

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter is divided into two major parts presenting a discussion about theoretical studies and previous studies. Theoretical studies comprise related theorists in this study while previous studies discuss the implementation of that related theories in prior studies.

#### **2.1.1 Student Exchange**

Student exchange is a program that student is received into an institution in another country, sometimes in exchange for one that sent in the university in their home country for the first. Tough there are also students exchange that sent in the other university without the one that send in the home university. Nowadays, there are a lot of types of students exchange program namely, YFU Indonesia Intercultural Exchange Program, Indonesia-Canada Youth Exchange Program, Rotary Youth Exchange, Global Undergraduate Exchange Program, and so on. These programs are different in terms of host country, organization, program duration, and the participants' criteria.

Nowadays, there are number or reasons of students to study abroad. Raby, Ward, and Rhoades (2021) defined the key influencers that impact students' choices to study abroad. Some of the most popular reasons for students to study abroad are personal interest and to grow their personal which linked to the job opportunity in the future. This argument supported by Harrell, Sterner, Alter, and Lonie (2017) who found that desire to travel and opportunity are primary reasons of students to study

abroad. They also added that student choose to study abroad to get academic credit for their graduation or to improve their job opportunities.

Studying abroad can bring a lot of benefits for the students. Studying abroad allows students to experience in-person international life experience and it potentially allows students to self-awareness, improve problem-solving skills, learn new subject material, and become world citizen (Rabi, Ward, & Rhoades, 2021). Moreover, Haj-Yehia and Erez (2015) argued that students from different countries are allowed to meet each other and recognize the cultures of their host region that host them in an atmosphere of multiculturalism and tolerance.

### **2.1.2 Culture Shock**

At first, the term culture shock was used by (Oberg, 1960) in his journal Culture Shock: Adjustment to New Cultural Environments. Culture shock is a feeling of loss of determination, being selfish, loss of identity, refusal, stomachache and headache, homesickness, longing for friends and family, and feeling of sensitivity (Masagus & Kurnia, 2019). For instance, Fiktorius concluded culture shock as several factors that vary from each individual that result personal experience. Narous (2018) asserted that homesickness is the most common culture shock symptom followed by the feeling of missing the home culture. There are four stages of culture shock. Interestingly, Patel and Sooknanan (2019) described the stages of culture shock as a U-Curve that poetry a situation that everyone has experienced.

The study of culture becomes important with the increase in global mobilization and immigration. The study by Lopez (2020) which investigated the challenges faced by Mexican students in the U.K. during the early stage showed that most of the students did not feel the excitement during the first stage and have to deal with the real problem since the early stage. He explained that most of the problems came because of the lack of student understanding of the culture and their institution. A study by Fiktorius (2019) investigated the way Indonesian students adapted to U.S. life and showed that the positive impact will appear through an understanding of a new culture and will enhance individual capacity to adapt to the new environment.

In Indonesia, many studies focused on foreign students' culture shock. Mihayo (2019), studied the culture shock among African students in Indonesia. This study took place in an Indonesian university. The study found that those who came to study in Indonesia experienced the same culture shock as those who study abroad in other countries. Mihayo (2019) also suggested those who want to study abroad to understand the mechanism and consequences of studying abroad, shape their knowledge, and develop a positive attitude in order to ease their adjustment to the new cultural environment. Another study by Sulaiman and Saputri (2019) found that there were two major points of culture shock which were academic shock (i.e Teachers' role and attitude, poorly organized program and classroom organization, and local students' attitude) and social shock (i.e) women-men relationship, community bonding, habits in the social gathering). The findings of this study

support the previous study. The students who have prepared their mental and psychology coped with the shock and learned academics in their destination.

### **2.1.3 Academic Life**

Academic life refers to a life that is related to academic value. In terms of international students and exchange students, academic life is always associated with their challenges when studying abroad in a new environment. Martirosyan, Bustamante, and Saxon (2019) mentioned that there are unique challenges that international students experience related to their academic lives. Compared to the local students, in their academic life, international students were more likely to experience anxiety, homesickness, and stress in adjusting to the new academic system. Smith (2020) and Dgatekin (2021) found that the language barrier is one of the most common struggles that is faced by international students while studying abroad. Moreover, exclusion from group discussion, cultural differences in learning, adjustment to the new environment, and academic support issues were also contributing to international students' academic life. The impact of these challenges may result the challenges of the institution in maintaining their students' enrolments (Smith, 2020)

A study by Su, McDonnell, Shi, Liang, Li, Wen, Cai, Xiang, and Yang (2021) who investigated Chinese international students in the United States found that undergraduate students had bigger cultural stress, because of the low quality of life. This result indicates that there is also an impact on the quality of life to the

academic life of an international student. In another setting, Dagtekin (2021) investigated the factor affecting international students' academic performance. His study figured out that institutions should understand international students' expectations and communication to be able to improve students' academic performance.

#### 2.1.2.1 Honeymoon Stage

Honeymoon stage is a phase of culture shock that took place during the first arrival. During this stage, people who experienced the culture shock will be captivated with everything that is new. Oberg (1960) stated that during the first weeks, most individuals are fascinated by the new. It is labeled as the initial phase that takes place when people arrive to a new culture, and everything feels so good (Fiktorius, 2019). The present feeling in this stage is mostly positive feelings but it rarely found that students experience negative feeling in this stage.

Previous studies have found that most of newly arrived exchange student were experiencing the honeymoon phase during the first few weeks. For example, a qualitative study by Herdi and Handayani (2021) found that exchange students at Rumbai, Pekanbaru experienced honeymoon stage included hospitality, scenery, and the custom of the country. In different setting, Grafia (2021) studied the culture shock experienced by Indonesia students at western university. This study which collected the data from two Indonesia students in Germany found that during the first arrival, Indonesian students felt surprised that they were already in western country. Moreover, this qualitative study also found that the students felt fascinated

to experience the weather and the culture that they never experienced before. However, different result was found by Lopez (2020). In his study, he found that Mexican Students in the western university experienced negative feelings because they had to deal with such problems during the first week.

#### 2.1.2.2 Frustration Stage

Frustration stage is an initial stage that happens after the honeymoon stage, it happens as soon as students have to deal with such problems because of the difference things. This phase is commonly described by the previous researcher as the lowest point where people in when moving to a different place. According to Sulaiman and Saputri (2019), when newcomer students gradually feel shocked and start noticing the ponder of the dissimilarities between the home country and the host country known as the frustration stage. In similar vein, Fiktorius (2019) described frustration stage of culture shock as when students start experiencing the feeling related to confusion, frustration, fatigue, and stress.

A qualitative study by Alloh, Tait, and Taylor (2020) found that students experiencing frustration stage of culture shock. This study which investigates African students in the western university found that in the frustration phase, students were still associated with the traditional food and changed in diet. In different context, Krsmanovic (2020) who investigated international students in the United States found that students from Middle East were found to experience significantly higher level of acculturative stress than their peers from other cultural backgrounds. Poedjiastuti (2021) who studied Thai students in Indonesian university

found that Thai students also experienced culture shock in terms of academic culture, such as teacher attitude and poorly organized program. Longing for home which is a part of frustration stage occurred in the first few weeks (Fiktorius, 2019). This meaning is in line with Narouz (2018) who argued that homesickness which is followed by missing the home culture is the most common symptom of culture shock.

#### 2.1.2.3 Adjustment Stage

The third stage of culture shock is known as the adjustment stage. This stage appears after the frustration stage as they respond to the problems that are faced during the frustration stage. According to Suliman and Saputri (2019), the adjustment stage is when the foreigners or newcomers have got positive behavior toward the people of the new country they stay in, and the culture becomes more familiar. They added that in this stage, the foreigners or newly arrived students have got accustomed and are able to adapt or socialize with the new environment. In a similar vein, Fiktorius (2019) explained that the adjustment phase appears when people show some increased abilities to get used to meaningfully conforming to the new cultural model, I was highly motivated to learn about the situation and to get away from a difficult situation so that I can enjoy my experience fully.

Previous related study focusing on international students who studied abroad in the United States done by Rabi, Ward, and Rhoades (2021) exploration found that through studying abroad, international students learned that they were capable of learning new things independently. In another context, Furnham (2021) study



examined Indonesian students culture shock who studied in the US. This qualitative study suggested that students should be encouraged to be involved in their adaptation as well as the education process. Ward, Raby, and Rhoades (2021) who examined international students in the United States found that students felt that through studying abroad, they learned how to solve problems independently.

#### 2.1.2.4 Adaptation Stage

The final stage of culture shock also known as adaptation stage is the stage where people who experience culture shock can enjoy their time being in a new place. According to Herdi and Handayani (2021), adaptation phase is the phase where people can interact with the locals' society. In this stage, the feeling of comfort can be experienced in daily activity and everyday situation (Fiktorius, 2019). As soon as this phase is reached, the new culture will completely be acceptable. Moreover, people can have abilities to take problems while managing new cultures successfully.

A qualitative study by Gravia (2021) that examined Indonesian students in Germany found that students in the adjustment stage get motivation also knowledge about the culture shock. Another related study done by Fiktorius (2019) found that international students in the United States felt excited as soon as they reached the adaptation stage which is typically depicted by the nuance of joy. Moreover, Fiktorius (2019) also found that students gained both self-confidence and the ability to survive in the new culture.



### **2.1.3 Culture Shock to Academic Life Experience**

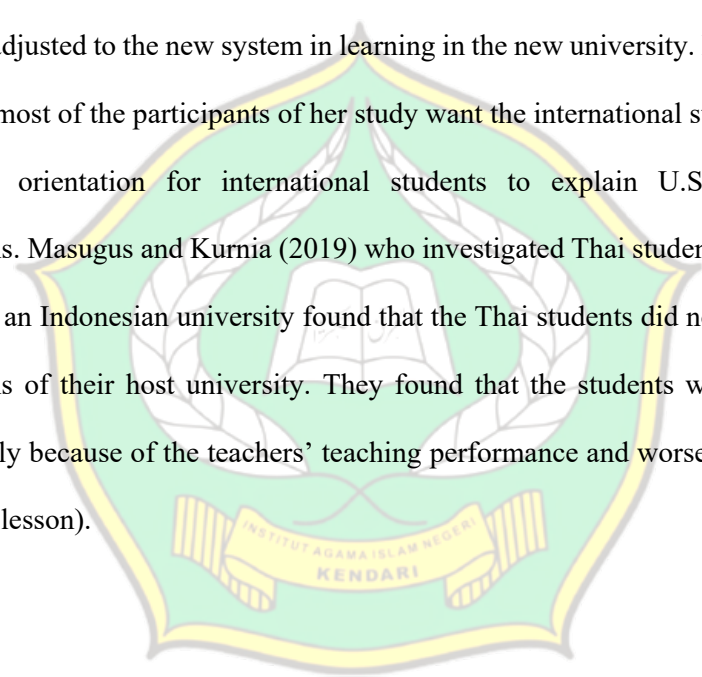
Every international student will get a culture shock no matter where the destination is (Rabi, Ward, & Rhoades, 2021). Even though every student has a quite different experience, they will still get the effect of culture shock itself no matter where they are going to study. Although the effect may be different among international students, it is still important to explore this issue. Some aspects that may be affected by culture shock are health experience (Alloh, et al., 2018), social experience (Heng, 2017), and academic life experience (Belford, 2017).

There are several benefits that are offered to exchange students who study abroad. For example, the access to get a high quality and internationally standard education and opportunities for work experience. Moreover, a benefit from the interaction with the host culture which can improve their language skill and help them to be confident in communication. As it is mentioned before, language barrier can be affecting the students' academic life tremendously, but by interacting with the host culture the students can help themselves in coping with the new cultural environment. In other hand, Belford (2017), found that the feeling of loneliness which is the symptoms of culture shock is often determined to exchange students over all confidence and academic performance.

The lack of knowledge about how to adjust and make a friendship with the house peer also impact international students' academic life. Alloh et al. (2018) found that some international students spent more hours learning language than studying their courses. Heng (2017) who studied Chinese international students at a U.S. college found that most of her participants want their house peers to be a little

bit more interested in them and communicate with them often so that they can improve their language and their academic performance. International students from some countries also wished for their peers to be more open-minded with them to not stereotype them.

Moreover, new classrooms and university environments are likely to affect students' academic life. It is quite predictable that each country has a different level of education and facilities to support students' needs. Some students need a longer time to be adjusted to the new system in learning in the new university. Heng (2017) found that most of the participants of her study want the international student office to arrange orientation for international students to explain U.S. classroom expectations. Masugus and Kurnia (2019) who investigated Thai students who were studying at an Indonesian university found that the Thai students did not meet their expectations of their host university. They found that the students were shocked academically because of the teachers' teaching performance and worse attitude (i.e. late for the lesson).



### **2.2.1 Relevant Studies**

This study focuses to explore an eastern exchange student's culture shock to academic life experience at a U.S. Midwest university. It is important to specify the studies about culture shock when having a talked about culture shock experienced by exchange students since there are studies that are related to exchange students' culture shock in recent years.

**Table 1.1 List of relevant studies on culture shock to academic life experienced by exchange student in the U.S. context**

Year	Researcher	PST	Stage of Culture Shock	Instruments
2020	Krsmanovic	10	First year	One-on-one, semicultured, and face to face interview
2019	Fiktorius	1	All Stages	Interview
2018	Wang, Li, Noltemeyer, Wang, Zhang, & Shaw	169	All Stages	Questionnaires

Table 1.1 presets the relevant studies on culture shock experienced by exchange students in the U.S. Setting.

The first reviewed related study is Wang, Li, Noltemeyer, Wang, Zhang, and Shaw (2018). Their study investigating cross-cultural adaptation of international student in the United States. As much as 169 undergraduate and graduate students participated in this study participated in this study. The participants in this study were vary in terms of age, gender, length of residence, nationality, first language, and major. This study used questionnaires to make surveys. This study analyzed the

data using the U-Curve theory as what it is also used in this study. Wang, et al., (2018) found that most of the students no matter the length of their residence most likely to experience all stages of culture shock (i.e honeymoon, culture shock (crisis), recovery, and adjustment). They also found that culture shock may appear after six to eighteen months after arrival. This study suggested international students and universities that it is needed to provide support beyond the first week or months on campus because adaptation is a process that happens over time. Furthermore, understanding the acculturation process is beneficial for both faculty and staff who interact with international student because they can have better understanding and sensitive to students' experiences and the challenges they may face. The study, however, only explained the physiological impact of culture shock to international students and the other aspects were ignored. Moreover, the study did not use the students' personal reflective and archives to enrich the data as it is used in this study. Instead, the study only using survey to collect the data from the large number of participants.

Fiktorius's (2019) study also took part in the United States setting. This study aimed to examine international students' social and cultural experiences. Similarly to this study, Fiktorius (2019) collected the data from only one international student. Moreover, during his examination, an Indonesian student was interviewed through WhatsApp and Email to gather data from the participant's own words and personal interpretation. He argues that the honeymoon period is a stage that presents when people arrive in a new culture, and everything felt so good. However, unfamiliar environments then would lead to confusion (i.e frustration stage). He added that in

the adjustment stage, students would get both self-confidence and the ability to adapt to the new environment. Fiktorius (2019) suggested the students to understanding the new place because it will lead the student to positive impacts that enhance their capacity to adapt. This should become a great concern for international students before deciding to study abroad. However, there is a big thing that differs this study from my study where this study did not provide evidence from student's personal archives to connect each event from the participant's narrative as used in my study.

Previously, International students' acculturation strategies also have been discussed by Krsmanovic (2020) in his journal, *I Was New, and I Was Afraid: The Acculturation Strategies by International Students First-Year Undergraduate Students in the United States*. Krsmanovic (2020) involved 10 participants in this qualitative study. To translate the data, this study used acculturation model, instead of using narrative approach as it is used in my study. In his study, he described students' strategy as voluntary and involuntary strategy. Voluntary strategy included the utilizing of knowledge, skills, and competencies obtained in their home countries. While the involuntary strategy included study group, workshop, or seminar which require the students to interact with other people or their peer. All these previous studies have discussed stages of culture shock and students' strategi in reducing culture shock. However, this study that have discussed the culture shock to academic life experience specifically and collect the data from students' reflection or archive.