

## LEARNING STRATEGY OF ALBINO STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY

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Doi :

**Keywords:**  
*Strategy*  
*Learning*  
*Albino Students*

### ABSTRACT

Limited knowledge of the concept of inclusive education is a problem for children with special needs, it is increasingly difficult for them to get opportunities in regular schools. This does not only occur in elementary and secondary schools, but also at the tertiary level. Students with special needs who wish to continue to tertiary level still experience difficulties due to the lack of universities that provide accessible facilities and infrastructure. Albino is one of the Disabilities that has limitations, one of which is deteriorating eyesight (Low Vision), therefore Albino students must have a special strategy in learning so that they are able to complete their education at the university level. The purpose of this research is to find out the adaptation of Albino students in studying at university. The method used is qualitative with a case study approach. Data were collected through interview techniques with 15 albino students, both those who had finished/were currently studying at tertiary institutions. Data analysis uses the Miles & Huberman model which consists of collecting data, reducing data, presenting data and drawing conclusions. The validity of the research data was carried out by investigator training. The results of the analysis describe the problems faced by Albino students, namely learning, social problems and strategies for completing education at the university level

Volume 2, No.2, November 2022, Pages : 63-68

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## INTRODUCTION

Humans are born from the womb of a mother, they have been gifted by Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala with some instruments to live and develop of their life in the world, such as instincts, senses, abilities (intelligence), conscience (heart), and humans have absolutely no knowledge whatsoever in cognitive meaning, except for the potential that exists and is ready to be actualized. With these instruments and potentials, humans are able to interact with their environment, both the personal (social) environment and the natural environment. It is from this interaction that humans observe, absorb, imitate, and modify the various experiences they encounter which then develop into a collection of knowledge and skills (Hude, 2017)

Basically one of the human rights is to obtain education guaranteed by the constitution, both at the national and international levels. Getting an education is the right of every individual without discrimination. The world community has agreed that every child has the right to a good education regardless of differences in race, economic status, politics, socio-emotional and social strata. This includes children with special needs (disabilities).

Education is one of the efforts provided by the government. It aims to improve the quality of human resources (Adi, 2020). It carried out consciously and have planning, in which there is a system that has components that are closely related to each other, it aims the students should have good morals including having good character, religious and moral values, having good intelligence needed by himself, other people and the State, as well as having intelligence both emotional, spiritual and intellectual intelligence, besides that what is really needed is also how to create a learning atmosphere so that students are able to actively participate in learning so that they are able to bring out their potential (Handoko & Gumantan, 2021 ).

In integrated classes all students have the opportunity to learn from each other, as stated by William Stainback and Susan Stainback by quoting Sinclair and Tetlie (1988): "in integrated classrooms all children are enriched by having the opportunity to learn from one another, grow to care for one another, and gain the attitudes, skills, and values necessary for our communities to support the inclusion of all citizens. Regular students have the opportunity to learn to understand and empathize with their friends with special needs. And conversely students with special needs can also learn from regular students without any psychological barriers. Understanding the learning styles and areas of intelligence of students, the lecturer should determine what is the appropriate approach and method for the inclusive class. A lecturer is required to deliver learning that is able to access every student who has a different learning style and realm of intelligence.

Regarding the understanding of Albinos, it is not an easy thing among ordinary people (Aulia Maharani et al., 2017) so many people equate Albinos with Caucasians. At a glance, Albinos can be said to have no serious problems, because they can see because they are not blind, they can walk normally, they can hear well and they can carry out activities like most people, but if seen more specifically albinos have problems serious problem, namely low vision (Lynch & Lund, 2011).

Albinism or Albino comes from the Latin "Albus" which means white (Wikipedia). Albinos occur all over the world. People with albinism are often very pale, have impaired vision, are susceptible to UV radiation from the sun and are sensitive to light (Lund., et al). Albino is a student who was born with a lack of melamine pigment (natural color) in the body (Prameswary & Maulana, 2020). This lack of melamine pigment causes an albino student to have no color in himself, both skin color, hair and other hairs and eyes (Fauzi., 2019). This is caused by a genetic disorder (Arsal, 2018), where this genetic disorder is a gene that is inherited from parents, this gene is also capable of making 1 out of 4 students in a family with an albino gene become carriers of this gene or even become albinos (Ayu & Nurfa, 2017). One can be a carrier of the albino gene without showing certain phenotypes so that an albino student can come from parents who are not albino (Yuliadi & Moch, 2011).

Based on phenotypic characteristics, albinos are divided into two major groups, Oculocutaneous Albinism (OCA) and Ocular Albinism (OA) (Nindrasari et al., 2011). Oculocutaneous Albinism is an albino that is often found, in which Oculocutaneous Albinism loses pigment in the eyes, skin and hair. but there are also those who have blonde, yellow/orange or even light brown hair (Garza et al., 2016). Whereas Ocular Albinism only loses pigment in the eyes, while the hair and skin has a normal appearance. Even though they have a normal eye appearance, they cannot function properly (Yuliadi & Moch, 2011).

Melamine has a very important role in protecting human skin from the harmful effects of Ultraviolet light (Putri et al., 2018). Albino is caused by the absence or lack of melamine pigment in the body (Franklin et al., 2018) so that this lack of melamine pigment can cause the skin of albino sufferers to burn easily when exposed to direct sunlight (<https://>

www.alodokter.com), even if you are often in the sun it will cause skin irritation and the risk of developing skin cancer (fauzi, 2019). Albinism is recommended to use sunblock and wear long-sleeved clothes and can wear a hat and sunglasses when not at home so as not to be dazzled by the light. (Lynch & Lund, 2011). In addition, the result of the lack of melamine pigment also affects the increased risk to the eyes (<https://www.halodoc>). Lack of melanin pigment causes reduced pigmentation in the eye, increases sensitivity to light and reduces the ability of the eye to absorb light. As a result, albinism can experience discomfort in bright light and often appears to squint or close the eyes (Voice, n.d.). Hayes (in Firnanda, 2014) said that the cognitive abilities of students who experience visual limitations or limitations in vision (low vision) do not spontaneously make themselves low in their thinking abilities. although their visual memory is not good, they have good conceptual abilities so they have strong memories. The thing that makes it difficult for albino students to adapt to the environment is the lack of precise learning strategies and from other reading sources

Hence, based on the explanation above, it can be understood that the concept of inclusive education is an ideal concept and should be combined with existing scientific concepts. This is certainly an interesting study, especially to improve the various inclusive education programs proposed by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia in the future. Furthermore, it is hoped that this research can also encourage the government and the general public who are concerned with disabilities to provide more opportunities for students with special needs to be able to enter higher education.

## METHOD

This research was qualitative research with a case study approach, where the case study approach was intended to find out the adaptation of Albino students while participating in the educational process at tertiary institutions. The subjects in this study were Albino students who were currently/finished at university level. In this study, the research location was not determined due to the fact that the subjects lived far apart. Researchers got subjects from WhatsApp media. Interviews were conducted via video calls and sent questionnaires. Therefore, the location in this study was based on the flexibility of existing conditions in the field. The data source in this study is the subject, namely where the data was obtained (Kurniasari et al, 2020)

This study uses primary data sources obtained directly by researchers through subjects and secondary data sources obtained indirectly or through second parties (Wulandari & Muzakki, 2018). In this study, the primary data sources were obtained from Albino students who had attended high school or the equivalent and Albino students who were currently/finished studying at university level. Meanwhile, secondary data sources were obtained from books and documentation. The data collection technique uses interview techniques, with semi-structured general guidelines (Septiani et al., 2021). Data analysis uses the Miles Huberman model which consists of collecting data, reducing data, presenting data and drawing conclusions (Melati et al., 2021).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the main objective of this study was the learning strategies of Albino students in pursuing education at the university level regarding their visual impairment, the result as below:

### 1. The Problem in the classroom

Albinos have limited vision (low vision) since they were born. These limitations make it difficult for people with albinos to get information, such as writing from a distance of 1 meter between the seat and the blackboard, and have difficulty writing in a printed book or notebook if the line of sight is too close. Low vision is the term given to people with visual impairments. Low vision is part of the blind, but still has vision even though it is very limited (Utomo & Muniroh, 2019). Low vision is damage to the function of vision that cannot be returned to its original state even through medical treatment, such as surgery, drug use, and cannot be corrected refractively with glasses or contact lenses (Syari & Wati, 2021).

Students who experience low vision can still see, although not as normal as others (Firnanda, 2014), this vision can still be used to carry out daily routines such as walking without a stick despite experiencing various obstacles and difficulties in the process being able to read books/newspapers/watch television very close quarters, unable to read the writing on the blackboard and often tripping when walking (National Eye Center). According to WHO, the low vision category is divided into 3 categories namely:

- a. moderate visual, it was impairment with the best visual acuity criteria of 6/18 – 6/60.
- b. evere visual, this is an impairment with the best visual acuity criteria between 6/60-3/60.
- c. profound visual was impairment with the best criteria for visual acuity 3/60 – 1/6 (Edwiza, 2017).

Vision problems of albino students related to law vision, including (1) Nystagmus, Eyes that 'shake' due to involuntary eye movements from side to side, which worsens when tired or stressed. Although the eyes move, people with albinism are able to see images stably; (2) Photophobia, namely extreme sensitivity to bright light. Sunglasses or a wide-brimmed hat will help reduce glare; (3) Myopia (nearsightedness), namely the inability to see clearly unless the way of seeing tends to be close to the object you want to see; (4) Astigmatism: double myopia; (5) Strabismus or squint (Garza et al., 2016).

Limitations in vision greatly affect the learning adjustment of Albino students, out of 15 respondents they had different vision problems, starting from normal reading distances of less than 1 span and some more than 1 span. Besides that, the room lighting conditions in the classroom, there are those who have difficulty reading when the classroom turns on the lights when the weather is cloudy, there are those who are more comfortable sitting near the window with natural lighting but not too bright and there are also those who are more comfortable reading under the light with lighting. That fits their eyes. However, besides the various vision problems they experience, all of them have in common that is they are unable to read the writing on the blackboard at a distance as usual.

In the process of teaching and learning activities, lecturers often use the blackboard as a means of imparting knowledge, but by writing on the blackboard this is what makes Albino students experience problems and need to make efforts and collaborate between albino students and other students, there are various strategies they can use to get the information on the whiteboard, including:

- a. dictated by friends,
- b. Borrow friends' notes/books
- c. stand by the blackboard to write (write while standing),
- d. lifting the chair closer to the blackboard,
- e. using binoculars prescribed by a doctor,
- f. using a cellphone camera to take pictures of writing on the blackboard (which is usually done by students).

## 2. The Using of Computer Problem

Difficulty in operating a computer/laptop, the research subjects answered that 8 out of 15 respondents said it was very difficult to operate a computer/laptop. These difficulties include glare against the light of the screen which causes eyeballs to feel sore and sore due to the duration of time that is too long, difficulty reading writing on a computer/laptop, often losing track of the cursor, besides that due to the lack of habitual albino students dealing directly with computers/laptops resulting in they are not proficient in using it, even today they still avoid activities related to computers/laptops.

The strategy used is that albino students use the JAWS (Job Access With Speech) application, which is a screen reader, which is software that is useful for helping people with visual impairments or low vision.

## 3. Social Problem

Deteriorating eyesight also results in obstacles in social interaction. Based on the results of observations made by McGaha & Farran (in Firnanda, 2014) it shows that blind and low vision students face many challenges in social interaction with their peers who have good vision. 5 out of 15 interviewed informants said they had difficulties or obstacles in interacting or adapting themselves in social situations. One of the main causative factors is the limitation of vision, where this visual limitation causes them difficulty in carrying out even simple activities such as: difficulty recognizing people, difficulty greeting people who meet on the street and difficulty interpreting nonverbal cues such as waving, hand signals, facial expressions, eye gaze, body gestures, and more. This is what makes them prefer to stay at home, prefer to do their own activities without involving other people, choose activities that do not involve the outdoor environment.

Related to the problems above, Albino students are to maintain that these social problems do not worsen, including often talking to people they already know, recognizing the voices of people they have known before, being sensitive to the sound of footsteps, recognizing the body shape of people they already know, getting to know the clothes they usually wear. used. As a result of this limited vision, Albinos tend to be seen as arrogant because they are often unable to

recognize nonverbal cues when friends greet or Albinos tend to rarely greet friends first when meeting.

## CONCLUSION

Albinism occurs all over the world regardless of gender, ethnicity, ethnicity, religion, culture and others where Albinism is caused by genetic abnormalities carried by one of their parents, where this genetic disorder refers to a lack of melamine pigment (natural color) in the body which causes them to tend to have pale skin and fur, have impaired vision (law vision), be vulnerable to UV radiation from the sun and sensitive to light.

One of the problems faced by Albino students is vision. Where this vision problem leads them to adjustments that they have to make in the world of education in tertiary institutions, these adjustments include learning adjustments and adjustments in socializing. This adjustment must be made so that they have the same rights in receiving knowledge and experience in higher education as those obtained by other students.

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