
Graduating from High School Overseas and Academic Transition to Indonesian University Atmosphere

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Abstract

This research aimed to explore the academic transition of Indonesian university students who graduated high school overseas from Qatar to Indonesia, specifically speaking about their experiences and challenges in the academic transition. The research implemented a qualitative design with a narrative approach to get in-depth information on the lives of everyone. This research involved 5 Indonesian university students who had stayed ten years or more in Qatar and studied in Indonesia. The data were collected through a semi-structured interview and documents of reflective writing as supporting data. The data were analyzed by using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that due to the academic transitions from one country to their homeland, the transition was difficult when comparing both education systems in Qatar and Indonesia. Furthermore, no additional classes, or orientation programs were effective in preventing the challenges they faced. The challenges were emotional anxiety, loss of the English language, and peer pressure. Fortunately, this transition phase was not static and could be fixed.

Keywords

Academic, challenges, experience, overseas, transition, and university student

Article History

Received 11 January 2023

Accepted 16 April 2023

How to Cite

Wahyuni, N., Mirizon, S., & Silvhiany, S. (2023). Graduating from high school overseas and academic transition to Indonesian university atmosphere. *Indonesian Research Journal in Education | IRJE |*, 7(1), 23–42. <https://doi.org/10.22437/irje.v7i1.24609>

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Introduction

Nowadays, it is easy for people to move from one place to another, especially to achieve a better life. It includes some expatriates that search for jobs outside of Indonesia, such as in the Middle East. Over the past 20 to 25 years, the case of expatriates working abroad has shown high growth (Johnson, 2005). Specifically, this has happened with Indonesia and the Middle East, which according to Istadiyantha (2021), have had a good relationship since the independence of Indonesia. They have collaborated in various fields, such as economics, politics, and social culture. Hence many Indonesian citizens move to the Middle East for job opportunities as expatriates. After getting a job, many expatriates spend their life there and grow in the host country's customs and culture. Thus, when expatriates have children, it will most affect the children during their development stages. Afterward, Kendall (2013) stated that from an early age, children have extraordinary abilities to master a language and have a relationship with language and culture in an environment. However, since work contracts have an expiry date, some expatriates have to move back from their host country to Indonesia. This transition will not only affect the expatriates' families but also the growth of their children, specifically, their adaptation process during their relocation in academic transition. This displacement is a process that involves many physical, social, and emotional variables that can be stressful for children (Rawls, 2016). It will have difficulty adjusting without direction and guidance on how to adapt well to a new environment. Researchers have shown that this will cause homesickness and deep culture shock due to relocation and impact on personality disorders and even emotional distress (Minichiello, 2000).

Preparation, encounter, adjustment, and stabilization are the successive stages of a transitional process (Nicholson & West, 1995). In other words, the academic transition can be the process students go through as they navigate various academic obligations in a new setting, such as when transferring from one high school to another. In this case, it is the academic transition from Indonesian university students who have lived in Qatar immersing in the Indonesian education system. Early immigrants, late immigrants, and unaccompanied international students were the three cohort groups of Chinese children in Eastern Canada that were the subject of one quantitative research (Kuo & Roysircar, 2004). These researchers used questionnaires to identify between-group differences, discovering that international sojourners had lower levels of acculturation and higher levels of acculturative stress than the other two immigrant groups. Additionally, they found overseas students displayed comparable characteristics and experiences to those of recent immigrants, which is not surprising considering the similarities between spatial dislocation and recent immigration to the new country. These same researchers used a survey methodology to investigate the adaptation of 201 unaccompanied sojourners from Taiwan in different quantitative research. They found that teenage overseas students were a vulnerable group that was frequently unprepared before their trip and had trouble adjusting to the new environment (Kuo & Roysircar, 2006). The students claimed that in addition to not knowing much about the host culture, they also struggled to understand why they were there, which made transitioning to a new cultural reality even more challenging. In addition, 230 Chinese undergraduate students

born abroad were subjected to a series of questionnaires by Ying (2001). According to her research, unaccompanied international students maintained stronger ties to their past and traditional values by speaking their native language, remaining more connected to others from their home country, and retaining a connection to their home culture. Based on some research above about foreign children settling for the academic transition in a foreign country, not much research has been done about Indonesian university students that have long lived in a Middle East country like Qatar and transitioning back to their home country Indonesia. Therefore, there is a lack of research on Indonesian university students from abroad settling for their academic transition in Indonesia. Hence, this research aims to establish a qualitative understanding of the experiences of Indonesian university students who long lived abroad and the challenges concerning their academic transfer to Indonesian universities. The research's main objective is to offer suggestions to educators on how to support these students who have long lived abroad regarding their academic transition to Indonesian universities more effectively.

Literature Review

Schlossberg transition theory

Schlossberg developed the transition theory because she thought there was a need to create a systematic framework that would make it easier to understand adults going through a change and direct them to the support they needed to manage. According to Goodman et al. (2006), understanding the change significance of a particular person necessitates considering the nature, context, and impact. Schlossberg's theory describes three sorts of transitions, such as anticipated, unanticipated, and non-events are described by. Transitions that are projected to occur include things like high school graduation. Unexpected shifts take place without warning or any plans. Such occurrences include getting fired, a family member passing away suddenly, or getting divorced. Non-event transitions are those that a person anticipated happening but did not, such as the marriage that never happened or the unborn child. According to Schlossberg's idea, a transition is only real if the person going through it defines the context as such. The context describes a person's relationship to the change (their own or another) and to the environment in which the transition occurs (work, personal relationships, and so forth). The impact of a transition, or how much it impacts a person's daily life, is also significant for those living through it. Stress can be caused by positive and negative transitions, and coping with several transitions at once can be very challenging. People are initially captivated by their new role. They gradually start to distance themselves from the past and create new identities, connections, routines, and presumptions. Both opportunities for growth and prospects for downfall can come from transitions.

Curriculum

The curriculum is a collection of plans and agreements that specify the objectives, subject matter, instructional strategies, and supporting materials that should be used to carry out learning activities, especially in the language curriculum. The Encyclopedia of Curriculum Studies defines curriculum theory as an interdisciplinary curriculum that

addresses the curriculum in terms of its historical, feminist, political, racial, international, post-modern, autobiographical, and religious elements (Kridel, 2010). Therefore, curriculum theory, which is strongly tied to our beliefs about what is significant about ourselves and our society, genuinely goes to the depths of our individual, social, and cultural depths (Walker & Soltis, 2004).

For this research, the students had already learned from the Cambridge curriculum in Qatar. The Cambridge curriculum impacted the world as an international curriculum that nations like Qatar would likely use. The Cambridge curriculum is a division of Cambridge University that has made the Cambridge International Examination which offers a global curriculum that can be used in all nations. The largest international curriculum in the world for kids between the ages of 14 and 19 is offered through Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), which are organized by Cambridge University. According to Oktaviani et al. (2013), more than 9,000 schools from 160 countries around the world—including America, Asia Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and South Africa—have implemented the Cambridge program, which offers examinations from elementary to secondary level and provides a curriculum or framework. It includes the one that is used in Qatar. Four prerequisites for CIE are Cambridge Primary (5–11 years), Cambridge Secondary 1 or Cambridge Lower Secondary (11–14 years), Cambridge Secondary 2 (14–16 years), and Cambridge Advanced (16–18 years). Green (2010) noted that many secondary schools abroad were working to expand their institutions through opportunities or the requirement to offer new courses or restructure existing ones. Furthermore, from the information above, the concept of how both society in Qatar and Indonesia builds a curriculum according to each country's beliefs and society. Hence, that shift in the education system from the curriculum in Qatar to Indonesia will impact their beliefs, society, and social and cultural depths.

Assisting transition

Transitioning to different places often influences many factors of every individual, including sociocultural skills, self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and support, friendships, the Internet, and transition programs (Bredeman, 2015; Hervey, 2009; Ittel & Sisler, 2012; Pollock & Van Reken, 2009; Quick, 2010; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Sociocultural skills

Sociocultural skill is the ability to have a verbal or non-verbal connection with people from everywhere and in every situation that does not depend on their background or where they are from. Since we live in a heterogenous world, the presence of sociocultural competence is the key to understanding verbal and non-verbal behavior and the ability to regulate their conduct under this knowledge in real-life situations of communication that will remain essential to the students' lives (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). Sociocultural skills are particularly crucial during transition time moving from one country to another as they can assist with the adaptation to social and cultural change. The students from abroad developed a former sense of culture from a foreign country, and the changes they have experienced

may be the same feeling as when changing jobs, moving from one country to another, or even losing a loved one (Cheng et al., 2015). Hence, it all depends on how the students move passed and use their sociocultural skills to potential changes and challenges in university life, like when studying back in their home country in Indonesian Universities.

Self-efficacy

Confidence within an individual with a strong sense of self-value and identity has been acknowledged to manage the challenging situation better. Ittel and Sisler (2012) stated that students who live abroad with a higher self-efficacy tend to find it less difficult in the sociocultural adaptation process. Therefore, confident individuals are more buoyant and resilient and can navigate their way from challenging situations. The responsibility to support individuals to develop a strong sense of self primarily lies with parents. Regardless of this, the research did not confirm that the family relationship affected sociocultural adaptation. Instead, they suggested these strong bonds may ultimately support a child's sociocultural adjustment, as a strong sense of self-confidence, nurtured by the family, can assist the process of adjusting to a new culture.

Emotional intelligence

They described that it is the ability to monitor one's and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. A person's decisions and behaviors tend to be more inclined to feelings, which act as a deciding factor. Therefore, a person does not only reply to the intellect but also uses their feelings and emotions to direct and guide them, particularly when facing tough times (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Consequently, individuals with well-developed emotional skills are more likely to be content and efficient in their lives (Goleman, 2007). Goleman (2007) argued it is because emotional intelligence assists people to deal with life's challenges, and those who are emotionally competent are at an advantage during difficult times in any aspect of their life. Therefore, emotional competence plays a significant role when people are faced with a transition; a person moves from one country to another for the first time and needs to have good emotional competence to achieve a balanced mind. Those with developed emotional intelligence are more likely to have positive transition outcomes.

Friendship

Relationships with other individuals who had a similar experience growing up outside their passport country can impact transition positively. The social constructivist perspective would argue that individuals' relationships are developed through their thoughts, feelings, and interactions with others (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Consequently, the person is more likely to form friendships and find security with other international students with the same experiences (Pollock & Reken, 2009). However, even if they have shared similar cross-cultural experiences with international students, they are different, as

international students are not permanent citizens of the country. Therefore, they will have varying needs (Quick, 2010).

Time

Length of time is another contributing factor to a person that has moved to another country achieving successful transitions. According to Bredeman (2015), these transition experiences are to have improved the longer the person stays in their new environments. The improvement over time was likely a result of individuals eventually being able to understand the culture and establish their identity within the new setting. Therefore, family and friends need to be aware of assuming adjustment which is completed within a specific period. Hervey (2009) added that providing ongoing support and understanding remained crucial to transitioning individuals.

Transition preparation and support

Now and then visits to the passport culture while living abroad may contribute to a more comfortable and easy transition for many children that have spent much time abroad (Bredeman, 2015). Programs can assist these transitions primarily because they introduce cultural values, trends, and norms of passport culture, so better-preparing individuals for them. Transition programs are also a way to connect individuals who have shared similar experiences and provide environments to share their life stories with others who understand (Hervey, 2009). Huxur et al. (1996) showed that many policies should be made, such as having updated comprehensive information for the students, language preparation, social integration, academic assistance, learning pre-return assistance, and internalizing the curriculum.

Enculturation, acculturation and deculturation

Internalization of culture is deeply rooted in when a person has become a member of a culture. According to Taft's theory in Hamers and Blanc (2000), several processes take place in this process which are enculturation, acculturation, and deculturation. Enculturation is part of a socialization process that begins when someone is socializing and then a person goes through a process with the first/primary culture. However, if the person encounters a second culture, acculturation will take place. In acculturation, the person must adjust the behavior from the first culture to a new one. It involves a combination of acquisition in competence and performing culturally relevant behavior. In this globalization era, where many people are free to move around, it is common for people to adapt to this process. Since this exposure already has a well-established identity, the person has to move to another culture and acquire a new cultural element in their current culture.

However, the older the person is, the harder it is to adapt to a new culture. If the form of adaptation is not well and causes distress, then the individual will have a deculturation phase. Extreme deculturation can cause as severe as a first-language loss. If not, assimilation occurs in the host culture, and deculturation may lead to anomie which is a

complex psychological state with alienation and isolation vis-à-vis the society's lives. Spencer and Markstrom-Adams (1990) have several factors which indicate this deculturation, such as conflicts between cultures, lack of role models, the absence of culture-focused specific guidance, and the preponderance of negative stereotypes about minorities. In his story of a second-generation Italian in the USA, the Italian adolescent males faced a dilemma. The person then found that there are three modes of adjusting to this conflict where some rebelled against their Italian background and assimilated the dominant culture, others rejected the American ways, and the last group displayed a withdrawal (anomie symptoms) and refused to think of them as an ethnic term either by avoiding the topic about cultural backgrounds or denying that Italians and Americans are any different.

Stages of cross-cultural adjustments

Some individuals who enter a different environment, whether they change from secondary school to university, move from one country to the other, or relocate from one part of the country to another, make several adjustments. When this move results in a change in environment, language, and an introduction to a different culture, the resulting adaptations are substantial and often hard to accomplish (Minichiello, 2000). The term for a sudden change is the often-called culture shock. According to Lopez (2021), culture shock is when an individual moves to a foreign country but does not successfully adjust to the new environment. Hence many theories have been written such as Lysgard's theory about the double-U curve or W-curve adjustment pattern, which states the idea of cross-cultural progress through three main stages is the initial state of elation and optimism, replaced by a period of frustration, depression, and confusion then gradually followed by improvement leading to feelings of confidence and satisfaction with the new society. Studies have shown many areas of student adjustment that focus on the common feelings associated with culture shock and difficulties attempting to cope with despair, isolation, alienation, and sadness in a new environment. Additionally, Oberg's theory describes aspects of culture shock, such as honeymoon, crisis, recovery, and adjustment.

Methodology

This section presents the research design, the participants, the method of data collection, the instruments used, and the data analysis technique. Explanations and elaboration are also presented in this part.

Research design, site, and participants

The research site is located according to the universities and the residency that the participants are currently residing in. It will be conducted and recorded via audio call or video call with each participant. The participants are 5 Indonesian university students that had lived in the same community in a foreign country called Qatar. The characteristics of the participants are 1) lived in Qatar for ten or more years, 2) English as their daily language at school and home, (3) Had enrolled in an Indonesian University, and 4) South Sumatra descendant which is claimed by the participants.

Research design

This research was conducted using a qualitative research method with a narrative approach. Cohen et al. (2018) stated that qualitative research shows several purposes, like explaining, describing, reporting, creating key concepts, and testing a theory generation. This research uses a narrative approach to gathering in-depth data and stories from individuals. According to Dewey (1938), a narrative inquiry has origins that claim personal experience closely links to education. De Fina (2015) argued that narratives are often seen as the primary vehicle to convey identity, and narrative analysts have gone so far as to claim that the stories we tell shape us into what we are. Therefore, based on this reason, this research used this method. The idea of narrative research that was put forward fits best for this research to understand the experiences of Indonesian university students who lived abroad to their academic transfer to Indonesian universities. The participants in this research were chosen by purposeful sampling for students who meet the requirement through the justifications made. Moreover, the research was conducted via phone through WhatsApp or Phone call or via video call through Zoom with the students discussing their experience in language and cultural adaptation from English to the Indonesian environment.

Data collection

This research used an in-depth interview and analysis of reflective writing of their favorite picture in Indonesia and Qatar to obtain the data. The interview was conducted with semi-structured and open-ended questions via video or audio call with the participants through Zoom or WhatsApp. The interview aspects mainly talk about the adaptation process, academic comparisons, the adaptation obstacles, and how they overcome them.

Data Analysis

The data analysis method applied was thematic analysis following the six steps of data analysis from Creswell (2012). The data from the interview were then analyzed through thematic analysis guided by Creswell (2012). The thematic analysis started by transcribing the interview of the participants. After transcribing them, the interview transcripts were read and analyzed to establish tentative codes. Similar codes were then grouped into categories. Furthermore, the categories were checked for consistency and revised if necessary. The categories then were put into themes. Thus, this process helped to articulate ideas about what the interview data consisted of and to see the challenges that were reflected by the students about language and cultural adaptation.

Ethical Considerations

All efforts were taken to address ethical concerns. Participants were made aware of the ethical issues regarding their participation in the research. Participants were encouraged to sign a consent form indicating their willingness to participate and permission to publish findings. Participants were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. The interview session was audio-recorded with the participant's

consent. All transcripts and research records are kept confidential, including the anonymity of participants in the published article.

Findings

The findings in this research were based on the research questions to find out the experiences and challenges faced by Indonesian university students with foreign educational backgrounds from Qatar during their academic transition to Indonesian universities. After carrying out the interview and documentation using thematic analysis, it was found that there were certain aspects of the student’s experience and challenges during their academic transition. The aspects are in Table 1:

Table 1. *Themes and sub-themes about academic transition*

Themes	Category	Examples
1. Adjusting to the new academic life	1.1 Comparison between education in Qatar and Indonesia	“For this pic, it reminds me of the difference between the curriculum in Indonesia and in Qatar because in Qatar we implement things of what we learn so we most likely remember it in the long run and also they make learning fun, even though we all know that learning is boring” (Amber Documentation)
	1.2 Subjects adaptation	“The subjects here that is different from Indonesia and Qatar, so I needed time to learn the types of subjects, Indonesia” (Clyde’s Interview)
2. Student’s Academic Opportunities	2.1 First-hand English Acquisition	“First is English, because a lot of people doesn't know how to speak English fluently, and I think that if I study abroad. (Amber’s interview)
	2.2 Teachers and International Friends	“Having a coach from the UK felt like I was being coached by a professional coach at that time” (Clyde’s Documentation)
	2.3 International Certifications	“I did get achievement such as AR some exams like it's connected, it's about music, right so its music theory I did” (Daisy’s interview)
	2.4 Competitions	“The opportunity is way bigger because I can join from Provence to

3. Student's challenges in academic life in Indonesia	3.1 Emotional Anxiety	International competitions" (Ella's interview)
	3.2 Loss of English language	"I have to physically prepare myself for everything before I actually could talk to people and emotionally open up to people" (Daisy's interview)
	3.3 Peer pressure	"I did kind of forget my English language a little bit, because I'm so used to engaging Bahasa Indonesia" (Bianca's Interview)

	3.3 Peer pressure	"I knew I was bullied" (Ella interview)
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Adjusting to the new academic life in Indonesia

When moving from one place to another, participants experience adjusting from their former curriculum which is a Cambridge-based curriculum to Indonesia's educational system. Even though it is their own native country, some participants experienced dominant changes throughout their transition. Amber mentioned her comparison between the two educational systems stating in her writing:

"For this pic, it reminds me the difference between curriculum in Indonesia and in Qatar because in Qatar we implement things of what we learn so we most likely remember it in the long run and also, they make learning really fun, even though we all know that learning is boring. But in Indo they make studying seems so boring and we mostly memorize things instead of implementing them so we tend to forget what we learn. In this picture as you can see, I was dressed up as a Viking because we were learning about the history of Vikings and what they wore and what food they ate."

"For this pic, it reminds me of my school in Qatar. Where it is called school but it doesn't look like school. It's more of a place where other than studying; I can play, meet friends, explore, and etc. I think is really different depending on school in Indonesia, where they mostly focus on the grade if what students get, instead of how they can implement things in real life. I really miss this place because I can find real friends here and they are like family to me, and also the teachers are nice, even though there are rarely kids that are naughty most of them are really obey with the teachers, but in Indonesia teachers here are strict but there are a lot of naughty kids."

Daisy also mentioned her time during the transition as follows,

"For creativity, I felt like I was more creative back there, I had access to a lot more instruments. I've had access to a lot more. Things to do about things and. In here. I guess it's because I also don't have my own instruments."

Amber also noticed a big change experienced as follows:

“Especially for university, I need to adapt and it's really hard, you know? Because the curriculum and stuff in Qatar and Indonesia is quite different.”

Similarly, Clyde also commented on the drastic change in his academic life,

“The subjects here that is different from Indonesia and Qatar, so I needed time to learn the types of subjects, Indonesia.”

Bianca also commented on her lessons,

“Then even during lessons at my Uni, I still struggle sometimes to make sentences that are *baku* (formal) but that didn't, that didn't stop me to like always improve and try and try and more.”

“Umm yeah, my creativity got less. I used to love art so much but then after coming here, I wouldn't say my creativity is lost, but it's less than I thought it would be and I lost like my skill and arts. Mm. So yeah, but I still like to do photos and stuff.”

The data showed a drastic change in what the participants experienced and felt during their academic transition from their education in Qatar and Indonesia. Most emphasized how difficult the transition is and shared their struggles during the lessons, whereas some made critical comments about the curriculum and education system as well as the student's feelings towards them both. Some universities tried to adapt additional lessons for these students like Clyde and Daisy. Daisy stated,

“We had, we had that at the end of the first semester, yes, but it wasn't effective because they still would not teach in English, you know, like it would be the same thing what they were teaching in class.”

Clyde also stated:

“Like MOS in UMB, to be honest, in my opinion, is my opinion, it doesn't help because if we look at it, there is a lot of groups that only chooses the person who is Asik (fun) and the people that is quiet not cool is left out. So, I think it is useless. That's in my opinion, but I don't know other people think.”

The data above showed that even if some universities implement an orientation program or even additional classes, sometimes it isn't directly implemented accordingly and is perceived as waste and useless to the participants.

Student's academic opportunities

Indonesia and Qatar, of course, have differences in both their opportunities and competition according to the availability and country's policies. With those differences, Qatar sometimes has the participants experience some opportunities that did not exist yet in

Indonesia or vice versa. All the students had the opportunity to use English as their communication medium. It is stated by all the participants, such as Amber, as follows,

“First is English, because a lot of people don’t know how to speak English fluently, and I think that if I study abroad. If I study abroad, I can learn English quite fluently. If. Like. More preferred with the People that study in Indonesia.”

Bianca also stated,

“Umm going abroad benefited me in many ways. Especially in English because I didn't know how to speak English before and when I moved there, I had to adapt and learn a new language which is it possible to do, especially when you're young and you've got lots of friends and it's really easy to adapt.”

“But like I did take Spanish lesson in my uh in school I used to take languages and subject and I chose Spanish, so I kind of learned a bit about Spanish even though I forgot about it, but some of the words are still remember, like “Hola, Como estas” and something like that.”

Followed by Clyde who stated,

“Yeah yeah, I learned a few languages like English, Spanish and Arabic and many more languages.”

Then, Daisy also stated,

“I believe that I speak better English than I do in Indo.”

Ella also claimed,

“Well, of course, one thing is that they actually put a specification of English. I mean, like they actually they gave me the English language or that English language grew inside me. And so now that the English language has always been my own language. Like, I thought that the English language was my mother tongue and yeah.”

The information above showed most participants had the opportunity to use English which was implemented directly in their daily lives and to learn other languages too. Hence, most of the participants had the opportunity to socialize with different people from other countries. These were stated by Ella as follows.

“I think I actually found well, other people there that lives in other countries, they were from India, Philippines, Malaysia.”

The same statement comes from Amber that stated,

“Because I don't get the same friends in Indonesia as in in Qatar.”

The same goes for Daisy who stated,

“It made me interact more with a lot more people internationally and with that I can get their point of view of the culture, of how you think. And it made me more open minded to be friendlier with other people as well”.

A similar point of view has been claimed by Clyde as follows.

“Umm by going abroad to Qatar I learn new culture new environments, new people and then how different people live in different countries and yeah there is many mores many more and that’s it really.”

“Having a coach from the UK felt like I was being coached by a professional coach at that time.”

The students lived in a multicultural community with people from all over the world. Thus, because all the participants were in one community and grew up in the same place, they could engage and interact in an international community which they do not get very much in Indonesia. Clyde also emphasized that being taught by a physical education (P.E) teacher from the U.K felt as if it was being taught by a professional. Furthermore, the participants also expressed that they could access definite things they no longer have access to in Indonesia. Ella stated as follows,

“Qatar is a very is a developed country and actually is the richest country. It's a country that's already developed. Meanwhile, Indonesia is a country that's still developing. So, um like the Technologies in Indonesia is still it's still primitive. So that it's very raw and rough here. And yeah, that's how like it's like a city girl living in a village area.”

Ella, in this part, expressed that she had a lot of opportunities in the technology aspect, but Indonesia is not yet available for that. Furthermore, Daisy also stated,

“For creativity, I felt like I was more creative back there, I had access to a lot more instruments. I've had access to a lot more things to do. About things and. In here. I guess it's because I also don't have my own instruments and my parents didn't let me take any majors related to art or anything like that, so I felt less free and what I could do here. I do still do my hobbies, just not as much.”

Ella described Qatar’s educational facilities as having more technology and access to things. Therefore, it can be concluded that Daisy had more access to certain instruments when she was in Qatar rather than in Indonesia. Speaking of arts, Bianca also experienced the same thing where she expressed as follows.

“Umm creativity wise since I'm in the health department. Umm yeah, my creativity got less. I used to love art so much but then after coming here, I wouldn't say my

creativity is lost, but it's less than I thought it would be and I lost like my skill and arts. Umm. So yeah, but I still like to do photos and stuff.”

All in all, both participants had the opportunity to express themselves through art in Qatar, but when they came back to Indonesia, they did not have the opportunity anymore with them. Hence, they felt as if their creativity had decreased before. An interesting thing about competitions when in university is that some participants had the opportunity to participate and win, such as Ella, that stated,

“Yeah. And until now I actually do joint competitions for”.

“I think Indonesia had given me a lot of achievement because in Qatar, I think they do give several small achievements and certificates but in Indonesia, the Challenge and the opportunity is way bigger because I can join from Provence to International competitions.”

However, it is not in line with Daisy has stated as follows,

“I actually have not done any achievements here because the lack of info Uh-huh like I'm still trying to understand how university works here and still struggling with myself identity.”

Comparing those two statements, the competitiveness in joining competitions lies within whether the participants have found their identity and have all of it figured out. When they have it all figured out, it created a positive outcome that Ella encountered, which stated that during in Indonesia, they could still win and participate in Indonesia. Exams standards in Indonesia and Qatar are different. Hence some participants got a chance to do an international exam and receive certifications. It mostly happened to Daisy that stated,

“I got more opportunities to do a lot more exams as well and like certifications and stuff like that and like competitions compared to when I was in here because of how limited I can speak Indo here.”

“I did get achievement such as AR some exams like it's connected; it's about music, right so its music theory I did. I did robotics competitions and I felt like, you know, there was a lot of fun. It was very pressuring at first, but it's very worth the certification.”

It concludes that Daisy was very tightly connected still with her academic life in Qatar. Therefore, she could accomplish international certifications and achievements at the international level.

Student's challenges in academic life in Indonesia

Being part of a new social group in a different country, even if it is your home country, will cause a lot of social expectations and various styles of social interactions. Some

of which the participants never had experienced in their life. Hence, some challenges occurred for some participants. Daisy stated,

“I have to physically prepare myself for everything before I actually could talk to people and emotionally open up to people.”

Ella also felt the same and stated,

“Well, the feeling's itself, of course, I felt nervous. I there was overthinking, there was also some confusion and a very young age.”

These participants did encounter a lot of waves of emotions and anxiety when they were transitioning. Other than that, they also faced a lot of expectations and peer pressure regarding socializing with their peer members. It is in line with what Bianca stated,

“Even though it's still Asian, it's they have like different cultures and stuffs, and you have to meet those expectation when you're in Indonesia like Salim (shaking hands) and stuff like that.”

Ella even stated that she experiences bullying,

“When I knew I was bullied even though I turn into an introvert, but I still have my inner self that's an extrovert. So, at that time despite myself being knocked down at university. After some time, I I finally felt and I finally know and how to actually adapt the culture and in Indonesia.”

This peer pressure, expectations and hard time adapting might be challenging for the participants' time adapting even in their own country. However, as time went by, they also learned and got used to the environment. When the participant got used to socializing and using the Indonesian language, the former language which was English tended to lose to some degree. Some participants have experienced this were Amber, Bianca, and Ella. Ella stated,

“Well, I remember at Junior High School, I still have some of the English languages and some of the Indonesian. But since at university, I think I can consider myself as an introvert, which I don't really communicate or use them a lot. So that's where I guess my English tend to disappear and I have to relearn it again.”

“I am influenced by the Indonesian English culture in pronouncing, several words. So yeah, I think my English word.”

After being long in Indonesia, she has claimed that she did lose her English at some point during her transition in Indonesia and some pronunciation and intonation changes which tended to the Standard English of those local Indonesians rather than the standard English of a native English speaker. It is in line with what Bianca says as follows,

“I did kind of forget my English language a little bit, because I'm so used to engaging Bahasa Indonesia.”

Bianca also declared that during her transition, she lost some of her English. It was also agreed with a statement from Amber:

“Well, as you can see, my English is um. Already decreased and um Yeah, I think it's about my English, though. That's it.”

The conclusion is that some participants after being in a long time in their home country after being abroad have lost their English language as well as their pronunciation at some point living in Indonesia.

Discussion

It is far more common for people nowadays to move from one place to another. However, moving from one place to another has its drawbacks in the transition phase of an individual due to adjusting to definite cultures, customs, and languages of another country. According to Huxur et al. (1996), many adaptation processes involve cross-cultural adaptation, problems returning home, language adaptation to the motherland, and language loss. Nevertheless, such difficulties are not static but tend to vary over time. This research focuses on the academic transition experiences and challenges of Indonesian university students who graduated from Qatar to Indonesia. This research found several statements regarding the academic transition experiences and challenges in 3 themes. The first two themes elaborated on the adjusting phase to a new academic life, and the second theme explained the opportunities in academics during their time in Qatar and Indonesia. The third theme discussed more challenges faced during the transition, such as emotional anxiety, loss of the English language, and peer pressure.

Regarding the experiences of the academic transition of students graduated abroad from Qatar to Indonesia, the students encountered a great deal of comparison between the two education systems in Qatar and Indonesia. Most of them had a once in a lifetime opportunity to implement English in an international community, to be taught by international teachers, to socialize with international friends from around the world, and to gain international certification and competitions. Thus, the students had the most positive effect during their time in Qatar because they had implemented how English should be used in the real world as the lingua franca of the international community that they are in. According to Panda (2021), regional languages have been underutilized as English has become the de facto global network language. Today, English is a universal language, and knowing it well is a must for success in the global marketplace. It is in line with Dewi (2012), English should be permitted to expand to accommodate trends as a tool for communicating across borders.

On the other hand, when students move from one country's educational system to another, several programs are set by the university and several expectations are never met. The academic transition in this research shows that the orientation process and help from universities did not affect the participants at all. It shows that most academic institutions did not meet their students' needs. According to Huhta et al. (2013), needs analysis in a student

is highly important. It demands a one-to-one matching of means with the objective for language learners. It is in line with Nunan (1988), who stated that needs analysis refers to a family of procedures for gathering information about learners for use in their teaching and learning process. Hence, the university and teachers did not affect nor help the student's transition process. Furthermore, besides the curriculum differences, they had fewer opportunities to get exams and certifications and fewer facilities than in Qatar.

In the transition from one country to another, challenges are inevitable during their transition time concerning their academic life and environment that result in participants having trouble and hindering them when socializing with the teachers and their peers. Some of the troubles did not understand the customs. In addition, the local students and students from Qatar had different socializing styles. Hence, some also feel pressured into cultural expectations that they did not know. It was similar to research from Alkubaidi and Alzhrani (2020) that stated that some co-workers that had to go back to their workplace had a hard time transitioning into the existing culture from different generations and that it was due to the gap and conflict to have their agenda. The research stated that the emotional distress caused by that feelings led some of them to feel disconnected and not belong to their home in Saudi Arabia. Le and LaCost (2017) stated that the participants who stayed in the U.S. and came back to Vietnam had a hard time readjusting to things and felt as if the home did not feel like home anymore. In addition, Walling et al. (2006) had participants denying their original American identity and pretending to have a Canadian identity. Another important aspect is the language which is used in every aspect of our academic life, where the participants are like having a loss of English during their transition. All participants had lost a significant amount of their English language as well. The language in most studies also showed they had a change in adaptation to their language and the host country's language might foster a deeper immersion with the students (Alkubaidi & Alzhrani, 2020; Gray & Savicki, 2015). Research shows that the acquisition of a second language also includes a second culture, which may pose a threat to the first language and culture in a new country (Colla & Micaella, 2018) which in this case is a threat to the English language and the first culture in Qatar. However, most of them managed to cope with language in a very slow process over time by practicing with the people in their environment.

Conclusions

This research explored the transition experience of Indonesian university students who spent their lives abroad in one community in Qatar and their challenges during their academic transition process and their re-entry to Indonesian universities. The research results showed many aspects and comparisons when they moved from the education system in Qatar and Indonesia. During their academic life in Qatar, they had many opportunities to get international certifications, join competitions, and learn first-hand English acquisition. The students also compared a lot during their time in Qatar and Indonesia regarding the education system and subjects' adaptations. Even though universities had orientation programs and additional classes for these students, it did not help at all. Hence, the students' needs were not fulfilled. Furthermore, they experienced a lot of challenges during their academic transition, such as emotional anxiety, loss of the English language, and peer

pressure. Consequently, even though it is their native country, some transitional challenges still need to be addressed. Fortunately, this transition phase was not static because, in the student's progress, a silver lining could be seen as they got used to their new environment in Indonesia.

According to the conclusion described above, there are some suggestions related to the addressed matter about the academic transition of Indonesian university students who graduated from Qatar to Indonesia. These suggestions are aimed at universities across Indonesia and further research can be as consideration. Firstly, for the universities in Indonesia, it would be suggested to add an orientation program that specifically targets the needs of the students who had graduated abroad to make the students settle down easier and have a sense of what to expect in the country's cultural, language, and academic system. It should be held to regulate the student's sense of how education works in Indonesia. In addition, this research can be used as a source for further research where other researchers can dig for more information about students' transitions with different cultural backgrounds and ideologies from other countries.

Disclosure Statement

There is no potential conflict apparent that was reported by the authors.

Acknowledgments

We would like to give our gratitude to the participants involved and IRJE editorial team for publishing our journal.

Human Participants

All participants and research place were masked to protect their confidentiality.

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