

The Contribution of Sports Student Exchange Experience toward Students' Self Confidence

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Abstract. Student exchange programs host many benefits for students' self-development, one of which is self-confidence. Having self-confidence is critical for students with sports backgrounds in pursuing careers as physical education teachers, athletes, coaches, sports therapists, and other sports-related jobs. However, few research aware of the importance of environment and life experience, such as joining an exchange program, in boosting students' self-confidence. This study examined the contribution of student exchange experience's to sports students' self-confidence. A structured interview was conducted with students from the Department of sports science, Faculty of Sports Science, UNNES, who run an overseas community service project at the department of physical and health education, the Faculty of Education, UiTM. The study adopts Lauster's theory of self-confidence, one of which is believing in yourself. It revealed that students who conducted this international exchange showed a high trust to their own abilities and reflected in their actions during the program and after completing the program. Seeing that self-confidence could direct students to accomplish their International project goals, this research would suggest students enhance their self-confidence by immersing themselves in a supportive environment and challenging themselves in productive activities to get more life-skill experiences. Further research should elaborate on all factors which shape students' self-confidence.

Keywords: Personality, development, overseas, community service

1 Introduction

The student exchange program gained a lot of attention in universities worldwide due to its benefits on the students' professional development [1]. The IISMA program (Indonesia International Students Mobility Awards) held by the Ministry of Education in 2021 and 2022, is evidence of strong support from the Indonesian government to conduct an exchange program. In the faculty of Sports Science (FSS), Universitas Negeri Semarang (UNNES), the Internationalization and students exchange program has been an integral part of the faculty [2] especially since the Faculty joined an association name ACPES (ASEAN Council of Physical Education and Sports) in 2011 which incorporate some sports faculties across South East Asia. The faculty also validates the IISMA program by giving funding to each department including

the Department of Sports Science to have their Duolingo test as an IISMA pre-requisite. This support, which comes in the form of preparation courses and funding, comes with a deep analysis of the importance of the sports exchange program.

The FSS UNNES has been hosting and supporting several exchange programs namely academic student exchange, cultural exchange, an academic field trip, overseas community practice, teaching practice, and internship [3]. The overseas community service, as the main theme of this research, is a minimum of two weeks of overseas project bringing certain missions such as introducing Indonesian sports and culture, promoting conservation, introducing Indonesian literacy, promoting Indonesian traditions, and giving health education. Within this program, the students find a place to share their knowledge, plan the programs, organize and run them with the supervision of the FSS lecturer.

The exchange students between UNNES and UiTM constructed an international community. Being part of the international community might raise the students' confidence. In addition, as an international students, the opportunity of experiencing different teaching styles and norms when communicating with the host-country teacher is something to be learned (Hsu et al., 2021). While self-confidence has been seen as a dominant factor which influences athlete success and performance [4], it can be achieved from real-life experience such as being part of an International student exchange program. The students who participate in the exchange programme are surrounded by peers who courageously push their boundaries by travelling overseas, leaving their comfort zone and environment to surf the world beyond their reach, teaching sports and displaying their talent in foreign countries. They are, therefore, surrounded by an environment that makes it possible for them to achieve success of the sports exchange project.

Many researches are discussing the importance of self-confidence for athletes and sports students [5]. While at the same time research has agreed on the benefits of an exchange program for students' self-development [6], not to mention self-confidence, limited research discusses the relationship between an exchange program and students' self-confidence in Sports students context. This research bridges the gap by explaining the sports student exchange experience's contribution to their self-confidence. This study aims to explain Indonesian students' sense of believing in themselves after participating in the exchange program at UiTM, Malaysia. It is collaborative research between FSS UNNES and the Faculty of Physical Education and Health (FPEH), UiTM. Both Faculties have been collaborating for years and have conducted several exchanges, one of which is the Overseas Community Service Project, a two weeks project initiated by FSS UNNES to introduce Indonesian sports and culture to FPEH UiTM, Malaysia.

2 Literature review

2.1 The importance of sports student exchange

The Sports Student Exchange Program (SSE) run in the FSS is a program where students from sports majors such as Sports Science, Sports Coaching, Physical Education, and Public Health, worldwide come to join several weeks of the courses in The FSS and vice versa [3]. The students participate an international education, activities, and programs that initiate collaboration and exchange of ideas between students from diverse cultures and borders [4]. The SSE provides a lot of benefits for institutions and the country. Hinojo_lucena emphasized that the partnership between universities across countries promotes cognitive and knowledge

exchange [7]. It also helps students to develop their personality and perceived self-efficacy (Petersdotter et al., 2017). Interestingly study by Aoyama and Takahashi (2020) indicates a strong correlation between self-confidence and willingness to talk a foreign language for international students. An exchange programme is an ideal approach to becoming fluent in a second language and building a strong international resume [8][9]. Students' basic networking abilities and cultural competency skills are also enhanced through international collaboration [10].

Research emphasized the benefits of the student exchange program such as developing intercultural competence [11], learning a language and technology [12], and having a global vision which encourages students to be global-minded students [13]. Further, this global-mindedness will likely influence students' perception (in a positive nuance) toward their future profession [14]. Additionally, the students get an up-to-date understanding of the country they visited and develop worldwide relations [11] which raise international solidarity and understanding during their intercultural interaction [15].

2.2 Self confidence

Scholars define self-confidence in various ways. According to the psychology dictionary, self-confidence is having trust in their skills, judgements, and abilities, or conviction that one can successfully handle problems and demands that arise daily. This view is supported by Sharour (2019) who defines self-confidence as an attitude of being able to accept reality, develop self-awareness, think positively, have independence, and have the ability to have everything you want [16]. On the other hand, Çiftçi and Yıldız (2019) simplify the definition of self-confidence as an individual's belief in him/herself. This study acknowledged Lauster's theory which suggests the characteristics of self-confidence [17], one of which is believing in one's abilities. It is self-trust in facing all problems and evaluating and overcoming any issue.

Self-confidence is important for a sports career as a coach, journalist, sports commentator, sports analyst, physical education teacher, etc. In sports competitions, having confidence may affect our performance during a competition which will influence the result [7]. Self-confidence positions people not to feel inferior in front of anyone and not feel awkward when dealing with many people. Self-confidence also triggers people to act responsibly because they believe they have sufficient knowledge to take the best action and decision [12]. Self-confidence is also the most valuable attribute in a social life that can direct people to actualize their potential. Thus, the researcher concludes that self-confidence is a belief in our ability to utilize all of our potentials to reach certain goals and standard that are confidential for students' success.

Vealey's paper discusses three sources of self-confidence in Athletes; he argues that the environment or social climate is important in shaping self-confidence [18]. Social support (from friends, coaches, and team leaders) is a reliable source to gain confidence, which further believes will influence a perceived goal [18]. Above all, Lauster characterized four aspects of self-confidence, namely: believing in yourself, having a positive attitude, being independent, and having an optimistic attitude [16]. Upon four of the mentioned aspects, this study will focus only on believing in yourself.

3 Methods

This is a descriptive qualitative research design with a structured interview as the main instrument for data collection. It aims to explain the FSS students` self-confidence which leads them to conduct an International program in UiTM Malaysia. The participants are eleven FSS students who conducted two weeks community service project at the FPEH, UiTM, Malaysia during their final year of study. The students have successfully planned and run sports programs: sports massage, *Pencak silat*, *futsal*, and aerobics dance. Besides, the students also introduced and taught traditional Indonesian sports such as *congklak* and *egrang bathok* and sports created by UNNES lecturers, namely *Tennis*.

4 Data collection

The procedure in conducting the interview are first designing the interview instrument and submit the instrument to be assessed and validated by the expert in the field of sports psychology. The final rubric was used for interviewing the respondent through WhatsApp video call. The interview with each respondent last for about an hour. During the interview, participants answer several questions related to sense of believing in yourself, based on the following indicator:

Table 1. Indicators

		Indicators
Believing yourself	in	In a new community, I could easily socialise.
		I am unable to lead a discussion in a new community.
		I am hesitating to ask a question to a stranger or a foreigner.
		I am bold enough to initiate a conversation in a new setting, and I am willing to lead a discussion in a new community.
		I feel that I gave uninteresting topics whenever I joined a discussion

The questions being asked are:

What are the activities in the overseas community service project that help you develop your social skill?

After conducting the overseas community service project, have you ever socialized/gather/immerse in a new community?

What are some activities in the overseas community service project that help you think help you develop your leadership skill?

Are you active in any organization in campus or off campus?

(If the answer is yes) How do you deliver your argument during discussion? Are there any activities in the overseas community service project that could add your strength in argumentation?

What activities in KKN do you think that help you develop your courage to be proactive in any forum discussion?

The result of the interview was transcribed and send to the interviewee to be checked and confirmed. The approved transcribed were analysed to answer the research question namely how is Indonesian students' sense of believing in themselves after participating in the exchange program at FPEH, UiTM, Malaysia.

5 Results and discussion

This research aimed to explain the sports students' sense of believing in themselves after completing a two weeks of overseas community service project. The students were asked whether the experience influence their view and perception toward their self-ability.

The International community service project initiated by the students of FSS, UNNES brought five missions: sports project, health project, cultural project, conservation project, and literacy project. As part of the sport project, the students performed and promoted Indonesian sports such as *Pencak silat* in UiTM and hosted matches between countries. The health project is introduction and practice of sports massage. The students also have prepared some cultural and conservation projects, namely introducing traditional songs, teaching a mix of aerobic and traditional dance of Maumere. For the culture and literacy project, an interlanguage discussion about multiculturalism in Indonesian and Malaysia were hosted. Last but not least, in the conservation project, a batik painting workshop was remarkable to experience for the FPEH students.

The students who initiated the projects were never been abroad before. However, they dare to jump into a new community overseas and introduce themselves to International peers. Each student was responsible for a project. The given responsibility directs them to prepare their best. When they were asked about what they experienced from the project which influenced their trustworthiness toward themselves, most of them related their answer to certain responsibilities they were into; for example, Fin, who is the Person in charge (PIC) for Interlanguage discussion, Kni the PIC of sports massage, Ar the PIC of *Pencak Silat* Promotion, and some other students. The students experience specific self-confidence, which is a changing mental and emotional state associated with the specific task or situation at-hand [19], in this case, they become more responsible for having a project to be presented.

Fin said that all activities he experienced encouraged him to socialize with the UiTM students. However, one of the exchange activities that mostly increase his social skill was hosting a cultural and linguistic diversity discussion between Indonesia and Malaysia. According to Fin, because he is the PIC of the project, he developed his sense of leadership, especially when he has to speak in front of Malaysian students and lecturers. The experience of leading a discussion in multicultural setting has improved his sense of self-confidence. This experience that student gets from the educational setting as Sharour (2019) mentioned could improve students' self-confidence and self-efficacy [20].

In line with Fin, Kni also describe that all activities he experienced during his overseas community service project, help him to better socialize in new culture and environment. Kni recalled a conversation he had with students and teachers in UiTM, which forced him to be a more social person to catch up with discussions with foreign people. He also experiences an increase in his leadership skill when he has appointed as the PIC the sports massage program where he led a workshop for UiTM students and lecturers. Kni emphasized that the enthusiasm

of Malaysian students and teachers when they joined his workshop increased his self-confidence, as [19] argued that people make judgments about themselves based on their experiences and others' feedback.

“Lalu kegiatan yang menurut saya dapat meningkatkan jiwa kepemimpinan saya yaitu ketika saya ditunjuk sebagai PJ atau penanggung jawab program kerja sport massage disana kita dituntut untuk berani memimpin didepan banyak mahasiswa UiTM beserta dosennya untuk menjelaskan apa itu sport massage, cara caranya dan bagaimana praktiknya, hal tersebut sangat amat melekat di jiwa saya karena antusias dosen beserta mahasiswa sana itu menjadikan saya sangat lebih percaya kepada kemampuan diri saya sendiri”

“Then the activity that I think improve my leadership skill is when I was appointed as the person in charge of the sports massage workshop where I am required to lead a workshop in front of many UiTM students and their lecturers to explain about sports massage, the procedure and followed with a practice. The experience attached to my soul because the enthusiasm of the (UiTM) lecturers and students made me feel more confident in my abilities”

In line with Kni, Ar also experiences improvement in his leadership skill. Their experience reflects the important of the environment to support students' trust on themselves.

“Menurut saya bukan hanya kegiatannya saja yang mampu menambah tingkat bersosialisasi saya, ketika saya berbicara atau mengobrol dengan dosen maupun mahasiswa UiTM itu sudah mampu meningkatkan rasa bersosialisasi saya lalu rasa kepemimpinan saya juga meningkat ketika saya ditunjuk menjadi PJ program kerja pencak silat, disana saya menyampaikan dan mengajarkan gerakan gerakan dasar dari silat dan kondisi dilapangan saya yang mengendalikan. Hal tersebut membuat saya mampu menambah kepercayaan diri saya” (Ar, 2021)

“In my opinion, not only are the exchange activities able to increase my socialization level, but when I talk or chat with UiTM lecturers and students, I feel my ability in socialization increase.... and then, my sense of leadership also increased when I was appointed as person in charge of the Pencak silat program. I conveyed and taught the basic movements of silat.... This made me able to increase my self-confidence” (Ar, 2021)

Usni, the Indonesian students' group leader, agreed with his member on the benefit of the exchange program toward their confidence. He explained that his self-confidence increased especially as he has experienced became the group leader for an International project. Some activities that influenced his view were the regular casual discussion he had with Malaysian students every afternoon where the students were exchanging their ideas about sports, classes, cultures, and other random topics. In addition, Pangkas, another exchange student, emphasized on the importance of sparing football between UNNES and UiTM in bonding the partnership between Indonesian and Malaysian students. Ani, a female student from Indonesia also experience an increase of confidence to speak in front of the public when she was assigned as a PIC for Meumere dance.

It is interesting to witness that the experience the students gained abroad remains and effect their personality when they come back to Indonesia to be more confident. Their sense of believing in

themselves has influenced the students' social life. Fin, who were previously a part of the student faculty board, get promoted to be University student board. He mentioned that after returning from the exchange program, he become more active in social life such as becoming a volunteer of Covid-19 recovery team, together with Pangkas, another exchange student in the program. Further, Kni, another exchange student, continued his role in sports massage by giving sports massage education in his environment. Usni, the former group leader, was more active in his *pesantren* (Islamic religious boarding school) and help more in some social program in the *pesantren*. Ani, one female member of the group, upon returning from the program, became a No-drugs ambassador to give socialisation about the danger of drugs. Ar, another member of the exchange program, was chosen to be a group leader for his city community [22].

Bringing home the experience as a group leader, the person in charge, presenter, and ambassador for Indonesia has directed the Indonesian students to be more active and involved in social life upon returning from the exchange program. Even though most students feel an increase in their self-confidence and ability to socialize in public after returning from the exchange program, one student mentioned that due to the bad case of Covid-19 in his city, he could not socialize and implement his skill in society. However, all students acknowledge that taking responsibility and feeling responsible for a project has built their self-confidence [23].

The students agreed that the positive experience they got from the exchange such as the hospitality of Malaysian students and teachers, the respect that Indonesian students get, the participation of Malaysian students in some of the programs that the Indonesian students initiated, and the involvement of Indonesian students in UiTM students' daily routine (sports and discussion) are some of the trigger factor that influence their self-confidence. The positive environment and ambience students get in Malaysia have influence their self-confidence [24]. Overall, the students see a positive influence of the exchange program on their self-confidence and their ability to socialize in their environment. The interview showed that the students successfully completed the five mandatory projects and gained several benefits from the program for their professional development .

6 Conclusion

This study sought to explain sports students' sense of self-belief after following a two-week overseas community service project. The students, who have completed the five mandatory projects assigned by the Indonesian institution, the students gained several advantages, particularly in terms of professional development. The experience of introducing their sports and culture to foreign students and being respected and valued in Malaysian institution make them reflect on their ability and capacity which further increase their value about themselves. Believing in yourself as indicated is one characteristic self-confidence.

The students who run the programs have forced themselves to be more confident than before because they represent their country's name. They work together to complete their mission. As a result, they perform to their full potential. Similarly, when students become aerobics instructors, teach basic Pencak silat techniques to the UiTM community, sports massage, and Tonnis technique. This is in line with what was conveyed that self-confidence is an attitude in someone who can develop self-awareness, think positively, have independence, and can gain everything you want. Given that self-confidence can lead to higher achievement, this study

suggests that students boost their self-confidence by immersing themselves in a positive environment and challenging themselves in a variety of activities to gain more life-skill experiences.

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