

Self-Efficacy And Communication Strategies For Blind Disability Entrepreneurs In Increasing Business Independence

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ABSTRACT

The limited accessibility of information, technology, and public perception is an obstacle in developing the entrepreneurship of business actors with visual disabilities. Therefore, it is essential to explore communication strategies that can increase the involvement and independence of the visually impaired in the business world, especially the development of Al-Quran braille as part of literacy. This research aims to analyse self-efficacy and explore effective entrepreneurial communication strategies for the visually impaired, focusing on increasing their engagement and independence in business. Another goal is understanding the challenges the visually impaired face in business communication. This research method uses a qualitative approach by conducting in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis of the visually impaired in entrepreneurship. This research resulted in a deeper understanding of self-efficacy and effective entrepreneurial communication strategies for the visually impaired. Positive self-efficacy can help determine the proper coping techniques to cope with the stress they are experiencing. In addition, this study found that effective communication strategies are essential to improve business independence for people with visual disabilities. These strategies include communicating positively, openly, and optimistically and emulating the spirit of achievement shown by friends with visual disabilities. The research provides practical guidance for the visually impaired who want to be involved in the business world and provides insight for business people and the general public to create an inclusive environment for the visually impaired in entrepreneurship in Al-Quran braille literacy.

Keywords: Communication, Entrepreneurship, Blindness, Independence, Business

Introduction

Inclusive education for visually impaired individuals is crucial to building accessibility to information and literacy. One important medium is the Braille Qur'an, which allows the visually impaired to access sacred texts independently. The Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation has been actively involved in developing and producing the Braille Qur'an in Indonesia since 2010, focusing on improving the quality and quantity of production and training Braille teachers. This research aims to document the foundation's production process, challenges, and development strategies in providing educational access for the visually impaired.

Persons with disabilities can participate in development to achieve independence and improve their welfare. Working independently or becoming an entrepreneur allows people with disabilities to participate in development and meet their family's economic needs. It is crucial that the family, as the closest individuals, also intervenes in supporting entrepreneurship. Self-efficacy of disabled entrepreneurs becomes a strength and influences decision-making based on knowledge and experience. Bandura and Niu state that social support plays a role in achieving entrepreneurial success. Self-efficacy is a self-confidence in one's ability to perform tasks to achieve success [1], [2], [3], [4]. Self-efficacy results from an interaction between the external environment, personal abilities, self-adjustment mechanisms, education, and experience.[5], [6].

Research on social support for people with disabilities shows that there is a positive relationship between entrepreneurship and self-efficacy in supporting people with disabilities. However, conversely, there is a negative relationship with the self-efficacy of people with disabilities who work for others. [7], [8]. Many question the position of visually impaired individuals in the workforce; among the honourable positions they hold is that of a prosecutor, despite all their limitations. [9], [10] Entrepreneurship for people with disabilities is not a matter of gender, but rather a focus on hard work, spirit, and risk-taking. [11], [12].

The role of visually impaired entrepreneurs in fostering self-confidence among their visually impaired peers includes facilitating Quran literacy through the production of Braille Qurans. This effort opens the door to equal access to Islamic education for those with visual impairments. [13], [14]. Braille is a reading system that uses

raised dots to represent letters, numbers, and other punctuation marks. The alphabet system is based on two horizontal rows of dots and three vertical rows of dots in multiples of six points.[15], [16].

Blind individuals who engage in the business of printing Braille Qurans play an important role in ensuring access to Quran literacy for the visually impaired. The braille Quran printing business not only facilitates access to the holy book for the visually impaired community but can also serve as a significant economic resource for the visually disabled. The locus was determined at the Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation in South Tangerang because it was the first institution to print Braille Qurans in Indonesia, which began mass production in 1997 at the request of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. [17], [18], [19]. This foundation produces many Braille Qurans, specifically one thousand sets distributed to foreign countries, especially in Asia and Africa.

Research Methods

Research Design

This research approach uses a qualitative approach in a study, namely qualitative interviews, to obtain a broader description of the research results and explain things in more detail. This research is a case study conducted at the Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation, which produces Braille Qur'ans as the research location. The sources are the person in charge of the braille Quran production and employees, all visually impaired. The duration of the research was 8 months, starting from preparation, data collection and processing, data analysis, and publication.

Analysis Unit

This research's analysis unit consists of primary and secondary analysis. The primary analysis unit includes informants directly involved in the Braille Quran initiative, foundation supervisors, marketing managers, and production staff. The secondary analysis unit includes references and literature on visual impairment and the Braille Quran.

Result And Discussion

Data Analysis Technique

The stages of this research are based on Michael D. Myers's qualitative research design, which consists of several stages, as shown in Figure 1.

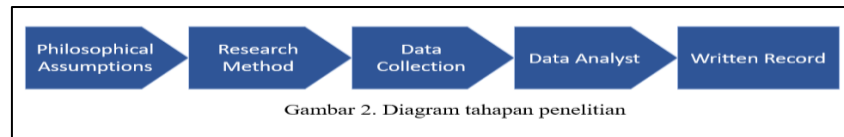


Figure 1. Research Stages Diagram

Self-Efficacy of Visually Impaired Entrepreneurs

Interview results show that visually impaired entrepreneurs at the Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation have varying levels of self-efficacy. Some participants expressed that positive experiences in running a business boost their confidence. For example, one entrepreneur stated, "When I see the results of my hard work, I become more confident to take further steps." This finding aligns with Bandura's research, which shows that successful experiences can enhance an individual's self-efficacy.[20], [21], [22], [23]

However, challenges are also faced, such as social stigma and limited accessibility. Some participants expressed that although they have abilities, others often doubt their capabilities. This highlights the importance of social support and a positive environment in enhancing self-efficacy. Research by Ferguson et al. emphasises that social support from the community can play a crucial role in boosting the confidence of individuals with disabilities.

Furthermore, it is essential to create a supportive environment where individuals feel valued and encouraged to develop their potential. Training and mentoring programs can also enhance self-efficacy by providing the skills and knowledge necessary for business success.

Effective Communication Strategies

Entrepreneurs at the Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation implement various communication strategies when running their businesses. One of the most widely used strategies is using social media to promote products. An entrepreneur explained, "Social media helps me reach more people. I can showcase my products and interact

directly with customers." This aligns with the findings of Kauffman et al., which show that social media can be an effective tool for disabled entrepreneurs to build networks and increase visibility.

In addition, participants also engage with local communities to build networks and gain support. They realise that good relationships with customers and business partners are vital for the sustainability of the business. One participant added, "Building relationships with customers is key. They don't just buy products, but also support me as an individual." This reflects the importance of interpersonal communication in creating mutually beneficial relationships.

Visually impaired entrepreneurs must develop deep communication skills, including active listening and empathy. These skills can help them understand customers' needs and expectations, allowing them to adjust their products and services to meet market demand.

Interaction between Self-Efficacy and Communication Strategy

Research results show a close interaction between self-efficacy and communication strategy. Highly confident entrepreneurs tend to promote their businesses and build customer relationships more actively. Conversely, positive experiences in communicating with customers also contribute to the enhancement of their self-efficacy. This creates a positive cycle that strengthens business independence. Research by Zhao et al. supports this finding by showing that individuals with high self-efficacy are more capable of building strong networks, which enhances their ventures' success.

This interaction also indicates that training programs focused on developing self-efficacy and communication skills can significantly enhance business independence for visually impaired entrepreneurs. Building self-confidence through training and experience can encourage individuals to become more involved in business activities and social networks.

History and Development of the Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation

The Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation, established in 1983, has undergone various significant phases of development. One of the critical moments in the history of this foundation was the launch of the Braille Quran, which began in the early 2000s. Choerul Rizal, secretary of the foundation, explained that the Braille Quran in Jakarta and Ciputat started to be recognised around 2004-2005, marking the initial efforts to provide accessibility for the visually impaired. Since then, the foundation has focused on developing programs to improve the quality of life for the visually impaired through relevant education and training and has concentrated on production.

The production uses three new and old machines, with licensed technicians from a Norwegian manufacturer handling maintenance. The Braille Qur'ans produced adhere to international standards with local adjustments in the writing of harokat, which means the Braille characters are slightly different from those in other countries like Malaysia and Singapore, but do not change the meaning of the text. The foundation's daily production capacity reaches 5 to 10 Braille Qur'ans, with a dominant portion for the waqf program and a small fraction for direct purchases, primarily by government institutions such as the National Library and courts that order technical books in Braille format. The foundation is also actively developing the 'Train of Trainer' (TOT) training programs to produce Braille teachers, including instructors with normal vision, who can assist in teaching in remote areas. The main challenges faced by the foundation are limited funding and resources for sending instructors to various regions, and the need for more intensive collaboration with campuses and volunteers. Development opportunities are evident from the potential for cooperation with the government and the large community of blind study groups, and the integration of supporting digital technology, such as NVDA software, for access to audio materials.

Challenges and Opportunities in Empowering the Visually Impaired

Rizal also noted several challenges faced by the foundation, including limitations in accessing data about the visually impaired population. Although data from BPS indicates around three million blind people in Indonesia, processing this data to design appropriate programs remains a homework task for the foundation. In this context, Rizal suggested collaboration with other institutions and more systematic mapping to identify the needs of the visually impaired in various regions.

On the other hand, the foundation also sees an opportunity to enhance the teaching capacity for the visually impaired. With the Train of Trainers (TOT) program, the foundation hopes to train more sighted instructors to teach Braille to the visually impaired, especially in remote areas. This will improve educational access for the visually impaired and create a more inclusive community where everyone can learn and share knowledge.

Marketing and Production Capacity

The Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation manages the marketing and production of Braille Qur'ans with a unique and adaptive model to meet the needs of the visually impaired community in Indonesia. Regarding marketing, the foundation adopts a "waiting for the ball" approach. Braille Qur'an products are not aggressively marketed through advertising or mass promotion, but rely more on the reputation built over the years. This makes the foundation a well-known institution among the visually impaired community and various agencies requiring

Braille products, generating organic demand from multiple quarters. This marketing strategy has proven effective, as the foundation is often approached directly by individuals and institutions in need of Braille Qur'ans. Government agencies such as the National Library, religious courts, and district courts have also become regular customers ordering technical books in Braille format.

One interesting aspect that needs to be added is Rizal's revealed marketing and production capacity. He explained that the foundation can produce five to ten Qurans daily, which could reach two hundred Qurans monthly if everything goes smoothly. However, Rizal also revealed the challenges in fulfilling large orders, such as a request for a thousand Qurans from abroad, although the foundation had previously handled such projects. This experience demonstrates the foundation's readiness to adapt to the increasing market demand.

In addition, the foundation also accepts direct purchase orders from companies that wish to channel donations as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs. Thus, the foundation's marketing is limited to the visually impaired community and involves various sectors as partners in providing inclusive literacy. From the production capacity side, if calculated over a month, the production capacity can reach around 150 to 300 copies. Although this number is still relatively small compared to the potential needs of the visually impaired in Indonesia, which reaches millions of people, this capacity is already sufficient to meet various existing demands, especially those related to endowment programs and special orders. In fact, the foundation has experience handling large production projects, such as an order of one thousand copies of the Braille Qur'an that has been completed.

Braille Quality and International Standardisation

The production process of Braille Qurans follows international standards. This is important to ensure that the produced Quran can be accepted and used by the visually impaired in various countries. Although there are differences in writing conventions between countries, the foundation is committed to maintaining quality and accuracy in every print.

The Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation provides education and resources for the visually impaired and serves as an agent of change, striving to empower individuals and communities. Despite all the challenges, the foundation remains optimistic in developing programs that can positively impact the lives of the visually impaired in Indonesia.

Conclusion

The research conducted at the Raudlatul Makfufin Foundation concludes that this foundation plays a significant role in providing educational accessibility for visually impaired individuals through the production of Braille Qurans. With experience since 1983 and a focus on empowering the visually impaired, the foundation has successfully developed various relevant educational and training programs. Volunteer involvement, an inclusive organisational structure, and a commitment to maintaining production quality are key factors in the foundation's success.

Although the foundation has made significant progress, challenges remain, such as limitations in accessing data about the blind population and the need to enhance teaching capacity. In addition, more effective marketing efforts and the development of a wider distribution network also need attention.

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