



## ADHD Students' Social Skills at the Time of Online Learning Activities During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Zamzammiah Nur'Aini; Ravik Karsidi; Munawir Yusuf

Department of Magister Special Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia

<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v8i12.3420>

### **Abstract**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, conventional learning activities in Indonesia were converted into online learning activities. That has a major impact on the skills of students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) who attend inclusive schools. The study was conducted to find out the social skills of ADHD students during the pandemic. The study was conducted at two inclusive schools in Surakarta, Indonesia. The data was collected through observations of 12 ADHD students, and interviews were conducted on 30 teachers. Data analysis in this study uses descriptive analysis by Miles and Huberman (1994). The results showed that ADHD students were in the category of lacking in aspects of responsibility, communication, cooperation, and self-control. While the empathy, engagement, and assertion aspects are in the category of enough.

**Keywords:** *ADHD, Social Skills; Online Learning; Pandemic Covid-19*

### **Introduction**

At the end of 2019, residents across the country were shocked by the emergence of a deadly virus that spread from one human to another quickly, namely Coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19). Covid-19 was found to have first infected humans in Wuhan, China. The virus spread very quickly in China in just 30 days (The Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia Emergency Response Epidemiology Team, 2020). The virus soon spread to other countries around the world, until finally on March 12, 2020 WHO officially announced a pandemic (Utomo, 2020).

This pandemic outbreak affects all aspects of the world's lives, including in Indonesia. In Indonesia alone, the Covid-19 outbreak was designated as a national disaster on April 13, 2020 (Arifin, 2020). All activities that cause crowds to be stopped, are replaced with online activities. One of the activities that are diverted through the online system is learning activities at every level of education. Online learning activities that occur suddenly cause various problems. In inclusive schools, learning activities for students with special needs become disrupted. One of them is experienced by students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) at an inclusive school in Surakarta, Indonesia.

ADHD students are those who have major characteristic problems in attention, and hyperactive-impulsive behaviour. According to *DSM-V* (2013), students can be diagnosed with ADHD if they have these characteristics before age 12, exhibit characteristics in two or more places (e.g. at home, at school, at tutoring), and those characteristics significantly impair students' quality of life in various aspects, and no other psychotic disorders are found.

In general, ADHD students are usually labelled naughty students, because they have disruptive behaviour and tend to break the rules. Though it happens because ADHD students have problems in self-control, so it is difficult to obey the rules even though they actually want to (Martin, 2008). This condition of ADHD students causes friendships with peers to be not good (Preston, et al, 2009), and become increasingly bad since learning activities are done online. Online learning activities limit interaction between students in person, they are unable to meet face to face and play together. For ADHD students, these interaction limitations can lead to diminishing social skills.

The results of previous research conducted by Kusuma and Sutapa (2021) with the title "Dampak Pembelajaran Daring terhadap Perilaku Sosial Emosional Anak". The study was conducted to find out if online learning can affect the social emotional behaviour of students at a kindergarten in Ngawi, Indonesia. The study was conducted by conducting interviews on 10 mothers of kindergarten students. From the results of this study, it was found that the emotional social behaviour of these students decreased. They become less cooperative, less tolerant, and sometimes feel bored and sad about not being able to interact with their peers and teachers.

Departing from the writing, researchers conducted research to find out the social skills that ADHD students have at the time of online learning activities during the pandemic. So that in the future, researchers can formulate solutions to overcome problems related to the social skills of ADHD students caused by online learning activities during pandemic times.

### **Methodology**

This study uses qualitative methods because it delves deeper into individual conditions related to human and social problems (Creswell, 2009). This research was conducted at the inclusive school of Al Firdaus Elementary School and Bromantakan Elementary School located in Surakarta, Indonesia. The subjects in the study were 12 ADHD students, 5 people from Bromantakan Elementary School and 7 people from Al Firdaus Elementary School. The data collection techniques used are observations and interviews. Observations were made on 12 ADHD students at the time of learning activities through video call / zoom meetings. While the interview was conducted on 30 teachers consisting of 9 homeroom teachers, 9 subject teachers, and 12 shadow teachers.

The data analysis used in this study is a descriptive analysis by Miles and Huberman (1994) consisting of three stages namely Data Reduction, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing or Verification. In the first stage, researchers collected data from observations and interviews of 12 shadow teachers, then the data obtained was grouped into several categories. At the display data stage, researchers present data that has been compiled in several categories into graph form. In the last stage, the researcher makes conclusions from the data that has been presented.

### **Result and Discussion**

From observations and interviews conducted, it can be known that these twelve ADHD students had problems in their social skills at the time of teaching and learning activities during the pandemic. The social skills of ADHD students according to Gresham and Elliott (2008) consist of 7 aspects, namely communication, cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, engagement, and self-control.

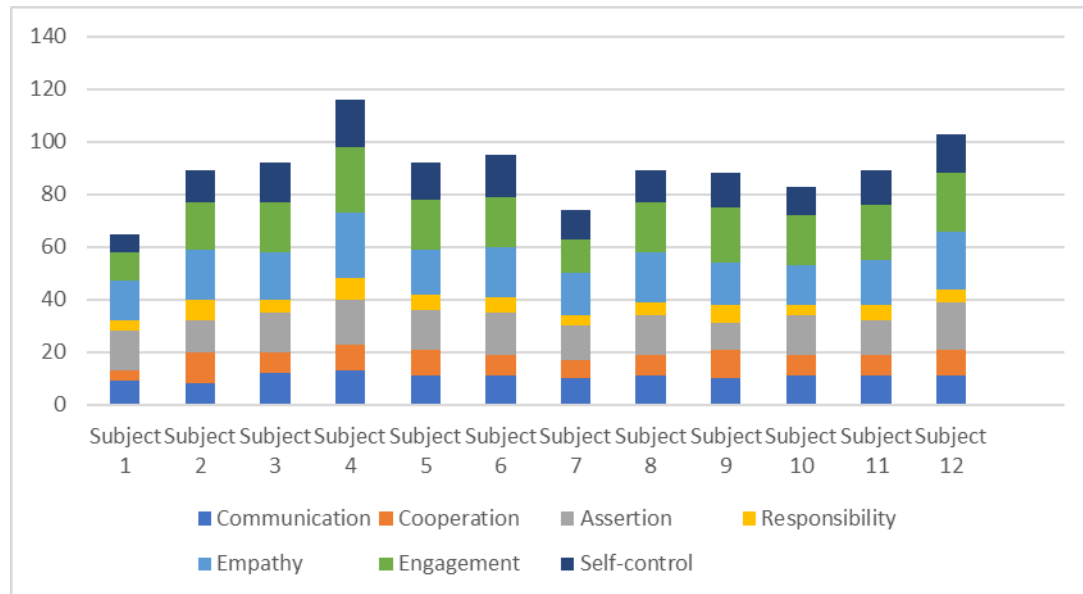


Figure 1. Observation of the social skills of ADHD students

Figure 1 shows the results of observations of ADHD students at the time of online teaching and learning activities. In Figure 1, twelve ADHD students showed that aspects of communication (average score 2.13), cooperation (2.17), responsibility (1.89), and self-control (2.18) were in the lesser category. While in the aspect of assertion (2.42), empathy (2.27), and engagement (2.35) are in the category enough.

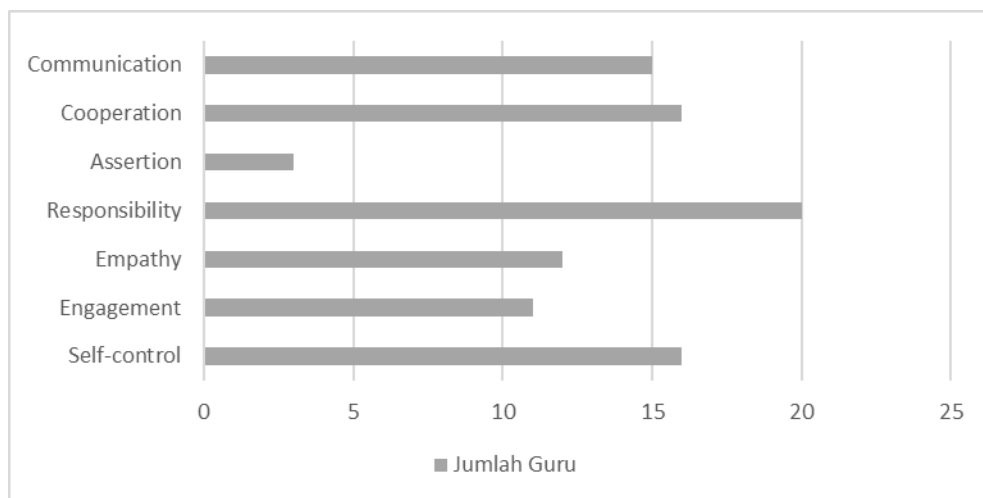


Figure 2. Interview results from home room teachers, subject teachers, and shadow teachers

Figure 2 shows the results of interviews to 30 teachers consisting of 9 homeroom teachers, 9 subject teachers, and 12 shadow teachers who accompany ADHD students. From the results of the interview, it can be known that ADHD students show the most deficiencies in aspects of social responsibility, self-control, cooperation, and communication skills.

Research on the social skills of ADHD students was conducted at the time of the pandemic, so learning activities were conducted online. In school, ADHD students basically do have less social interaction skills (Preston, et al, 2009) so have difficulty in the function of social skills (Kok, et al, 2016). At the time of online learning activities, the social skills of ADHD students are increasingly challenged.

This is due to the lack of online-based learning activities, one of which decreases oral communication (Ajizah & Munawir, 2021) which is one aspect of social skills.

Observations and interviews show that the least/stunted aspect of social skills is responsibility. ADHD students are less able when it comes to listening and carrying out instructions and regulations imposed by teachers at the time of online learning activities. This is in accordance with the opinion of Martin (2008) who mentioned that ADHD students have characteristics including inattention that causes difficulty distinguishing important and unimportant stimuli, and difficulty in self-control that results in breaking the rules.

The next difficulty experienced by ADHD students is the communication aspect, namely difficulty maintaining eye contact, asking for the help of teachers or friends, and showing positive expressions when studying online. Then on the aspect of cooperation, ADHD students have difficulty working with friends in doing tasks and listening to the opinions of other friends. In the self-control aspect, ADHD students tend to have difficulty controlling anger in teachers or other students when things don't like it when studying online. Difficulties in these three aspects are closely related to passive habits in social conversation (Stroes, Alberts, & van der Meere, 2003).

Some ADHD students were found to have difficulty in empathy aspects that were shown by difficulty assessing teacher expression at the time of teaching online classes, as well as frequent interrupting as teachers explained. The engagement aspect is also difficult for some other students who are shown through difficulty joining group discussion activities, as well as difficulty expressing opinions. In the assertion aspect, there are ADHD students who show difficulty in greeting or starting conversations first with teachers or other students during online classes. The difficulties ADHD students experience in these aspects are closely related to two main characteristics that have, namely inattention and hyperactivity-impulsivity.

Social skills are skills that ADHD students are indispensable to being able to interact with others and be accepted into their social environment (Elliot & Gresham, 1993). Social skills are skills that can be learned through a series of structured exercises. For ADHD students, social skills should be taught through interventions made for long periods of time and from the most basic (DuPaul & Weyandt, 2006; DuPaul, Weyandt, & Janusis, 2011). Causes include ADHD students tend to have difficulty mastering social skills because there is no feedback, cues, and behavioural disorders that they have (Elliott & Gresham, 1991). These ADHD students generally also have difficulty focusing on major social problems, less precisely predicting the end of the problem, and are less able to find solutions to various social problems (Zentall, Cassady, & Javorsky, 2001).

Before the pandemic, learning activities were carried out conventionally at both schools where the study took place. ADHD students' social skills are easier to observe and given simple interventions such as teachers asking other students to invite ADHD students to join the game. However, social skills interventions can hardly be provided when learning online. The cause is still many obstacles in the implementation of online learning activities, including the unpreparedness of teachers to accompany online learning activities, parental competence in the mastery of technology, parenting, and learning of children with special needs, lack of time, unpreparedness of children to learn at home, as well as monotonous activities and minimal interaction with peers (Wardany & Sani, 2020; Intanuari, 2020; Minsih, Nandang, & Kurniawan, 2021).

Learning activities carried out online are realized or do not have a less favourable impact on the social skills of ADHD students. The decline in social skills during the pandemic was felt by almost all students at every level of education, even in kindergarten students. They tend to show uncooperative attitudes, less tolerance, and less social interaction with peers when learning activities take place online

(Kusuma & Sutapa, 2021). This can be a consideration for further research on the development of students' social skills at the time of online learning activities. The goal is that learning activities continue, while social skills remain, social interaction between students also continues to occur.

### **Conclusion**

Online learning activities during the Covid-19 pandemic make ADHD students have difficulty in some aspects of social skills. These ADHD students tend to experience problems in aspects of social skills. Aspects of social responsibility, communication, cooperation, and self-control skills are in the lesser category. While the empathy, engagement, and assertion aspects are in the category of enough. Based on the results of this study, it is very necessary for teachers, parents, and related parties to work together to devise strategies that support the existence of ADHD social skills intervention programs that can be flexibly applied at school and at home.

### **References**

- Ajizah, I. & Munawir. (2021). Urgensi teknologi pendidikan: analisis kelebihan dan kekurangan teknologi pendidikan di era revolusi industri 4.0. *Istighna: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemikiran Islam*, 4 (1). pp. 25-36. ISSN 1979-2824; 2655-8459. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33853/istighna.v4i1.93.g86>
- Arifin, D. (2020, April 13). Presiden Tetapkan COVID-19 Sebagai Bencana Nasional. *Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana*. Retrieved January 20, 2021, from <https://bnpb.go.id/>
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington: American Psychiatric Publishing.
- Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches – Third Edition*. California: Sage Publication.
- DuPaul, G.J., Weyandt, L.L. (2006). School-based Intervention for Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Effects on academic, social, and behavioural functioning. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, Vol. 53, No. 2, pg. 161-176. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10349120600716141>.
- DuPaul, G.J., Weyandt, L.L., & Janusis, G.M. (2011). ADHD in the Classroom: Effective Intervention Strategies. *Theory into Practice*, Vol. 50, No. 1, pg. 35-42. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2011.534935>.
- Elliott, S.N., & Gresham, F.M. (1991). *Social Skills Intervention Guide*. Circle Pines: American Guidance Service.
- Elliott, S.N., & Gresham, F.M. (1993). Social skills interventions for children. *Behaviour Modification*, Vol. 17, No. 3, pg. 287-313. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/01454455930173004>
- Gresham, F.M., & Elliott, S.N. (2008). *Social Skills Improvement System: Rating Scales Manual*. Minneapolis: Pearson Assessments.
- Intanuari, A.M. (2020). Dampak Pandemi Covid-19 Pada Pembelajaran Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pascasarjana UNNES*, ISSN: 2686 6404

- Kok, F.M., Groen, Y., Fuermaier, A.B.M., & Tucha, O. (2016). Problematic Peer Functioning in Girls with ADHD: A Systematic Literature Review. *PloS ONE*, Vol. 11, Iss. 11. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0165119>
- Kusuma, W.S., & Sutapa, P. (2021). Dampak Pembelajaran Daring terhadap Perilaku Sosial Emosional Anak. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 5 (2), pp. 1635-1643. ISSN: 2549-8959; 2356-1327. DOI: 10.31004/obsesi.v5i2.940
- Martin, G.L. (2008). *Terapi untuk Anak ADHD*. Terj. T. Hendi. Jakarta: PT Bhuana Ilmu Populer
- Miles, M.B., & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis Second Edition*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication.
- Minsih, Nandang J.S., & Kurniawan, W. (2021). Problematika Pembelajaran Online Bagi Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus Di Sekolah Dasar Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *Jurnal Basicedu: Research & Learning in Elementary Education*, 5 (3), pp. 1252-1258. ISSN 2580-3735; 2580-1147. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v5i3.876>
- Preston, A.S., Heaton, S.C., McCann, S.J., Watson, W.D., & Selker, G. (2009). The Role of Multidimensional Attentional Abilities in Academic Skills of Children with ADHD. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, Vol. 42, No. 3, pg. 240-249. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022219408331042>
- Stroes, A., Alberts, E., & Van der Meere, J. J. (2003). Boys with ADHD in social interaction with a nonfamiliar adult: An observational study. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 42(3), 295–302. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1097/00004583-200303000-00009>
- The Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia Emergency Response Epidemiology Team. 2020. The Epidemiological Characteristics of an Outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus Diseases (COVID-19) — China, 2020. *China CDC Wkly*. 2020 Feb 21; 2(8): 113–122. DOI: 10.3760/cma.j.issn.0254-6450.2020.02.003
- Utomo, A.P. (2020, March 12). WHO Umumkan Virus Corona sebagai Pandemi Global. *Kompas*. Retrieved January 20, 2021, from <https://www.kompas.com/>
- Wardany, O.F., & Sani, Y. (2020). Pelaksanaan pembelajaran jarak jauh bagi anak berkebutuhan khusus (Survei terhadap orangtua dan guru di Lampung). *Jurnal Pendidikan Khusus*, 16 (2), 2020, 48-64. ISSN1858-0998; 2580-6475. DOI: 10.21831/jpk.v16i2.32793
- Zentall, S.S., Cassady, J.C., & Javorsky, J. (2001). Social comprehension of children with hyperactivity. *Journal of Attention Disorder*, Vol. 5, pg. 11-24. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/108705470100500102>

## Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).