

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents the introduction of the research, which consists of several points. The first point elaborates the background of the research as the reason why this research is conducted. The second point discusses the identification of the problems followed by delimitation of the problems to limit the research. The next point is a research question that contains two items. Further the next point explains the objectives of the research to answer the research question. The next point presents the significance of the research, which explains the benefits of this research for several parties, and the last point is organization of this research.

Background of the Problems

Education is an essential aspect of a country that should be concerned of the government. According to UU No.18 of 2016, The Indonesian government is required to succeed in the implementation of equality and prosperity the intelligence of the whole community, including the education of those who have disabilities. Every child has the right to get access to education regardless of their background or disabilities.

There are some children who are born with visual impairment, hearing loss, and other disabilities. In addition to children born with disabilities, there are also children who have accidents that make them disabled. Children with disabilities who have special needs also have the right to get an education that is equal to other normal children. In this research, researchers will focus on discussing visually impaired students.

Students with special needs like visual impairment have limits to their learning. According to Saleh and Zainall (2010), the disability of kids to see limits their learning

experience and their learning exercises if compared to those who are sighted. This could happen because they are unable to receive the visual input and depend on their hearing to receive information. However, there are some special education programs that are prepared to suit visually impaired students' needs. According to Nanda and Susanto (2018) the special education programs are managed by Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB) Type-A, which specifically focuses on visually impaired students.

The education program for visually impaired students is different from those who are sighted. Saleh and Zainall (2010) also stated that teaching methods, instructional materials, and educational aims are created and modified to suit the child's specific learning abilities and needs. Everything is designed to help them experience visual learning through other media of learning like hearing and using their senses of touch. Special services are provided by professionals in a variety of educational settings to teach visually impaired students (Brasher & Holbrook, 1996). Thus, they can be successful learners at the hands of professionals and the curriculum which is designed to help them face the challenges.

Nowadays, education system is facing a real challenge because of the pandemic. It affects the whole education community including schools that have students with special needs. Battistin et al. (2020) argued that students with developmental disabilities, including visually impaired and blind students, were the most affected by this change in both their daily routines and learning methods. The curriculum, which is designed for classical meeting suddenly switched to be applied for online meetings. According to Morgan (2020), some schools cannot afford enough resources to provide online learning for the students. This should be causing some challenges since some schools may not be prepared for this pandemic. Those who do not have an

online learning program previously are required to adjust to the new learning method, which may also bring some new challenges.

Visually impaired students are also required to do the online class since all classical meetings are banned by the government. This may induce some real challenges for them since they used to have professionals near them, but now, they are only able to reach them from the internet. Those with visual impairment require continuous and comprehensive support for their development from vision rehabilitators, psychologists, speech therapists, psychomotricity, neuro therapists, and other experts during their treatment (Fazzi et al., 2010).

Since they were born with special needs, this pandemic may create some serious challenges for their learning process compared to ordinary students. These challenges are also experienced by a visually impaired student from an Islamic foundation in Yogyakarta. The researcher is curious to find out what those challenges are faced by impaired students during online classes also how they can overcome those challenges, which are relatively new for them. Thus, the researcher is desired to conduct this research to find out the answers.

Identification of the Problems

Visually impaired students need special treatments for their learning since they have limits compared to those who are sighted. Online learning system, which was implemented during the pandemic, has clearly created some new challenges for all students, especially for visually impaired students. They need special learning programs with the help of professionals to help them become successful learners. Online learning system becomes a real challenge since the special treatments that they used to get are no longer available. They also do not have professionals or even classmates around them.

Common challenges that can be easily overcome by ordinary students could be serious problems for visually impaired students. Since this pandemic is unpredictable, there are some schools with visually impaired students who do not prepare special treatment for online learning. This becomes a problem since they have special needs, which means the online learning system should also fit their needs. For some schools that are not prepared, the online learning system that they give to visually impaired students could be not effective. This pandemic happened so fast and forced everyone to adjust everything in a short period of time. However, visually impaired students will face more challenges if their special needs are not fulfilled.

Delimitation of the Problems

To limit this research, the researcher only focuses on a foundation in Yogyakarta that shelters some visually impaired students. Moreover, to do this research to be more focused, the researcher also limits the problems. This research is aimed to find out the online learning challenges that occur during the pandemic as perceived by visually impaired students and how they overcome those challenges. Therefore, other problems that do not have any correlation with it will not be discussed in this research.

Research Question

In accordance with the theoretical background and issues above, the researcher formulates two research questions which consist of:

1. What are the challenges of doing online learning for visually impaired students during the pandemic?
2. How do visually impaired students overcome the challenges of doing online learning during the pandemic?

Research Objectives

Based on the research questions above, the research objectives are:

1. To find out the challenges of doing online learning for visually impaired students during the pandemic.
2. To identify how visually impaired students overcome those challenges.

Significance of the research

This research is expected to give valuable benefits related to the challenges of online learning for visually impaired students during the pandemic to the following parties:

Visually impaired student. The findings of this research are expected to provide information for visually impaired students about the challenges that they may face while doing online learning and also the strategies that can be applied to overcome those challenges. After visually impaired students know the information, it is hoped that they can anticipate the challenges and they can apply the solutions to the problem they face when studying online.

Teachers. This research can be used by teachers who teach visually impaired students during the pandemic as guidance. By knowing the challenges that the students face, teachers can make certain solutions to improve the online teaching strategies, and they can adjust using some of the strategies while doing the online learning process.

School Institutions. The result of this research would give information to school institutions that have visually impaired students as a reference to improve the online learning facilities or to create a proper online learning system that fits the students' special needs during the pandemic.

Future Researchers. This study will help future researchers as guidance to conduct similar research. The findings can also be added to the theoretical review to support future research that needs references related to this topic.

Organization of the Research

This proposal consists of five chapters that provide an overview of each research chapter. The first chapter of this research describes the background of the research, which explains the reasons for conducting the research. This chapter also explains blind students and the challenges they face when studying online. The next section is the identification of problems, problem boundaries, research questions, research objectives, and research significance related to this research. The last part is the research organization.

The second chapter discusses a literature review relevant to the challenges of online learning for blind students during the pandemic. There are seven main subtopics that will be discussed in this chapter. The first will explain about the visually impaired. The second is about blind students and is divided into two topics, namely types of blind students and adaptive learning for blind students. The third is regarding the application of the online learning system during the pandemic. Furthermore, the problem of blind students in online learning. Next is a strategy to overcome the problem of blind students in online learning. Then, the researcher will provide some research related to this research. At the end of this chapter, the conceptual framework will be explored.

The third chapter describes the research methods used to collect and analyze the data to complete this research. Researchers will use qualitative as a research method and descriptive qualitative as a research design. The second part is about the research setting at the Islamic Blind Foundation in Yogyakarta. The third is the research participants. In this case, the researcher will

have five participants who will be taken from the high school level in various classes. The fourth is about data collection techniques. Researchers used interviews as a technique to collect data based on the purpose of this study. Next is the data collection procedure. The final point in this chapter is data analysis.

Chapter four describes the findings and discussion. The findings answer research questions that ask about the challenges that visually impaired students face in online classes and also how they overcome those challenges. This chapter presents findings drawn from participant responses. There are 7 findings for challenges and 3 findings for strategy.

This last chapter presents the conclusions of the findings and recommendations of this study.

This chapter summarizes the research, from the background to the findings. Furthermore, this chapter also provides recommendations for teachers, students and other researchers. This chapter also explains the limitations of this research.