

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF ONLINE SCHOOLS: A STUDENT'S POINT OF VIEW

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Abstract. This type of learning system has developed a lot. Students no longer have to go to school to study, but learning can be from anywhere. Especially when the pandemic came, schools were run from home, and online schools were the right choice. Then, are school activities still fun and useful when done online? Based on this, the article tells the experience of the advantages and disadvantages of online schools from the perspective of the author as a 7th-grade online school student. The focus of the object of study is PKBM Generation Juara, which is the place where the author gains knowledge and learning experiences. A qualitative approach is used to discuss the purpose of the article with support from various literature reviews. The results of this study show the various experiences and explorations of kinetics, culture, social and natural knowledge, and creativity experienced by online school students. This research contributes to providing a new perspective on online schooling.

Keywords: Online School, school students, exploration, creativity.

INTRODUCTION

Online learning is an activity carried out by a person to broaden knowledge through electronic or remote media, which is different from the usual way of learning that requires face-to-face. Online school can be done anywhere and anytime, with online school learning activities can be done at home, malls, and places to eat anywhere if there is an Internet connection and the adjusted time can be morning, evening, evening, or afternoon (Syarafin, 2021). Through online learning, students can interact with teachers using applications such as Google classroom, video conference, telephone or live chat, zoom, or via groups on WhatsApp or telegram in a fun way (Marlena, Mela, 2021)

It is known that online learning methods give students the freedom to create a learning atmosphere according to their own wishes based on the atmosphere, time, or place. However, that does not mean that learning is free without rules, there are still assignments and the presence of a teacher or tutor as a guide. Thus students can be more optimal in doing the tasks given by the teacher through online learning.

According to Lukmana (2021), online learning is similar to conventional learning, which is carried out in a structured manner. Learning and teaching activities always start with the preparation of learning tools, learning materials, learning media, and learning resources. In addition, learning materials must also be prepared according to standards as a reference in developing the curriculum.

Before the Coronavirus hit, schools with online learning were often considered less popular, but after the pandemic occurred, distance learning became a solution so that teaching and learning activities continued and physical distancing could also be carried out so that the spread of the virus could be controlled. Online learning has finally been suddenly adopted by conventional schools with short preparations due to government regulations that require the transfer of learning and teaching activities from schools to their respective homes. According to Wardhani and Krisnani's research in 2020, when conventional schools move to an online system, teachers are required to redesign various assignments for students while at home and digital communication is a very

important key for schools and parents to carry out the school process. This online activity is still carried out intensely with results that are not far adrift with face-to-face learning in class (Wardhani and Krisnani, 2020). At that time schools with an online basis that were ready with an online learning system and human resources became visible and popular because they were considered safe for students. In this article, PKBM Generasi Juara, or Genju, is the focus discussed as a place for online learning and one of the pioneers of online-based Homeschooling with a mission to assist the Government in providing educational services to Indonesian Citizens. The students come from various places in Indonesia and outside Indonesia. In PKBM Generasi Juara, there are two categories of distance learning systems, namely HS or Home Schooling and Regular. The Home Schooling System has absolutely no face-to-face activities to meet tutors or teachers through online media whereas Regular, students have face-to-face online schedules to get material from tutors, discuss and meet other friends.

Based on the explanation above, it is important to discuss the topic of online learning, especially from the point of view of individuals who experience it, and the general public needs to know the point of view of seventh-grade online school students regarding distance learning. This forms the following research questions: What are the advantages and disadvantages of online schools based on the experiences of online school students?.

RESEARCH METHOD

In order to achieve the research objectives, this article uses a qualitative method with a storytelling or narrative approach, namely writing about the author's experiences related to online learning activities (Darmayanti et al, 2022). The article is based on observations while joining PKBM Generasi Juara in mid-2021 since the author was still in Penang, Malaysia due to following a mother who was studying further and the observations continued until now in 2022 when the author returned to Indonesia. The research stage begins with personal experience and then collects literature data regarding the definition of online school or online learning, what is the role of schools in the online learning system, the role of parents in online learning, the relationship between Covid-19 and online schools, the advantages, and disadvantages of online schools. Then, everything is discussed and discussed so as to answer research questions. Therefore, based on the purpose of the article, the results of this study are to find out various kinetic explorations of the culture of knowledge and creativity experienced by online school students. Through physical activity, physically healthy people will be formed because they work physically (moving in certain patterns), spiritually healthy by taking the values of sports that are taught, and socially healthy because they provide broad opportunities to interact with peers and the environment. Thus it is clear that the purpose of physical education and sport is as a means to improve health and create healthy lifestyle habits for students and for their future.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Learning activities are often a burden on students, and this will have an impact, especially if the material does not match the interests and pressures of the many assignments on the subject. This makes students tired and has less time to explore activities that suit their preferences and passion. In fact, it is known that pressure and fatigue will hinder children's learning process and creativity (Tabrani, 2006).

The author has experienced both school learning systems, namely face-to-face or conventional and online. The author feels the difference between the two, especially in terms of time, place, atmosphere, and way of learning greatly influences the writer to develop himself, be creative and gain knowledge and experience.

Studying at PKBM Generasi Juara made the writer more explorative about what she is interested in and able to try and experience various new things that enrich her experience from the side of sports involving movement, the side of cultural and social knowledge, as well as the side of creativity.

To be creative does not require high technology. Creativity arises from our habit of interacting with many things, daring to try new things, and having skills that involve our hands, feet, body, taste, and mind (Anggen, 2020). In figure 1, the author shows one of the learning activities as well as creativity that involves hands, feelings, and thoughts, namely practicing narrative narratives through intensive writing both manually and using technology that helps write efficiently. This situation seems normal, but the writer has a different experience of writing manually and digitally with its own "sophistication" that is not found when writing manually, for example, digital writing can be directly added to pictures taken by yourself or taken from the internet. Whereas in manual writing, the pictures are replaced with sketches which is also a fun process because you can choose colors, draw lines and make shapes creatively with your own hands, according to your own wishes. This activity, it turns out, is in accordance with research conducted by Lukmana in 2021 that even though they attend the online school, students can still work creatively (Lukmana, 2021).

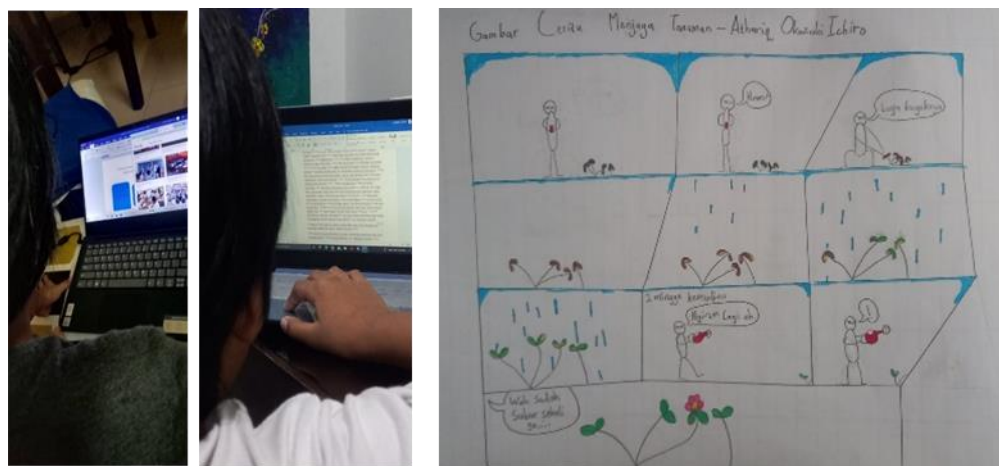


Fig. 1. Active Writing Activities Digitally (left) and Manually (right)

Not being able to meet school friends in person every day is indeed the writer's weakness for online schooling. The experience of playing in a school building is also no longer felt. However, playing experience is obtained through activities outside of learning activities at school. Playing can be done anywhere, even making friends becomes wider, because you can get acquainted and have friends from the places you are visiting. As can be seen in Figure 2 - *I met new friends when I attended my mother's activities at her research location in Jamblang, Cirebon. At first, it wasn't easy to start a conversation with new people, but it had to be tried and in the end, we tried various activities together, such as seeing cultural exhibitions, having lunch together, trying traditional food from the place directly such as Jamblang chicken noodles, Empal Gentong and Jamblang rice, and took part in making a mural together.*

Apart from that, there is another interesting experience, evidenced by one of the lessons in school about inter-religious tolerance. The author experienced firsthand how to respect the habit of praying before eating - *I pray first, sorry if I disturb you*, that's what Rico, a new friend of the author at Jamblang, said. It seems simple, but experiencing it firsthand is a valuable experience (figure 3).



Fig. 2. Meet and Play with new friends at the parents' research location



Fig. 3. Practice Religious Tolerance Outside School Activities: Pray before Meals



Fig. 4. Making a Mural with New Friends



Fig. 5. Self-Defense Activities

Another positive value obtained through online learning is quite a lot of free time. That's what made the writer take part in self-defense activities, namely Jujitsu. In addition to gaining knowledge of self-defense, it is also felt that there is a lot to learn about strategies for dealing with problems. Many rules are also studied such as various techniques or moves, these things help the writer to control himself. Apart from Jujitsu, self-defense using a *katana* or sword is also practiced. Self-defense indirectly can increase creativity, this statement is in accordance with one type of learning, namely problem-based learning, whose goal is to solve a problem and discover new things. Creativity is an ability possessed by a person in the form of ideas and actions in an effort to solve the problems found (Nazareta, 2016). In addition to creativity, martial arts help build self-confidence and provide motivation regarding health such as choosing healthy foods to improve body performance, besides that it also increases focus (Diandra, 2020).

1.1 Learn from and Anywhere

Online learning activities can be done anywhere and anytime. So, students and parents have no worries about traveling anywhere but can still participate in school learning activities. Of course, this situation can enrich the material provided at school because it can be directly experienced at the locations visited. The knowledge gained is not only through books or tutor presentations but can be obtained directly with direct experience. An example is a knowledge about culture, one of which is Chinese culture through the Jamblang Festival. Jamblang is known as Chinese Village or Chinatown in Cirebon, West Java. The author went to the event and immediately saw the influence of local culture and Chinese culture on the Barongsai dance, and also saw the influence of Chinese culture on the various old buildings called Peranakan Houses that were there (figure 6).



Fig. 6. Experiencing the Culture Firsthand at the Location: Lion Dance Show (left) & Peranakan House Building (right)

The experience of online school is like removing distance and time barriers, even students can directly experience what is learned not only from the material presented by the teacher. Juhani Pallasmaa, an architect and expert in phenomenology, said that something or a place will be easily stored in memory if the individual experiences it. That's because of all the senses of the bodywork. Experiencing activity also indirectly is a way to preserve something that was experienced at that time for the future (Pallasmaa, 2007). Pallasmaa's statement is in accordance with the circumstances experienced by the author, when he was far away and left Jamblang, memories of Jamblang were still stored in detail, especially those related to culture. The same thing was repeated, when the writer went with his mother to a place that has historical and cultural values. The author experiences a trip to visit historical and cultural places, namely the Ulen Sentalu Museum in Yogyakarta and Alam Manis Village in Kuningan, West Java (figure 7). In both places, the writer has many memories of objects from the past, such as ancient telephones, ancient batik cloth, and ancient musical instruments, and even remembers the life stories of the ancient palace people. Again Pallasmaa (1985) reinforces the fact that the atmosphere and anything related to the past or ancient will be more imprinted in the memory and will always give an impression.

These memories and experiences cannot be felt when participating in face-to-face learning, because they are limited by time and place.



Fig. 7. Old Telephone at Alam Manis Village & Learn Ancient Batik at Ulen Sentalu Museum

Online learning also brings the author to be able to introduce traditional games to foreigners or from other countries directly, one of the assignments given by PKBM Generasi Juara. When he got the assignment, the writer was still in Penang, Malaysia, and had friends from Pakistan, namely Asharab and Rawwa from Iraq. The traditional games introduced are Sondah in Sundanese or Engklek in Javanese (figure 8). This situation is in accordance with Riaz Ahmed's statement (2018) that online schools remove physical barriers as a factor for learning within the scope of the class, students can study directly in their place according to what is needed.

A feeling of happiness and pride is immediately felt when friends are enthusiastic about playing, meaning that it is a success in introducing one of the cultures from Indonesia. Not only fulfilling school assignments but also fostering a sense of love for one's own country.



Fig. 8. Introducing Indonesian Traditional Games to International Friends

The various activities carried out above, not only have practical value or more to hard skill and soft skill training, training that requires manual or technological skills but also have educational value. This statement contradicts research conducted by Lukmana (2021) which says that online learning has weaknesses because it is more towards training than education. In addition, the statement regarding the enthusiasm and interest in student learning, that when students encounter difficulties in learning, they easily feel hopeless and fail in learning is not proven based on the author's learning experience. However, please note that the role of parents is also very large in online learning. If a failure in learning occurs, parents need to calm down and continue to provide enthusiasm for learning because students do not get direct support from their classmates or teachers.

1.2 Online Learning Sharpens Creativity and Strengthens Student Interests

Exploration by online school students can be more in-depth than in conventional schools, again because there is more time available. The author has an interest in art, nature, and science, especially micro-organisms. These three interests are poured into various activities outside of online learning assignments. Art interest is done because the writer's mother has the same interest, so she often participates in his activities. In July 2022, a Community Service activity was held at the mother's workplace. The writer participated in making a mural about the history of a Vihara in the Jamblang area, Cirebon. The author participates in the process of making sketches on the walls called murals, then coloring them using colorful wall paints, besides that they learn to interact with other people who make up the mural-making team. This statement is not in line with Sugiharti's statement (2020) that the academic and social aspects of online school students tend to decline in their development because learning is carried out without face-to-face meetings.



Fig. 9. Art Activity: Making a Mural in Jamblang, Cirebon

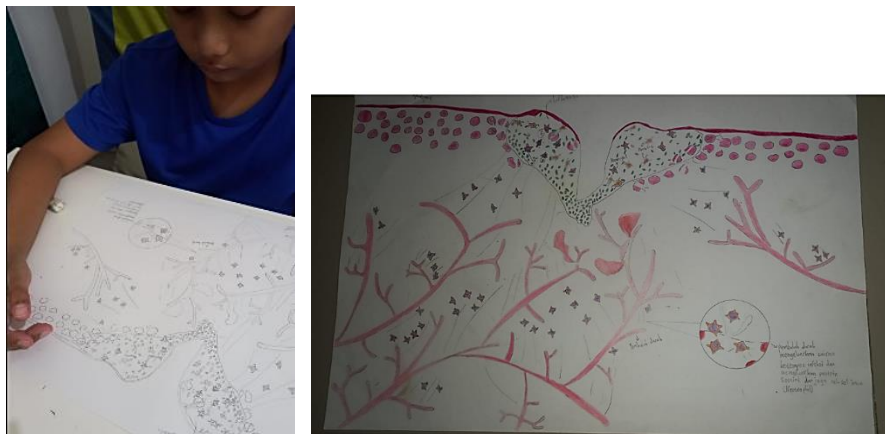


Fig. 10. Science Related Activity: Drawing the Human Immune System



Fig. 11. Learn Natural Science Hands-on: Large Cactus Plants (left) & Sea Animals (right)

Various online school activities have provided experiences that not all of them get from attending conventional schools. Understanding the subject matter by directly experiencing it is very influential in understanding the material. In addition, the pressure on assignments that are very much in conventional schools is replaced by direct real-world exploratory experiences.

CONCLUSION

Online learning is an activity carried out by students to broaden academic knowledge from anywhere and at any time through electronic or remote media. Students can also interact with teachers and schoolmates using various applications. Based on the author's experience as well as an online school student, it is known that there are many advantages to be gained from online learning, namely training, processing, experiencing, and increasing self-confidence, courage, interpersonal and social skills. Increasing the kinetic ability to exercise through self-defense activities, broadening and deepening historical, cultural, social, and natural knowledge, as well as increasing creativity because there is a lot of time for exploration and experimentation.

A significant drawback of online learning is meeting friends or teachers, which usually occurs when attending conventional school learning. Because the material is given remotely, and there is no direct contact with students, so the teacher is less skilled in understanding students because they do not see students' expressions and gestures directly, as well as a lack of ability in conveying learning material. This results in students being bored and hopeless if the role of parents also has less contribution. Another drawback is that if an online school holds face-to-face activities, it will only be attended by students who live near the online school's head office. Even so, the benefits of online learning are more felt by students but it must be with the support and participation of parents.

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