and productive, finding solutions to every problem. In addition, strengthening project based learning by continuing to build good communication with parents at home, so that the goal of learning and early childhood development is not hampered even in difficult situations.

3.5 Parental Issues

Parents need to know the child's learning style in order to help him or her understand the material learned. Every child has a typical in response to learning, there is a positive tendency if parents are fully involved in the child's educational process to be able to get optimal performance in school.

But not to an extent, the problem of parents suddenly becoming teachers, brings up new problems that make it difficult in children's learning at home. These problems include:

- a. Parents who have many children, with different levels of education, while mobile phones are only one and the priority of their use is more aimed at whom, while the intensity of mobile phone use is more often used by PAUD children. So it will be a problem for parents and cause stress in accompanying their child.
- b. The dilemma experienced by parents, on the one hand parents must maintain survival for their family but on the other hand must provide educational services to the child because it must replace the role of teacher at home.
- c. Parents do not prepare to "become teachers" for children at home. Preparing to become a teacher means that the role of the teacher is transferred to the parents, where the parent must teach, make observations of the child's development, conduct assessments, so that it takes the ability that the teacher has. However, most parents do not adapt the ability of the teacher into him so that the parents have difficulty in performing the role to the child. Parents only build communication to teachers by sending the child's learning assignments to the teacher in order to conduct assessments.

3.6 Synergy of Teachers and Parents in Learning activities

Educating children in the covid-19 pandemic era requires synergy of good cooperation between parents and teachers. Synergy is an effort to build and ensure productive cooperation relationships and harmonious partnerships with teachers and parents/guardians to produce useful and quality work.

Strategies that can be implemented in building synergy of parties involved in early childhood learning, especially teachers and parents / guardians in the form of:

- 1. Straightening the mindset, the assumption that when the child is handed over at school then the parents have fulfilled their obligations in the school and meet the needs of the child, then the entire educational and teaching task is handed over to the teacher. Whereas family education is the fundamen or basis of the next child's education. The educational results obtained by the child in the family determine the child's next education, both in school and in the community. Teachers with parents / guardians need to communicate

- directly and teachers can ask about the character, daily habits of the child and his/her behavior that can be considered by the teacher in educating the child.
2. There needs to be a similarity of vision and orientation. In educating children, there is a similar point of view between parents and teachers. It is important to integrate parents into the school community. In this case, a kind of parental committee was formed for character education planning, or there could also be seminars or workshops on childcare.
 3. Teachers need to communicate clearly the core school policies and character education plans to all parents. In making that policy, schools can survey parents and invite comments, views, feedback and criticism from parents.
 4. Establish effective communication between family members, and most importantly between parents and their children.
 5. Mutual respect and support between parents and teachers, have tolerance, mutual understanding and avoid negative thinking towards the profession of PAUD teachers and the role of parents / guardians.

3.7 Early Childhood Learning Survey Results in Covid-19 Pandemic

Based on the results of the survey, the authors conducted by raising several questions that have a direct connection to the learning system such as teachers, parents and other related parties (as can be seen in Figure 1) to the learning of early childhood in the covid-19 pandemic.

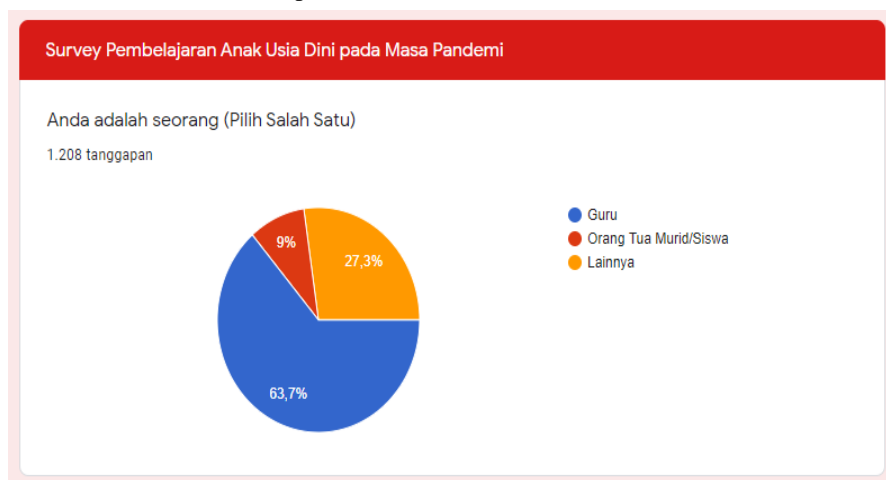


Figure 1 Early Childhood Learning Survey during pandemic

From the results of the survey, data is obtained, among others:

- a. Online learning process during Covid-19 Pandemic?

Based on the survey results in Figure 2, it can be explained that about ± 85% of parents use video conference applications (zoom, Google meet, and others), then ± 24% use a combination of technology equipment (laptop/smartphone), the rest through YouTube, email, home visit, Google classroom, and so on.

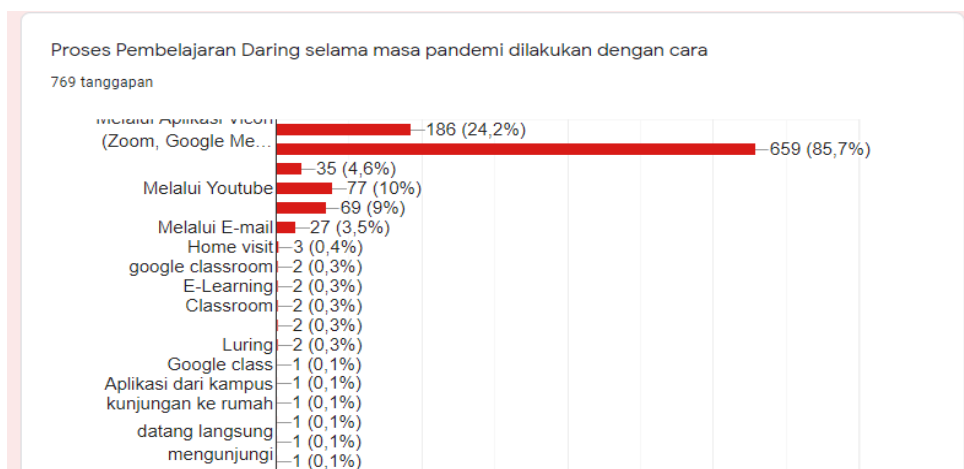


Figure 2 Online learning process surveys during pandemic

- b. What is the best way to evaluate the results of a pandemic?

From the survey results in Figure 3 obtained 769 responses regarding the evaluation process of learning results ± 48% through reporting results by email, then ± 46% through online portfolio, ± 27% through virtual

teacher interviews with parents, the rest through home visits, video calls through zoom/WA/etc. applications, learning videos and learning photos, and so on.

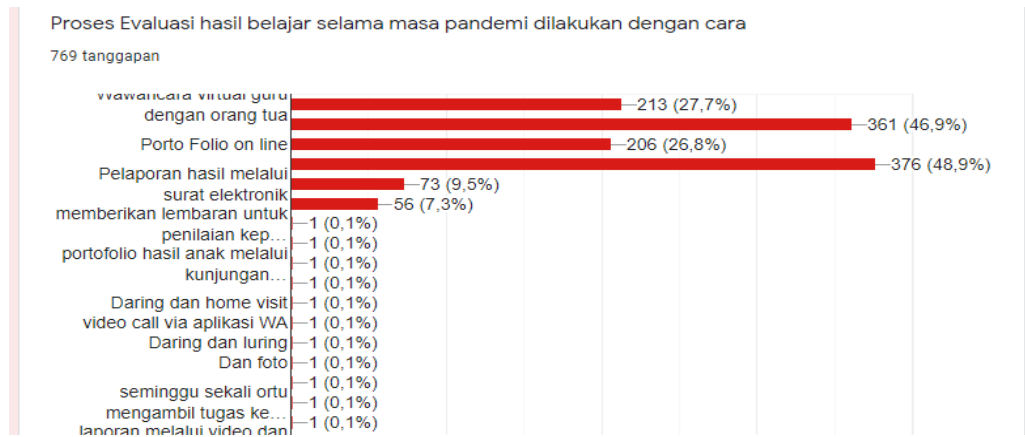


Figure 3. The process of evaluating the results of learning during the pandemic period

c. Who accompanies the child to study at home?

Of the 878 responses based on the survey results, there was ± 75% conducted by other family members, ± 34% accompanied by older siblings, ± 6% by tutors and only ± 1% accompanied directly by parents.

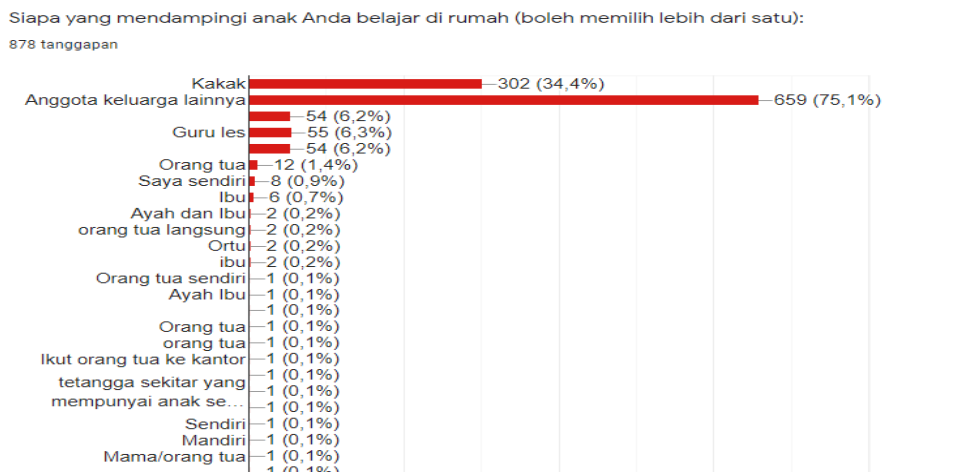


Figure 4. Child mentoring during home learning

d. If it's not accompanied (for parents), what's the reason?

Of the 878 responses based on the survey results, there were ± 56% of parents/guardians working, then ± 31% did not master the child material, ± 16% accompanied the remaining children on the grounds of having babies, illiterate parents and the elderly, and so on.

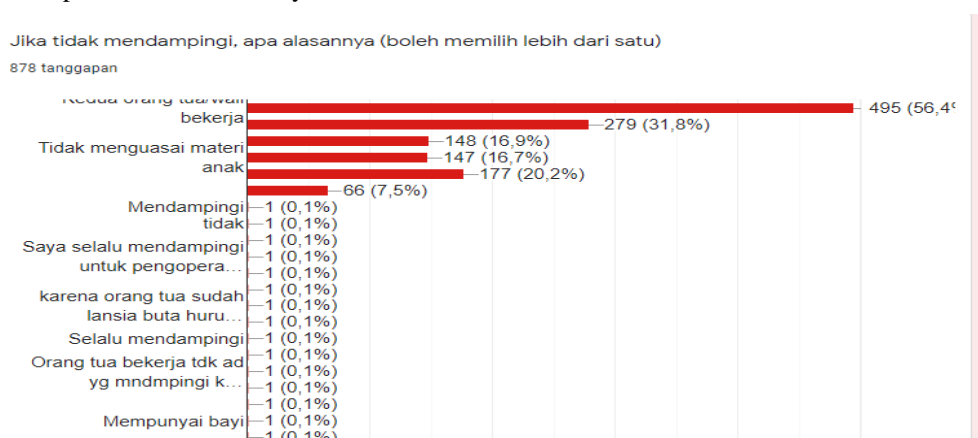


Figure 5. Why parents don't accompany the learning process at home

e. What do parents do to monitor their child's learning activities from home?

Of the 878 responses based on the survey results, there were ± 65% of parents/guardians asking about the completion of tasks performed by the child, examining the tasks performed by the child, checking the child's

understanding of learning materials, communicating with the child regarding learning difficulties, consulting with the teacher regarding the child's learning barriers, the rest did not monitor the child's learning activities.

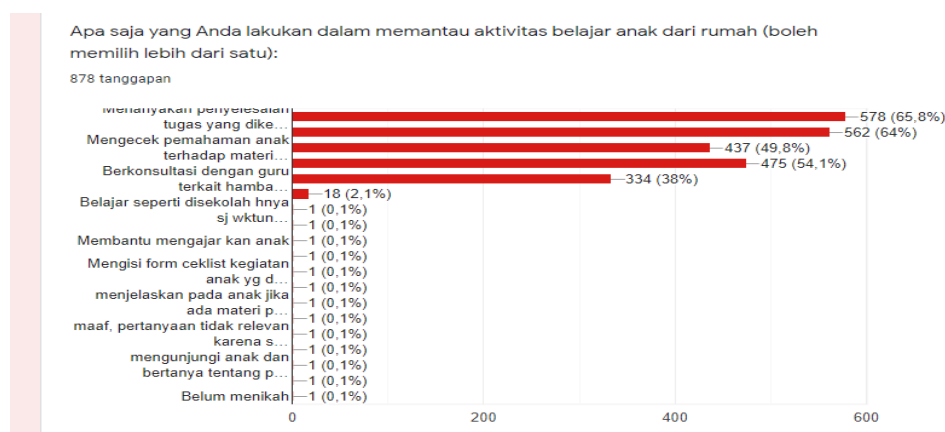


Figure 6. What parents do in learning at home

IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusions of the study can be formulated as follows:

1. The main obstacle in learning for early childhood in the Covid-19 pandemic is the low skills of teachers in using information technology.
2. Parents' attitude in online learning is due to the lack of readiness of parents to be companions of children learning from home.
3. Synergy between teachers and parents in carrying out learning during the Covid-19 pandemic is positive and cooperation between teachers and parents / parents in learning during the Covid-19 pandemic is good, this can be proven by the efforts and commitment of the school in the midst of existing limitations but has a commitment to carry out learning for children effectively and efficiently.

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