



## THE ROLE OF VIDEO CALLS AS FACILITATORS IN PAI STUDENT THESIS SESSIONS

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**Abstract:** Video calls are the best way to be an easy facilitator in conducting thesis trials. The purpose of this study is to describe the role of video calls as a facilitator in a thesis trial. This research is a qualitative descriptive study. Technical data collection using interviews, documentation, and observation. Data were analyzed using reduction, presentation, and conclusion techniques. The subjects of this study were students of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). This research is located at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training IAIN Salatiga. The results of this study indicate that video calls provide a role as a facilitator in providing services and replace the role of offline thesis hearings. This research implies that during the pandemic, the thesis trial can still be done online using video calls so that the academic calendar can still run.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced the government to restrict activities outside the home. All communities and agencies carry out activities online. This is to reduce the growth of Covid-19 cases. The government is making every effort to suppress the spread of the virus. Various prevention efforts were carried out, including in the world of education. Education must be replaced with online learning. However, education must continue and should not be delayed. One way for the world of education to continue is that teachers and lecturers must always be creative and innovative and achieve educational goals, helping students develop their potential to face life's problems and then solve them wisely and creatively (Wati et al., 2020).

Campuses where students study are also affected by this pandemic. Students and lecturers carry out learning from their respective homes. They have to return to their hometown amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, they are required to prepare for online learning. Not only learning but thesis trials are also conducted online. This has become a phenomenon in the field, and it is not easy to carry out online learning, including the implementation of thesis trials. They need components that are always ready, including internet availability,

good signal, areas that are easily accessible to the internet, and students must have cell phones.

The thesis trial using video calls is unique because its implementation can be easy and sometimes tricky. The reality in the field of signal and area is always the main reason. Not to mention that a fast and stable internet connection is a determining factor for the smooth running of the online thesis trial. The reach of the internet creates obstacles and problems for them, requiring them to think twice about undergoing a thesis trial. Students can live on roof tiles, high areas, borrow village offices, or some others have to go to the city center to get the best signal during a thesis trial. Included in the revision process after completion of the problem.

Education must continue in its learning. Education is crucial for the Indonesian people to protect and educate the nation's children. Education is proven to provide a place of honor and change in status for humans, of course, for those who want to change by going to school (Marwanto, 2021). Everyone is affected by this Covid pandemic. All learning activities must be done online.

The internet is social media is one of the media where users can find information, communicate with each other, and make friends online (Trisnani, 2017). Including in the world of college was not left behind. Everything has to change from offline and face-to-face to online learning. Including the thesis trial by holding a problem using video call media. Of course, this has many advantages and disadvantages. Of course, learning must continue to meet student satisfaction and completion of learning according to the educational calendar in higher education.

The thesis is one of the scientific works in a field of study written by undergraduate students (S1) at the end of the field of study. The thesis is a scientific paper based on field research and literature compiled by a student according to the area of study taken as a formal study final project (Perdana, 2020). The thesis itself is research conducted by students as one of the requirements in completing the undergraduate program (S1) education in the form of scientific work. The word is a term used in Indonesia to illustrate a scientific paper in the form of an explanation of the results of undergraduate research that discusses a problem/phenomenon in a particular field of science using applicable rules (Anugrah et al., 2021). The thesis is a scientific work that students must write as part of the requirements for their academic education (Pramitasari, 2020). It is a scientific work compiled by an undergraduate student from his research results based on primary and secondary data analysis techniques (Pratama & Zulhijra, 2019).

Thesis supervisors will assist students in overcoming difficulties during thesis writing (Rizan et al., 2020). They must communicate well with the supervisor to facilitate the mentoring process. Some students sometimes experience obstacles and obstacles. According to Permatasari et al (2020), the barriers students face in thesis guidance include the difficulty of meeting supervisors. Thus, students need support and guidance from their supervisors,

motivating them to complete their thesis immediately. Seto et al (2020) state that students with high motivation in writing a thesis show better results.

The pandemic has given its place where the educational process must continue and should not be stagnant. It does not create obstacles to learning and the educational process. Education should receive better attention from the government and managers (Subekti et al., 2020). So creativity is needed in this case. All must be creative in preparing social media methods, including the thesis trial.

Video calls are one of the most accessible alternatives in conducting this online thesis trial. Students can still carry out thesis trials without being hindered by meeting problems and health protocols. Through this video call, the examining students and lecturers can conduct the trial process in their respective places. A Video Call is a telephone using a mobile phone with a video screen capable of capturing video (images) as well as transmitting sound (Pratiwi, 2017). Video telephone is a real-time communication tool between one person and another. Technology has become a human need and helps make their work faster, more precise, accurate, and can be completed effectively and efficiently (Wahyuni, 2018). The hope is related to the results achieved by students in fulfilling their wishes to be successful in the trial. Lecturers and students must follow this change. Evolution or change occurs in technology and internet innovation that causes changes in aspects of human life, especially communication (Nurfitri, 2017).

The facilitator is a tool or media to help facilitate or lighten the work. According to Daulay et al. (2022), a facilitator helps a group of people understand their shared goals and helps them make plans to achieve them without taking a particular position in the discussion. According to Rohman & Susilo (2019), the role of the teacher or lecturer as a facilitator is to provide services to facilitate students in the learning process activities.

The study "The Effect of Online Academic Service Quality and Thesis Sessions on Student Satisfaction in the Covid-19 Pandemic Period" stated that online or online thesis trials positively affected student satisfaction (Supriyadi & Amalia, 2021). The equation of this research is on the online thesis trial variable, but it is not yet specific to using video calls or other media as in this study. The difference is in using three variables, while this study only uses two different variables for each variable.

While several other studies, namely Pratiwi's (2017) "Use of Video Call Media in Communication Technology," The focus of this research is on the media used in communication. At the same time, the study "Utilizing Video Conferences as Interactive Learning Media in Productive Subjects in Vocational High Schools" by Subekti et al (2020) examines media as a learning tool in schools. Furthermore, in "Utilization of Whatsapp as a Communication Media and Satisfaction in Delivering Messages Among Community Leaders," the research conducted by Trisnani (2017) contains Whatsapp media as a tool for communicating with the public. The analysis above is more inclined toward social media, which is used in research such as Whatsapp and video

conferencing. While in the study using the media as part of the WhatsApp application itself.

Meanwhile, this research focuses on using WhatsApp video call media as a thesis trial facility, where the users are college students. Of course, college students can better take advantage of the video call feature more optimally because students already understand the use of technology well. In addition, video calls in this study were used to prepare a thesis determining student graduation.

This research is necessary because, currently, the use of video calls in thesis trials is phenomenal. The main reason for thesis trials with video call facilitators is to provide opportunities for students who want to continue to graduate according to their aspirations. The educational calendar must continue to run according to the year, in addition to knowing the role of the lecturer in the implementation of the thesis trial.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is qualitative research with a field study method. The use of qualitative methods is because the researcher wants to describe the situation of PAI students who carry out thesis trials using video calls in the field more transparently and in-depth. The source of research data is through observation, namely by observing students directly during the implementation of online thesis trials using video call media. Further data were obtained through interviews with students who guided revision after the thesis trial and literacy studies using data from books and journals.

This research was conducted on students of Islamic Education at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training IAIN Salatiga. The subjects in this study were PAI students, totaling ten student respondents who carried out revision guidance after the thesis trial. After the data is obtained, the data is reduced; all data is collected, selected, simplified, and converted into good sentences. Furthermore, the data is presented in the form of a description in good sentences and paragraphs, then it is concluded.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The role of video Calls in thesis trial**

Before the pandemic, the thesis trial was conducted face-to-face with the examiners. Pandemic gives confidence to lecturers and academics to continue to innovate and be creative as a service to students in completing their studies. The best way at this time is to conduct a thesis trial using a video call. There are three roles of video calls in the thesis trial: anticipating the thesis trial, the online system is exciting and easy, and students are more relaxed and not nervous like a face-to-face thesis trial.

First, the anticipation of the thesis trial must continue to be carried out so that students can graduate according to schedule. That means the existence of a pandemic should not hinder the learning and graduation process for students. All must be prepared to make innovations the best form of service for students.

AM said that video calls are more effective by saving time and costs because there is no need to come directly to the location with the distance of students who live outside Salatiga and also helps the government to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. While SP said that everything is faster because it does not require time and distance.

Furthermore, video calls are one of the most appropriate solutions and mainstays for running a thesis trial in the Covid-19 Pandemic. Meanwhile, the students have to finish college on time. Although in some cases, there are obstacles, such as the signal where students live is not very supportive. But overall, as a student, FF explained that the function of the video call feature featured by WhatsApp is beneficial in completing the students' final project in the form of a thesis trial.

Second, the online system is attractive and easy. The online system in the thesis trial is easy. The online session is interesting because students don't have to bother to make a printout of a thesis script. Their families can also accompany them at home during the trial. They also need motivation from their families so that in carrying out the prosecution later, they can be confident, answer all questions, and run smoothly during the trial at home (Amalia & Fatonah, 2020). It's just that students must be adaptive and familiar with these devices, both hardware and technology applications. The obstacle is having to use quotas, and the signal must be good too.

Third, students are more relaxed and less nervous like a face-to-face thesis trial. The trial with the online system makes students less anxious because they do not deal directly with the examiner lecturer. They are more relaxed in answering and presenting their thesis during the trial. Of course, it will be very different if the thesis trial uses a face-to-face system. Students must be prepared mentally and materially.

As explained by Retno N, one of the students who took the thesis trial, during the trial, students were more relaxed because they did not meet directly with the examiners at one table. The use of video calls during the thesis trial is beneficial, especially in the current pandemic conditions, to make it easier for both parties (examiners and students) to complete their responsibilities. While NF also stated that video calls became more exciting and accessible during the thesis trial. As a thesis examiner, she feels less awkward than in a face-to-face problem. She also feels happy, even though the Covid-19 pandemic is not a barrier and a reason for holding the trial.

### **The Role of Video Call as a Facilitator for PAI Student Thesis Session**

According to Rohman & Susilo (2019), the role of the teacher or lecturer as a facilitator is to provide services to facilitate students in the learning process activities. As a facilitator, the lecturer must provide services, learning facilities, and infrastructure to students so that the learning process can run well and smoothly. Furthermore, the role of the video call as a facilitator for the PAI student thesis session will be described; namely, the lecturer provides services, facilities, and infrastructure.

First, lecturers provide services. During the pandemic, lecturers continued to operate online to serve students, including in the learning process, guidance, and thesis trial. The role of the thesis supervisor is to help students overcome the difficulties encountered when writing a thesis (Gamayanti et al., 2018). Especially for the thesis trial for Islamic Religious Education or PAI students, it is still running. Kintama (2021) states that by implementing online consultations, students can carry them out anywhere. According to the educational calendar, this makes it easier for students and their goals to finish on time. The use of video calls during the trial is beneficial for PAI students. They are more relaxed or less nervous during the trial. Time is more effective because those whose homes are far away do not have to go to campus and are clearly by health protocols.

Second, lecturers provide facilities and infrastructure. In providing thesis trial facilities, the lecturers cooperate with academics. The academic provides and prepares all the needs of the thesis trial. Lecturers only provide facilities during the trial, namely the implementation using a video call managed directly by the members of the examining trial, in this case, the secretary of the trial examiner.

PAI students during the trial amounted to four or five students on average. The use of video calls during the test by calling them one by one by the secretary of the session. Assisted facilities do not require much. Just google the form for filling out the attendance list and student assessment. Lecturers are happy to facilitate students so that all can follow the thesis trial and graduate on time. Meanwhile, implementing the online thesis trial continues to provide satisfaction to students, especially those who want to graduate soon, and campus academic sustainability.

On the other hand, the problem in implementing the video call thesis trial is the signal because many students come from rural areas, mountains, and areas where communication is still challenging to reach. Some students even had to borrow the village head's office, stay at a friend's house, and some stayed at the boarding house to get a good signal during the thesis trial. This also happens to the examiner lecturer, so that sometimes the implementation of the thesis trial becomes less than optimal.

So, during the implementation of guidance using video calls between lecturers and students, good communication must be established. Some obstacles include lecturers who are out of town, busy teaching, and being difficult to contact. Meanwhile, students themselves are slow and less diligent in submitting guidance.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that video calls provide an alternative way to implement the thesis trial. The implementation of the thesis trial must continue to fulfill the academic calendar and aspirations of students who want to graduate on time. During the mentoring process, there must be good communication. Lecturers and students must have a shared commitment (Sadri, 2019).

In the implementation of the thesis trial, sometimes there are obstacles, especially signals due to specific areas that the internet has not reached, both examiners, supervisors, and students. The timing agreement between the two is essential to complete the mentoring and trial process on time. Students also need motivation before the problem to be confident, answer all questions, and run smoothly during the test.

## CONCLUSION

The role of video calls is becoming very dominant at this time. Although it has advantages and disadvantages, facilities are simple and easy to use. In essence, video calls provide a facilitator role as a service and provide facilities and infrastructure for users, primarily when the thesis trial is conducted. An easy and simple application to make video calls is used and favored as a facilitator in thesis trials on every campus. The results of this study indicate that video calls provide a role as a facilitator in providing services and replace the part of offline thesis hearings. This research implies that the pandemic is not an obstacle to the implementation of the thesis trial. During the pandemic, thesis trials can still be done online using video calls so that the academic calendar can still run.

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