

Memanfaatkan Pengalaman Pelajar Pelawat Dalam Membangunkan Garis Panduan Untuk Program Pengantarabangsaan Pendidikan

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ABSTRAK

Pengenalan- Kajian ini dicetuskan daripada pengalaman dua pelajar Malaysia yang mengikuti program pemindahan kredit ke Universiti Islam Negeri Walisongo, Indonesia. Program ini merupakan satu program Pengantarabangsaan Pendidikan (ILe) seperti yang dicadangkan oleh sebuah universiti awam di Malaysia. Dapatan lisan dan penulisan dari Pelajar-pelajar yang pulang dari program Pengantarabangsaan sering melaporkan tentang kesukaran yang dihadapi oleh mereka seperti salah faham dalam berkomunikasi ketika bergaul dengan masyarakat setempat serta dalam mengadaptasi budaya asing (masyarakat setempat).

Objektif – Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mendalami kejayaan dan cabaran yang mereka lalui selama 6 bulan mengikuti program ini.

Methodologi – Kaedah yang digunakan adalah analisis dokumen dan temu bual. Data dikumpulkan melalui entri jurnal pembelajaran yang diserahkan oleh pelajar melalui e-mel, yang dikompilasi oleh penyelidik serta laporan akhir mereka yang diserahkan pada akhir program. Untuk tujuan triangulasi data, mereka kemudian ditemu ramah setelah mereka kembali ke Malaysia.

Dapatan – Data dari kedua kaedah tersebut telah dianalisis secara tematik mengikuti Analisis dua peringkat Merriam (2009). Empat tema muncul dari data - pengalaman, hubungan masyarakat, kebebasan dan kemahiran komunikasi. Setiap tema memperincikan kejayaan dan cabaran.

Kepentingan – Penemuan ini memberikan input kepada draf garis panduan bagi mana-mana fakulti atau universiti untuk menjalankan program pemindahan kredit pada masa akan datang.

Kata Kunci: Analisis dua peringkat Merriam; Entri Jurnal Pembelajaran; Pengantarabangsaan Pendidikan (ILe); Program Pemindahan Kredit;

Utilising Sojourners' Experience In Developing Guidelines For The Internationalisation Of Education Programmes

ABSTRACT

Introduction- This study was an impetus from the experiences of two Malaysian students who embarked on a credit transfer programme to Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo, Indonesia. The programme was to uphold the Internationalisation of Education (ILe) as proposed by a public university in Malaysia. Oral and written reports presented by returning ILe students often highlighted the difficulties leading to miscommunication in mingling with the locals as well as adapting to foreign culture.

Purpose – The aim of the study was to explicate the successes and challenges that the students had endeavoured during the programme for 6 months

Methodology – The methods employed were document analysis and interview. The data were collected via learning journal entries which the students submitted through email to be compiled by the researchers as well as their final report which was submitted at the end of the programme. In order to triangulate the data, they were then interviewed once they came back to Malaysia.

Findings –The data from both methods were analysed thematically following Merriam's (2009) two-level analysis. Four themes emerged from the data – experiences, public relations, independence and communication skills. Each of the theme details both successes and challenges.

Significance – These findings provide input for a draft of guidelines for any faculty or university to conduct a credit transfer programme in the future.

Keywords: Credit Transfer Programme; Internationalisation of Education (ILe); Learning Journal Entries; Merriam's two-level Analysis

Introduction

Being Malaysia's 12th public university, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) strives to realize the 8th shift of the Malaysian Education Blueprint (Higher Education) 2015-2025, by becoming a regional and global reference centre for the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* knowledge (USIM'16 & USIM'25) (Faizal Kasmani, 2015).

In 2016, academic collaborations between USIM and its regional counterpart had seen the fruitful outcome from the credit transfer programme (CTP) between two students of Faculty of Major Language Studies (FPBU, USIM) and Walisongo National Islamic University, Indonesia. Such move can be termed as the concept of Internationalisation of

Education (ILe), and very much in line with the 1st shift in the Malaysian Education Blueprint (Higher Education) 2015-2025, where universities are expected to produce holistic, entrepreneurial and balanced graduates..

The internationalisation of higher education can be defined as ‘the process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of an institution of higher education’. This can be attained by various strategies such as encouraging students to study abroad, recruiting foreign students, strengthening cooperation with overseas universities, establishing international education centres, integrating international knowledge into the curriculum and promoting the publication of articles in international journals (Ho, Lin & Yang 2015).

The collaboration between the two regional Universities provide engaging learning platforms for the students to be dynamic in seeking meaningful purposes in life through connections (hands on/real world) with the local/regional community at large. This paper will report the experiences (the successes and challenges) of USIM through its students’ involvement in the Internationalisation of Education (ILe) and CTP programme.

Literature review related to topic

Universities around the world respond to challenges presented by globalisation in various ways and one of it is the internationalisation of the university campuses. The concept of Internationalization of education (ILe) is flexibly defined, fluid and quite dynamic. However, Knight’s definition (Knight 1999: 16) is the most commonly used in describing education in relation to internationalization, where she states that it is the process of “integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service of the institution”.

In relevance to this academic/student mobility issue, after two and a half-decades of dealing with the European programmes, Malaysian Ministry of Education is looking into the need for “regional harmonisation of higher education systems”, whereby the Malaysia-based public and private higher education providers are exploring the strengths and weaknesses of ASEAN higher education internationalisation policies, a strong commitment to internationalisation in terms of openness and mobility (Atherton, Crossling, Munir Shuib & Siti Norbaya Azizan: 2019).

Internationalisation of Education (ILe)

Globalisation triggers the concept of bringing education to the international level. (Knight 1999). It also affects the higher education as it has intensified the mobility of ideas and people in this sector. As the role of global interdependence has been accepted economically, politically and socially, academic internationalising function also has become more permeable of interdependence. Universities around the world respond to challenges presented by globalisation in various ways and one of it is the internationalisation of the university campuses. Interestingly, the emphasis is more on student learning outcomes which includes “international and intercultural knowledge, skills, and values” resulting from the Academic mobility of the students to the Credit Transfer Program (CTP) (Knight, 2012: 20).

In addition, a few other areas are brought into the fold such as curriculum and other accommodative measures taken by the host institutions. The concept of ILe receives global approval as it not only fosters good relations but it also brings in revenue to the host institutions. A case in point is the \$10.1 billion generated by Internalisation of education into Australia in 2005/2006. (Bishop, as cited in Bell 2008). Therefore fiscal consideration has spurred on the Internalisation of education in countries like Canada, United Kingdom and Australia. (Andrade 2006). On the home turf, Malaysia is aspiring to reach the 600 billion ringgit mark by the year 2020. (Chi 2011). This is supported by a robust body of literature on this concept in Malaysia covering various areas like policy and trends, problems of internalization of education in general and issues with English. However, studies in Malaysia seems to lack information on proactive steps that can facilitate and support a smooth and rewarding experience for the participants of ILe programmes in their new environment. The current study, by investigating the experiences of Malaysian students in an international environment, aims to fill this gap and at the same time provides insights as a guide to prospective ILe participants and their stakeholders.

Acculturation

Acculturation is defined as “socio-cultural adjustment and acquisition of dominant cultural norms by members of a non-dominant group” (Gul & Kolb 2009:1). Put simply it is the process of adapting faced by students undergoing ILe programmes. ‘Culture’ as an integral concept in the process of acculturation is defined as “shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretation of meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations” (House et al.2004).

Drawing on the understanding for the needs of a Manual or Guide that will facilitate the adaptability and performance of credit transfer/exchange students in their international environment, this study has utilized indicators as provided by an Acculturation Model by Smith and Khawaja (2011) which describes the multi-domain Acculturative Stressors encountered by international students:

1. Language (language barrier and language anxiety in academic & sociocultural setting)
2. Academic (quality, efficiency)
3. Sociocultural (social network/friendship, cultural norms, loneliness)
4. Discrimination
5. Practical (financial, accommodation)

It will also incorporate indicators of positive gains from the students’ international experience which comprise foreign language proficiency (Pickert, 1992), development of cultural knowledge and cultural sensitivity (McCabe, 1994; Sachdev, 1997), inter-personal maturity (Stitsworth, 1989), and increased international interest and concern (Carlson & Widaman, 1988).

Successes and Challenges of Students' International Experience

In a research conducted by Noor Saazai Mat Saad, Melor Md Yunus & Mohamed Amin Embi (2014), successes can be referred to any significant development reported by participants concerning their positive development in their English language learning experiences (i.e academic achievement, being optimistic and accomplishments). Besides that, it also has other successes which include diversifying and enhancing the learning environment for the benefit of domestic students, the University, and the nation. Furthermore, it is able to change the lives of international students as it helps in producing graduates who are internationally knowledgeable and cross culturally sensitive. Ho, Lin & Yang (2015) in their study discovered that internationalization of education has increased students' international knowledge, enhanced their foreign language abilities, and created a multicultural campus.

As for challenges, they refer to whatever difficulties or misadventures faced by the participants. For instance, problems in communication. Being in a foreign country with different mother tongue may impede communication in certain situation. Differences in language to communicate with the local people might hinder students to socialise and they may need some time to adapt. Another challenge is difference in culture. Some students may have difficulties in adapting to the culture which is foreign to them. For example, European culture differs from Asian culture in terms of food, tradition, lifestyle and others (Jibeen & Khan, 2015). However, being exposed to the culture, the students will soon learn and may be able to adapt even though it requires them some time.

In summary, in relation to this, the current study analyses the ILe participants' experiences and the integration process that comes in the form of the service offered by the host institutions, i.e. Walisongo National Islamic University, Indonesia and Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). These experiences may shed some lights in dealing with the problems and issues of acculturation, to ease the journey of participants in their international experience.

Methodology

The approach of the study was qualitative in nature. With the objectives of exploring the participants' successes and challenges in undergoing the programme, two methods were employed - document analysis and interview. The document analysis was conducted on the participants' written journal entries and their final report. These participants were then interviewed. The data from the documents and interview were then analysed to reveal themes which would give the answer to the research question set earlier. This section continues with the elucidation on the participants, methods and instruments and data analysis.

Participants

There were two participants involved in this study. They were third year students from the Bachelor of Education programme in a public university in Malaysia. They went for a credit transfer programme to Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Walisongo, Semarang, Indonesia. This programme was under the internationalisation of education (ILe) in the

university. Zarita and Hani (pseudonyms) were the selected ones as they fulfilled all the criteria – their MUET scores were 3 or above, their CGPA points were 3.0 and above, they were active in co-curricular activities and most importantly, they had their parents' permission as they would be in UIN Walisongo for approximately 6 months; from 24th August 2016 to 18th February 2017 including during Eidul-Adha celebration. They stayed amongst the other students in a *Maahad* or a big residential block and followed all the activities conducted in the *Maahad*. Zarita and Hani attended the related classes along with their new classmates in UIN Walisongo.

Methods and Instruments

This study employed document analysis and interview as the methods to collect data. The former included journal entries and final report, while the latter was conducted face-to-face once the participants came back here. One of the activities assigned to Zarita and Hani was for them to write learning journal entries on their everyday experiences in Semarang, Indonesia.

There was no specification of the number of entries that they should complete but they were told to just write when they had anything to share. Based on their submissions, both Zarita and Hani completed 6 entries. They submitted via email to one of the authors for compilation. Another document that has provided the data for this study was their final report. It was a requirement set the International Student Centre in the participants' university in Malaysia. The final report was in a form of PowerPoint presentation slides that also included pictures and video clippings.

As for the interview sessions, Zarita and Hani were interviewed individually. The researchers prepared a semi-structured interview protocol based on the input found in the journal entries. Refer to Appendix A for the interview protocol. They were first asked to complete a consent form and the interview began with some background questions like a brief introduction about themselves namely their age, hometown, languages used and family background. The interview protocol also stated specific questions regarding their experiences there in UIN Walisongo. They were asked about their positive and negative endeavours as sojourners, opinions on the differences and similarities between their university in Malaysia and UIN Walisongo, whether they would recommend the credit transfer programme to their friends and other questions. Their answers were recorded and then transcribed.

Result

In line with the qualitative nature of this study, the data were then analysed using thematic analysis. The data from the documents were triangulated with the data from the interview. Although it was done manually, the researchers were divided into 2 themes. Both themes did the analysis in 2 phases adhering closely to Merriam's (2009) two-level analysis. Figure 1 below details the analysis.

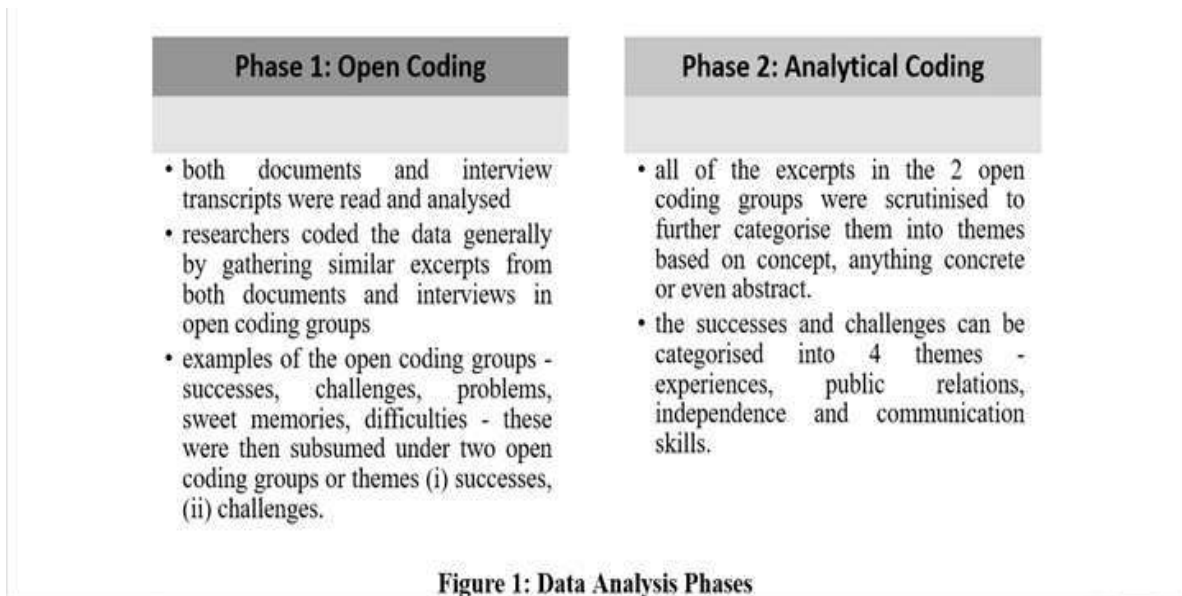


Figure 1 illuminates how the analysis was conducted. The themes were accepted when there were two or more excerpts categorised together. Once the themes and subthemes were established, they were compared and discussed among the 2 groups of researchers. There was no major discrepancy between the findings from the 2 groups, just some excerpts were moved to other subthemes that could suit them better.

Discussion

Based on the Learning Journal Entries and Interview transcription, Table 1 highlights the four main themes with specific excerpts related to experiences, public relations, independence and communication skills. Each theme addresses the successes and challenges as experienced by the two sojourners.

1		<p>EXPERIENCES <u>Enriching Experiences</u> (Successes)</p> <p>Getting to know interesting cultural practices and historical places at Semarang, Indonesia</p>	<p>ZARITA</p> <p>“went to Lawang Sewu (History place) just two of us by using BRT (Trans Semarang) a bus - 3 500 Rp for one person”.</p> <p>“we went to ibu lutfiyah house at Kota Kendal, our ilmu fiqih lecturer and stayed for 5 days 4 nights”.</p> <p>“visit park by the bay, industry kendal. The owner of this industry is Korean”.</p> <p>“went to Wali Demak grave”.</p> <p>“went to Harbor beach”.</p> <p>“picnic at the Ngebom beach”.</p>	<p>HANI</p> <p>“We got a new experiences celebrated mauled Nabi in Indonesia”.</p> <p>“Santri Day”- kalau Indonesia nak dapat kemerdekaan para Ulama dan Santri² di Pondok akan perjuangkan-pengalaman saya masuk Pertandingan Nyanyian, ‘Tibaan’- Marhaban, pakai make up pekat macam Gadis Jawa”</p> <p>“Got a chance to stay at a lecturer house”.</p> <p>“Visited all the people in village”.</p> <p>“Join opening ceremony a new madrasah in that village”</p>
		<p><u>Testing experiences</u> (Challenges)</p> <p>Experience a foreign place (to do as the locals do).</p>	<p>“crossing the street in Indonesia very challenging and frightening.</p> <p>“taking public transport- driver bus drove the bus very harsh”</p> <p>“to find a white cloth for santri day”.</p>	<p>“Tandas banyak tapi kotor, bilik air dan tempat berak tempat yang sama” – diorang tak ada Flush, kena simbah sendiri”.</p> <p>“boleh merokok dalam kampus, dalam kelas, tak ada adab”</p> <p>“sewaktu exam, kedudukan hanya seperti di dalam kelas biasa dan ini memberi peluang kepada pelajar</p>

				lain untuk meniru sama ada melihat nota di dalam phone ataupun berbincang sesama sendiri”
2	<p>PUBLIC RELATIONS <u>Positive Social Networking</u> (Successes)</p> <p>a) With Indonesians</p> <p>b) With Thais</p>	<p>ZARITA</p> <p>“Kawan-kawan ok. Mereka pun excited jumpa dengan orang Malaysia. Bahasa la lain sikit. Apa- apa yang dibualkan akan dikaitkan dengan Upin Ipin, itu memang yang pertama, Upin Ipin sangat famous di sana”</p> <p>“visit Thailand students house nearby campus”.</p> <p>“Dapat mengeratkan hubungan silaturrahim dan menambah kenalan baru di Negara lain”.</p>	<p>HANI</p> <p>“Celebrate Santri Day, participate in Singing Competition ‘Tibaan’ (marhaban)</p> <p>“Student in campus only using Indonesia language than Arabic and English”.</p> <p>“We have start the presentation in university and we got a positive response from students and lecturer there”.</p> <p>“Language in Maahad with our members. We got a good bonding time and share our ideas together”.</p> <p>“Students maahad are very creative in making video and they were very enjoy to do it. Video are one of the way their study in Maahad”.</p>	
	<p><u>Unproductive Networking</u> (Challenges)</p>	<p>“stayed at Indonesian house. we dont know how to treat them. we are so shy”.</p>	<p>“We have to present clearly because there are some student cannot understand the word we using”.</p>	
3	<p>INDEPENDENCE <u>Boosting independence</u> (successes)</p>	<p>ZARITA</p> <p>“Dapat menjiwai hati mereka yang</p>	<p>HANI</p> <p>“I have to complete the assignments by myself because of the student</p>	

			<p>belajar diperantauan dan belajar berdikari di Negara orang”.</p> <p>“able to find ways around unfamiliar places-crossing the streets in Indonesia very challenging and frightening”.</p>	<p>in campus do not know how to find the Kitab Fiqh and translate them into Arabic language.”</p> <p>“Students have to do presentations even when Lecturers are not around”</p>
		<p><u>Trying independence (Challenges)</u></p>	<p>“Pihak fakulti dan pihak Bekerjasama macam tak synchronise. Mereka macam tak membantu la. Kami cuba settle sendiri – tanya orang orang Thailand”</p> <p>“Kami terpaksa bayar juga denda yang over-stayed tu ... untuk dielak dipenjarakan ... terpaksa settlekan sendiri, pendam je la ... that’s the worst experience.”</p>	<p>“Even there is no lecturer in class but the presentation are still going. So all the presenter have to find the right sources”</p> <p>“Pasal Visa tulah, buatkan kita kena lepas ni kena berdikari, kalau kat mana-mana pun, tak leh harap orang sangat, memang ada orang dengan kita, tapi bergantung kita sendiri”</p>
4		<p>COMMUNICATION SKILLS <u>Progressing (Successes)</u> Advancing to another level (Arabic language fluency) Effective activities to enhance language acquisition (Arabic)</p>	<p>ZARITA</p>	<p>HANI</p> <p>“Arabic morning class in Maahad, we have to change from junior group to senior group because of our mastering in Arabic language”</p> <p>“Every morning we are given 10 vocabularies and in one week there also have interesting activities such as</p>

				debate using a title given”.
		<p><u>Impeding communication</u> (Challenges) Language barriers – learn a new language (Challenges) Lecturers, Coursemates & the locals are using native language (Javanese) in daily conversation & certain University subjects (Challenges)</p>	<p>“they more talk in Java language than Indonesia language”.</p>	<p>“Most of our friends in Maahad start using in Javanese language in room and we got misunderstanding with their communication” “There is one subject that I still can’t understand it deeply because of the lecturer is using a Javanese language and the subject is all about education system in Indonesia” “Difficult to communicate with the village people because most of them are using Javanese language”.</p>

Table 1: Themes derived from Learning Journal and Interview

Table 1 portrays not only the themes but the subthemes as well. Each theme has 2 subthemes which are related to both successes and challenges. The 2 sojourners expressed themselves rather vividly for each theme. In the first theme, the experiences that they underwent could be seen in two lights – enriching and testing. The former deals with their visits to historical and recreational places, and lecturer’s house. Furthermore, they also reported their involvement in cultural ceremonies. All these have enriched their experience. On the other hand, the other subtheme is testing experiences. These are the experiences which are rather negative and test their patience. The sojourners relayed their

difficult experiences dealing with the different lifestyle, everyday routine and rules in a foreign place. Figure 2 below exhibits the other themes and subthemes.

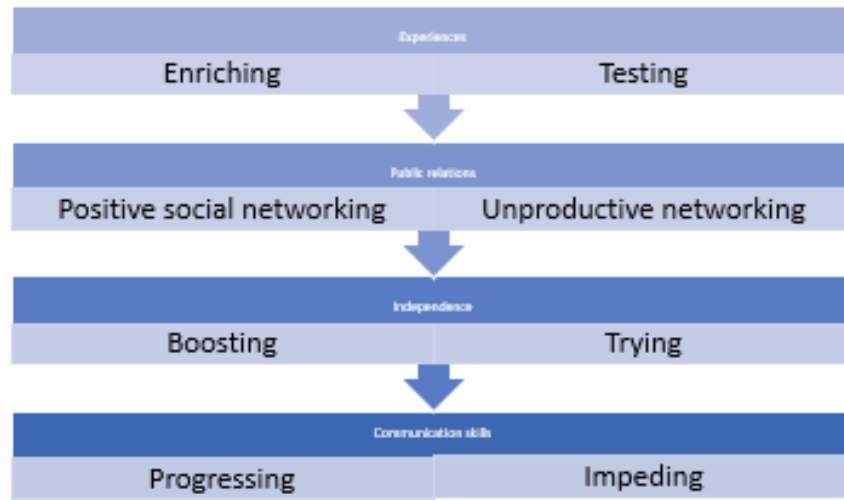


Figure 2: Themes and subthemes from the study

Figure 2 above shows the 4 themes with 2 subthemes each. It can be surmised that the successes and challenges are experienced by the sojourners can be seen in 4 aspects. In analogy, the 4 aspects are the coins and each coin has 2 sides – one is the success and the other is the challenge.

Based on the input gathered (the four themes; experiences, public relations, independence & communication skills), from the first-hand experiences of the sojourners based on their learning journal entries and the interview, a draft of guidelines or manual for any faculty or university to conduct a credit transfer programme in the future could be made possible. All the recorded successes, challenges as well as some suggestive tips to assist students in foreign countries could be documented into the form of a Manual for Social and Cultural Awareness (MaSCA). Findings in MaSCA can be addressed to many stakeholders, namely the 2 faculties and the 2 universities involved (own and host), as well as to the sojourners.

Conclusion

As Internationalisation programme acts as the catalyst to universities in reforming themselves to the demands of the global knowledge society (Ota, 2018), USIM, through Faculty of Major Language Studies has stepped up with a strong commitment in ASEAN higher education internationalisation policies with smart regional partnership (credit transfer/exchange students programme) with Indonesia. The 2 Malaysian students underwent the credit transfer programme for 6 months in UIN Walisongo, Indonesia. Their sojourn experience recorded in the Learning Journals Entries and transcribed Interviews were proofs of their successes and challenges in a foreign place. The report on their successes and challenges can be utilised as input for the guidelines or manual for implementing the Internationalisation of Education (ILE) programme at any faculty and

university. The document would be able serve as a guide for faculties and universities in implementing ILe. Undoubtedly, the proposed MaSCA is still in its infancy as the statements are only based on the main stakeholders – the students (Zarita and Hani). There are more stakeholders whose ideas should be sought as they can assist in developing a comprehensive guideline or manual. Hence, future research includes studies on the other stakeholders as well as ILe programmes to other locations besides Indonesia. These findings will help to ameliorate MaSCA to ensure that it stays relevant to ILe.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions for Respondents/*Soalan Temubual untuk Responden*

Interview Protocol <i>Protokol Temubual</i>
Project: An Analysis of the Internationalisation of Education (ILe) Programme to Walisongo National Islamic University Indonesia: Successes & Challenges.
Time of Interview: <i>Masa temubual:</i>
Date: <i>Tarikh:</i>
Place: <i>Tempat:</i>
Interviewer: <i>Penemubual:</i>
Interviewee: (State respondent's name & year/age) <i>Responden yang ditemubual: (Nama & umur/tahun Responden)</i>
Describe the project, telling the interviewee about the a) purpose of the study, b) individuals & sources of data being collected, c) what will be done with the data to protect the confidentiality of the interviewee, and d) how long the interview will take. Turn on the tape recorder & test it. <i>Terangkan dengan ringkas tujuan Responden ditemubual, dan beri kepastian bahawa data adalah sulit.</i> <i>Pastikan alat merekod berfungsi dengan baik.</i>
<i>Lead In:</i> Can you briefly introduce yourself – your age, where you live, the language you use most at home, parents' occupations. <i>Minta Responden ceritakan latar belakang dengan ringkas – umur, tempat tinggal, bahasa utama yang digunakan di rumah, pekerjaan ibu bapa)</i>
Questions: 1. Why did you decide to join the Internationalisation of Education (ILe) Programme to Walisongo National Islamic University Indonesia?