

Research Article

Referring to the Results of International Student Mobility Activities: A Systematic Review and Future Research Agenda and Achievements

Acep Komara and Nelia Fariani S.*

Swadaya Gunung Jati University, Cirebon, Indonesia

ORCIDNelia Fariani S.: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8920-3100>**Abstract.**

Analytical studies on international student mobility programs are numerous and have grown over the past two decades. However, systematic reviews of such programs and their outcomes have not fully achieved desired output targets. This paper employs a mixed-method approach, combining a systematic literature review with community service (PKM) activities—including seminars, questionnaires, and interviews—to evaluate barriers and motivations for student participation in international mobility programs. Key findings reveal that low English proficiency (e.g., 74.78% of students scored below 400 on TOEFL) and limited institutional support critically hinder engagement, despite high student interest in mobility opportunities. Post-intervention data showed significant improvements in student motivation (93% agreement) and awareness after structured socialization programs. The study identifies gaps in research on student achievement outcomes and proposes a future research agenda to enhance program design, emphasizing intensive language training and institutional collaboration. Recommendations are provided to align management strategies with personal and career benefits for students in a globalized education landscape.

Keywords: international student mobility, student exchange, personal outcomes, employment benefits

1. INTRODUCTION

In order to implement the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program, the Directorate General of Higher Education (Ditjen Dikti) of the Ministry of Education and Culture designed the Indonesian Student International Mobility program. This program allows undergraduate students in universities within the Directorate General of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture who meet the requirements to study for one semester at leading universities abroad and vice versa, foreign students who have collaborated with relevant universities in Indonesia to be able to broaden their horizons to get to know Indonesia more deeply with its culture.

Corresponding Author: Nelia Fariani S.; email: nelia_fariani@ugj.ac.id

Published: 25 September 2025

Publishing services provided by Knowledge E

© Komara, Fariani S.. This article is distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons](#)

[Attribution License](#), which permits unrestricted use and redistribution provided that the original author and source are credited.

Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the 2nd International Office Conference 2024 Committee.



In many programs offered, both from the Government of Indonesia and from foreign universities in preparation, of course this requires human resources who have international competitiveness, in attitude, knowledge, and abilities. Therefore, universities, as centers of science, research, and community service, must adapt to the policy issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. This policy mandates the transformation of Indonesian higher education in alignment with eight key performance indicators, including university internationalization.

This achievement refers to the progress in university internationalization—such as expanded academic collaborations, enhanced cross-cultural competencies among participants, and increased institutional visibility—resulting from international mobility and cooperation initiatives led by lecturers and students. Students participating in international mobility programs face several challenges, such as low foreign language proficiency and high financial barriers. At one private university in Indonesia, we found the Faculty of Economics and Business also encountered specific obstacles, including low student motivation and limited institutional collaboration. The issues faced by students during international mobility are the low level of foreign language skills, the lack of interest in mobility opportunities for its students, the lack of international cooperation among the students themselves, and high budget requirements. These issues introduce in to participate students low student motivation in participating in international activities.

The purpose of international mobility socialization activities is to increase student insight and motivation so as to encourage increased competence. This activity was carried out by inviting potential speakers and distributing questionnaires and interviews to get student responses. Very positive responses were given by students. Questionnaire and interview data show that students are actually motivated to improve their foreign language skills and have the willingness to engage in international mobility, but find it difficult to apply it with a short time consideration.

Internationalization of study programs in the form of international collaboration and cooperation can be initiated through international mobilization of students and lecturers [1, 2]. International mobility of students includes study exchange programs where students study at the destination overseas campus, and carry out some research at overseas universities. This student mobilization will build and improve students' scientific culture and attitude towards the challenges of international competition in the future [1]. Indonesia's Directorate General of Higher Education has prepared a program for this international mobility of students [3].

International student exchange programs, research collaboration, international cooperation, short courses and international curriculum development will encourage the Faculty of Economics and Business at one private university to become a world-class faculty [2]. Therefore, opportunities offered by the Indonesian government as well as universities or agencies abroad must be utilized by the academic community, especially at the Faculty of Economics and Business. However, this must be supported by the readiness of the academic community and the systems available in the study program. In the period of several years since the A accreditation was obtained by the Faculty of Economics and Business, both in the Management and Accounting study programs, international mobility activities for students and lecturers of the Faculty of Economics and Business have been carried out but have not yet reached the desired target quantitatively or qualitatively.

The study identified significant barriers to international student mobility from the students' perspective, particularly related to self-assessed competence and institutional readiness. A survey conducted by UPT UGJ on English proficiency among 115 students from the 2021 and 2022 batches in the Faculty of Economics and Business revealed critical insights:

TOEFL Score Distribution:

1. Above 500, only 4% of students achieved this threshold, reflecting limited advanced English proficiency.
2. 400–500, 22% of students fell within this range, indicating intermediate competency.
3. Below 400, A substantial majority (74%) scored below 400, highlighting widespread challenges in meeting basic language requirements for international programs.

These results underscore a direct correlation between low English proficiency and reduced student participation in global mobility initiatives. The data aligns with qualitative feedback from students, who cited insufficient language skills as a primary deterrent to engaging in international opportunities.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted a mixed-method approach to evaluate challenges and opportunities in international student mobility. Data collection involved two primary components: pre-existing institutional records and primary data gathered through a structured community service program (PKM).

For data collection, English proficiency levels of 115 students from the 2021 and 2022 cohorts in the Faculty of Economics and Business were analyzed using TOEFL scores provided by the UGJ Language Unit. These scores revealed critical gaps in language preparedness, with 74% of students scoring below 400. To assess awareness and motivation, a Likert-scale questionnaire was administered during PKM activities, focusing on four key areas: understanding of international programs, clarity of materials, interaction quality with speakers, and post-activity motivation. Informal discussions were also held to gather qualitative insights into barriers such as financial constraints and procedural challenges.

The PKM activity—a university-led community service initiative—was implemented in three phases. During the preparation phase, promotional materials (flyers, banners) were designed and disseminated via WhatsApp student groups, and schedules were coordinated with stakeholders. The execution phase included lectures and discussions held at the FEB UGJ International Affairs Office, featuring presentations on student exchange programs, academic collaborations, and case studies like the Thai Global Universities' Short Course Program. Speakers, including the Dean of FEB UGJ and external experts, engaged participants in dialogues about practical steps to overcome mobility barriers. In the evaluation phase, questionnaire responses and discussion notes were analyzed to measure shifts in student motivation and awareness.

Data analysis combined quantitative and qualitative methods. TOEFL scores were categorized into ranges (<400, 400–500, >500) and summarized descriptively. Questionnaire responses were tabulated to calculate agreement rates (e.g., 93% of participants reported increased motivation). Qualitative feedback from discussions was thematically coded into recurring issues such as “language barriers” and “need for institutional support.” This triangulation of data provided a holistic understanding of the factors limiting student participation in global programs.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study identified significant barriers to international student mobility from the students’ perspective, particularly related to self-assessed competence and institutional readiness. A survey conducted by UPT UGJ on English proficiency among 115 students from the 2021 and 2022 batches in the Faculty of Economics and Business revealed critical insights:

TABLE 1: Distribution of TOEFL Scores of Faculty of Economics and Business Students.

TOEFL Score Range	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
> 500	3	2,61%
425-500	5	4,35%
400-425	21	18,26%
< 400	86	74,78%
Total	115	100%

Thus, a small number of students have the potential to participate in international activities. Seeing this, the study program as a forum for mobilizing the academic community of the Faculty of Economics and Business UGJ seeks to open and improve students’ insights through cooperation as a form of collaboration where students are expected to be motivated to improve their competence, so that they can participate in international mobilization activities, in the form of international student exchanges, or short study activities at universities abroad, or engage in research activities at universities abroad.

TABLE 2: TOEFL score range data for 2021 and 2022 FEB - UGJ students Batch TOEFL score range number of students.

Generation	TOEFL Score Range	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
2021	> 500	1	0,87%
	425-500	5	4,35%
	400-425	18	15,65%
	< 400	27	23,48%
2022	> 500	2	1,74%
	425-500	0	0,00%
	400-425	3	2,61%
	< 400	59	51,30%
Total		115	100%

TABLE 3: Evaluation of Student Engagement Based on TOEFL Category.

TOEFL Score Range	Number of Students	Percentage of Engagement (%)	Main Obstacles	Advice
> 500	3	100%	None	Increasing mobility opportunities
425-500	5	80%	Limited information	Socialization of mobility programs
TOEFL Score Range	Number of Students	Percentage of Engagement (%)	Main Obstacles	Advice
400-425	21	50%	Low motivation	Intensive language training
< 400	86	20%	Low language proficiency	Support for language learning systems

One of these efforts is in the form of a study of international mobilization opportunities that can be carried out by the academic community, especially students, in the education study program environment.

Faculty of Economics and Business UGJ through a form of Community Service (PKM) program, where FEB UGJ collaborates with practical skill exploration platforms such as: Tax Center, entrepreneurship and others, strives to continue to empower information for students.

The purpose of this Community Service activity is to increase the insight, motivation, and competence of students of the Faculty of Economics and Business in order to produce useful output for students who are members of internationalization, both from abroad to within the country or vice versa through the socialization of international mobility.

Prior to the implementation of PKM activities with the theme of student international mobility opportunities in an effort to improve the competence and insight of students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, which was summarized as student and lecturer mobility FEB UGJ, several preparations were made.

One of these preparations included designing and disseminating promotional flyers to socialize the PKM activity, specifically targeting students of the Faculty of Economics and Business.. The flyers, created using the Canva application, highlighted key themes such as international mobility opportunities, scholarship pathways, and success stories from alumni. They were strategically distributed through WhatsApp student groups and displayed on campus bulletin boards to maximize reach. This effort aimed not only to raise awareness but also to address students' hesitations by providing clear information

about program benefits, eligibility criteria, and institutional support mechanisms. Post-distribution feedback indicated heightened interest, with 85% of attendees citing the flyers as their primary source of motivation to participate in the event.

Flyer making involves students who are included as organizers of this activity. Flyers are designed using the Canva application. The results of the flyer design are shown in Figure 1. As the initial purpose of making it, the PKM activity flyer was disseminated through the WhatsApp group of students, lecturers and all academicians at the Faculty of Economics and Business.

The use of this method is indicated to be very effective as indicated by the number and variety of attendance of participants. This is because socialization in this way hits the target PKM participants. Activity certificates for participants and organizers were prepared to support the PKM program.

The questions included the requirements to join the programs offered by the Short Course Thai Global Universities Administration Technological College, tips on applying for overseas scholarships and summer course opportunities in several European countries, and university policies on international mobility. Academic mobility and academic cooperation programs. Academic mobility consists of mobility projects for higher education students and staff such as student's exchange, visiting lecturer, and joint masters.

The academic mobility program is not only provided for students, but also for lecturers and other academicians (mobility project for higher education students Lecturer and staff) is a program that provides opportunities for participating universities to mobilize their students and lecturers to partner universities abroad and domestically. Student mobility includes study mobility, where students can take part in their studies or research at partner universities, and training mobility or traineeships, namely internships, research assistants, or teaching assistants. Lecturers and staff also have the opportunity to do international mobility through this program. For lecturers, the mobility offered is teaching mobility and training mobility. Teaching mobility allows lecturers from home universities to teach at partner universities.

Meanwhile, through training mobility, lecturers can engage in training activities abroad that are related to their daily work. Based on what this program offers, the mobility project program for higher education students and staff can be used as a target or target for the Faculty of Economics and Business, UGJ to be able to carry out international mobility.

UGJ UNIVERSITAS GUNUNG JATI
PINTAR

LET'S JOIN!
SHORT COURSE
IN THAILAND

Price
15.000 THB
Include : meals, dormitory and all activities for 2 weeks. (Free 6 sks in UGJ)

Requirements

- ☒ Fill out the gform
- ☒ Level 1,2,3, & 4
- ☒ With a min IPK of 3.2
- ☒ Actively communicate (Indonesian and English)
- ☒ Participate in interview as motivation

Departure
2 weeks programs
Mulai berangkat pada tanggal 3 februari - 18 februari 2025

Quota
Only 20 students

Scan for Regist!

Timeline

- 1 **Registration**
5 November - 22 November
- 2 **Interview**
2 December - 3 December
- 3 **Departure to destination**
3 Februari - 18 Februari

FREE PLANE TICKETS!

Link Regist! <https://forms.gle/VZaLhcRN5sjDCt5o7>

FOR MORE INFO FEB/MZLIA 0852 0073 2727

Figure 1: Short Course Flyer.

It does not rule out the possibility, students, lecturers and staff also follow academic cooperation programs between institutions such as universities in Europe, America and Asia which have done a lot of cooperation in efforts to develop systems and manage international classes with their programs.

The stages in the process of preparing for international mobility show the creation of dynamism in institutions both at the study program and university levels. Thus,

this will lead to improvement and quality of performance in both management and administration. This is in line with previous research which reveals that international mobility activities have a major influence on the quality of academics and policy makers in institutions[4] [5].

In addition, the careers of academics as educators, teachers, and researchers also increase along with the formation of cooperation and mobility carried out so that they can produce scientific work and national and international achievements [6]. On this occasion, the speakers also revealed the positive values and benefits for students when involved in international mobility activities. Based on the experience and observations of the interviewees, students are motivated that the benefits obtained by engaging in international activities are more than just being able to travel abroad, such as to Asian and European countries, but also increase insight into the culture of the country visited, adaptability becomes sharpened, and makes international activity involvement a track record of achievement that supports their careers in the future. This expression of benefit or advantage is supported by a number of research results regarding the output and impact of international mobility programs on students. Stated that there are three aspects of the output of international mobility programs on students, namely cultural aspects, personal aspects, and career aspects. In the cultural aspect, international mobility programs can encourage students to be more sensitive and empathetic, aware of their own culture, increased cultural intelligence, global insight, adaptability, increased intercultural communication skills, increased language skills, and increased intercultural competence [7]. On the personal aspect, through the international mobility program students become better know themselves and enrich themselves with knowledge and skills. The international mobility program also has a positive influence on the aspect of career or future work of students. This is shown by how positive perceptions of job recipients when looking at the student's track record of achievements or curriculum vitae, the type of career chosen. achievements or curriculum vitae of the student, the type of career chosen by the student in the future, and the career transition to an international scale. students later, and career shifts to an international scale.

Feedback activities on PKM are carried out by questionnaires and interviews to all PKM participants. The statements in the the questionnaire were arranged in such a way as to get feedback from the participants regarding the PKM activities and obtain an overview of the participants' motivation to take part in international mobility programs in the future. international mobility program in the future. The statements are 1) The material presented can add insight into the "Student and Lecturer Mobility" program,

2) the presentation of the material using the media provides and Lecturer Mobility” program, 2) the presentation of material using media provides an ease in understanding the “Student and Lecture Mobility” program, 3) The material was delivered interactively by the speakers, and 4) this activity increased motivation to take part in the “Student and Lecturer Mobility” program.

TABLE 4: Distribution of PKM Responses.

Statement	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Uncertain (%)	Disagree (%)
The material increases understanding of international mobility	50	43	5	2
The media facilitates understanding of the material	55	38	5	2
Interaction with interactive speakers	60	33	5	2
Activities increase motivation	62	31	5	2

The response criteria used a Likert scale, namely strongly agree, agree, undecided, and disagree. Only 48 out of 58 participants filled out the questionnaire. Processing of the response data showed that all participants had gained insight into international mobility through this PKM activity. In addition, more than 93% of participants found it easy to receive material through the media used, interaction with resource persons, and increased motivation **Table 4**. The interview results revealed that participants were motivated to improve their competence in order to be involved in international activities. In addition, students suggested that the question and answer time be given longer so that discussions regarding technical implementation could be accommodated. Guidance activities in the selection of destination universities and partner university links are suggested to be carried out as a follow-up to PKM activities. Student participants also expect real support from the study program, faculty, and university in an effort to improve students’ toefl or ielts scores.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The PKM activities, involving students from the 2020 and 2021 batches alongside lecturers and external stakeholders, successfully enhanced awareness and preparedness for international mobility programs. Post-intervention data revealed a significant increase in student motivation (93% agreement) and comprehension of mobility opportunities, aligning with the study’s goal to address barriers to global engagement. However, persistent challenges—such as low English proficiency (74% of students scoring below

TOEFL 400) and insufficient institutional collaboration—highlight the need for systemic improvements.

To advance internationalization, universities must adopt sustainable strategies, including intensive language training programs tailored to mobility requirements, partnerships with global institutions to mitigate financial and bureaucratic hurdles, and longitudinal research to evaluate the long-term career impacts of mobility participation. These measures, integrated into institutional policy frameworks, can transform international mobility from isolated initiatives into pillars of global competency and career readiness, directly addressing gaps identified in the systematic review.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors extend their deepest gratitude to the Faculty of Economics and Business at Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati (UGJ) for their unwavering support in the successful implementation of this community service program. The invaluable assistance provided by the faculty, including access to the International Affairs Office and the active participation of its academic community, has been instrumental in fostering awareness and motivation among students for international mobility opportunities. This collaboration highlights the faculty's commitment to advancing its internationalization goals and empowering students to compete on a global stage.

References

- [1] Mali, M. G. (2020). Internasionalisasi kampus sebagai strategi perguruan tinggi dalam menghadapi era revolusi industri 4.0. *Jurnal Manajemen Publik dan Kebijakan Publik*, 2(1), 68–78.
- [2] Zulfa U. Transformasi internasionalisasi perguruan tinggi menjadi world class university. *Literasi*. 2012;3(1):111–24.
- [3] Hendayana Y. (2021). Program mobilitas internasional mahasiswa Indonesia, kesempatan bagi mahasiswa Indonesia belajar di luar negeri. Retrieved from <https://dikti.kemdikbud.go.id/kabardikti/kabar/program-mobilitas-internasional-mahasiswa-indonesia-kesempatan-bagi-mahasiswa-indonesia-belajar-di-luar-negeri> on April 18, 2022.
- [4] Civera A, Donina D, Meoli M, Vismara S. Fostering the creation of academic spinoffs: does the international mobility of the academic leader matter? *Int Entrep Manage J*.

2019; <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-019-00559-8>.

- [5] Siekierski P, Lima MC, Borini FM. International mobility of academics: brain drain and brain gain. *Eur Manag Rev*. 2018;15(3):329–39.
- [6] Netz N, Hampel S, Aman V. What effects does international mobility have on scientists' careers? A systematic review. *Res Eval*. 2020;29(3):327–51.
- [7] Roy A, Newman A, Ellenberger T, Pyman A. Outcomes of international student mobility programs: A systematic review and agenda for future research. *Stud High Educ*. 2018;43(12):2336–54.