

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS MOBILITY PROGRAM: EXPERIENCES OF INDONESIAN STUDENTS

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Abstract

Learning is an activity that can be done anywhere and at any time as long as we have the desire to learn. Many people now travel abroad solely to learn. In this experience, exchange student found challenging on the cultural difference. This study aim to investigated Indonesian students' experience during the student mobility program abroad. Narrative inquiry was implemented to explore the experiences of two students by utilizing oral narratives by means of semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed that Indonesian students find it challenging talk to middle-aged people. In conclusion, perceive the challenges of living in other countries positively.

Keywords: Challenges, Experience, Student Mobility, English Language

INTRODUCTION

Education is a chance for learner to study about their preference subject. In this modern era, many opportunities are open, many students are attempting to further their education. They even travel abroad to do so. Studying at universities other than one's own is an academic experience that can broaden students' knowledge in many areas, including culture and society. Studying abroad is a brief and usually temporary stay in a foreign country or region during which students engage in the target culture and learn the target language. (Larrinaga & Amurrio, 2015; Moore, 2016, as cited in Gong et al., 2021). Studying in another country includes learning a foreign language, living with a foreign host family or dormitory, internships, and community service." (McKeown, 2009, p. 12, as cited in Costello, 2015). Learners got opportunities to get experience in universities abroad in short term or called students mobility. International student mobility refers to students who pursue higher education in countries other than their own; it is a worldwide phenomenon, with students from at least 209 countries studying in at least 143 countries. (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018 as cited in Shields, 2019). Internationalization of education can take many forms, including joint degrees, twinning, satellite campuses, short and long-term study abroad, exchanges, bespoke programs, work-integrated or community-service learning, and various other forms of movement of ideas, staff, intellectual property, culture, and values. (Altbach and Knight, 2007, as cited in Roffee & Burns, 2020). In this short amount of times, many factors effecting students while living abroad such as cultural difference from their background culture and the culture of the target country. Cultural differences in the short term study have an impact to the student. Maharaja (2018) stated that a study abroad experience has a positive impact on students' their intercultural competence and personal development.

Many factors might affect an international student's sociocultural experience, including length of stay in a new culture, prior cultural knowledge, degree of interaction and affiliation with host nations, cultural distance, and acculturation styles (Ward and Kennedy, 1999 as cited in (Wen

et al., 2018), language or communication competence Furnham (1988 as cited in Wen et al., 2018), quantity and quality of contact with host nationals, and friendship networks Bochner et al. (1977 as cited in Wen et al., 2018). Therefore, it is important to investigate the cultural difference from exchange-students' point of view. Many researchers conducted several studies related to this topic. Sobkowiak (2019) done research relating to the impact of studying abroad on students' intercultural competence. The result shows that the experience of studying in another country, demonstrated that studying abroad did not provide students with ample opportunities to immerse into the local community and fully discover a new cultural environment. In the other hand, (Alghamdi & Otte, 2016) done research relating to the The Challenges and Benefits of Study Abroad. The result shows that Students who study abroad face challenges related to language barriers, social integration issues, and financial challenges for the challenges, and These benefits are include financial gains on the part of the institution, the opportunity for cross cultural understanding and global awareness for host institutions and for domestic and international students.

While many study are done in this topic, but few are investigate on Indonesian student-exchange. In comparison to the previous research, this participant is Indonesian student. The researcher chose Indonesia student because want to know the differences of challenges between Indonesian and Polish student. The purpose of the research is to know their experiences on student mobility program in abroad and look into the cultural difference that may occur during their program.

METHOD

The study employs narrative inquiry to investigate the experience of two students from a state university in Indonesia during their involvement in student mobility program. Narrative inquiry is suitable to gain phenomenon of people's experiences and a methodology for narratively investigating experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, as cited in Trainor & Graue, 2013)(Abrar, 2019). Oral narrative is gained by means of interview which was conducted through Zoom application. The participants were both 23 years old and studied in one of the biggest university in Czech during their mobility program. An interview is an information-gathering technique that entails asking questions and receiving oral responses. The researcher used an interview because the data is closer and easier to obtain. According to (Brounéus, 2011) In depth interviews gather individual perspectives on one or a few narrowly defined themes. Zoom video calls were selected because they offer numerous benefits such as save time, money, and effort. The semi structured interview is used because it is allow for some flexibility for the researcher to ask follow-up questions as the interview progresses for interviewees to clarify or elaborate.(Barkhuizen et al., 2013) The interviews were conducted in Indonesian Language before being translated into English. Students were interviewed about their experiences during International student mobility program. The story sparked a slew of research-related inquiries. The narrative must pay close attention and carefully note what the interviewee says while collecting the data. That's why to back up the data, the narrative used a screen recorder during the interview process via video call, because sometimes their voice was unclear. As a result, the researcher would take notes during the interview for essential points to reduce transcription errors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The researcher discovered that the participants engaged in typical student activities such as studying, exploring new places, and traveling to neighboring countries during their four months

there. Their attendees met many people from different countries. The participants encountered several issues. The researcher discovered that some students struggle with food and weather and that most of them are perplexed when speaking with older people. The participant did not face many challenges because they were so warmly welcomed. The following is the student's explanation:

Participant number 1:

In the beginning, I found it challenging. I was nervous because it was just the beginning, so I needed to adapt. Starting from a small scope like

chatting with foreign people. At first, it seemed challenging to make the conversation flow, perhaps because we had a different background. Sometimes we don't understand their world and what the terms are. That's the difficulty that I got. Because rarely a middle-aged person can speak English.

Participant number 2:

It isn't difficult at all, because we in Olomouc have a lot of students from around the world who can speak English, but sometimes it's difficult if we communicate with middle-aged people who don't even know English.

According to the interview, participant 1 struggled because she is timid and sometimes cannot understand their meaning due to background differences. Participant 1 was initially nervous, but as the situation progressed, the participant became accustomed to it. While participant 2 was fine because many people in Olomouc, particularly students, can speak English. The exciting thing here is that both of them struggled when talking to middle-aged people because the majority of them they met didn't speak English.

Discussion

In this section, the researcher would like to discuss the finding of International Students Mobility Program: Experiences of Indonesian Students. The interviews revealed that the problem is from the internal and external, from the internal is, the participant need to adapt with a new culture, and from the external is the middle-aged people acting as impediments. This is align with Alghamdi & Otte (2016) stated that international students frequently encounter issues related to their adjustment to new academic and social environments. The participants had low confidence when they arrived in Czech, but their confidence and also knowledge grew as they lived there. This is consistent with previous research. According to the study, the sojourn, as an opportunity for meaningful interactions with both domestic and international students, has the potential to significantly improve participants' global-mindedness, preparing them for variety, change, and adaptation. (Sobkowiak, 2019). In the other hand they are still perplexed about how to respond when someone speaks to them in Czech. The difficulty was that they usually found someone aged between 40-70 who couldn't speak English, so they struggled when buying groceries because most of them were that age and couldn't speak English. Based on the preceding information, it is possible to conclude that the impediment is from the others. This is in line with (Wen et al., 2018). According to new research, cultural norms, language difficulties, and the nature of friendships in the host country may make it difficult for international students to form connections, contributing to their feelings of loneliness. Fortunately, some students can use both Czech and English to assist them. It was assumed that the student needed extra motivation to stay positive and try to learn daily conversation in that location. The current study demonstrates that the motivation of

international students influences their acculturation by assisting them in meeting their own needs in the new context. (Yang et al., 2018).

Based on the preceding paragraph, it is possible to conclude that the obstacles encountered by Indonesian students during student mobility are middle-aged people. Learning daily conversations in their language can help Indonesian students communicate more easily with locals, improving their language skills and increasing their motivation and confidence.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have periscoped critical challenges students face during student mobility and their possible solutions. The study found that the students perceive the challenges of living in other countries positively because learning a language while visiting another country is more interesting because we can learn with locals and in real life, which increases their interest and motivation.

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