

AN ANALYSIS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS FACED BY INDONESIAN INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY AWARDS (IISMA) AWARDEES OF STATE POLYTECHNIC OF BENGKALIS

Name : Rosita Angellina
Reg. Number : 5504221062
Advisor : Rionaldi,S.Pd,M.Pd.CICS

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the intercultural communication problems experienced by IISMA awardees from the State Polytechnic of Bengkalis and to examine how differences in cultural values and non-verbal communication affect their adaptability in social and academic environments. A mixed-methods design was employed, combining a five-point Likert scale questionnaire with semi-structured interviews involving 12 awardees from the 2022, 2023, and 2024 cohorts who studied in Taiwan, South Korea, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. Three variables were measured: Language Barriers, Cultural Misunderstanding, and Social Norms. The findings revealed that all three variables fell within the High category (Grand Mean = 3.86), with Social Norms obtaining the highest mean ($\bar{x} = 4.12$), followed by Cultural Misunderstanding ($\bar{x} = 3.85$) and Language Barriers ($\bar{x} = 3.70$). Psychological barriers, particularly a lack of self-confidence, emerged as the most dominant language challenge (LB3, $\bar{x} = 4.42$, Very High). Interview data confirmed that cultural misunderstandings stemmed from value differences, contrasting communication styles, and implicit unspoken habits, while non-verbal communication including facial expressions, intonation, eye contact, and gestures significantly affected adaptation. The study concludes that intercultural communication challenges are systemic and multidimensional, and that emotional readiness and familiarity with implicit social and non-verbal norms are equally critical as linguistic competence in determining successful cross-cultural adaptation.

Keywords: intercultural communication, IISMA, language barriers, cultural misunderstanding, social norms, non-verbal communication, adaptability