

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research problem, the objective of study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, and the definition of key terms. These steps must be discussed first because this part will be the outline of the research.

A. The Background of Study

"The first duty of a university is to teach wisdom, not a trade; character, not technicalities." **Winston Churchill (1874-1965)**. In order to produce agents of change in society, especially to prepare human resources to be ready for global change, the education of university ought to build students as wise human. But nowadays in Indonesia, universities only play their role as *diploma mills*. University forgets that education is a cradle of civilization, which is vital to build the prosperity of Indonesian people. University does care about giving the university students some provisions for their future. They are taught to be specialist or expert in their fields, but they do not know the real world, nor adapt with global changes. Based on Churchill's statement about university, actually Indonesia does not support any potential university and graduations.

This world is dynamic, everything changes so fast, due to technology development. But most Indonesians cannot realize it. For example, in university, most students prefer choosing education as their faculty, with expectation that

they will become teacher someday. They do not think about their chances in global employment market. If they are only prepared to be teacher, they will not ready for any bad changes in the world. What if all schools of Indonesia have to expel some teachers because they do not need the subject matter to teach? As we know this year, many English teachers of elementary schools have lost their job because of government's policy that eliminates English as subject matter in elementary school and kindergarten. There is a possibility that other job will face the same situation, which is unpredictable. Can the graduations adapt with this dynamic world?

Being a student of university is a waste of time, considering Indonesian Education program design that is longer than the program design of developed countries, just like England and Malaysia which commonly use six (6) semesters for undergraduate program. In addition, the collegian becomes static on the track of the faculty. The National education developing policy has failed to create students to be creative in accommodating various of solutions for their problems.

The education curriculum in Indonesia is the continuation of Netherland colonizer's curriculum, that created Indonesian as the political tool. It means that Indonesian has been created as servant in such a vocational education. Even the researcher knows that the main purpose of university is now to produce competent employee, the researcher thinks that education in Indonesia should be better than just producing some great employees.

It will be great for Indonesia if taking an example of the curriculum of advanced countries, named Liberal Arts. All of famous universities just like

Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Stanford, Berkeley and Chicago has been applying Liberal Arts for undergraduate program students. Liberal Arts will produce intellectuals that can master other knowledge more than the majors of their fields. The students also have basic in stating their thinking into written text and rhetoric, have high morality, able to think critically and systematically, capable of appreciate arts, behave well, and can understand the history of National culture. Liberal Arts education is very needed for education world because world gets faster changes. Every professions need criticism and large imagination, not only narrow-minded thinking.

Liberal Arts system is still used in Europe and America schools since 2000 years ago. Survey about the relationship between education with job world in America proved that most of private enterprise and government office prefer like to choose the graduation of Liberal Arts than Vocational in their recruitment, because of their wider and general basic knowledge, also that they are more able and faster to adapt in their position when they begin to work.¹ The great philosophers just like Pythagoras, Plato, and St. Augustinus are the developers of Liberal Arts education, which consists of *artes sermocinales* and *artes reales/physicae*. The muslim philosophers just like Ibnu Sina, Ibnu Rusydi, Al-Farabi and Al-Kindi also developed the same paradigm as the Greek philosophers in developing Liberal Arts. It is wonderful that Al-Farabi is well-known as philosopher, musician and doctor at the same time. Islam faced the most glorious era at the time.

¹ <http://aliusman.wordpress.com/2008/04/07/pendidikan-berparadigma-liberal-arts/>. accessed on September 10th 2013 at 8 a.m.

In Indonesia, there are still only three universities that apply Liberal Arts curriculum, Universitas Pelita Harapan, Universitas Paramadina and Universitas Pembangunan Jaya, all of them are in West Java. The researcher takes Universitas Pembangunan Jaya (UPJ) as the object of research, considering that the university has already had the concept of Liberal Arts Curriculum since 2011. Therefore, the concept will explain everything about Liberal Arts education that is applied in Indonesia.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in presenting the title **“The Curriculum Concept of Liberal Arts Education at Universitas Pembangunan Jaya Tangerang Selatan”**.

B. Research Problem

Based on the background above the researcher states the problem of the study as follows:

“How is the curriculum concept of Liberal Arts education at Universitas Pembangunan Jaya Tangerang Selatan?”

C. Objective of the Study

Based on the research problems above, the research is intended to know about the curriculum concept of Liberal Arts education.

D. The Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this research is expected to give explanation about Liberal Arts education. This study is expected to give some contributions as follows:

1. To the Students

This study is more expected to give knowledge about liberal arts education which is new to Indonesian. The students are expected to be more enthusiastic in learning every field of studies.

2. To the Lecturer

The result of the study is supposed to be a useful income for the lecturer to consider liberal arts education for developing the better generation of university students.

3. To the Researcher

The result of the study in this research is to know the curriculum concept of liberal arts education. This research hopefully will be useful as input for her future and as valuable experience to apply the knowledge from the college.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The researcher focuses the study on liberal arts education. The researcher will limit the scope on the curriculum concept. The limitation of this research is the curriculum concept at Universitas Pembangunan Jaya (UPJ) Tangerang Selatan.

F. Definition of the Key Terms

In this study the researcher gives definition about key terms as follows:

1. Liberal Arts are those subjects or skills that in classical antiquity were considered essential for a free person (a citizen) to know in order to take an active part in civic life.
2. Curriculum is the subjects comprising a course of study in a school or college.
3. Concept is an idea or mental picture of a group or class of objects, formed by combining all their aspects.