Viewing The West: A Case of Occidentalism by Members of AIESEC (Association Internationale Des Etudiants En Sciences Economiques Et Commerciales) Surabaya

Abstrak :

AIESEC is an international platform of youth exchange programs. In one of the writers’ personal experience, most of his friends join AIESEC because they want to have ‘first-hand experience’ living in Western countries. The Western world has been arguably stereotyped more superior than its Eastern counterpart. The way Eastern people view the West is called Occidentalism, as the opposite of orientalism (the way the West views the East). Using Venn’s definition of occidentalism, this study was conducted in AIESEC Surabaya to further investigate how its members view the West and whether they change their views after joining the exchange programs. The method applied for this research is qualitative approach by utilizing in-depth interview and participant observation. The number of informants recruited was twelve members: one male and eleven females. This study discovers the changing of AIESEC members’ view towards the West after they experience in AIESEC. Although their views of the West are mostly positive (enchanting, prosperous, and modern West), AIESEC members also find ‘realities’ which are different from the stereotypical West through their interaction with Western people in AIESEC programs held in Indonesia or during their exchange programs in some Western countries. It is also argued that AIESEC has given its members better skills in cross cultural communication and understanding toward Western culture.

Keyword :

AIESEC, occidentalism, the West, white world, cross-cultural communication

Daftar Pustaka :

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