

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Research**

A journal article is a scholarly publication that presents original research findings, reviews existing literature, or offers theoretical perspectives on a specific issue. It typically adheres to a standardized structure—comprising an abstract, introduction, methodology, results, discussion, and references—to ensure clarity and reproducibility (Day & Gastel, 2012). This structure enables readers to follow the logical progression of the study and evaluate its credibility. Furthermore, journal articles undergo a rigorous peer-review process, in which experts in the field assess the manuscript's quality, originality, and contribution to knowledge. According to Smith (2020), this process is fundamental to preserving academic integrity, as it helps filter out work that does not meet scholarly standards. Beyond serving as a platform for disseminating academic insights, journal articles are vital resources for researchers, students, and practitioners seeking to stay updated with current developments, inform evidence-based practices, and build upon existing research. Mertens (2019) highlights that the accessibility and trustworthiness of peer-reviewed journal articles make them essential to the progress of science and academia.

However, international students often face significant barriers that hinder their academic writing. Smith and Khawaja (2011) identified language barriers as a major challenge that limits students' ability to fully comprehend course content

and engage in class discussions. These barriers can make it difficult to articulate complex ideas fluently and can create stress when navigating unfamiliar academic conventions. Braxley (2005) emphasizes that many students struggle with academic English, particularly in constructing essays, research papers, and reports. This includes difficulties with grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure, all of which can interfere with expressing ideas clearly and persuasively. Supporting this, Cennetkuşu (2012), in her study on international students at a U.S. university, examined the challenges of academic writing in English through surveys, interviews, and analysis of writing samples. The findings highlighted that mutual understanding of expectations between students and instructors could significantly improve writing outcomes for students writing in a second or foreign language.

Several prior studies have also identified strategies employed by international students to address writing challenges. For instance, Ernofalia (2017), in her study on cultural shock among Indonesian students studying abroad, reported that students commonly relied on peer discussions, consultations with lecturers or academic advisors, and support from counselors to navigate academic difficulties, including writing. Her findings, based on questionnaires and in-depth interviews, showed that students experienced varying stages of culture shock, from initial excitement to eventual integration, influencing their academic performance.

Similarly, research by Ermiati et al. (2021) examined students' experiences in completing theses and how personal challenges—such as health problems, emotional stress, and psychological pressures—could impact their academic progress. The study emphasized the importance of a strong support system,

including encouragement from peers, advisors, and family, in helping students stay motivated throughout the thesis-writing process. These findings are particularly relevant for Indonesian international students who may experience increased pressure while studying abroad.

Additionally, Wei et al. (2024) explored the writing strategies of Chinese international high school students in blended learning settings. Their research identified the use of cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies as crucial for overcoming writing difficulties such as limited vocabulary, grammatical mistakes, weak argumentation, and lack of structure. The study, which employed semi-structured interviews, student logs, and classroom observations, offered a holistic view of how students manage academic writing in both online and offline environments.

Although these studies provide valuable insights into the academic writing challenges and coping strategies of international students, most of them focus on writing essays or theses. There remains a gap in the literature concerning the specific difficulties faced by international students in writing and publishing journal articles. Furthermore, little research has specifically addressed the experiences of Indonesian students pursuing higher education at the Master's or Doctoral level overseas. To address this gap, the present study explores the academic writing challenges faced by Indonesian international students and the strategies they employ in writing journal articles. This research focuses on students affiliated with a national university in Taiwan and aims to provide a deeper understanding of their writing experiences and problem-solving approaches.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

1. What are the challenges experienced by Indonesian international students in writing and publishing a journal article?
2. How do Indonesian international students deal with the challenges in writing and publishing a journal article?

## **1.3 Purposes of the Research**

1. To analyze the specific challenges encountered by Indonesian international students in writing and publishing a journal article.
2. To describe how the strategies applied by Indonesian international students to overcome the challenges.

## **1.4 Limitation of the Research**

In this research, there are several limitations. Firstly, this research is only on Indonesian international students who are pursuing their Master's Degree and Doctoral Degree at NDHU (National Dong Hwa University). Secondly, this research is conducted exclusively within the context of one national university in Taiwan. Lastly, this research only focuses on articles published in SCOPUS-indexed journals.

## **1.5 Significance of the Research**

1. For Indonesian International Students

The finding of this research is beneficial for Indonesian students who study overseas to provide new insight about writing a journal article experience in university outside Indonesia. They will find out some beneficial strategies the international students use to overcome challenges and get good writing results.

## 2. For Future Researcher

The topic research specifically focusing on the challenges and strategies experienced by Indonesian international students in writing a journal article remains limited. Therefore, this research contributes to the existing literature by offering contextual insights that may be useful for future researchers who are interested in addressing the academic writing experiences of Indonesian international students.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

#### 1. International Students

International student is a person who studies in a country other than their country of origin. UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) also defines international students as individuals who have physically crossed an international border between two countries with the objective to participate in educational activities in the country of destination. In this research, international students are Indonesian students who takes their Master's degree and doctoral degree overseas.

#### 2. Journal Article

A journal article is a scholarly work published in academic journals that presents original research, theoretical analysis, or a review of existing studies on a specific topic. It follows a structured format, typically including an abstract, introduction, methodology, results, discussion, and references, to ensure clarity and rigor (Day & Gastel, 2012). These articles are peer-reviewed to maintain quality

and credibility and serve as key resources for advancing knowledge in a particular field (Smith, 2020),