

## Research Article

# Exploring International Partnership for Sustainability of International Academic Program and Global Achievement: A Case Study

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**Abstract.**

The global achievements of sustainability using the exploration of cooperation networks in higher education are very important for a competitive advantage. Designing international academic programs with global partners leads to the guarantee of student learning and their interaction with international parties of campuses, institutions, and industries. The various types of international academic programs are needed for university excellence, additionally, international cooperation partners can maintain their existence by collaborating in the program design which further provides benefits for both parties such as the creation of positive branding, increasing trust, and human resources quality for cooperation sustainable of both parties in the long term. This paper discusses the international academic program between Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Sutaatmadja Subang (STIESA) and its international partnerships during 2019-2024. We use an explanatory method that explores STIESA's International Partnerships in relation to both the international academic programs and global achievements. Then, we also used the survey method including three respondents' perspectives STIESA's cooperation partner, and students to complete our analysis. The regression panel approach and robustness check are used for examining the relation of variables. The results show a significant relationship between STIESA's International Partnerships both on the sustainability of the International Academic Program and global achievements. These findings imply that a university needs to increase international partnerships and/or participate in international academic programs involving international partners to maintain the sustainability of international achievements and global competitiveness.

**Keywords:** international partnership, international academic program, global achievement, sustainable cooperation, competitive advantage

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The demand for superior quality in organizing world universities drives the need for sustainable global achievements. In Indonesia, the National Accreditation Agency and the existence of the Independent Accreditation Institution encourage universities to actively interact with international external parties, both campuses, institutions and industries. The global achievements sustainability using the exploration of cooperation networks in higher education is very important for the competitive advantage. This is based on the needs on Global Quality Demands of the university, The activeness of university interaction with international external parties, which has become an accreditation standard, and the international achievements of sustainability needed for competitive advantage.

Global cooperation partners jointly design academic programs both inbound and outbound to ensure global standardized learning. Student interaction in international academic activities is expected to be able to form better hard skills and soft skills. The intensity of interaction with external parties of the campus, especially those on a global scale, leads to the opening of opportunities and chances to achieve international scale for both students and lecturers of higher education.

To achieve superior competitiveness, higher education institutions need to design a variety of international academic programs that refer to national standards of higher education, namely the Tridharma in the form of international mobility, international research and international community. Improving students' global abilities through international academic programs is an effective university strategy to meet the skills and competencies required by worldwide society and industry [1].

When various international academic programs such as International student mobility, International conferences, International visiting lecturers, International certification, and others are followed individually or through cooperation between universities and international external parties, this encourages the expansion of international networks and additional opportunities to achieve global achievements such as competition awards, speakers and others. The International Academic program, which had been physically stopped during the pandemic, has increased again afterwards as an effort by universities to create HR and graduate profiles that meet international standards. National cooperation partners can maintain their existence by collaborating in the program design which further provides benefits for both parties such as the creation of positive branding, increasing trust, as well as increasing human resource quality.

This paper discusses the International Academic Program between Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Sutaatmadja Subang (STIESA) and its international partners from 2019-2024. The next section will explain various literature related to international academic programs and the sustainability of global achievements. The third section discusses the paper discussion methodology, which is continued by the fourth section, namely the description of the progress of STIESA's international academic program with its partners which is supported by responses from partners, top management, and students involved in the international academic program. The discussion continues with the testing of the effectiveness of STIESA's international academic program and global achievements in the fifth section which then in the sixth section there are conclusions and implications including the limitations of this paper.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND ORIGINALITY

### 2.1. International Collaboration, Academic Program and global achievement sustainability

In the years following the pandemic, there has been an increase in international collaboration in education, research, and community service. Universities have strengthened their competitiveness through increased networks of cooperation between nations [2]. Designing international academic programs by universities both bilateral international arrangements between two universities and international collaboration based on a formal consortium of multiple international universities both from one and multiple countries.

Investigation of previous studies found International academic programs based on consortium find that students enhanced their skills and competencies relevant to the labour market and for a cohesive society such as tolerance, confidence, and problem-solving skills.

### 2.2. Overview C4 of STIESA's International Academic Program

Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Sutaatmadja (STIESA) is one of the private universities in the city of Subang, West Java, and has two study programs, namely management and accounting. Since its beginning, STIESA has been trying to eradicate ignorance in the surrounding environment and realize an excellent and Independent College of

Economics Based on Human Resources with Good Morals. Therefore, STIESA designed a Field trip program abroad every year as part of the curriculum involving students and lecturers abroad to improve hard skills and soft skills in the form of campus, industry and country visits in 2012 and developed into Campus, Company, Country Connection (C4) in 2019. C4 is an excellent academic program with international partners designed to shape experience and observation in a global company or institution related to management and accounting. The change in the name of the international academic program was accompanied by a change in the design of the program, which was previously a field visit for students and lecturers in foreign conditions and situations, transformed into a leading academic program with international partners. The implementation of the STIESA's international academic program called C4 is a strategy to achieve the vision and mission of STIESA which has developed with international partners who continue to grow to support global achievements, especially ASEAN.

Students are expected to have the ability to identify problems, learn to analyze and offer solutions. The hard skill and soft skill outputs of the C4 STIESA program are directed at personal, communication, organizational and international intercultural competencies. Students are expected to have analytical problem-solving skills, professionalism, teamwork and leadership capability. The C4 STIESA academic program is also designed to form long-life learning soft skills (prayer time, discipline, observation, activity), cross-cultural view soft skills (foreign languages, cross-national friends, productivity, kindness), and international basic ethic soft skills (right, justice, utilitarian, recognition).

The implementation of C4 STIESA as a strategy to achieve STIESA's vision and mission is developed together with international campus partners whose numbers continue to grow to support global achievements, especially ASEAN. Some of the collaboration partners include Universiti Islam Selangor 2019, Institut Koperasi Malaysia 2023, Universiti Sains Islam Selangor 2024 and Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali Brunei 2024. The main principle of the C4 academic program is collaboration and sustainability between STIESA and international partners, both campuses, institutions, governments, and SMEs to improve students' hard skills and soft skills as well as improve lecturer competencies through inbound and outbound academic programs. The STIESA C4 program is optimized in various forms of design, including short visits in the form of 4-day short visits for specific purposes such as SMES's observation, research exposure, and academic competition. In addition, there is a long visit program in the form of

international mobility with a span of 14 days which contains international webinars, international workshops, international conferences/symposiums, international sit-in classes, international industry visits, international certification, and international training. The mechanism for STIESA's internal meetings in designing the C4 program which is then discussed with international collaboration partners is carried out to ensure the sustainability of dialogue at the regional level of the country so that the implementation of the academic program is effective and efficient. The meeting based on the evaluation of university executives, faculty members, international relations officers, students, and alumni to meet and review the Program's process, share updates, discuss challenges and obstacles, and reflect on future developments. For member universities, faculty members are grouped by discipline to discuss academic exchange, including credit transfer and course mapping, and the international relations officers meet to network and discuss the internationalization process and procedures forex change.

A university can accelerate the expansion of the global partner network to improve the competence of lecturers and student abilities by joining a consortium that is limited to selected institutions that are allowed by the other partner institutions to enter the consortium [3]. STIESA also joins a consortium of selected institutions that carry out international academic activities in 2024, namely the consortium of Asosiasi Dosen Akuntansi Indonesia (ADAI) for boosting the global vision. The common goal of ADAI, namely strengthening Tridharma , makes STIESA's participation in the consortium encourage the acceleration of STIESA's new network access for the next C4 program cooperation partners. STIESA's participation in an international academic program consortium is a learning forum for STIESA's preparation in pioneering the design of an international academic program consortium with its partners both domestically and abroad.

Recognition of the effectiveness of the C4 international academic program design and STIESA's significant contribution to an international academic program consortium is proven by receiving awards from its cooperation partners, namely "best strategic partnership of IKMa" and "top choice outstanding partnership ADAI" in 2024. Some of STIESA's other best achievements from international interactions with its partners are best sponsorship Indonesia delegation FAEA Vietnam 2022, best paper in NCAF UII 2023, best presenter PRA 2023, best paper ICS-BEP UNJANI 2024, excellent visiting lecturer UIS 2022-2024, invited visiting lecturer UNISSA Brunei 2024, first winner of International Business Plan Competition (IBPC) USIM Malaysia 2024, best product design IBPC USIM 2024, invited international student teaching program MAIWP Malaysia 2024, and best student international mobility IKMa 2024.

STIESA is concerned with getting a competitive advantage through collaboration sustainability between STIESA and international partners of campuses, institutions, and governments, including SMEs for global achievements, both student abilities and lecturers' competencies through inbound and outbound academic programs.

### 3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This paper discusses the International partnership and sustainability of the International Academic Program between Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Sutaatmadja Subang (STIESA) and its international partners as well as the relationship between international partnership and STIESA's global achievement. To achieve this objective, the following three research questions are proposed:

1. How is the International Academic Program of STIESA and its international partners?
2. How is the global achievement sustainability of STIESA?
3. Is there a significant impact of international partners on increasing international academic programs?
4. Is there a significant impact of international partners' numbers on increasing global achievement?
5. Is there a significant impact of international academic program quantity on global achievement numbers?
6. Is there a significant role of international academic programs in mediating the relationship between international partners and global achievement?

We use an explanatory method that explores the relationship of intentional academic programs on the STIESA's global achievements and sustainability using the data during 2019-2024. and using global achievement as the dependent variable, international partnership as an independent variable, and international academic program as the variable mediation.

Our explanation is based on the Knight Model that combines the three aspects namely organizational, political, and functional. According to Umemiya, we developed the measurement of The International Academic Programs are International Webinars International, Visiting Lecturers, International Conference co-hosts, International

Reviewers, International Speakers, International Community Services, International Student Presentations, and International Certification Programs [1]. Then the global achievements sustainability is proxied by Memoranda of Understanding or Agreement, International Award, International Publication, International Invitation, International Certified Students and Lecturers, and Foreign Students Visiting. Then, we use the number of global cooperation for the measurement of international partnerships.

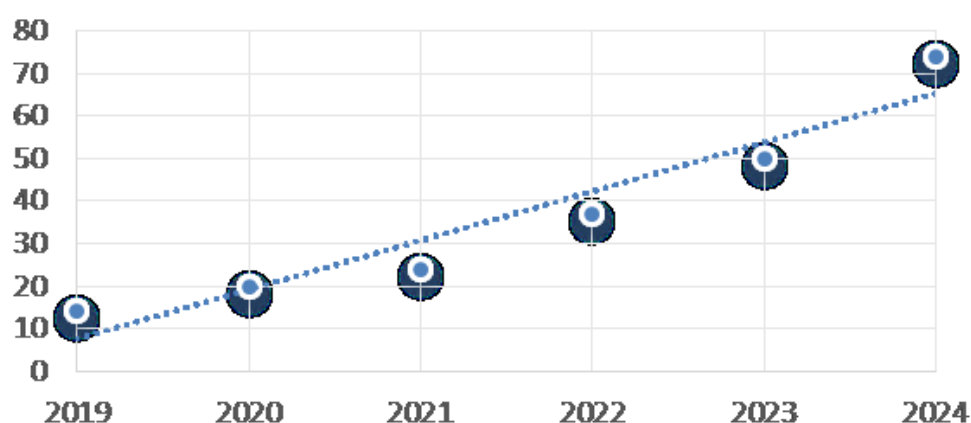
Furthermore, we also use the survey method which includes the three perspectives of respondents the STIESA's cooperation partners, the STIESA's top management, and the STIESA's students for completing our analysis as well as using the regression panel approach and robustness check used for examining the variables namely International partnership, Sustainable International Academic Program and Global Achievement.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Result of Descriptive Qualitative Analysis

#### 4.1.1. International partners and International Academic Program

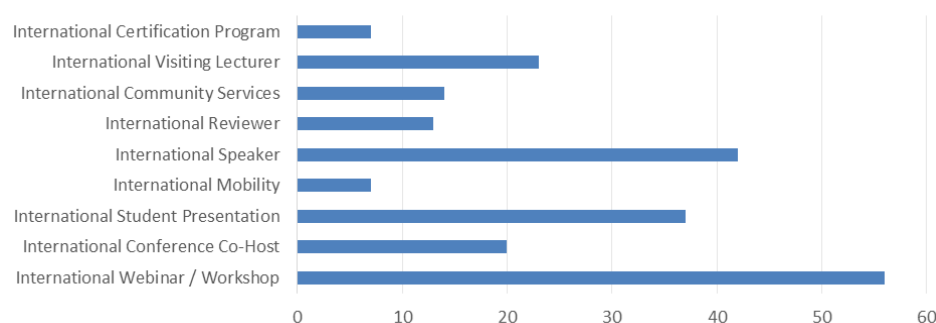
The development of STIESA's international partners shows an increase in quantity and quality covering campuses, institutions, industries, and SMEs. STIESA started with one partner in 2019 which was optimized in the form of international webinars/workshops, international conference co-hosts, international student presentations and international certification programs.



**Figure 1:** The Trend of STIESA's global partners during 2019-2024.

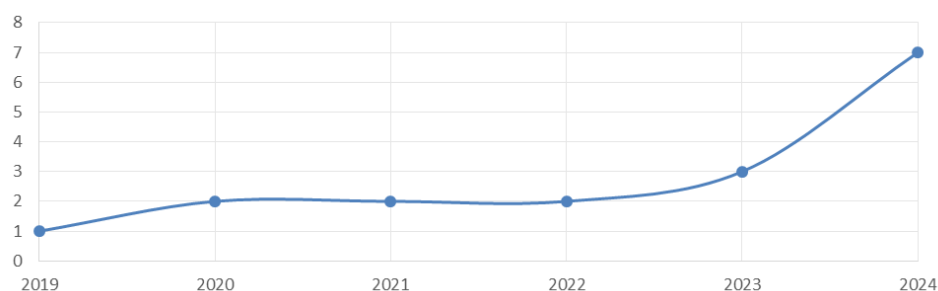
STIESA's commitment to the realization of international academic programs with partners has created a strong trust in the collaboration of online international activities, the

frequency of which increased during the 2020-2021 pandemic. The online international academic program makes STIESA able to guarantee global student interaction with easy adaptation. Students get learning materials that are appropriate in the classroom flexibly and can find out the global conditions of the presenters who present presentations in foreign languages. A survey of student respondents who participated in online international webinar/workshop/conference activities showed that 67.6% of students were able to absorb the workshop material. 65% of STIESA's students agree that international academic programs build a lot of skills. Trending international topics of academic programs are interesting and help them in the context of preparing their research proposals.



**Figure 2:** The Various of STIESA's International Academic Activities with its global partners during 2019-2024.

STIESA started with one partner in 2019 which was optimized in the form of international webinars/workshops, international conference co-hosts, international student presentations and international certification programs. The development of STIESA's international partners shows an increase in the quantity and quality of collaborations that include campuses, institutions, industries, and SMEs as shown below:



**Figure 3:** The Increasing of STIESA's Collaboration with its global partners during 2019-2024.

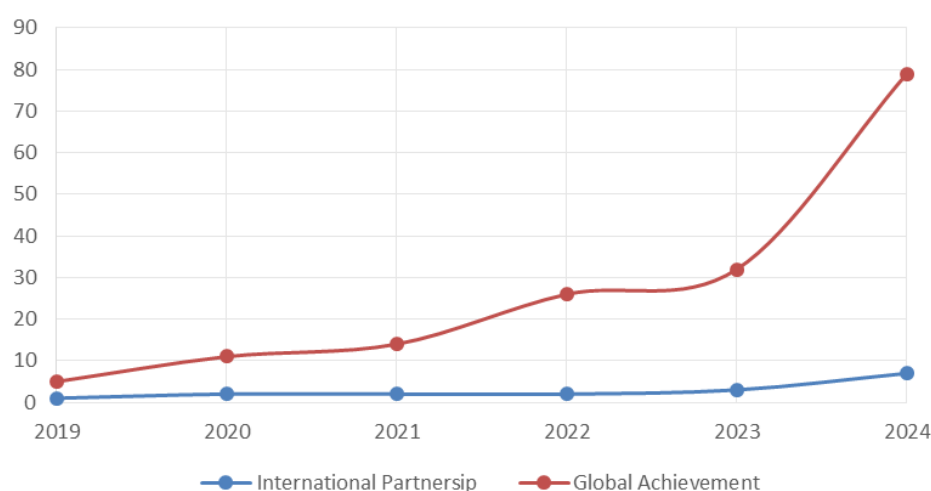
The increase in collaboration with STIESA's partners is a belief in the clarity of the plan and the realization of international academic programs. The respondent survey



showed that 55% strongly agreed with the statement of transparency in planning and 65% stated that the realization of the program was very good.

#### 4.1.2. International partners and Global Achievement

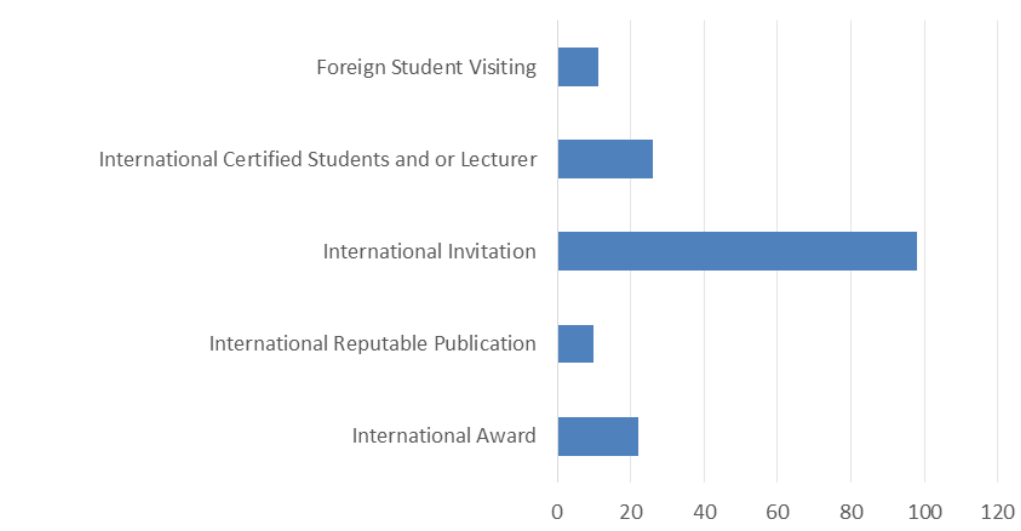
STIESA's international partnerships open greater opportunities to be able to be globally competitive. 100% of top management of STIESA agree that partnerships can drive institutional excellence and membership in international networks encourages institutional capacity building



**Figure 4:** The Trend of STIESA's global partners and its global achievement during 2019-2024.

Collaboration of international academic programs with partners such as workshops/webinars increases students' insight into global topics such as SDGs, Sustainability, Green Concept and others. 68% of respondents' responses were able to clearly understand economic and business developments through international academic activities, both inbound and outbound, and 95% felt the benefits in improving their academic abilities.

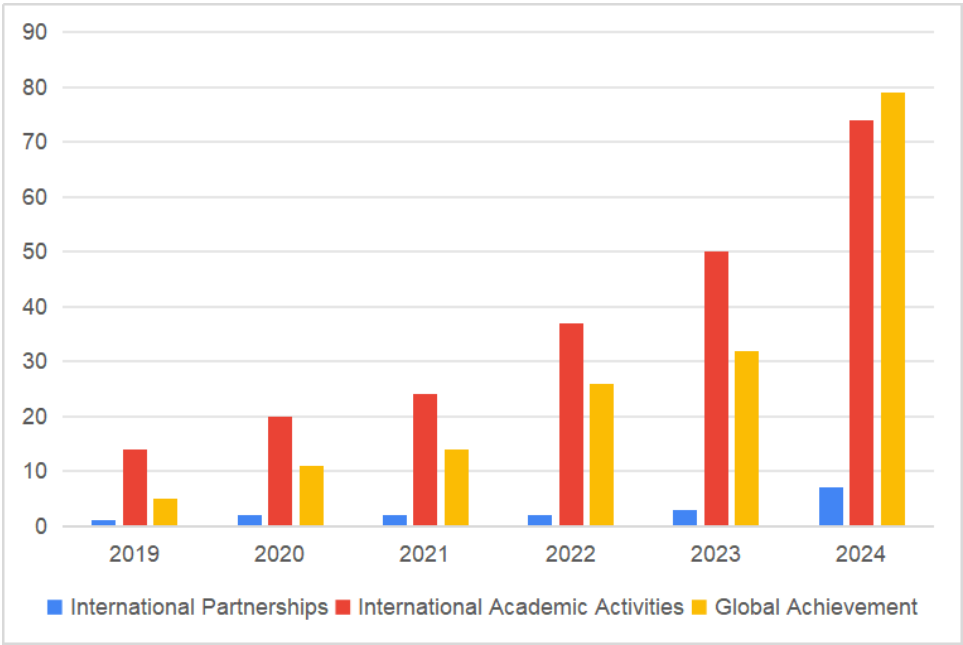
International partnerships owned by STIESA open up greater opportunities to be able to compete globally that continue to increase and sustain. Increasing the quantity and quality of international academic activities encourages the achievement of more global achievements for STIESA's students and lecturers. 100% of STIESA's top management agree that the increasing of international partners lead to faster achieving its global vision.



**Figure 5:** The Trend of STIESA global achievement during 2019-2024.

**4.1.3. International partners, International Academic Program, and Global Achievement**

Increasing international academic activities encourages the sustainability of global achievement for STIESA's students and lecturers. 100% of STIESA's partners and top management agree that the competency suitability and the accuracy needs of cooperation partners encourage the competitive advantage which leads to STIESA's cooperation sustainability.



**Figure 6:** The Trend of STIESA's international partnership, international academic activities, and global achievement during 2019-2024.

The trend of increasing global cooperation supports a strong trust in the partnership for wider collaboration that shown by the increasing of STIESA's international academic activities as well as its international achievements. It has increased the excellent reputation of STIESA in line with many awards from cooperation partners for the effectiveness of STIESA's international academic program design. A sustainable value created by STIESA through the commitment to collaboration with its partners is the main key to the campus to maintain the sustainability of academic programs and excellence achievement.

## 4.2. Quantitative Analysis

We build the hypotheses based on the research question that focuses on exploring the relationship between international partnerships, international academic programs, and global achievement. There are four hypotheses:

H1: There is a significant impact of international partners on increasing global achievement

H2: There is a significant impact of international partners on of international academic program

H3: There is a significant impact of an international academic program on the global achievement number

H4: There is a significant role of international academic programs in mediating the relationship between international partners and increasing global achievement.

Then, we examine the STIESA's data of Cooperation and International Relations from 2019 to 2024, including the number of international partnerships, the types of international academic collaborations, and various international achievements of STIESA.

As mentioned above, the study uses panel regression for testing the hypotheses, and our regression results run the least squares for the four equations of international partnerships, international academic program, and global achievement as below

Based on the results of Table 1, there is a direct effect of the international partners on the quantity of global achievement proxied by International Award, International Publication, International Invitation, International Certified Students and Lecturers, and Foreign Students Visiting. It supported our first hypothesis, which means many global partners lead to higher international academic programs. We also have substantial

TABLE 1: Regression Result.

Research Model	Model (1) regression X - Y	Model (2) regression X - Z	Model (3) regression Z - Y	Model (4) regression X-Z-Y
Dependent Variable				
<i>Global Achievement</i>				
Mediation Variable				
<i>International Academic Programs</i>			1.164454* (0.145293)	0.506347*** (0.212095)
Independent Variable				
<i>International Partnerships</i>	12.38686* (1.199526)	9.788321* (1.917486)		7.430574** (2.229706)
Constant	Included	Included	Included	Included
Method	LS	LS	LS	LS
Adjusted squared R	0.954807*	0.833659*	0.926721*	0.979220*

This table presents the results of the panel data regression of the research model. The dependent variable is international partnerships, proxied by the number of all global achievements. The independent variable is proxied by Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) or Letters of Intent (LoIs). The International Academic Program is measured by the total number of global academic sessions. The values in parentheses are standard errors. \*significant 1%; \*\*significant 5%; \*\*\*significant 10%.

evidence that international partners impact the international academic program measured by International Webinars, International Visiting Lecturers, International Conference co-hosts, International Reviewers, International Speakers, International Community Services, International Student Presentations, and International Certification Programs. Then the second hypothesis is accepted, and also there is a significant effect of international academic program on STIESA's global achievement, which means an accepted third hypothesis. Furthermore, we find a direct relationship between international partners, international academic programs, and global achievement, where the number of global partners and the quantity of global academic programs have a significant effect on several STIESA's global achievements. This is in line with the research of Umemiya et al. [1] that a high education that has more partners will have wider access to cooperation for the enhancement of global academic activities and enhance their reputation.

We do the Sobel test to test the mediating role of the international academic program in the international partners and global achievement relationship, and the result shows that the international academic program has a significant mediation in increasing the number of global partners and higher global achievement, with z-test value is

4.3055722. The number of global partners increases the number of kinds of global academic programs and will increase the quantity of global achievement.

The results are supported by the responses of STIESA's global partner, top management, and students that the global partnership increases the international academic program, both inbound and outbound programs and this in line with the research of Umimeya et al. [1]. We had the Sobel test for examining the mediation role of the International academic program in boosting global achievements, and as per our expectation, there is significant evidence of it.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Our data show the trend of international partnerships increasing support to higher international academic activities of STIESA as well as its global achievement. Internationalization universities needed to increase global partnerships and design international academic programs for the sustainability of global achievement. A university can achieve its competitive advantage by collaborating with global partners because it will develop institutional standards, gain valuable insight into practices from other regions, and promote innovation and knowledge transfer. In STIESA's case, there is significant evidence that international partnership is important for the sustainability of international academic programs and global achievement.

However, our study has some limitations in the measurement of international partnerships only in the number of and not consider the education level or country. Next research should explore partner alignment so that the selection of partners can be adjusted to the institution's vision and mission for optimizing the benefit quality. On the other side, the collaboration quality should be tested according to co-designing with partners of international academic activities can help students further enhance their global identity and knowledge. Sustainability excellence needs to be attention because global achievement requires the commitment of approaches variety to ensure learning internationalization access by incorporating technology considerations into international academic programs such as a hybrid model, elements of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) or virtual mobility.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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