

## **FAMILY ROLE IN OPTIMIZING ‘STUDY FROM HOME’ WITH MERDEKA BELAJAR APPROACH**

**M. Nawa Syarif Fajar Sakti<sup>\*1</sup>, Sitti Fathimah Herdarina Darsim<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Malang, <sup>2</sup>Universitas Padjajaran, Bandung  
e-mail: [\\*1nawasyarif.ns@gmail.com](mailto:*1nawasyarif.ns@gmail.com), [rina.natsir@yahoo.com](mailto:rina.natsir@yahoo.com)

**Abstract:** The Covid-19 pandemic changed all aspects of life and the government tried to reduce transmission more quickly through policies to maintain social distance. One of them is in education the learning process at school is shifted to learning at home, the policy reaps controversy between parents and teachers who experience difficulties in the learning process. Some newspapers mention complaints about e-learning facilities that are less supportive which has an impact on children's learning difficulties. But, the family aspect in education is not widely mentioned, even though family education is very important. This article seeks to explain the role of the family in children's education which begins to fade when the family occupies an important role in the learning process in the midst of the co-19 pandemic using library research methods. Through the Merdeka Belajar approach that carries literacy, numeracy and personality, the role of the family through its functions in education can be optimized in improving children's learning at home.

**Keywords:** *Role of the family; Child; Free Learning; Merdeka Belajar*

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The pandemic of Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) was a new disaster for all citizens of the world. The epidemic that appeared at the end of 2019 spread quickly to all countries in the world including Indonesia. Indonesia announced the first Covid-19 case in February 2020. The number of cases increased from day to day, until Saturday (23/10) positive patients were 381.910 people, recovered was 305.100 people, and those who died were 13.077 people (Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan COVID-19, 2020). In just one month, Covid-19 virus has entered all regions in Indonesia. This pandemic had impacts in all aspects of life, one of which was education. The physical and mental health of students, teachers, school principals, and all school residents were major consideration in implementing educational policies.

The Minister of Education and Culture (Mendikbud) issued Surat Edaran (SE) Number 4 Year 2020 dated March 24, 2020, which said ‘Study from Home’ through online learning was carried out to provide meaningful learning experiences for students and according to their interests and individual conditions, including considering the gap of access/learning facilities at home. The role of parents seems very dominant in the learning process at home. Family was indeed one of the informal educational institutions. But the role of parents in children's education at this time looks very lacking, especially when parents had their own activities.

The Study From Home policy was complained by many parents. Reported by kronologi.id, it was explained that the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) claimed to have received complaints from a number of parents who complained that their children were stress because they were getting various tasks every day from the teachers. KPAI suspected that most teachers might understand home learning is by giving online assignments and also uploaded online. Most parents still make Study From Home is the full responsibility of formal education institutions (Tio, 2020). In

fact, family as an educational institution is the first and main. The family is expected to always try to provide needs, both biological and psychological for children, as well as caring and educating them. The family is expected to be able to produce children who can grow up to be independent and be able to live in the midst of society. As well as being able to accept and inherit the values of life and culture.

According to Selo Soemarjan, the family is the main group, because the family is the first educational community and is natural. Children are prepared to go through stages of their development as provisions when entering the world of adults, languages, customs, and the entire contents of culture through the family. Education should be a duty did by family and community in sustaining life (Soemarjan, 1962, p. 67).

Parents, especially mothers as *madrastul ula* (the first school) for children since they were still in the womb to adults, were giving moral education to children. Such as guidance, stimulus, giving examples, sometimes punishments that are typical in a family. Whether in the form of household, religious, and other community work, which is borne by all family members, or individually, including interactions in the family education. According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, the family is a collection of individuals who have a sense of selfless devotion, for the benefit of all individuals that is include in it. That's the importance of the family in human life for individuals and groups of people (Dewantara, 1961, p. 45).

Children cannot be separated from family. With family, people can gather, meet, and stay in touch. Can be imagined if humans live without family. Unconsciously, indirectly has eliminated the nature of a person as a social creature. This is in line with the statement of Selo Soemarjan, a family is a group of people who are united by kinship, marriage, or adoption that are socially agreed upon and generally in accordance with well-formulated social roles (Soemarjan, 1962, p. 175). Similarly, in terms of pedagogical views. The family is a fellowship of life woven by affection between a couple of two types of people who are confirmed by marriage with a view to perfecting one another.

Based on the explanation above, the family is the most important element in child development. Both in affective, psychomotor, and cognitive. Current conditions that require every student in a formal institution for Study From Home actually provides a family opportunity to be able to optimize their role in the learning process of children. In this paper, the roles of the family in children's education through family functions during the Study From Home condition will be put forward using the *Merdeka Belajar* approach, which is a new concept from the Ministry of Education and Culture for future Indonesian education.

## **B. MATERIAL & METHODS**

This type of research is library research using a qualitative approach (Hatch, 2002, p. 5). The selection of this method is based on consideration of the availability of data in various media that complained of the 'Study From Home' policy. The method of data collection with documentation, which is to trace various data in the form of online documents, articles, books and notes will be analyzed using analysis of educational approaches (Merriam, 1988, p. 26).

## **C. RESULT & DISCUSSION**

### **1. Family Education**

In a variety of literature, experts gave various perspectives about the meaning of family education. For example Mansur, defined family education as the process of giving positive values to the growth and development of children as the foundation of further education. (Mansur, 2007, p. 219) In addition, Abdullah also defined family education as all efforts done by parents in the form of habituation and improvisation to help the child's personal development (Abdullah, 2003, p. 24). Another opinion expressed by an-Nahlawi, Hasan Langgulung set limits on the meaning of family education as an effort carried out by fathers and mothers as people who are given the responsibility to provide values, morals, ideals, and fitness (Langgulung, 2000, p. 20).

Family education provides basic knowledge and skills, religion, and beliefs, moral values, social norms, and way of life that students need to be able to play a role in the family and in society.

Most of children raised by families show those things in the family, the child got education and coaching for the first time.

The family is a natural educational institution because between parents as educators and children as the one who is educated, there is a blood relationship. Because of that, his authority was also natural. That character, brings the relationship between educators and the one who is educated to be very close. There are several functions of family education institutions, like: (Mizal, 2018)

- 1) Is the first experience for childhood, this experience is a very important factor for the next developments, especially in personal development. Family life is very important, because childhood experience will give color to the next development.
- 2) Education in the family environment can guarantee the moral life of children to grow and develop. Moral life is very important in the personal formation of children. Poor or excessive moral relations will be detrimental to the child's development.
- 3) In the family, moral education will be formed. Exemplary parents in speaking words and behaving everyday will be a point for moral education of children in the family, in order to form moral people.
- 4) In the family will grow a helping attitude, tolerance, so that a peaceful and prosperous family life grows. Every family member has a noble social attitude, in this way the family will be the place to form human as social beings.
- 5) Family is an institution that does play a role in laying the foundations of religious education. The habit of parents bringing their children to the mosque is a wise step from the family in the effort to form children as religious beings.
- 6) In the context of developing children as individual beings to be directed and can develop and help themselves. In this context, the family is tend to create conditions that can develop initiative, creativity, will, emotions, responsibilities, skills and other activities in accordance with what is in the family. While in development, the concept of principle, generalization and intellect, as a family because of its limitations only serves as a motivator and encouragement.

The explanation above explains that parental behavior is the most fundamental thing in a child's development, even though the environment can also affect the child's development. As parents, there must be an agreement between husband and wife in instilling the values of discipline that must be applied to the children, so that in the future there will be no misunderstanding.

Duties and roles of parents in the family towards their children's education are more about the formation of character, skills training, and social education, such as helping, helping to keep the house clean, maintaining the health and peace of the household, and so on. This duty is an obligation for every human being especially Muslims. The obligation to educate this is explicitly stated by Allah in the At-Tahrim verse 6, which means as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْجِبَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

*"O you who believe, preserve yourself and your family from the fires of hell which the fuel is man and stone; the guardian angels are rough, hard, and do not disobey God for what He has commanded them and always do what is commanded."*

This verse is a verb command or *fiil amar* which is an obligation that must be fulfilled by both parents towards their children. Both parents are the first and foremost educators for their children. Because before someone else educates this child, both parents educate them first.

Each family member must learn to express the values they want in a simple and easy way to understand form that also builds boundaries that can be accounted for to give children space to express their personalities. Families as a whole group, especially parents consisting of their husbands and wives must agree, agree in terms of the values they display. Parents must try to

develop a way of caring for children and instill discipline that can be accepted by both, parents and children (Berns, 2007, p. 67).

Based on the description of the family's necessity in carrying out its role in the field of education, family roles can be achieved through family functions. Family function is a measure of how a family operates as a unit and how family members interact with each other. This reflects parenting style, family conflict, and the quality of family relationships. Family functions affect the health capacity and well-being of all family members. (Prabaningtyas, 2018) To be able to more clearly describe the various functions of the family, the government has stated several family functions in Government Regulation No. 21 in 1994 which states that family functions consist of: (1) Religious, (2) Socio-cultural, (3) Love, (4) Protection, (5) Reproduction, (6) Socialization and education, (7) Economics, and (8) Environmental development.

The function of the family is explained more specifically by Mollehnaur in Abdullah about the function of the family in education which includes three aspects namely Quantitative Function, Selective Function, and Pedagogical Function (Abdullah, 2003, p. 67). In this case, the family has a big responsibility in the process of children learning.

If we learn more, it is true that the responsibility of education lies with both parents and cannot be shared with others. Unless parents feel unable to do it themselves, then their responsibilities may be left to others. For example by school. Educational responsibilities that need to be made aware and fostered by both parents towards children include the following:

- 1) Maintain and raise them. This responsibility is a natural impulse to carry out, because children need to eat, drink and care, so that they can live sustainably.
- 2) Protect and guarantee their health, both physically and spiritually from various diseases or environmental hazards that could endanger them.
- 3) Educate them with various knowledge and skills that are useful for their life, so that when they were adult they are able to stand on their own and help others (*hablum minan nas*) and carry out their caliphate.
- 4) Make them happy children for the world and the hereafter by giving them religious education in accordance with the provisions of God as the ultimate goal of Muslim life. This responsibility is also categorized as responsibility to God.

Awareness of the responsibility of educating and fostering children continuously needs to be developed to every parent, they also need to be equipped with modern educational theories in accordance with the times. Thus the level and quality of educational material provided can be used by children to deal with an ever-changing environment. If this can be done by every parent, then future generations have the mental strength to face changes in society. To be able to do this, of course parents need to improve their knowledge and skills as first and foremost educators for their children.

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## **2. Merdeka Belajar**

Merdeka Belajar is a new policy program of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbud RI) launched by Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Anwar Makarim. Nadiem made a policy of Merdeka Belajar (independent learning) not without reason. The reason is the study of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2019 showed the results of the assessment of Indonesian students only ranked sixth from the bottom. In the field of mathematics and literacy, Indonesia ranks 74th out of 79 countries (Abidah et al., 2020).

If freedom of learning is fulfilled, it will create independent learning and the school is called an independent school. It is remind about a writer Paolo Freire, a Brazilian educator from Recife

University. As a law student, he also studied philosophy and psychology in languages. Even though he graduated as a lawyer, he never really practiced in that field. Instead he worked as a teacher in high school, teaching Portuguese. His famous teaching is that man is the master of himself and therefore human nature is to be free. This is Freire's attempt to humanize humans. Humanization can also mean liberation or liberation of people from oppressive boundary situations that they want. "The oppressed must free and free themselves from inhuman oppression and at the same time free the oppressors from the prison of conscience that is not honestly oppressing." (Razzak, 2020) If there are still exceptions, true freedom and freedom will never be achieved fully and meaningfully. Nowadays, freedom of education lies in the notion of new humanism (Marope, 2017).

The essence of freedom of thought according to Nadiem, must be preceded by teachers before they teach it to students. Nadiem said, in the competency of teachers at any level, without the process of translation of existing basic competencies and curriculum, then there will never be learning that occurs.

There are four main policies of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, (Mendikbud, 2019) they are:

- 1) The National Examination (UN) will be replaced by the Minimum Competency Assessment and Character Survey. This assessment emphasizes literacy and numerical reasoning abilities based on PISA test best practices. Unlike the UN which is conducted at the end of the education level, this assessment will be carried out in grades 4, 8, and 11. These assessments include Literacy (the ability to reason about and use language); Numeration (the ability to reason using mathematics); Character (For example, learners, mutual cooperation, diversity, and harassment). The results are expected to be input for educational institutions to improve the next learning process before students complete their education.
- 2) The National Standard School Examination (USBN) will be submitted to the school. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, schools are given independence in determining forms of assessment, such as portfolios, written works, or other forms of assignment.
- 3) Simplification of Learning Implementation Plan (RPP). According to Nadiem Makarim, the RPP is enough to be made in one page. Through the simplification of administration, it is hoped that the teacher's time taken for the administration process can be diverted for learning activities and competency improvement.
- 4) In the enrollment of new students (PPDB), the zoning system is expanded (excluding the 3T region. For students who go through the affirmation and achievement path, are given more opportunities than the PPDB system. The local government is given technical authority to determine this zoning area.

Explaining the concept of *Merdeka Belajar* policy proposed by the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim mentioned above, which emphasized on the concept of *Merdeka Belajar* is that Nadiem makes a breakthrough assessment in the minimum ability, including literacy, numeracy, and character surveys.

Literacy not only measures the ability to read, but also the ability to analyze the contents of the reading along with understanding the concepts behind it. For numerical ability, what is assessed is not mathematics, but assessment of the students ability to apply numerical concepts in real life. One remaining aspect, the Character Survey, is not a test. But the search for the extent to which the application of the values of character, religion, and Pancasila which has been practiced by students (Mendikbud, 2019).

### **3. *Merdeka belajar* approach in 'study from home'**

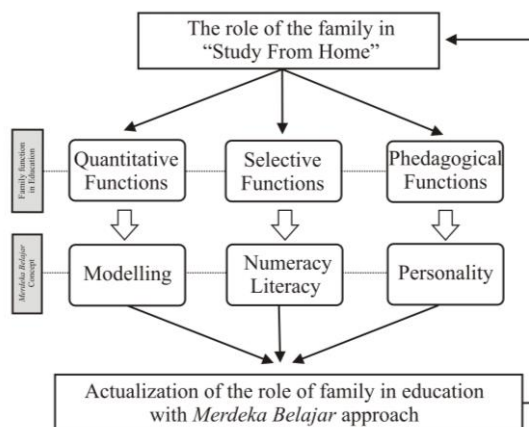
There is *Merdeka Belajar* concept that Indonesia government made, but on the other hand we had to apply self-quarantine and social distance in the Covid-19 Pandemic situation. Social distance deliberately increases physical space between people. Staying at least 180 centimeters from someone else decreases your chances of capturing Covid-19 (Maragakis, 2020). People apply

social distancing in daily activities like working from; meet the loved ones by social media; and attend online classes (Study From Home).

Indonesia realized the need to implement *Merdeka Belajar* program in the middle of this physical distancing situation. The learning process can be done through online learning. Various platforms such as Google Class, Zoom, School, Smart Classes, Zenius, Edmodo, Quipper, and Microsoft have been prepared for this limitation (Abidah et al., 2020).

To improve the learning process of children during this Study From Home, family functions in children's education can be realized by using several approaches in the concept of "Merdeka Belajar". The concept offered by Mollehnaur in Imron Abdullah divided three functions of the family in children's education can be a reference in the learning process at home with the *Merdeka Belajar* approach, which include:(Abdullah, 2003)

- 1) The quantitative function, which is to provide the formation of basic behavior, means that the family not only provides the physical basic needs of the child, in the form of clothing, food and drink, and a decent place to live. However, families are required to provide and facilitate the availability of the foundations of kindness, in the form of behavior, ethics, courtesy, and the formation of the character of children who are polite and have good character as essential human nature. Because the family is the main and first institution for the initial process of children's education to develop the potential of a child towards the development of a positive and good personal personality. Parents (father and mother) have a great responsibility in educating children in the family (Jailani, 2018).
- 2) Selective functions, which is to filter the children's experiences and inequality of social position to the learning environment. This means that family education functions as well as portraying itself as a function of supervision control about the child and various information received by the child. So it is expected to be able to distinguish between good and bad. Therefore, the family (father and mother) is obliged to provide meaningful information and experience. In the form of direct and indirect learning experiences, it is expected that these experiences can be absorbed and transformed in children. This learning experience uses numeracy and literacy approaches, namely the ability of students to apply numerical concepts in real life and the ability to analyze the contents of the reading as well as understanding the concepts behind it.
- 3) Pedagogical function, which is to inherit values and norms. That is, family education functions to provide a legacy of values related to aspects of the child's personality. The final duty of family education is reflected in the attitudes, behavior and personality of children in everyday life that is displayed. From here the character aspect in the concept of *Merdeka Belajar* becomes relevant to be applied. The role of parents is not just to be a child supervisor carrying out online learning from school, but to be a companion in the learning process to transform values without threatening/coercing learning. Using threats to encourage learning will negatively impact a child's character. If done continuously, the child will actually be lazy to learn. In other words, children become accustomed to learning just to get good grades and avoid bad grades. This makes students forget the intrinsic enjoyment that can be obtained from the learning process itself.



In addition to maximizing the role of parents through their functions with *Merdeka Belajar* approach above. This Study From Home instruction from the Ministry of Education and Culture has the potential to create intimacy by creating a new culture in the home, especially culture of family literacy. Can be in the living room, special study room, to the permanent space allocated for the gathering place. Especially if then other family members imitate to produce written works. Of course, creating literacy in the family is not limited to discourse. But literacy education also has become a family planning program that is not limited to reading but also writing, this activity can produce products or write from the basic education environment, family.

#### D. CONCLUSION

'Study From Home' is not only the responsibility of formal educational institutions that run online learning processes and assignments to do at home. The role of the family as an informal education institution has a great opportunity to contribute in developing children's competence in the home. This role can be realized through family functions that are currently starting to decline, especially in family functions in education which include quantitative functions, selective functions, and pedagogical functions. Through *Merdeka Belajar* approach which includes literacy, numeracy, and character. Family functions can be optimized in supporting study from home policies to reduce the number of large crowds and prevent the wider transmission of the Covid-19 virus.

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