

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Modern life is constantly changing and fast-paced, and human needs are constantly evolving. Parents' increasingly busy schedules have impacted children's eating habits, particularly with the rise in instant foods. Instant foods are a popular choice, especially among elementary school children, because they're considered convenient, quick, and delicious. But behind all this convenience, there are health risks to be aware of, particularly the lack of nutrients necessary for children's growth and development. Despite their convenience, instant foods can have negative impacts if consumed consistently without paying attention to balanced nutritional intake. Having the habit of consuming too much instant food will have a bad impact on the health of children, teenagers and adults. (Pamelia, 2018).

Every instant food, a part of many children's daily lives, turns out to contain harmful substances. Preservatives, artificial colors, and synthetic flavors are designed to extend the shelf life of food and enhance flavor. However, if consumed over a long period of time or in excess, the side effects can damage the body's metabolism. Nutritional imbalances with high levels of fat, salt, and sugar but low in fiber and vitamins pose a threat to children who are in their growth phase, especially elementary school children. In Indonesia, fast food has become very popular. Typically, this type of food is sold in restaurants originating from other countries. Slowly, instant food is replacing traditional Indonesian dishes. Many traditional dishes are disappearing as people prefer modern, fast-food options like fried chicken, pizza, burgers, French fries, pasta, nuggets, sausages, fried foods, and more. (Janah, 2016).

Observations have revealed a variety of factors influencing the rise in instant food consumption among elementary school students. One of these factors is the influence of advertising, which attracts children's attention through television, the internet, and apps. These advertisements typically present instant foods in an engaging way, making children more likely to try them. In addition, easy access to instant food, such as through supermarkets, stalls, or online delivery services, makes it easier for people, including children, to

Accessible at any time. Instant foods are also often chosen because of their affordability and quick preparation time, making them a practical solution for families with limited time. However, despite all these factors, children's eating patterns can be disrupted due to a lack of healthy nutritional intake. One factor contributing to the high consumption of instant foods

among elementary school-aged children is their lack of understanding of the risks hidden behind their delicious taste. Therefore, it is important to have engaging and easy-to-understand learning media, such as illustrated books and pop-up books, to help elementary school children understand the health risks of fast food and encourage them to choose healthier foods. The limited availability of effective educational media for children presents a challenge in conveying important information about the dangers of instant food. Existing media is often unattractive or difficult for children to understand, so the message about the health risks of instant food does not get through well.

According to the official website of the Ministry of Health, the health impacts of someone frequently consuming fried chicken burgers and French fries are detrimental to health and can disrupt the development of the body for children or adolescents, such as obesity, heart disease, cancer, malnutrition, diabetes, stroke, and disrupt academic performance, etc.

According to Dr. Ari Fahrial Syam, an internal medicine specialist and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Indonesia, excessive and continuous consumption of instant foods can increase the risk of various serious health problems. He emphasized that the habit of consuming instant foods can lead to obesity, a risk factor for diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and even some types of cancer. Dr. Syam explained that instant foods contain high levels of carbohydrates and salt. However, Dr. Syam refuted the common belief that MSG in instant foods directly causes cancer, asserting that this is a myth. He emphasized the importance of a balanced diet rich in fiber and fruits, as well as an active lifestyle with regular exercise, which can reduce the risk of chronic disease. This expert statement reinforces the urgency of educating the public, especially children, about the dangers of excessive instant food consumption and the importance of a healthy diet from an early age.

Pop-up books serve as an engaging and interactive learning medium. They argue that pop-up books provide a fun educational experience, combining play elements with information delivery. The advantage of pop-up books lies in their ability to present visual and tactile material, which not only increases their appeal to children but also stimulates their interest in reading and motivation to learn. (Putri Arlis & Romadhona, 2023)

The use of illustrations in children's books is firmly grounded in visual learning theory. This approach aligns with the characteristics of elementary school children aged 9–12, who tend to be more responsive to information presented visually. In general, children are more interested in reading books with engaging pictures and illustrations. Engaging images can help children recognize objects, characters, and environments within the book. (Salsabil Darmawan & Daniar, 2023)

According to illustrator Harris M, books equipped with attractive illustrations tend to be more effective in capturing the attention of readers, especially elementary school-aged children. Illustrations are a tool to help children recognize and understand various story elements, objects, and characters. A visual approach is believed to improve children's ability to process information and develop their imagination, thus creating a more meaningful reading experience.

Expert speakers emphasized that this approach not only improves children's comprehension of the material they read but also develops visual interpretation skills, which are essential for learning in the digital age. Furthermore, the researchers highlighted that integrating text and images into children's reading materials can stimulate their interest in reading and motivate them to engage more deeply with the content, creating a richer and more meaningful learning experience. (Kharismatuzzahra & Daniar, 2024)

Text and images in children's learning media play a crucial role in enhancing literacy comprehension. When children see images directly related to the text they're reading, they can form visual representations of it. This process helps them construct meaning from what they read. Images can provide visual context, clarifying concepts that might be difficult to grasp through text alone, while text helps children understand the details within the images. The interaction between these two elements not only strengthens reading comprehension but also develops the ability to analyze deeply. In the context of educating children about the dangers of instant foods, this approach can help children conceptualize more easily and engagingly, increasing the effectiveness of conveying important messages about health and nutrition.

1.2 Problem Identification

1. The impact of the role of parents, the busyness of parents which encourages the choice of instant food.
2. Many diseases arise from the habit of eating fast food or instant food too often.
3. High consumption of instant food or snacks, elementary school students are the biggest consumers.
4. Lack of understanding among elementary school children about the dangers of instant food.

1.3 Problem Formulation

Based on the background How to design an interactive picture story book about the dangers of instant food for children aged 9-12 years?

1.4 Problem Limitations

1. Create a story book with interactive illustrations to educate about the risks of fast food.
2. The target segment targeted for this interactive picture story book is children aged 9-12 years when designing the interactive book.
3. This design only focuses on the risks of fast food for elementary school children (it does not discuss the dangers of other foods outside of instant food)
4. Illustration technique using cartoon style, illustration technique with cartoon style which is suitable for children.

1.5 Design Objectives

1. Provide educational media with interesting interactive picture story books.
2. Teach children aged 9-12 years about the importance of maintaining body health by avoiding instant foods.
3. As a medium to introduce the dangers of instant food if consumed every day, it is not good for health

1.6 Benefits of Design

With the existing objectives, it is hoped that the benefits of the design are as follows:

1. Benefits of Student

- a. Enriching the author's portfolio in the realm of visual literacy and education.
- b. Provide education to elementary school children about the dangers of instant food.
- c. Designing an illustrated and pop-up book about the dangers of instant food to complete the seminar course.

2. Benefits for Universities

- a. To be proof of the implementation of student creativity and produce research and design-based work.
- b. Adding references to the UPN "Veteran" East Java repository regarding the dangers of instant food.

3. Benefits for Readers

- a. Increase health awareness about the dangers of instant food through easy-to-understand media.
- b. Teach healthy eating patterns in an interesting and fun way engajarkan pola makan sehat dengan cara menarik dan menyenangkan.
- c. Improve children's memory through illustrations and pop-ups.

1.7 Planning Structure

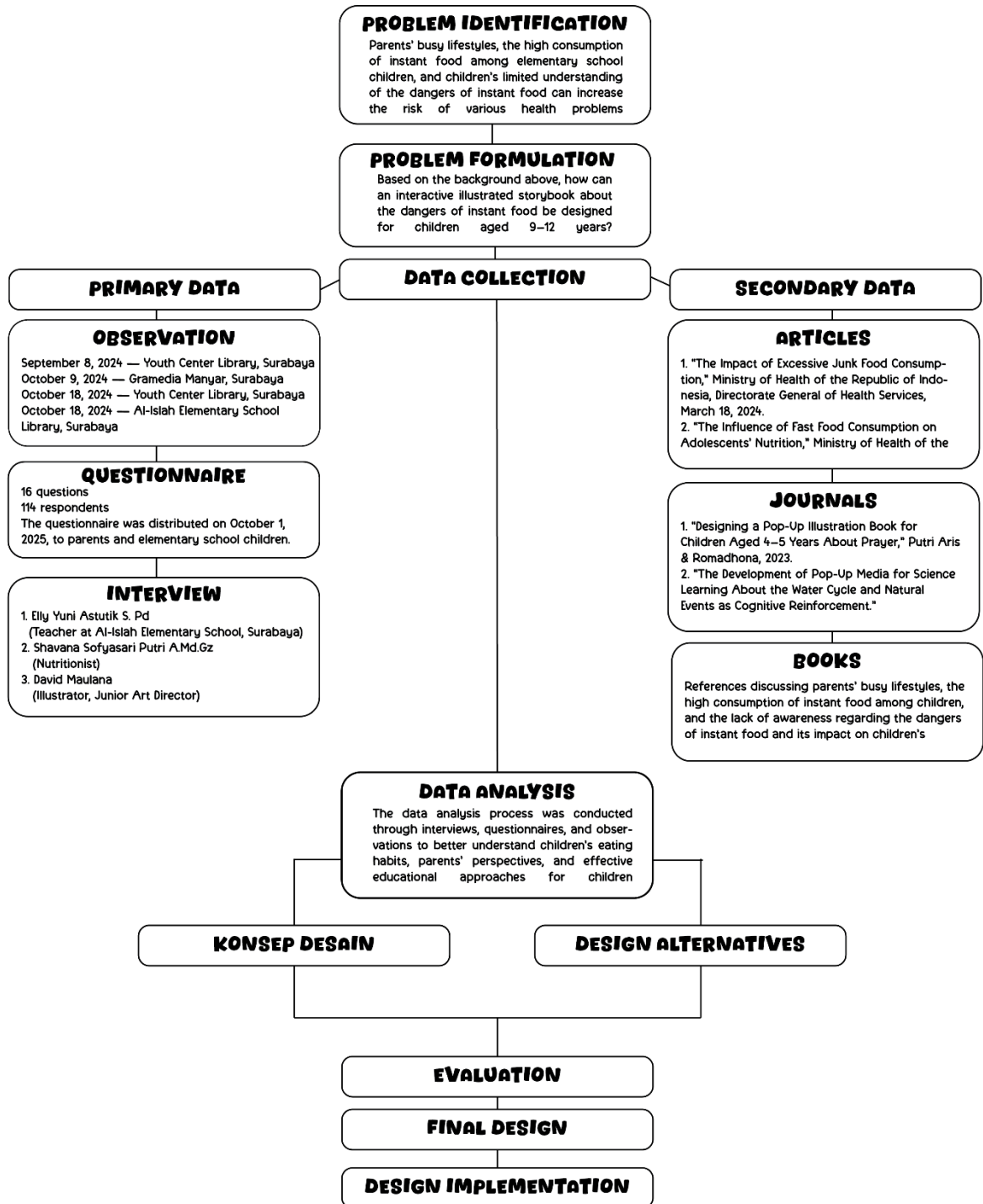


Figure 1. 1 Planning structure

Source : Personal Documents