

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In this current era of globalization, the higher education is one example of an industry affected by globalization, particularly on some educational factors such as access to education, faculty and also student mobility. In this case, it is closely related with the term internationalization. It can be said that the higher education faculty such as universities strategic initiatives is to provide and continue to stay within the field of education and addressing the challenges of globalization. Through internationalization, universities can grow through the exchange of knowledge and cultures, the enhancement of the quality of the education, and also the increase competitiveness of universities both domestically and internationally.

Referring to internationalization in higher education, which in this case in universities, it is accomplished through variety of initiatives, including international conferences, international student and staff mobility, cooperative research and publishing, and more. In Indonesia, the increase pace of internationalization has drawn attention to scholarly or academic cooperation, in particular to collaborative research, joint degree and also international student exchange programs (Susandi et al., 2023). In Indonesia, according to the Minister of Education and culture regulation number 3 (2020) Article 15 paragraph 1, learning activities can take place both inside and outside of study programs, which also mentioned that students' exchange is one of the example (Haq et al., 2022). An example of exchange program in Indonesia is Program Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka (PMM). PMM focuses on helping the students comprehend Indonesia's diverse cultural heritage, and also anticipated that students who participate in this program would have a solid understanding of the archipelago (Sesriyani et al., 2022). For the PMM, the students are given a choice to study at another campus within the duration of one to three semesters.

In the realm of international education, students exchange programs have evolved as transformative and as life-changing opportunities for students. The exchange programs allowing them to encounter many foreign cultures, gain a global perspective, and engage in both academic and personal development. These programs, often undertaken by international students, which promotes cross-cultural encounters and immersion in various environments, leading to the creation of memorable experiences that have a lasting impact on the students' life (Cho et al., 2020).

Covid-19 pandemic, which is one of the worst geopolitical disruption known to this day, has affected the implementation of the international students exchange programs. During the pandemic period, student exchange programs are no longer physically possible because of some country restrictions due to the pandemic. Universities around the world were compelled to devise a different way of carrying out the student exchange programs because of the global lockdown and also travel restriction. Because of this, some students who were engaging in an exchange program during the pandemic period need to participate virtually or via online. The classes are done through digital devices such as phone, laptop or pc which also requires a reliable internet connection. The virtual exchange program can be considered as cost effective, due to students didn't need to spend more money for things like accommodation, living expenses and plane tickets which are all parts of the physical student mobility factors from the exchange programs.

Exchange program could be considered as a part of educational tourism. Educational tourism can be defined as a form of learning experience that is planned and overseen by academic institutions (Tomasi et al., 2020). The notion of educational tourism has undergone some scrutiny over the years from academics and researchers, and it occasionally changes (Thoo et al., 2022). International students are one crucial factor that has impacted educational tourism worldwide. As the demands and needs of international students change, so does the landscape of educational tourism.

International students are exposed to diverse worldviews, customs, and perspective, shaping their global mindset and the cross-cultural skills that are highly

valued within a competitive job market. In other words, they are often regarded as a valuable pool of global talent. With those students engaged in educational tourism, the impact extends beyond graduation, influencing the students' career paths, social relationship and might lead to future international engagement. Within the context of educational tourism, understanding the complex linkages between memorable experiences, nostalgia, satisfaction and revisit intentions among international students becomes particularly relevant. Within the context of marketing, eventually the revisit intention would impact the national image of the host countries, and would impact the marketing performance through experience marketing and integrated marketing (Zhang et al., 2018).

Nostalgia, characterized by a sentimental longing for the past, are frequently found in the memorable experiences that international students have when participating in exchange programs. Nostalgia is bittersweet (Leunissen et al., 2021; Turner & Stanley, 2021), although more of the sweet than the bitter. In this context, nostalgia becomes a strong emotional anchor, which potentially drawing students back to revisit the places and experiences that have left a lasting impression.

Satisfaction also is a crucial factor regarding the student's experiences while being in foreign countries while doing the exchange programs. In this case, the students can be considered as the tourists, which make this not only a type of educational visit but also considered as tourism visit. The results of previous research, which show how pleased that tourists either return to the same place in the future or promote it to others, are confirm by the positive connection between tourist's overall satisfaction and their intention to return (Alegre & Garau, 2010; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Kozak, 2001b; Meleddu et al., 2015; Meng & Han, 2018; Zhang et al., 2018). Satisfactory experiences in this case have the potential to endorse the host country as a prime destination for educational tourism.

As for revisit intentions, it can be defined as the likelihood that a tourist will return to a certain location, and this behavior is seen as loyalty or genuine action that indicates a person's wish to return to the same destination (Choo et al., 2016). Revisit intentions also can be considered as a critical factor in the evaluation of the success and sustainability of the exchange programs.

From international business perspective, the exchange program which is a part of international education not only has become a cornerstone for academic growth, but also a strategic aspect of international business development. One way to look at this is when there's positive revisit intentions among international students, which transform them into returning educational tourists, contributing not only for the local economy but also the ongoing interchange of cultural and business ideas. In certain countries, exchange programs and educational travel have developed into a reliable and continuous sector that grows more rapidly each year than leisure and business tourism (Lesjak et al., 2015).

In Indonesia, as mentioned there's an increase pace over the years that gain the educational institutes attention to implement more of academic cooperation and collaboration, including exchange programs (Susandi et al., 2023). In this case, the students who have participated in the exchange programs have certain experiences during those exchange period, and this would cause the students to have future options whether they are going to go back to the host countries for certain reasons (job opportunities, vacation trip) or not (Cho et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, there are certain indicators of issues with higher education that call for particular intentions regarding the exchange program that has been implemented. Those indicators are the students' preference on which country is the most selected country as the target destination for the exchange program, the educational revolution in education that are related with the preparedness of the human resource or human capital, and also graduates who are capable of responding the market (Sesriyani et al., 2022). In the relation with this research, this research tries to find out with the availableness of opportunities in the host country and with their experience in the exchange program, whether would they're willing to go back to that host country in a determined period of time (1-year period) and in relation with the countries they're visiting for the exchange programs.

Moreover, even though the students are considered as tourists, little research has been done on the intention of foreign exchange students to return to their host country (Cho et al., 2020). The model used for this thesis bridged the fields of psychology, tourism and also international business, which creates a

multidisciplinary framework. This aligns with the trend of integrating the rise of internationalization in Indonesia that has been mentioned. This research focus on to figure out the direct relationship between the variables which are the components of human behavior, and those are memorable experiences, nostalgia, satisfaction, and revisit intention. Furthermore, this research wants to highlight the potential impact if the students revisit the host country on the development of educational tourism destinations and in business perspective.

The researcher's interest in investigating this topic is to explore the intricate connections between all the variables involved, and to know how eventually exchange programs could contribute to the host countries in terms of international business. This research seeks to explore and contribute a deeper understanding of how memorable experiences evoke nostalgia, influence satisfaction levels, and shape students' intentions to revisit their host countries in the future.

1.2 Research Problems

The current state of international higher education is characterized by students' increased cross-border mobility and participation in exchange programs that cut beyond national and regional boundaries. Additionally, based on the background of the problem explained above, the research problems for this research are as follows:

- a. Does memorable exchange program experience positively impact the Indonesian students' revisit intentions?
- b. Does memorable exchange program experience positively impact the development of nostalgia in Indonesian students participating in exchange programs?
- c. Does memorable exchange program experience positively impact the general satisfaction of the Indonesian students who participate in an exchange program?
- d. Does nostalgia positively influence satisfaction among Indonesian students in the context of exchange programs?

- e. Does nostalgia influence the revisit intention of Indonesian students who have participated in exchange programs?
- f. Does the satisfaction of the Indonesian students who participated in exchange programs positively impact their revisit intention to the host country?

1.3 Research Objectives

- a. To examine whether memorable experiences positively impact revisit intention.
- b. To examine whether memorable experiences positively impact the development of nostalgia among Indonesian students participating in exchange programs.
- c. To examine whether memorable exchange program experiences positively impact the Indonesian students' satisfaction levels.
- d. To examine whether nostalgia positively impact the Indonesian students' satisfaction in the context of exchange programs.
- e. To examine whether nostalgia positively impact the Indonesian students' revisit intention.
- f. To examine whether the students' satisfaction who participated in exchange program positively impact their revisit intention to the host country.

1.4 Research Benefits

1. For the researcher, this research is useful to enhance a deeper understanding of the relationship between memorable experiences, nostalgia, satisfaction and the revisit intentions among Indonesian students who have participated in an exchange program. The research also gives insight on how eventually the students' revisit intentions impact educational tourism and the host countries from international business perspective which help the researcher to reach the conclusion of this research.
2. For the readers or other parties that have an interest in the results of this result, it is hoped that this research can be useful for academic purposes and

can be used as reliable information and reference material for future research.

3. For higher education, this research is hoped could be useful in terms of academic and practical dimensions. It is hoped that from the results of the research, the higher education could gain new insight on how to enhanced student recruitment, and also improve the student experience and satisfaction in terms of educational exchange programs.

1.5 Systematic Framework

This report will use a specific writing structure in order to professionally provide the information to the readers through this report, which are as follows:

Chapter 1

This chapter contains the general background regarding the issue discussed in this research, and it provides the research questions, objectives, purpose and the benefits of this research.

Chapter 2

In this chapter, various literature reviews were given in order to develop the basic knowledge of the main issue and variables that were being used in this research. The conceptual model and the hypothesis of this research were also given in this chapter.

Chapter 3

This chapter contains the information regarding the research type, and the data collection method that was used to collect the data which was through questionnaires. It also contains the data analysis and the research design, which provides the questions that were used in the questionnaires.

Chapter 4

In this chapter, the results of the data were provided with detailed explanations. The data provided such as the total number of respondents, the characteristics of the respondents, and also certain elements within the data collected that has been analyzed through Smart PLS.

Chapter 5

This chapter provide the answers and the final conclusion of this research. Explanations regarding the implications that occurred while doing this research were also given. This chapter will also provide the limitations of the research conducted for this thesis. Certain guides and tips for future researcher that wants to conduct a similar research were also provided for this chapter.

