

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Nowadays, the 21st century highlights the increased opportunities for students to mobilize and understand the different paradigms of learning and teaching. Students facing the 4.0 Industry Revolution must be prepared for a more diverse social and academic environment. In the field of Teacher Training and Education, studying abroad improves the international experience that can promote the influence of multicultural awareness and literacy. Such experience can lead to the expansion of one's knowledge regarding the necessary skills for 4.0 Industry Revolution. According to Anderson et al.'s (2006) claim that studying abroad has four principal purposes: 1) academic improvements, 2) intercultural sensibility, 3) professional development and 4) personal goals. They must have multicultural literacy and global connectivity along with social network, and fundamental adaptability.

With the golden opportunity of studying abroad, a student is equipped with international experience, immersed in diversity, and intercultural knowledge (Denda K., 2013). All of which points covers international academic and cultural exposure. Having study abroad experiences is an advantageous benefit, for example, global experiences and multicultural student participation where students can maximize their full potential according to Murray Brux, J., & Fry, B. (2010).

I am interested to share my personal experiences to help other students to have new insights and perspectives regarding studying abroad. Furthermore, through my experiences, I can help students who want to study abroad to have better preparation as well. Therefore, I am interested to share my academic and cultural experiences during my time studying abroad experience of IISMA in Czech Republic and how the experiences transformed me as a student.

1.2. Research Question

Many people encounter academic problems when they study abroad, for example adapting to The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and encountering different people with different backgrounds and cultures. I experienced similar challenges when I

encountered a difficulty in interacting with other students due to language barrier. Therefore, I want this research to focus on sharing my academic and cultural aspects of learning experiences.

In line with the discussion above, the research questions would be as follows:

1. How do the academic and cultural experiences during my study abroad in Czech Republic during IISMA program transform me as a student? This question can be broken down into two specific questions: 1) What are my academic experiences? 2) What are my cultural experiences?

1.3. Objective of the study

This study aims to explore my academic and cultural experiences during my study abroad experience of IISMA in Czech Republic, written based on a narrative inquiry method. To do so, I would like to share my stories and the meaning of my stories on my transformation as a student.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study is expected to give students an outlook on academic and culture during my IISMA studies in Czech Republic. It is also expected to give students insights regarding study abroad experiences in Czech Republic and motivation to pursue scholarships abroad. It contributes to the knowledge of academic and cultural challenges faced by other students who are planning to study abroad.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the theories of narrative inquiry. The study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world according to F. Michael Connelly, D. Jean Clandinin, (1990). This general concept is defined into the view that education and educational research are the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories; learners, teachers, and researchers are storytellers and characters in their own stories and those of others. D. Jean Clandinin & Vera Caine (2008) further explains that narrative inquiry is the best way of understanding experience through intimate study of individuals' experiences over time and in context.

1.6 Limitation and scope

This study is limited to the autoethnography and narrative of each corresponding sources of data. The scope is my own personal experience. This study is narrative and autoethnography, so it should be treated as such. Because this study is subjective to my own experience, it may not be generalized to other people's experiences.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Below are the key term definitions used in this study:

- a. **Academic experience:** It is defined as any learning experience obtained in an academic environment which may satisfy one or more areas in the related field. It is anything physical and psychological involvement by a student that devotes an experience academically. (
- b. **Autoethnography:** Autoethnography is a theoretical, methodological, and (primarily) textual approach that seeks to experience, reflect on, and represent through evocation the relationship among self and culture, individual and collective experience, and identity politics and appeals for social justice. (Holman Jones, S., 2007).
- c. **Cultural experience:** Cultural experiences consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodement and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves.' (T. Schwartz, 1992)
- d. **IISMA:** Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards is the Government of Indonesia's scholarship scheme to fund Indonesian students for mobility program at top universities overseas.
- e. **Narrative Inquiry:** Narrative Inquiry is a qualitative research method with a focus on people's experiences which are presented in narratives. It is well suited to addressing the complexities and subtleties of human experience in teaching and learning and researchers are allowed to present experience holistically in all its complexity and richness. (Mertova & Webster, 2019)
- f. **Study abroad:** Study abroad is an opportunity for students to pursue their higher education studies in a foreign country. This includes acquiring a broader perspective of different cultures and explore the foreign country. According to Baecher (2021), studying abroad

highlights the potential of international learning and promoting students' global and critical understandings in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

1.8 Organization of The Thesis

Chapter 1: Chapter one is the introduction chapter which mainly discusses the research background, research questions, research objectives, theoretical framework, the significance of the study, definition of key-terms, limitation and scope, and organizational of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Chapter two is the review of literature chapter which mainly discusses the related theories and previous studies of studying abroad.

Chapter 3: Chapter three is research methodology chapter which mainly discusses the research design, participants, instrument, the procedure of collecting data, technique of data analysis, and research schedule.

Chapter 4: Chapter four is the findings and discussions of the thesis, which mainly discusses the results of the research based on the analyzed data of artifacts, documents, reconstructed narratives and personal notes.

Chapter 5: Chapter five is the conclusions and recommendations, which mainly discusses about the overall summary of the research and the recommendations for future researchers.