

**STUDENTS' PROBLEMS IN ONLINE LEARNING ACTIVITIES THROUGH  
MOBILE APPLICATIONS DURING PANDEMIC ERA  
AT SMAN 1 PALEMBANG**

**A Thesis by**

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**English Education Study Program  
Language and Arts Education Department**



**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION  
SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY  
PALEMBANG  
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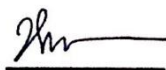
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## DECLARATION

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Palembang, January 2022

  
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## **DEDICATION AND MOTTOS**

**This thesis is fully wholeheartedly dedicate to:  
My beloved family and myself**

## **MOTTOS**

**فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا**

**For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease**

**(Q.S. Al - Insyira : 5 )**

**“Learn as if you will live forever, live like you will die tomorrow.”**

**-Mahatma Gandhi**

**“It is nice to be important, but it’s more important to be nice”**

**-John Templeton**

**“Do good it will come back to you in unexpected ways”**

**-Unknown**

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Palembang, 5 January 2022

The Writer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alif Rifqy', written in a cursive style.

M. Alif Rifqy

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**ABSTRACT**

*The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic had significantly impacted the educational sector in every country. As a result, the conventional learning in the classroom had shifted into online learning through various mobile applications. It was the Governments' policy to reduce the transmission of Covid-19, therefore students are required to study from home. Mobile applications are considered as an instructional media to support the implementation of teaching and learning process. This present study was aimed to investigate what are the problems faced by students in online learning activities through mobile applications at SMA Negeri 1 Palembang. In this study, the writer employed a qualitative research approach. The sample of this study was 12<sup>th</sup> grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Palembang. The data for this present study were collected through a written interview. Furthermore, the results of this study showed that the students faced various problems in online learning activities through mobile applications during covid-19 pandemic such as poor internet connections, limited internet package, technical issues, and lack of interactions.*

**Keywords:** *Problems, Online Learning Activities, Mobile Applications and Covid-19 Pandemic*

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This section describes background of the study, problem of the study, the objective of the study, and the significance of the study.

### 1.1 Background of the study

In 2020 almost every nation around the world encountered a disaster caused by the emergence of the COVID-19 outbreak, called Corona Virus Disease. WHO (World Health Organization) has informed that this pandemic originated from China, specifically in the Wuhan area. The appearance of this pandemic has shocked the entire world because it has rapidly spread to almost every area in the whole world. Furthermore, the WHO (World Health Organization) announced COVID-19 as a global public health crisis of worldwide importance on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and a pandemic on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020. (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020). WHO has suggested to every society worldwide to follow all health protocols, including handwashing with soap, wearing a mask, and keeping social and physical distance.

In March 2020, COVID-19 was discovered for the first time in Indonesia. President Joko Widodo released the first public announcement about two Coronavirus positive patients On March 2<sup>nd</sup>. 2020. The two patients, a woman with her daughter were considered to have contracted the disease from Japanese citizens. The Indonesian government then moved quickly to adopt "large-scale social limitation" in response to the rising amount of infected people with the COVID-19 virus. Large-scale social limitation refers to the restriction of various activities of the society in an area considered of getting infected with the COVID-19 virus to prevent the spread of this virus. Moreover, Government of Indonesia has imposed various restrictions, including wearing masks whenever outside the house, social and physical distance, staying away from the crowds, handwashing at all times, and restricting public transportation access. Therefore, every community should do several activities from home, including teaching and learning activities. The Government encourages every community to follow all current health regulations at all times. The purpose of these regulations is to reduce the COVID-19 transmission chain. Thus, the number of infected cases will not expand.

As a consequence, one of the sectors that have been highly impacted by this pandemic is education. This pandemic has a significant impact on learners, educators, and schools worldwide (Mailizar et al., 2020). As a result, academic institutions in various nations have closed to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus (Naciri, Baba, Achbani & Kharbach, 2020). The case is similar to Indonesia. Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia has implemented a regulation by temporarily shutting all academic institutions on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2020. This regulation is one of the methods for decreasing the amount of cases and slowing the transmission of COVID-19. The regulations in the COVID-19 outbreak force learning activities to switch to distance learning instead of face-to-face instruction (Ministry of Education and Culture Indonesia, 2020). Because schools or universities are public locations that are highly susceptible to the spread of COVID-19.

Therefore, distance-learning or online learning systems are employed to conduct the teaching and learning process. Since March 2020, every school in Indonesia has implemented an online learning system, which will continue if the pandemic continues. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020), mentioned that e-learning programs, including digital and distance learning alternatives, have been implemented as possible and suitable to maintain the students' educational continuity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, Online learning was considered the best option for maintaining the teaching and learning process continuity during the COVID-19 outbreak. According to the regulations provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture on March 24, 2020, educational institutions should manage online learning to create a valuable learning experience for students without being overburdened with the requirements of completing all curriculum obligations.

During the implementation of online learning activities in the COVID-19 pandemic. Mobile applications have become a learning platform which is considered highly appropriate to communicate with students and can be utilized to support the teaching and learning process. Further, Archambault et al (2016) states that the usage of social media networking facilitates the interaction between educators and students, allowing them to communicate more efficiently. Numerous mobile applications are broadly used as an online learning platform, for example, WhatsApp, Telegram, and Google Classroom. These mobile applications have various functions that could support both students and teachers. For instance, WhatsApp is utilized as a tool of

communication between teachers and students. Teacher could inform about the lesson time and deliver the subject matter to students in form of documents, pictures, videos, or audios through WhatsApp Groups. Next, Google Classroom also necessary to support and make the implementation of teaching and learning activities more flexible. Teachers can save time to deliver the learning material appropriately and students can submit the assignments. Besides these two kinds of tools, video conferencing is also broadly used. Zoom Meeting, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams are some of the most popular video conferencing platforms. Video conferencing in online learning could enable synchronous learning experiences, maintaining the nuances of face-to-face learning while also allowing for changes to various learning styles. (Holden & Westfall, 2010)

However, online learning activities are not always carried out effectively and smoothly due to various difficulties that hinder the teaching and learning activities. As a result, schools without experience with e-learning and not planned e-learning materials encounter challenges, specifically when teachers don't understand how to operate online learning applications (Zaharah & Kirilova, 2020). One of the challenges that influence the smoothness of educational activities is teachers' technology knowledge in an online context (Conrad & Donaldson, 2011). Students also encounter difficulties with poor internet connections or unsupported devices while not all parents could afford smartphones or laptops. In addition, Sikirit (2020) argued that the absence of internet access and electronic gadgets is the most significant barrier that students face when studying at home.

In this study, the term online learning activities were used by the writer to describe the teaching and learning process implemented during the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. The limited studies were recently completed in Indonesia during the pandemic era. The majority of recent studies focused on primary and secondary education, or at the university level. A previous study conducted by Aliyyah et al (2020) found that teachers encountered various difficulties during implementing online learning in the COVID-19 pandemic, such as technological barriers, student conditioning, student involvement, and online teaching experience. Another recent study conducted by Mailizar et al (2020) discovered that secondary mathematics teachers encountered significant obstacles in managing e-learning as a means of guidance during school closures due to the COVID-19 epidemic. At the

student level, the lack of students' experience and skills in using e-learning and their lack of access to devices and internet connectivity were significant challenges.

In this present study, the writer had high interest to conduct a study focusing on students' problems in online learning activities through mobile applications during the pandemic era at SMA N 1 Palembang. This research was expected to provide insights for both teachers and students to improve the quality of online learning and can provide solutions to overcome problems that emerge during the teaching and learning process. The writer was conducted this study at SMA N 1 Palembang, specifically 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Every face-to-face learning in this school has changed into online learning because of social distancing regulations associated with a circular letter from the Government. Both teachers and students already used various mobile applications as instructional media to simplify the teaching and learning activities, for example, Google Classroom, WhatsApp, Telegram, and Zoom Meetings. The writer was conducted this present study based on students' experience in using the mobile applications in online learning activities. Therefore, the writer decided to conduct this study to find out what are the problems faced by students in online learning activities through mobile applications.

## **1.2 The Problem of the Study**

The problem of this study was formulated into following question: "What are the problems faced by students in online learning activities through mobile applications?"

## **1.3 The Objective of the Study**

In relation with research question, the objective of this study was to find out what are the problems faced by students in online learning activities through mobile applications.

## **1.4 The Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study were expected to give several advantages to teachers, students and future researchers by giving valuable information about students' problems in online learning activities through mobile applications at SMAN 1 Palembang. The writer hoped that this study can provide a detailed explanation for teachers to understand the problems encountered by students when participating in online learning activities via mobile applications during the pandemic era. This study

is expected to produce useful information, and teachers will receive knowledge on how to effectively organize the online learning courses. Moreover, the writer hoped that this study can provide valuable suggestions to help students overcome the problems that emerge in the online learning process. For future researchers, the writer hoped that this study would encourage other researchers to investigate online learning activities through mobile applications at the educational level during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also expected that the findings of this study would be valuable information or positive contributions to other researchers dealing with similar topics.



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