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## **Difference in learning attention between career and non-career parents during the COVID-19 pandemic in elementary school children**

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## **Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted Indonesian students to transition from traditional to online learning. The role of parents, both career and non-career, in focusing on paying attention to their children's learning has also changed. The study aimed to compare learning attention between parents with careers and parents without careers before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. This study was a comparative design with a questionnaire as the instrument. The variable measured is elementary school children's learning attention. A total sampling technique was employed, involving 64 respondents. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test and Mann-Whitney U Test were used in data analysis. The findings indicated a significant difference in the learning attention of parents with careers before and after the COVID-19 pandemic ( $p$ -value = 0.000). Similarly, parents without careers also exhibited a significant difference in learning attention before and after the pandemic ( $p$ -value = 0.000). Notably, within both the career and non-career parent groups, there was a substantial difference in the learning attention provided to their children before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. These results highlight the significant impact of the pandemic on parental involvement in their children's education. The findings emphasize the need for parents to be conscious of their responsibilities in the face of the unique demands posed by the pandemic, underlining the crucial role they play in supporting their children's education.

## **Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the Indonesian government to implement regulations in all sectors including education.<sup>1</sup> According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, the principal education policy during the pandemic places a high priority on the well-being and safety of participants, including students, educators, and the broader community. It also encompasses the provision of educational services tailored to the growth and development, as well as the psycho-social

conditions, of the participants.<sup>2</sup> This comprehensive policy aims to fulfill the educational needs during the pandemic, emphasizing the utilization of distance learning conducted from the safety of individuals' homes.<sup>3</sup>

The learning paradigm has shifted from traditional face-to-face instruction to online learning facilitated through technological devices.<sup>4-7</sup> However, a significant concern arises from statistics provided by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2021, revealing that only 17.66% of Indonesian children exhibit an interest in reading or engaging in educational activities. Instead, a considerable number of children prefer activities such as playing online games and watching cartoons, soap operas, or movies on YouTube, all of which are easily accessible on electronic devices during online learning.<sup>8,9</sup> Efficient online learning at home necessitates active parental involvement. Parents play a crucial role in motivating their children by offering clear instructions, providing assistance when needed, and maintaining supervision.<sup>10</sup> A dedicated commitment to education involves fostering an environment conducive to completing the school curriculum during online learning.<sup>11-13</sup> This commitment entails parents taking education seriously and providing the necessary resources for their children to successfully navigate the online learning process. Crucially, parental attention is identified as the ability of parents to channel their energy, both physical and psychological, towards their children. This focused effort is instrumental in ensuring successful understanding and adapting to a particular parenting style.<sup>14,15</sup>

The level of busyness among parents, influenced by factors such as parental status, career involvement, and non-career engagement, significantly impacts their ability to devote attention to their active children during online learning.<sup>16</sup> The number of career and non-career workers can be seen from amount residents age employed in Indonesia, which is approximately 75.49 percent of the total population of Indonesia, from 203.97 million residents aged work, which belongs to the workforce as many as 138.22 million people with a Labor Force Participation Rate of 67.77 percent.<sup>17</sup> According to BPS, the number of persons working in East Java in August 2020 was 22.26 million, up 1.81 percent from 21.87 million in August 2019. TPAK increased by 0.72 points as well.<sup>18</sup> According to BPS Banyuwangi Regency, main work residents, fine career and non-career, totaling 873,521 including parents' medium the child take education, as many as 265,305 declared work as employees (career) and as many as 104,388 were stated as worker free (non-career) as many as 165,408 declared own workers like self-employed and similar (non-career).<sup>19</sup> According to this data, non-career workers outnumber worker careers. These findings are consistent with parent data from students at a state elementary school in Banyuwangi, where early researchers discovered in May 2021 that as many as 39 parents and children at the elementary school work as non-career workers and 25 children at the elementary school work as career worker.

The findings of the study indicate that busy parents' employment has an impact on school achievement. According to the findings, 75 percent of parents in the group are busy, and 92 percent of achievement is insufficient. The findings indicate a relationship between varying workloads of parents and student performance learning in State Elementary Schools in grades 4 and 5.<sup>20</sup> The type of employment done by parents while their children attend school, particularly in elementary school, will greatly impact their child's learning activities, particularly online learning. Parents support their children's learning implementation, particularly online learning. High levels of parental involvement will have a detrimental impact on this study's child's activities and outcome. Lack of parental attention will cause a child to seek attention from sources other than school, such as a friend or peer, or parents when they are at home.<sup>16</sup> This study aimed to determine the difference in learning attention between parents' careers and non-career at a student's state elementary school in Banyuwangi before and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Materials and Methods**

### ***Design***

This study used a design to compare learning attention between parents' careers and non-career before and after the COVID-19 pandemic in children at an elementary school in Banyuwangi.

### ***Sample and sampling technique***

The population in this study comprises all fifth-grade students at the elementary school, totaling 64 students. The sample, consisting of characteristics utilized in respondent research,<sup>21</sup> specifically encompasses 64 students from a state elementary school in Banyuwangi. Within this sample, there are 25 respondents representing parents with careers and 39 respondents representing parents without careers. The sampling methodology employs total sampling, which means that obtaining a sample with the method counts the entire population as a sample.

### ***Variables***

The learning attention parents' career and non-career before the COVID-19 pandemic is an independent variable in this study. This study's dependent variable is paying attention to parents' careers and non-careers after the COVID-19 pandemic. This study was conducted at the Banyuwangi state elementary school from 1 May 2021 to 30 August 2021.

### ***Instruments***

This study's instruments included a form questionnaire with 15 positive and closed comments. Each statement will be given a score of 1 for an answer "no ever", 2 for "sometimes", 3 for an answer "often", and 4 for the answer "always". The questionnaire has been thoroughly tested for validity and reliability. The validity test results instrument says that all statement items (15 statements) are considered valid where all  $r_{count} > r_{table}$  (0.444), reliability test findings stated 0.895.

### **Data analysis**

Univariate analysis was utilized to explain the frequency and percentage of learning attention about parents' careers and non-careers before the COVID-19 pandemic and worries about learning about parents' careers and non-careers following the COVID-19 pandemic. Bivariate analysis using the Mann-Whitney U Test for a different test for two groups of parents' career and non-career and Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test as technique data analysis for comparison learning attention parent before and after the pandemic in each group. These two tests use level significance by 5%. This obtained approval from the Universitas Jember Health Research Ethics Committee (KEPK) no. 1249/UN25.8/KEPK/DL/2021. The researchers have given a clear understanding of the research goals to the participants and have also provided them with consent forms to become respondents.

### **Results**

According to Table 1, the majority of parents' career age by category was mature (100%), kind sex women (52%), and employees' private sector (56.0%). Meanwhile, the majority of adults (79.5%) did not work, as do many sex women (51.3%) and farmers (51.3%).

Table 2 provided information on the learning attention of parents' careers before the COVID-19 pandemic (84%). Meanwhile, most of the good (80%) occurred after the pandemic. Learning attention in non-career parents also increased from before the majority of the COVID-19 pandemic in the category (92.3%) after the pandemic all non-career parents' learning attention was good (100%).

Table 3 showed a difference in parents' and non-career learning attention with a p-value of 0.000. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, non-significant results were solely assigned to group testing of the parent's career and non-career in children (p-value=0.118).

### **Discussion**

The research findings regarding the learning attention of parents with careers and non-careers before the pandemic reveal no significant difference between the two groups. In both cases, the majority of parents provided sufficient attention to their children's learning. This lack of significant

difference can be attributed to the pre-pandemic study conditions, which were typically conducted at school.<sup>22-24</sup> Parents only give special attention to challenging activities at home and need help.<sup>25</sup> There was no significant difference between the two data groups due to the type of work occupied by career and non-career parents where work requires quite a lot of activities outside the home. Several employees dominate parents' job careers by a significant 56.0%, confiscating lots of time and sparing together children at home.<sup>26</sup> Although in general employment parents' non-career no bound with time and more lots time interacting with their son at home, work as several traders reached 41.0% as showed results of this study, it makes time spare lots spent outside the house.<sup>27,28</sup> Busy outside homes are carried out by non-career parents, particularly those who work as traders in the market, on the sidewalk roads, and the like. This busy work environment affects both career and non-career parents, resulting in a lack of sufficient attention to their children's education before the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>29</sup> The study emphasizes the impact of parents' busy work schedules on their ability to provide adequate attention to their children, underscoring that this lack of attention can influence a child's understanding of their educational and social world. The findings highlight the need for a balanced approach to parental commitments to ensure that children receive the attention necessary for their overall development, particularly in the context of the pre-pandemic learning environment.<sup>30</sup>

The test results on learning attention after the pandemic revealed a significant difference between parent groups with careers and those without careers. In the category of learning attention, most parents with careers and overall non-career parents performed well. However, despite both groups falling into the "good" category, there was a distinction wherein parents with careers exhibited lower attention compared to non-career parents.<sup>31,32</sup> This disparity is attributed to coping strategies employed during the online learning process amidst the pandemic, particularly regarding parental involvement.<sup>33</sup> Parents with careers may face challenges in dedicating attention to their children's learning due to the added workload associated with working from home. The demands of the home office contribute to increased stress, with the egalitarian nature of parenting serving as a more significant stressor than traditional parenting approaches.<sup>32</sup> In contrast, non-career parents, particularly those who are self-employed or involved in business, faced lockdown policies and restrictions on operating hours for economic centers like markets. The reduced time available for producing goods or food for sale created an environment where non-career parents had more interaction and increased learning attention for their children. The Work From Home (WFH) situation, especially for mothers, involves multitasking in caring for their children while fulfilling work responsibilities, reflecting efforts to be good parents under challenging circumstances.<sup>34</sup>

The results of the data analysis indicate a significant difference in the learning attention of parents with careers before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has brought about substantial changes, impacting various aspects of parents' work activities.<sup>32,35</sup> The transition to online learning during the pandemic has necessitated increased parental supervision for a smooth and effective educational experience, as teacher supervision is limited.<sup>36</sup> Especially for children who are less interested in online learning, parents play a crucial role in providing the necessary attention and support.<sup>37</sup> Parents must be aware of their children's challenges in online learning and actively participate in addressing and resolving these issues.<sup>38</sup> Research also emphasizes the importance of daily communication and connection between parents and children. The family's ability to intertwine and establish a positive pattern of connection is vital. Busy parents who are often away from home may experience a reduction in the intensity of interaction with their children.<sup>39</sup> Conversely, research indicates that parental involvement in a child's learning process at school is a proven factor contributing to the child's success. Therefore, the level of parental engagement in the learning process is crucial for children's educational achievements, and this has become even more pronounced in the context of the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>40</sup> Comparison results in learning attention before and after the pandemic in groups non-career parents also found significant differences. The improvement in learning attention before the pandemic was mostly sufficient, but after the pandemic, it has significantly increased and is now considered good. This shift can be attributed to the dominant involvement of one parent in non-office-based work, such as being a farmer. Moreover, a considerable number have become traders or are self-employed, a trend that has been influenced by the enforcement of the Implementation of Community Activity Restriction policy.<sup>41</sup> This policy has led to restrictions on non-career parental activities, necessitating their presence at home more frequently. This change in occupation and the subsequent increased presence at home have positively influenced the overall learning attention provided by parents after the pandemic.<sup>33,34</sup> Appeal learning at home for student school during the COVID-19 pandemic made the parental role truly purified return as an educator.<sup>36</sup> Parent involvement in supervision activity learning, resources learning mainly for a child, parental authority gives teaching to the child by material from a teacher. They play a substitute teacher during activity teaching from home.<sup>42</sup> Patterns of learning attention parents' non-career during the COVID-19 pandemic increased bigger when compared to before because influence environment around them. The environment is one factor in learning attention parents to children or influences the success and achievement of learning children.<sup>43</sup> The environment around the moment the COVID-19 pandemic occurred necessitates somebody active at home or staying at home to disconnect eye COVID-19 viral chain.

This study is in line with the findings stated in research that many parents participate in helping and providing motivation to children during learning at home cause of an appeal government regarding COVID-19.<sup>44</sup> No few parents propose to spare time to get help with the learning process of their son while at home. Parental roles and learning child roles changed during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>22,35,37</sup> The involvement of parents in continuing the learning process at home during the pandemic is more effective and a solution, especially in schools and developing countries.<sup>45,46</sup> The most crucial factor influencing students' learning activity is surveillance, specifically parental attention to the child.<sup>31,47</sup> The role of parents, either career or non-career, in supervising a child inside the house, specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic, is far bigger than before the pandemic.<sup>36,37,47</sup> At this time, they work daily in a context fulfillment economy family from house, with intense activity outside their job more little from before the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>32,34</sup> This related to attention or supervision to learn of children too far more significant when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred.

## **Conclusions**

Parents' careers and non-career learning attention to the child before the COVID-19 pandemic in the majority category was enough. Parents' careers learning attention after the COVID-19 pandemic was entirely category good. Then parents' careers and non-careers learning attention before the COVID-19 pandemic was no different. However, there was a significant difference in learning attention parents' careers with non-careers after the COVID-19 pandemic. This demonstrated the increase in condition pandemic learning attention by both groups of parents careers and non-career, particularly in the group of parents' non-career learning attention totally in the category is good. The key reason boosting learning attention for parents' career and non-career is an increase in home availability to accompany the online learning process. Parents' careers and non-careers are likewise linked to parents' enhancement requests in the online learning process.

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**Table 1.** Data demographic career and non-career parents.

Demographics	Career		Non-Career	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Age</b>				
20-60 years (adult)	25	100.0	31	79.5
> 60 years (continued age)	0	0	8	20.5
<b>Gender</b>				
Man	12	48.0	19	48.7
Woman	13	52.0	20	51,3
<b>Work</b>				
Retired/not work	0	0	3	7.7
Civil servants	2	8.0	0	0
Teacher	9	36.0	0	0
Employee private	14	56.0	0	0
Farmer	0	0	20	51.3
Entrepreneur/trader	0	0	16	41.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 2.** Learning attention career and non-career parents in elementary school children before and after COVID-19 pandemic.

Learning attention	Before		After	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Parents career</b>				
Good	3	12.0	20	80.0
Enough	21	84.0	5	20.0
Not enough	1	4.0	0	0
Total	25	100.0	25	100.0
<b>Non-career parents</b>				
Good	3	7.7	39	100.0
Enough	36	92.3	0	0
Not enough	0	0	0	0
Total	39	100.0	39	100.0

**Table 3.** Difference between learning attention of career and non-career parents.

Learning attention	Mean	Z-values	p-values
Career and non-career parents before the COVID-19 Pandemic	40.68	-1.564	0.118
Career and non-career parents after COVID-19 Pandemic	50.22	-5.405	0.000*
Careers parents before and after the COVID-19 Pandemic	88.76	-4.212	0.000*
Non-Career parents before and after COVID-19 pandemic	92.28	-5.450	0.000*

\*p<0.05

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