

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter explains about the background of the study. This chapter consists of the research background, problem identifications, research limitation, research question, research objective and the research significance.

### **1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND**

Pandemic is widely acknowledged as an infectious disease where significant and ongoing spread occurs in multiple countries around the world at the same time. (BBC, 2020). Additionally, according to BBC, a pandemic is a condition in which a virus is brand new, infectious, and able to spread from person to person rapidly in a sustained way. Early in 2020, the World's Health Organization declared a new pandemic called Coronavirus disease or COVID-19. Coronavirus disease is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The very first outbreak was identified in Wuhan, China, by the end of 2019. The Coronavirus disease spread rapidly worldwide, covering around 216 countries with more than 13.575.158 confirmed cases causing more than 584.940 deaths by July.

The virus has been causing deaths and infected thousands of people, which leads to global crises. The governments ban tourists, even domestic from visiting and travelling to minimize the spread of the virus. Furthermore, public facilities are being shut down, reducing crowds such as festivals, restaurants, and bars, which lead to massive unemployment. Schools are being closed down as well to prioritize the safety of children. Social distancing is beneficial in limiting the spread of infection, but it also

dramatically affects people's lives and the whole nation's economy in unpleasant ways. Therefore, many countries took their time to consider the best response before declaring restrictions in dealing with the current situation.

As aforementioned, education has been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 Pandemic, leading to nearly total school closure, including universities and colleges. According to [educationcannotwait.org](http://educationcannotwait.org), 1.53 billion learners are out of schools and 188 country-wide school closures, impacting around 87.6% of the world's total enrolled learners. As a result of this massive disruption to education access, drop-out rates across the globe are likely to rise. In Indonesia, according to The Jakarta Post, over 60 million students across the nation have to study from home due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Due to the current unfortunate situation, online learning is the only option left for students to continue getting the education they need.

Online learning has been prevalent for educational experiences due to its flexibility and customizability to students' needs (Allen & Seaman, 2016). The online course allows the instructor to replace all in-class instruction with online instruction, in which both students and instructors do not have to come to class (GVSU, 2015). Due to the global Pandemic, formal and non-formal institutions are being closed down, and online learning offers the best solution to the situation. Online learning courses tend to be student-centered; hence learners are expected to engage in the learning process approximately to one in a traditional education setting (Puzziferro, 2008). Students' engagement is described as the level of interest demonstrated by students, how they interact with others in the course, and their motivation to learn about the topics (Briggs,

2015). Students are expected to actively engage and participate in the online learning environment since communication happens only through technology. Geri (2012) stated that students' engagement and retention are among the significant challenges of online programs. When students are motivated to do well in their courses and willing to strive for the effort expected by their teachers, they are more likely to be engaged in their education (Mandernach, 2011).

Logically, it is difficult for students to keep up with the course due to the current situations, where the terrifying issues and news of COVID-19 encounters in their everyday life. Students might feel anxious due to the massive and rapid spread of the virus. They might as well worry about their health, their family, and their education. Students tend to have more stress encounters during this time and the feeling of overly under-pressured. This psychological condition often leads to a lack of motivation, affecting their effort and performance in the learning process. This term is widely known as low self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to one's beliefs about the capabilities of what they can do in a specific domain (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy affects an individual's task choice, the number of efforts put into the task, and persistence on the task. It also influences academic motivation and achievement (Bandura, 1997; Choi, 2005; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996; Schunk & Pajares, 2002). In other words, students with positive self-efficacy are willing to put more effort into and tend to be more persistent on the academic tasks they choose.

Students with high self-efficacy will tend to be optimistic, and it usually ends up in bigger efforts to gain the best result that they can achieve. It is crucial to learn

more about the students' self-efficacy due to its influence on students' effort in doing the task to achieve the goals of their learning process. It will help both teachers and students to make successful and valuable learning and teaching process. (Karsten & Roth, 1998) believe that self-efficacy can influence students' accomplishments. Students with high Self-efficacy will find comfort and motivation in online learning, which leads to the very least anxiety. With the high level of independence and self-direction required of online learning, self-efficacy is of great interest.

Although having positive self-efficacy is very important, it is an issue among the students. Prior studies in various subjects show students are still lacking in having positive self-efficacy. A study by Whitney Alicia Zimmerman & Jonna M. Kulikowich (2016) explored online learning self-efficacy in students with and without online learning experience. The results show that participants were least confident in completing online group projects regardless of the prior online learning experience. Moreover, students who felt working through distractions may be challenging in both face-to-face and online learning environments. This skill is particularly crucial in online courses because the instructor is not physically present regularly to keep the students on track.

Quintin Kreth, Mary Spirou, Sarabeth Budenstein & Julia Melkers (2019) did another similar study, explored how prior experience and self-efficacy shape graduate students' perceptions of an online learning environment in computing. Surprisingly, this study found out that previous experience with a formal, credited online course resulted in lower learning self-efficacy for both men and women, and subsequently, a

more negative view of the online environment. A similar result found in the study presented by M'hammed Abdous (2019) attempted to foster students' academic self-efficacy by using online learning orientation. The results conclude that the higher the number of online courses taken previously, the higher the academic self-efficacy, particularly for completing online course activities. The odds of having a higher self-efficacy for completing online course activities are 0.26 times lower for inexperienced students.

Various online surveys are conducted to figure out students' readiness, self-efficacy, and the obstacles they find during the mandatory online learning environment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Kemendikbud Indonesia conducted an online survey by the end of March with 237.193 college students as the participants. Unfortunately, the result showed that 90 percent of the respondents prefer to have face-to-face lectures than online lectures (CNN Indonesia, 2020). UNICEF Indonesia also surveyed students affected by the school closure early in June, with over 60 million active students participating. The survey revealed that 66 percent of students do not enjoy learning from home during the Covid-19 Pandemic. (Kompas Indonesia, 2020). The lack of assistance from their teachers is one of the reasons they preferred not to learn from home. Moreover, students also struggled with the lack of internet access and Wi-Fi or mobile data.

Online learning offers both students and teachers simplicity and benefits to stay connected, where teachers can assist and teach students from afar. The governments expect teachers to maintain courses and learning materials for students. As for students,



they are expected to follow the new standards and the new systems set for them. Unfortunately, the reality does not meet the expectations set. Based on several studies and online surveys concerning students' readiness and perceptions in facing the significant shift of their learning approach, which contradicts the governments' expectation, students are not confident with the new system, and they face various obstacles in online learning.

Self-efficacy is crucial for students to obtain in an online learning environment to succeed in the online learning courses, especially during the Pandemic, a massive shift from face-to-face learning to a complete and mandatory online learning environment. Thus, this study attempted to analyze the students' self-efficacy in the online learning environment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, specifically their efficacy in learning English. In Indonesia, English subject has been included in the curriculum for years now and usually, students learn English from such a young age to higher education. English is learned as a local content subject in elementary schools curriculum; further, English is considered one of the compulsory subjects in secondary schools and higher level (Kartika & Emaliana, 2016).

This study also attempts to analyze the gender difference in students' self-efficacy. In education, gender equity and equality is an issue under discussion for more than a century (Sabine Meinck and Falk Brese, 2019). According to UNESCO (2015), gender equality is of high importance. At an international level, gender equality is one of the most important goals for education. In the future, issues on psychological gender differences will continue for years to come, having firm beliefs that differences exist

across gender and the insatiable thirst for new findings on gender differences (Hyde, 2013).

The urge to conduct this study is to learn about students' self-efficacy in facing an entirely new circumstance, where they need to adjust themselves to a mandatory online learning environment amidst the outbreak. Therefore the present study aimed to find out students' self-efficacy and the gender difference in students' self-efficacy in learning English in the online learning environment. This present study was conducted in Bali, especially in Gianyar.

## **1.2 PROBLEMS IDENTIFICATION**

Theoretically, self-efficacy has a significant influence on students' accomplishments in a specific domain. Self-efficacy is one's belief that they can overcome any obstacles encountered in their task, which will set a positive mindset of their abilities in achieving the goals and tend to put more effort into the task and result in better accomplishment. Empirically, self-efficacy is proven to have an influence on students' performance and achievement both in writing and reading. Moreover, some studies showed that self-efficacy plays a vital role in students' overall achievement in other settings, such as in math, nursing, and art. Some other studies also showed that self-efficacy impacts students' performance in computing courses.

Based on preliminary observations about online learning, due to students' challenges and struggles during online learning, they tend to prefer having offline classes rather than doing it online. Students agree that online learning is less effective than face-to-face learning in terms of increasing skills. Moreover, students assessed

that they were less active during online classes compared to traditional classes. A poor internet connection and lack of IT equipment are also considered the main problems students face in the online learning environment. These might affect their self-efficacy. They may think they cannot undertake the online learning courses and will not get the perfect grade for their online courses. Low self-efficacy leads to a lack of motivation and efforts and decreases their online learning environment accomplishments. Nevertheless, no study investigates students' self-efficacy during a pandemic, forcing students to undergo an online learning environment. Thus, this study attempted to analyze students' self-efficacy in the online learning environment, especially in learning English, due to the massive social distancing amidst the ongoing Pandemic.

Moreover, this study also attempted to find out the gender difference in students' self-efficacy as gender in education has been under discussion for years now and the gender stereotypes could be a barrier for students in their scholastic attainment or the treatments toward them, it could also lead to gender superiority. Hence, this study attempted to analyze whether or not students' gender difference influences their self-efficacy in the online learning environment, specifically in learning English.

### **1.3 LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH**

This study is limited to students' self-efficacy in the online learning environment, specifically in English language learning, and their gender. This present study attempted to analyze students' self-efficacy in learning English in the online learning environment due to the Coronavirus outbreak, conducted in public high school and vocational school in Gianyar. It covered students of the eleventh grade.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION**



1. How are the students' self-efficacy in learning English in online learning environment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
2. Is there any gender difference in students' self-efficacy in online learning environment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?

### **1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

Under the research questions, the objective of the study is:

1. To analyze students' self-efficacy in the online learning environment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
2. To find out the gender difference in students' self-efficacy in online learning environment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

### **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

The results of this study are expected to give significant benefits in terms of theory and practice, as:

#### **1. Theoretical significance**

Theoretically, the result of this study is expected to contribute to the development of science, especially in educational psychology. It is also likely to share insight into students' self-efficacy in the online learning environment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

#### **2. Practical significance**

##### **A. For Teacher**

Practically, this study's result is intended to give a meaningful contribution to English teachers to acquire a deeper understanding and knowledge about

self-efficacy and students' self-efficacy in the online learning environment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Moreover, from students' answers to the self-efficacy questionnaire, the teacher can reflect and learn about students' self-efficacy in the online learning environment. It will assist them in educating and encouraging the students to have higher self-efficacy, especially in the online learning environment, and help them design their online courses.

#### **B. For Students**

The result of this study is expected to be beneficial for the students to reflect on their belief in their capabilities of doing the given tasks to improve their lack of learning, especially in following the online courses. Students will also understand more about self-efficacy and get knowledge about their self-efficacy in the online learning environment.

#### **C. For other researchers**

This research result is expected to help the other researcher as an additional reference in conducting a similar study.

