CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This paper is going to expound on background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, research framework, and previous research related to the study.

A. Background

The growth of technology motivates educators to get familiar with and use technology in the context of learning and activities related to learning to produce dynamic learning environments, as an example in the development of new learning approaches such as blended learning. Recently, Indonesia introduced a new normal era after the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. The Ministry of Education and Culture permitted schools in green zone areas to perform teaching and learning processes subject to specific conditions, such as adhering to health protocol norms and maintaining social distance (Kemendikbud, 2022). As a result of this condition, the most suitable strategy that can be adopted is blended learning. Blended learning has become an essential approach in education, particularly in the aftermath of the pandemic (Nong et al., 2023). Blended learning in English language teaching mixes face-to-face training with online components, focusing on flexibility and resilience. Institutions can quickly adjust to changing circumstances, such as transitioning between in-person and online learning. This adaptability guarantees uninterrupted operations even in the face of disturbances. Institutions can expand their appeal to a wide range of students by providing courses through both in-person and online formats. English educators have the ability to utilize a diverse range of subjects as a means to introduce the language for example, certain inventive strategies involve the integration of real-life occurrences, news-related films, and genuine information. These techniques assist learners in actively participating in English language usage in real-life situations that they may come across beyond the confines of the classroom. In summarize blended

learning optimizes student learning by combining technology with conventional teaching methods.

Additionally, blended learning is appropriate for the twenty-first century regarding technological advancement. Kaur (2013) stated that blended learning is an effective combination of various delivery models, teaching models, and learning styles that can be done in an interactive learning environment through online learning (e-learning) and face-to-face learning. In short, it can be concluded that blended learning is a method that combines traditional face-to-face methods with online-based learning.

Dziuban et al. (2018) argue that blended learning creates a successful and productive learning environment. Thus, when technology devices are paired with the availability of interaction, both teachers and students need more effective and efficient teaching methodologies. Although the adoption of blended learning in the majority of developing nations encountered numerous obstacles, this method of instruction is primarily regarded as the most efficient (Kintu et al., 2017). The teachers make an effort to implement learning methods that are contemporary with the times, especially blended learning with personalized adaptations. Marsh (2012) stated concerning English language instruction that blended learning could deliver various benefits to language learners over traditional teaching methodologies. Some of these advantages include increasing language learners' independence, providing more individualized language support, promoting collaborative learning, raising students' interaction and engagement, providing opportunities for language learners to practice the language outside of the classroom, and improving language learners' language skills.

Limited observation in the Islamic Junior High School of Qordova in Bandung shows that the teachers have implemented blended learning from the beginning of the pandemic, and this approach has persisted both after the outbreak and up to the present day. This demonstrates that blended learning may be applied at lower levels of education. Teachers' experiences and obstacles in implementing the blended learning

strategy for English language acquisition. in order to serve as a guide for the ongoing implementation of blended learning in primary and secondary education.

In the past five years, many studies about blended learning have been done in the higher education field, especially at the university level. They are concerned with the various method and media of Teaching, including their experiences, strategies, perspectives, and beliefs. For example, research by Hayati et al (2021) about Senior Secondary School teachers experiences and challenges in using the blended learning method in Malaysia and Indonesia, rand esearch by Ma'rufa & Mustofa (2021) about EFL teacher's professional experience in implementing blended learning during COVID-19 pandemic, and research by Cunningham (2021) about teachers experiences and interplay of beliefs and practices of blended Teaching and learning, research from Yan Ju & Yan Mei (2018) perception of blended learning among foreign language lecturers and the types of blended learning models that have been used by the lectures at a university in Malaysia, and research by Aldosemani et al (2019) about instructors' perceptions also investigated problems instructors encounter and identified potential solutions to reduce these problems of blended learning.

However, the present study has different concerns from the previous studies. While the earlier study has focused on the implemented blended learning in higher education. It focuses on TEFL in Islamic Junior High School teachers and particular the teacher's experience and challenges in the use of blended learning. In light of this chapter's explanation, it is crucial that other English teachers learn about the teacher's experience so that they might improve upon their past actions for the sake of the future. When adopting blended learning to teach English, teacher may reflect on their own lives and then take steps to improve themselves. Consequently, the teacher has lived experiences, and real tales were used to teach English in junior secondary school via blended learning.

B. Research Questions

From the elucidation above, this research is deliberated to answer these two following questions:

1. What experience does teacher get while teaching using the blended learning spproach in teaching English?
2. What challenges does the teacher face while teaching using the blended learning approach in teaching English?

C. Research Purpose

From the research questions, this study is aimed at acquiring the two following purposes:

1. To explore the teacher's experience in teaching blended learning in teaching English.
2. To find out the challenges the teacher encounters while implementing blended learning in teaching English.

D. Research Significances

This study is helpful in one form: theoretical and practical. Theoretically, this research can help other English teachers comprehend and learn from the teacher's experience as a reference for how to implement teaching English through blended learning at the junior high school level

Practically, the result of this research hopefully:

a. The study can provide English teachers with a clear picture and serve as a guide for using blended learning as a teaching method.
b. This study can give teachers a way to teach English in Islamic Junior high schools through blended learning.

E. Conceptual Framework

There are various learning approach in teaching and learning activities, especially with the rapid development of technology. This method is also increasingly diverse,

one of which is blended learning. Graham and Misanchuck (2004) define blended learning as "traditions, methods, and norms which several educators have long been familiar with." These are the behaviors and norms of the traditional, brick-and-mortar classroom on the one hand and distance delivery on the other. Graham (2013) also noted that blended learning is an effective combination of different delivery models, teaching models, and learning styles that can be carried out in an interactive learning environment on face-to-face and online learning. Blended learning is one of the latest educational issues in globalization and technology development it combines online delivery of educational information with the best elements of classroom interaction and live instruction to customize learning, permit reflective thought, and differentiate instruction for a varied group of learners (Pardede, 2012). Thoroughly blended learning means learning patterns that contain elements of mixing or merging between one learning pattern and another. According to the previously discussed definitions, blended learning is a teaching and learning method that face-to-face learning with online learning at a distance.

Subsequently, blended learning has been recognized as an efficient strategy for education, training, and professional development (Arkhipova et al., 2018). This practice use traditional teaching methods and blends synchronous and asynchronous technologies to produce a learning environment that supports several learning styles. There will inevitably be a shift toward building a blended or distributed learning environment as instructors get more comfortable with the integration of technologies in teaching and learning. Related to English language teaching blended learning is valued by both students and teachers because it combines the advantages of face-to-face classroom interaction with the flexibility and convenience of online learning (Ivanova et al., 2020). Other advantages of mixed learning include, increases in students' motivation and involvement in the learning process, views and attitudes toward learning, as well as performance and language proficiency. Moreover, blended learning is not merely a combination of online and face-to-face approaches, but rather a well-designed combination of purposeful activities in both forms. Blended learning

necessitates consideration of multiple aspects, with a primary emphasis on learning objectives and a learner-centered educational environment.

F. Previous Study

Several researchers have researched related EFL Teacher's Experience in Blended Learning, first by Hayati (et al., 2021). This research examines the advantages and difficulties that have been encountered by educators while implementing the blended learning methodology within the context of the instructional and educational process. The qualitative approach with the case study design was used for this research. In the study, there were six instructors from Malaysia and Indonesia. According to the findings, the blended learning environment was created by combining traditional classroom instruction with interactive online activities. According to the results of this case study, there are a few variables that can make it difficult for teachers to engage their students in blended learning classes. The lack of an internet connection is the first factor that comes from environmental factors, and it is one of the factors that hinder the blended learning process. The factors that come from students include a lack of student interest and motivation, taking a lot more time, students being lazy during online class, students paying less attention, and maintaining consistency of participants in the class. The teacher's factor is an inability to assess students' work, which is the final factor that comes from environmental factors.

The second has been made by Ma'rufa & Mustofa (2021). From a narrative inquiry viewpoint, this research intended to capture three EFL instructors' professional experiences with blended learning. Three Indonesian high school EFL instructors participated in the study by participating in an interview regarding the implementation of blended learning. The research discovered that all educational activities, including Teaching and learning, were undertaken virtually from home and were less successful and ineffective. Therefore, blended learning can facilitate learning activities during a pandemic. Blended learning implementation requires the professionalism of teachers. Therefore, teachers engaged in several pieces of training on the performance of blended

learning, and schools even assisted teachers in enhancing their ICT skills by providing training. In addition, based on the teachers' own experiences, it was discovered that the success of the adoption of blended learning in this epidemic was influenced by elements such as the motivation of the students, the school's Internet connection, and the school's scheduling.

The third was conducted by Cunningham (2021). This research aimed to investigate how teachers perceive blended learning instruction. Based on interviews, observations, and artifact analysis, this study examines how the beliefs and behaviors of four high school teachers interact. Four teachers were found to demonstrate their values in the blended environment. According to the teachers, pupils learn best when engaged in meaningful activities. There was a sense of trust in the teaching and learning process shared by the facilitators, coaches, guides, and fellow learners. The use of a range of materials, the flexibility of content from week to week, the inclusion of student choice, particularly in actual activities, and opportunities for student cooperation were the instructional practices that supported their opinions.

The fourth by Ju & Mei (2018). The aim of the study was to determine the perception of blended learning among UISM foreign language lecturers, the types of blended learning models used by USIM foreign language lecturers in their daily teaching activities, and the data gathered from the participants who teach foreign languages at the faculty of Major Language studies at the Islamic Science University of Malaysia. Through an open-end questionnaire and interview as the research instrument. The findings showed that while acclaiming the factor of independence and autonomy in blended learning, the instructors still prefer the traditional face-to-face interaction for a teacher-learner contact. Such comments of the instructors can be seen as reflecting the fact that the application of blended learning does not have a long tradition in language teaching/ learning, and instructors might not be very experienced in involving their students in exciting and creative activities to attract students to control over their understandings.

Furthermore, the last is conducted by Aldosemani (et al., 2019). This study explored instructors' perceptions of blended learning as an emerging trend in Saudi higher education through the quantitative method by using a questionnaire as the instrument. It investigated problems instructors encounter and identified potential solutions to reduce these problems. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed training for faculty members should be delivered regularly, and sessions should be planned progressively to build skills. Various training sessions should be offered, including an introduction to blended learning, content creation tools, assessment quality assurance strategies, and advanced tools. Just-in-time support should also be provided. These supports may be provided via online training materials, handouts, video tutorials, and MOOCs. Another strategy to increase the adoption of blended learning is through incentives.

However, in contrast to earlier research that focused on the implementation of blended learning at higher education levels, specifically four studies at the university level and one study at the senior high school level. The present study has different concerns from the previous studies. It focuses on TEFL in Islamic Junior Secondary School teachers and in particular, the teacher's experiences, advantages and challenges in the use of blended learning.