

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this section, we will describe a) the background as the context of the research, b) the scope and limitations of the research, c) the review of relevant previous research, and d) the definition of terms used in this study.

1.1. Research Background

Although World War II, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland China have been building modern economies since the 1960s. These countries have been unique success stories throughout modern world history, even if they have experienced setbacks over the decades. Nevertheless, East Asia is currently one of the most economically prosperous and technologically advanced regions in the world. This can be seen from the OECD data for 2021-2022, which records the gross domestic product (GDP) growth of each country in East Asia, where the highest figure was achieved by China (21%), followed by Macau (17%), Taiwan (16%), South Korea (10%), Hong Kong (7%), and Japan (-2%). The average growth in East Asia reaches 14%, which is higher than Indonesia's growth of 12%.

The World Bank once predicted that East Asia's economic growth would reach 7.4% in 2021 (Siregar, 2021), and this is based on China's economic growth in recent years. In addition, the rapid economic growth and technology are due to excellent quality human resources.

Realizing this tardiness, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture launched a learning program called Merdeka Belajar (The Independent Learning Program). One of the programs is the Kampus Merdeka (The Independent Campus). The program was launched in 2020 within the framework of preparing students to be firm, relevant to the needs of the era, and ready to become leaders with a high national spirit (Kemdikbudristek RI, 2022). Additionally, this program was created to

build students' soft and hard skills according to the needs of both business and industry fields.

When implementing the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MB-KM) program, Students have the opportunity to study different programs of study at the same university or another university for one or two semesters. One of the MB-KM programs that can improve student abilities and provide new learning experiences is International Credit Transfer. In addition, this program is facilitating students to strengthen and increase their competence through other study programs or tertiary institutions. Besides, the existence of this program is to prepare students with global competence and as well as effort to anticipate intense global competition in various aspects (Kemdikbudristek RI, 2022).

The University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM) has collaborated with a university in Taiwan through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The consequence of choosing an overseas university is a form of implementing the International Credit Transfer Program for UMM students. This matter has consideration requires Indonesian students to learn from Taiwan with the outlook that will be able to improve their study quality.

In looking at MB-KM policy, the University of Muhammadiyah Malang implemented this program through online learning. Online learning is an alternative step that must be taken from the learning process by lecturers and students (Ruijten & Hooijman, 2019). From online learning, each will experience a different learning experience (Hsu & Dyke, 2021), including mastering scientific material that they learn through online learning.

Furthermore, the effects and impacts of implementing the International Credit Transfer program on students are of great concern. In particular, a study by Faiz et al. (2022) shows that international credit transfer student programs are more disciplined and responsible in terms of

cultural education carried out by the host university. Students could exchange any information related to the curriculum and educational culture they encounter. Based on previous studies, there are similarities with the current study such as the implementation of the International Credit Transfer program is carried out online but using a different website platform. Besides, the current study examined the program activities with a host university in Taiwan, in contrast to Aiman's research which examined this with a host university in India.

The study was conducted with different subjects and locations from the previous study. This inspires the recent study to examine students' experiences during the program process involving several challenges such as time management, adjustment in using learning platforms, and communication.

1.2. Research Problem

From the above explanation, the combination formulation in question can be prepared as follows:

1. How are the online learning experiences of UMM students joining the International Credit Transfer program?
2. What forms of knowledge do students obtain during online learning at an East Asian University?
3. What are the supporting and inhibiting factors experienced by the students while participating in the International Credit Transfer program?

1.3. Research Objectives

Referring to the research problem, the purposes of this research are:

1. Describes any forms of students' experiences in online learning as participants in the International Credit Transfer program.
2. Describes the forms of knowledge obtained by students during online learning at an East Asian university.

3. Describes the factors that support and inhibit students in the online learning process as the International Credit Transfer's participants.

1.4. Scope and Limitation

This study will primarily focus on the online learning experiences of students joining the International Credit Transfer program. Besides, it will not cover the other East Asian country universities except Asia University in Taiwan. The respondents must be students from the University of Muhammadiyah Malang students who participate in the International Credit Transfer program.

1.5. Research Significance

This research has significant values and relevancies that are important to know. First, it is a form of findings that will become input for the MB-KM program, especially at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang, and other university campuses in Indonesia. Second, it is to inform the advantages and disadvantages of implementing the MB-KM program. Third, it measures the effectiveness of the University of Muhammadiyah Malang campus policy in selecting cooperation partners for the international credit transfer program in the MB-KM program. Fourth, it is to show the use of English as lingua franca in learning educational process. Moreover, this research study result can be used as a reference for future research.

1.6. Definition of The Key Term

1. Online Learning

According to Al-Hawamleh et al. (2022), learning is a tool that can make the teaching and learning process more student-centred, innovative, and flexible. Apart from that, online learning is a type of distance learning, which is a general term for learning that takes place in a separate room rather than a traditional classroom (Savić & Alčaković, 2022). Aligned with those ideas, this study defines online learning as a teaching-learning activity which is held by teachers and students using different devices using the internet.

2. Experience

Based on the Merriam-Webster dictionary, experience refers to facts or states of affairs that are influenced or that knowledge is gained through direct observation or participation. As same as this idea, the recent study defined experience as a knowledge or skill gained from an event in the past.

3. International Credit Transfer

International credit transfer is a process that certifies the amount of learning and learning outcomes that students have learned at overseas partner universities (host universities) (Kemdikbudristek RI, 2022). Almost similar to this idea, a recent study interprets International Credit Transfer as a program that supports student learning experiences at host universities and the credit will be converted into courses at home university.

