

Admission Strategy for International New Students at the University of Mataram

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ABSTRACT

Recruiting international students is highly beneficial yet challenging for universities in Indonesia. This study raised research focusing on strategies applied by Indonesian Universities to attract international students' willingness to enroll. It also figured out the challenges and solutions encountered by the students in their initial studies. This study adopted Vincent Tinto's theory about the factors affecting students' academic accomplishments and learning failures. Qualitative design, case study approach, and open-ended questionnaires were implemented. This study invited three staff members of the International Affairs and International Center as the participants. Thematic analysis was adopted utilizing Atlas. Ti software to analyze the data from the respondents following Kawulich's (2004) framework, encompassing Narrative, Coding, Interpretation, Confirmation, and Presentation. The result demonstrated some strategies implemented by Mataram University for international students, such as providing proper facilities, including library and study spaces, access to technology, and a health center. The university also utilizes international alumni to endorse the university in their home country. Alongside the hurdles, the university provides students with a welcoming ceremony that includes a language course, academic orientation, and cultural adaptation programs upon their arrival

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, scholars in education management have shown growing interest in globalization and internationalization. Many have acknowledged that internationalization is crucial in the sustainable growth of higher education (HE) (Beech, 2015). International student recruitment has generally been a prominent aspect of the internationalization of higher education on a global scale that persists in formulating strategies to allure and enlist overseas students (Oladipo & Sugandi, 2022). In this matter, they must be able to deliver high-quality education and establish support systems for students unfamiliar with the local language, teaching methods, and culture. To improve the quality of education and research for all students and staff and make a significant contribution, they must actively participate in internationalization at home by strengthening their formal and informal curriculum (Highman & de Gayardon, 2022).

International education has become essential for higher education and training services worldwide since it can improve access to higher education and reduce the knowledge disparities between industrialized and developing nations (Ali et al., 2020). Students who have received education in economically advanced nations can make many valuable contributions to their respective societies. Hence, higher education systems and globalization appeal to students who want to relocate to a foreign country to pursue advanced education. Besides, leaders of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) should adopt a more comprehensive perspective on the services they are offering. The trend of studying abroad and the necessity to globalize education services has given rise to a novel educational setting significantly distinct from conventional colleges. This environment prioritizes student recruitment, particularly at the local and regional levels. Due to the heightened and evolving nature of competition, it is imperative for prospective students and their recipients to collaborate to cater to the emerging international student market.

However, despite having a plethora of benefits, studying abroad provides challenges for international students. Students highlighted several significant obstacles, including adaptation, social isolation, proficiency in the English language, academic performance, unfulfilled expectations, culture shock, and psychological stress. Support services that international institutions offer to international students aim to identify obstacles and propose solutions to overcome them, which might benefit other international students (Khawaja & Stallman, 2011). As stated by Sivtceva (2016), typically, international students who seek to study abroad lack prior experience in studying abroad and are embarking on their first experience elsewhere. This presents further challenges to the sociocultural adaptation. Not all students have acquired linguistic proficiency, and learning the local language might be challenging. Such challenges can impact their academic, economic, and daily life. One major challenge international students face is language proficiency (Sivtceva, 2016).

Another challenge international students often encounter is the target university's education system. One primary determinant influencing international students' adaptation and sociocultural adjustment is the challenges associated with the learning process and diversity in education systems (Tas, 2013). Many students emigrate from their home countries at the start of their university education, so they have limited exposure to campus life. As a result, students are still influenced by the prevailing atmosphere of their high school. Studying at university is markedly different from high school (Sivtceva, 2016).

Besides, newly arrived international students often encounter culture shock in all aspects of their new lives as they adapt to a new country and university (Lin, 2006). The association between social support and cultural shock, mediated by resilience, is more robust than the relationship between emotional intelligence and culture shock affected by societal support, emotional intelligence, and resilience (Putra et al., 2022). International students encounter numerous societal obstacles in a host country and novel academic experiences. In their sociocultural experiences, international students frequently encounter language obstacles and cultural disparities (Mustagis & Sukarno, 2024). An international student's emotional and mental view of the educational process might be significantly hindered by a prolonged shock phase, reducing the efficacy and efficiency of their stay at a foreign university. Overcoming the adverse effects of a cultural space's rapid transformation can only be achieved through a student's cultural assimilation into a host culture (Zhao et al., 2020).

Considering its abundant cultural legacy, varied ecosystems, and expanding academic establishments, Indonesia is a promising choice for overseas students. Nevertheless, as expounded in the previous paragraphs, Indonesia also encounters distinct obstacles in attracting international students. However, by implementing effective strategies, Indonesia has the potential to establish itself as a compelling and competitive hub for global education. This study aimed to investigate the strategy implemented by Mataram University, Lombok, as one of the Indonesian universities that attracts international students to study continually. Hence, the researchers came up with two research questions as follows.

1. What strategies does Mataram University employ to attract international students?
2. How does Mataram University address the obstacles encountered by international students studying at the university?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Related Previous Studies

As universities worldwide strive to diversify their student populations and enhance their global reputations, research on methods for attracting overseas students has become a burgeoning area of study (Oladipo & Sugandi, 2022). Various prior studies have investigated different tactics higher education institutions employ to appeal to overseas students, analyzing aspects such as marketing methods, institutional collaborations, and student support services (Onk et al., 2017). One prevalent approach to attracting overseas students is the implementation of focused marketing and branding initiatives. Higher education institutions progressively allocate resources to establish a worldwide brand that attracts students from many nations. In their 2002 study, Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) proposed the "push-pull" model to elucidate the impact of external factors (push factors), such as economic and political conditions in students' home countries, together with internal factors (pull factors) such as the university's reputation, quality of education, and support services, on students' choices to continue their education overseas.

Prince College created a short-term SL program with a social justice theme, which is unusual for an ESL program, built on its relationship with the local community. It led to the creation of a socially and educationally responsible program that uses resources wisely and, most importantly, makes the students happy. Second, this credit-bearing program was led by an academic department with help from several other groups. Compared to more structured university programs, this method gave the school more freedom and control. A complete integration of social justice education and SL with a primary focus on English as a Second Language (ESL). This is meant to create a synergistic effect that will naturally improve student learning while highlighting the college's goal to serve the local community. The post-participation survey showed that all the students were pleased with this way of teaching and that the school, besides teaching languages, gave them an experience that changed their lives (Akiba, 2021).

Another study was conducted by Suvi (2019) regarding the strategies used to attract students in China and Finland. According to the study, prospective students establish expectations about studying abroad from several sources. Mediators like website content that connect hosts and international students are essential to impact students' study abroad decisions. The study introduced websites as mediators between host country recruiters and prospective international students. The study suggests assessing platforms like websites for foreign education representations and student expectations. Study abroad text and photographs are on the website.

Theoretical Framework

Retention of students is a vital issue for higher education institutions globally. Academic institutions endeavour to recruit students and guarantee their successful completion of studies and attain academic objectives (Lynam et al., 2022). Over the years, several hypotheses have arisen to elucidate the reasons behind the persistence of some students in their college studies while others withdraw. Vincent Tinto's Student Integration Model (SIM) has substantially influenced educators' and policymakers' views on higher education student accomplishment. This study examines Tinto's Student Integration Model, emphasizing its ideas, relevance, and impact on higher education particularly concerning Mataram University.

According to Tinto's model, the development of students' future commitments to the university is directly influenced by their degree of social and intellectual integration (Stadtfield et al., 2019), which affects pre-entry elements that impact their first-year experience and their aspirations for success. Tinto examines preuniversity attributes such as family background, talents, capacities, and previous schooling experiences as determinants of students' early educational goals and university commitments, impacting their degree of academic and social integration. Such integration, in turn, frequently determines the success or failure of students in their first year. In essence, the Student Integration Model (SIM) developed by Vincent Tinto is a well-acknowledged theory that elucidates the reasons behind the persistence and success of certain students in finishing their college instruction, as well as the decision of others to withdraw or discontinue their studies (Quinn et al., 2019). The hypothesis centers on the impact of integration, encompassing both academic and social aspects, on a student's choice to stay enrolled in a particular university. Tinto's theory is also applicable to the process of enrollment. Evidence indicates that students' choices to enroll and continue in higher education are shaped by their academic and social integration level inside the institution (Fincham et al., 2021).

Academic integration encompasses two categories: formal and informal integration. Formal academic integration pertains to interactions associated with academic pursuits and the institution, whereas informal academic integration encompasses interactions between educators and students beyond the immediate educational context, specifically regarding their perceived social parity and the extent of personal discourse between them (Severiens & Schmidt, 2009). Likewise, for social integration, formal integration mostly encompasses interactions among peers on educational matters. These interactions frequently pertain to collaborative efforts – specifically, how students engage in joint tasks, particularly in departments where project-based work constitutes a significant component of the curriculum, making the quality of collaboration a crucial factor in student retention. This formal level is differentiated from the informal level, characterized by regular social interaction and involvement in student activities. Students with numerous university friends who have a sense of belonging and derive enjoyment from their experience are likelier to attain their degree

(Severiens & Schmidt, 2009). The following figure is Vincent Tinto's Student Integration Model (SIM) framework.

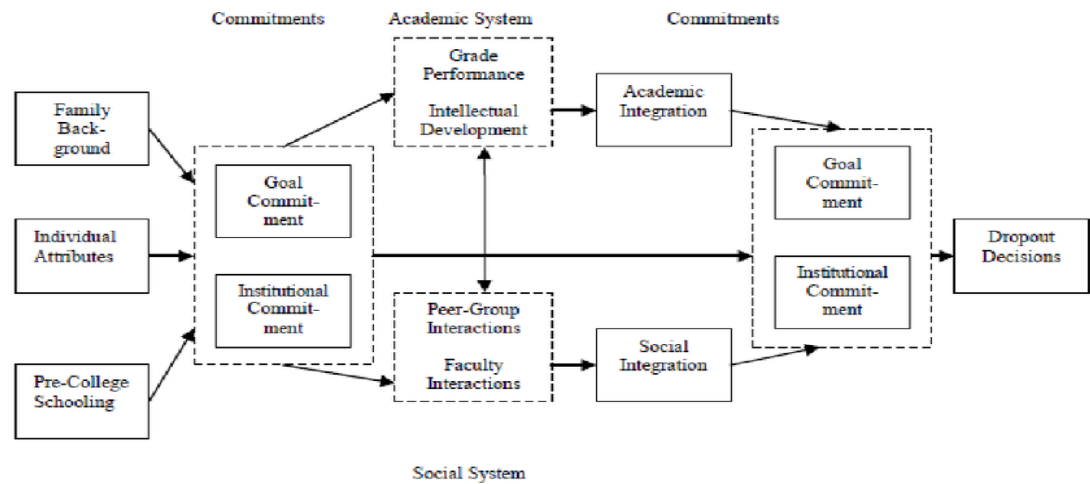


Figure 1. Vincent Tinto' Student Integration Model (SIM) Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative design and case study approach to address the strategies Mataram University implemented in recruiting international students. Kumar (2011) defined a case study as an analytical method where a specific case is the foundation for a comprehensive and profound investigation of a particular issue. Similarly, a case study thoroughly examines specific naturalistic phenomena, such as an individual, an organization, a program, an event, a geographic area, or a choice within its particular context (Tracy, 2020).

Participants

Five participants were involved in the current study, including the director and staff of the International Center and three staff members of the International Students Affairs who successfully recruited international students by developing strategies at Mataram University. Indeed, these participants have encountered various challenges during the recruitment process, which this study will explore.

Instrument and Data Analysis

Open-ended questionnaires are used in qualitative research, although some researchers will quantify the answers during the analysis stage. The questionnaire does not contain boxes to tick but instead leaves a blank section for the respondent to write in an answer. Closed-ended questionnaires were used to determine how many people use a service, while open-ended questionnaires might be used to determine what people think about a service (Dawson, 2002). Moreover, for the data analysis, this study conducted a thematic analysis connecting Kawulich's (2004) analysis procedures which include Narrative, Coding, Interpretation, Confirmation, and Presentation. Atlas. Ti software was utilized for a more systematic way of the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter spelled out and discussed the findings about Mataram's strategies for recruiting international students. The five staff members interviewed at international centres gave a broad explanation of not only the enrollment strategies but also the challenges faced by the university. All the findings are elaborated on in the following paragraphs.

Strategies for International Student Enrollment

Despite being the most outstanding university in NTB province, recruiting international students requires Mataram University to have strategies that provide certain comfortable academic climates, which include facilities and services. These facilities would further enhance students' interest and comfort in learning. The researcher also spelled out some challenges encountered by the new international students in the beginning of their study along with the solutions conducted by the university. To begin with, the following figure is the result of data analysis implementing thematic analysis by utilizing Atlas. Ti software followed by the analysis discussion following the figure.

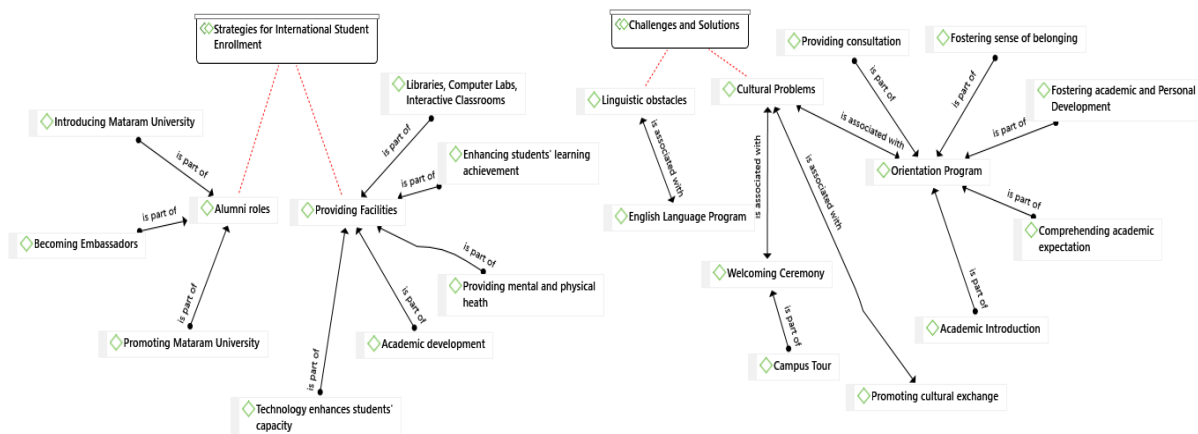


Figure 2. Analysis Result of Strategies, Challenges, and Solutions in Recruiting New International Students

Providing Compatible Facilities

In the contemporary educational environment, learning institutions are vital instruments for promoting academic achievement and holistic development. These facilities, including libraries, computer labs, and interactive classrooms, are intended to improve the learning environment, assisting students and educators in their quest for knowledge. Incorporating advanced learning environments is crucial for enhancing educational outcomes, facilitating resource access, and fostering cooperation (Munna & Kalam, 2021). In this matter, Mataram University provides several primary facilities to attract students' enrolment, as spelled out below.

Libraries and Study Spaces

Libraries and study places are essential for students' academic achievement and personal development. They offer access to critical resources, create an environment favorable to concentrated learning, cultivate motivation and discipline, enhance mental well-being, and encourage lifelong learning (Soltani & Nikou, 2020). Educational institutions investing in superior libraries and study environments improve students' academic achievement and foster their well-being and intellectual growth (Rodrigues & Mandrekar, 2020). Libraries are crucial in molding students' educational journeys and preparing them for future success by providing environments that promote learning, cooperation, and personal development. Moreover, a fundamental function of libraries is to provide students access to a wide range of resources required for academic study and research (Alokluk, 2020). Libraries function as reservoirs of knowledge, housing books, academic journals, research papers, and digital resources that facilitate students' comprehension of course content. Students can access specialist literature and academic resources essential for fulfilling assignments, performing research, and investigating academic interests. Furthermore, librarians provide research assistance, aiding students in identifying and utilizing appropriate resources, thus enriching their academic experience. Besides, modern libraries offer physical materials and access to digital databases, e-books, and online journals, enabling students to obtain knowledge from anywhere (Sudaryat et al., 2022). This adaptability is especially advantageous in the contemporary digital landscape, where online education and remote resource accessibility are more prevalent. Libraries with extensive digital holdings facilitate study, project completion, and awareness of academic advancements unhindered by geographical or physical constraints.

Additionally, study areas in libraries and throughout campuses are intended to provide students with a pleasant and concentrated atmosphere for learning. These environments enhance focus, reduce distractions, and foster academic efficiency, making them essential for students to optimize their study periods (Soltani & Nikou, 2020). A multitude of students require tranquil environments to concentrate on their educational pursuits. Besides, libraries frequently offer designated silent or quiet zones, enabling students to engage in focused work devoid of the distractions typically present in other sections. These areas are especially beneficial during examination seasons or when students engage in intricate assignments necessitating intense focus.

Although quiet study places are crucial, libraries also offer environments conducive to collaborative learning, enabling students to engage in group projects, conversations, or idea exchange (Mayer et al., 2020). Group study rooms with whiteboards, PCs, and additional resources enhance collaboration and promote peer-to-peer learning. Collaborative study environments foster critical thinking and problem-solving by enabling students to interact and share varied viewpoints (Sidgi, 2022). Furthermore, libraries and specialized study areas are aimed to cultivate discipline and drive in students by providing a setting tailored for intellectual pursuits. Students who consistently utilize libraries for studying

often establish a habit of linking the environment with concentration and efficiency.

Moreover, libraries facilitate self-directed learning by allowing students to determine their study methods and schedules. The accessibility of tangible and digital materials promotes students' independent exploration of themes, enhancing their comprehension of the subject matter and fostering curiosity (Lai & Wang, 2012). This autonomy enables students to assume responsibility for their education, a vital competency for academic achievement and continuous learning (Soria et al., 2017). Libraries offer a tranquil and conducive environment for students to concentrate on their studies, free from the distractions of daily life, thereby enhancing emotional equilibrium. Besides, libraries foster student interaction, resource sharing, and mutual assistance by establishing communal study areas. These contacts enhance a favorable academic experience, facilitating connections among students and the broader university community.

In addition to fulfilling urgent academic requirements, libraries and study areas foster a passion for learning that transcends university life. They furnish students with the essential tools and resources for ongoing intellectual development, facilitating the cultivation of research skills, critical thinking, and an enthusiasm for exploring novel concepts. Libraries are crucial in assisting students in cultivating robust research abilities since students can various research sources (Latifah, 2018), which are vital for academic achievement and professional advancement. Hence, providing research resources and library assistance empowers students to proficiently explore academic databases, assess sources, and synthesize information. These skills apply across diverse domains and are essential for graduate education or professional success. Libraries promote students' exploration of topics beyond their current curriculum. Libraries provide various resources across several disciplines, encouraging students to explore their intellectual pursuits and broaden their perspectives (O'Donnell & Anderson, 2022). This culture of inquiry fosters a perpetual passion for learning, which is essential for personal and professional advancement.

Technology Access

In the contemporary, technology-oriented landscape, colleges must give students access to advanced technologies to maintain competitiveness and guarantee student achievement (Carstens et al., 2021). Incorporating technology into academic life is crucial for the excellence of a university. Modern education increasingly depends on digital resources, requiring equitable access to hardware, software, and internet connectivity for all students (Willems et al., 2019). Technology facilitates students in conducting research, performing data analysis, and executing design projects efficiently and effectively which expands students' cognitive boundaries, collaborative learning, and creativity (Bonnardel & Zenasni, 2010). Moreover, access to sophisticated technology, simulation software, and virtual learning platforms enables students to participate in new learning modalities beyond conventional classroom instruction (Ervianti et al., 2023). Universities offering these resources augment their students'

competencies, equipping them for the workforce and cultivating a culture of creativity.

In a digital age, students want continuous access to internet resources, research databases, e-books, and virtual classrooms. Comprehensive Wi-Fi coverage throughout the campus enables students to remain connected and access educational resources from any location, including libraries, dormitories, or outdoor areas. Universities that invest in comprehensive digital infrastructure exhibit dedication to addressing students' academic requirements and facilitating their achievement (Criollo-C et al., 2021). Providing Wi-Fi and other supportive media resources has helped Mataram University attract international students' interest in unrolling.

Health Center

Health is crucial for students' academic achievement and general well-being. Universities offering on-campus health services, such as university hospitals, are vital in promoting a healthy and productive student community (Saheb et al., 2021). University hospitals are essential for meeting students' physical and mental health requirements, enabling them to concentrate on their academic pursuits without the burden of unresolved medical concerns. In this matter, optimal mental health cultivates abilities such as concentration and stress management, essential for academic success (Kothari et al., 2018). The Mataram University operates a hospital for students requiring consultations with physicians concerning their mental and physical well-being. Moreover, optimal health is crucial for academic achievement. Healthy students exhibit improved concentration, consistent class attendance, and enhanced engagement with their educational pursuits (Michael et al., 2015). Students who become unwell can promptly obtain treatment on campus, avoiding the inconvenience of traveling to an off-campus clinic or enduring appointment wait times. This prompt care facilitates quicker recovery and earlier resumption of academic duties, resulting in improved attendance and enhanced academic achievement.

Optimizing the Roles of Alumni

International student alumni hold a distinctive and impactful position in assisting their universities, especially in recruiting and enrolling new international students (Ljepava et al., 2022). As colleges endeavor to globalize their campuses and attract a more varied student population, international alumni play a crucial role in marketing the university overseas, sharing their experiences, and enhancing its global reputation (Unangst, 2020). Initially, overseas alumni function as influential global representatives for their schools. Their personal and professional achievements exemplify the caliber of education they obtained, serving as tangible evidence of the chances and development accessible to international students at their alma school. By conveying their experiences to potential students in their home countries, these alumni enhance the university's global reputation. International alumni enhance international recruitment fairs, networking events, and virtual webinars by offering a relatable and credible viewpoint, facilitating prospective students' ability to picture their success at the university (Gai et al., 2016).

The uncertainty of adjusting to a new culture, language, and educational system is one of the obstacles that international students face when contemplating studying abroad (Sharaievska et al., 2019). Prospective students can benefit from the invaluable advice of international alumni who have successfully overcome these obstacles. They can offer firsthand perspectives on navigating academic and social transitions, managing cultural differences, and capitalizing on university resources. Alumni can also provide practical advice on student life, including establishing a social network, participating in campus activities, and a housing search (Singer & Hughey, 2002). This mentorship ultimately influences the decision of prospective international students to enroll by fostering a sense of confidence and preparedness.

Numerous colleges utilize their global alumni networks in recruitment efforts. Alumni frequently engage in recruitment activities, either in-person in their home countries or virtually via Internet platforms. Their involvement may significantly influence prospective students seeking insights from individuals with comparable cultural or geographical backgrounds. International alumni who articulate their good experiences, including how they surmounted hurdles and leveraged the university's resources, present a persuasive story that appeals to prospective students and their families (Andrade & Davis, 2020). Alumni may also endorse their alma mater to friends, family, and colleagues, organically broadening the university's outreach. The global network of a university is among the most appealing attributes for potential overseas students. International alumni significantly contribute to the expansion of this network by providing internships, job placements, and career guidance to current students and new graduates (Burns, 2015). Upon returning to their home countries or relocating globally, these alumni establish an extensive professional network that can give them an advantage over future students. The prospect of career assistance and global employment options enhances the university's attractiveness to prospective students seeking both academic distinction and post-graduation achievement.

International alumni enhance the formation of a dynamic, internationally interconnected university community that draws students from varied backgrounds. Their sustained engagement with the university promotes continuous cultural interchange via alumni gatherings, guest lectures, or virtual partnerships. Prospective international students are more inclined to contemplate enrollment when they observe a university's hospitable and engaged international alumni network (Patras, 2020). This perception of a worldwide community instills confidence in students that they will get assistance throughout their university tenure and post-graduation as members of a perpetual network of global citizens.

Resolving Problems Faced by International Students

Despite advancements in comprehending the coping strategies associated with culture shock, adaptation to a new culture is not assured, and not all overseas students effectively navigate university life (McLeod & Graham, 2021). In this case, Mataram University conducted a welcoming ceremony for new international students. Welcoming ceremonies and orientation programs are vital to the university experience, particularly for overseas students. These programs are essential for assisting students in acclimating to their new surroundings, comprehending academic expectations, and fostering a sense of belonging in their host country (Mohzana, 2024). International students frequently encounter distinct problems, including cultural disparities, linguistic obstacles, and the navigation of foreign academic frameworks. An effectively structured welcoming ceremony and orientation program can mitigate these problems, establishing a basis for a joyful and prosperous educational experience. Essentially, international students frequently encounter substantial cultural adaptations while relocating to a new country for higher education. Welcoming ceremonies and orientation programs facilitate the integration of individuals into a new setting, alleviating the challenges associated with cultural shifts (Mardiningrum & Larasati, 2021). Orientation programs frequently encompass seminars that familiarize students with the host nation's cultural norms, customs, and etiquette. These lessons offer crucial insights into daily interactions, including greetings, social conduct, and comprehension of local customs. By acquiring these cultural nuances early, international students can prevent misunderstandings and enhance their integration into the new community (Goldoni, 2013).

Numerous international students may lack familiarity with the legal and regulatory structures of the host countries. Orientation seminars furnish essential knowledge regarding visa regulations, housing, work permits, and other significant facets of expatriate life (Knott & Ed, 2010). This information enables students to navigate their new surroundings more confidently and mitigates the danger of legal complications. Besides, language difficulties are prevalent for numerous international students, particularly those enrolled in a country where the medium of instruction differs from their native language (Ali et al., 2020). With regard to this matter, through welcoming ceremonies and orientation programs, Mataram University frequently provides linguistic assistance, encompassing workshops or language courses, to enhance students' communication abilities. This assistance facilitates academic achievement and enhances students' comfort in daily interactions.

Similarly, every nation and institution possesses distinct academic standards, encompassing instructional methods and task grading criteria. Orientation sessions familiarize overseas students with the university's academic atmosphere, encompassing details on plagiarism policies, expectations for class participation, and the significance of critical thinking (Baetz & Nitsch, 2019). The programs familiarize students with expectations early, preventing academic misconceptions and equipping them for success in their courses. During orientation, students are acquainted with these resources and instructed on how

to access them. This introduction is essential for instilling confidence in students to seek assistance when necessary and fully utilize the university's academic support resources (Moodie.jee et al., 2021).

Furthermore, orientation programs frequently feature time management and study skills sessions, which are especially beneficial for overseas students adapting to a new academic burden and timetable (Senyamator et al., 2021). These courses equip students with techniques to manage their time efficiently, balance academic responsibilities, and cultivate robust study habits, all essential for academic success. Orientation programs typically encompass icebreakers, collaborative exercises, and social events to facilitate student interactions and foster connections (Kavanagh et al., 2011). These initial interactions are crucial for establishing a support network among kids facing comparable issues. Establishing friendships early helps alleviate isolation and enhance international students' connection to the campus community.

In addition, there are other myriad benefits that international students can obtain during the orientation, including academic counselors, international student coordinators, and faculty members (Fletcher-Anthony & Efthymiou, 2015). These ties give students a network of individuals for academic counsel, personal assistance, or administrative support. Forming connections with staff and faculty early in their university experience helps international students comfort in seeking assistance when necessary. Moreover, orientation events frequently familiarize overseas students with several extracurricular activities, and organizations available on campus to support their education system. International students can explore their interests, cultivate leadership abilities, and participate in social activities beyond the classroom by discovering chances for involvement in student life. Engagement in campus life is crucial for students to feel assimilated into the larger university community and to enhance their overall academic performance (Supervía & Bordás, 2020).

Indeed, numerous overseas students encounter homesickness and cultural disorientation in the initial weeks of their stay in a foreign country. Orientation programs equip students with methods to manage these emotions, including maintaining connections with family and friends (Osoro & Nyamwange, 1970), adhering to established routines, and requesting assistance from peers and counselors. By confronting these emotional problems proactively, orientation programs enhance students' preparedness for their move (Wolfe & Kay, 2011). Hence, the welcoming ceremony is a symbolic occasion that fosters a sense of importance and inclusion for international students within the university community. This ceremony cultivates a sense of pride and belonging by formally welcoming students to the university (Soria et al., 2017). Experiencing a sense of welcome and appreciation is essential for students' emotional well-being, as it fosters their perception of belonging within a supportive and inclusive atmosphere.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study reveals two prevalent conclusions in response to the research questions. The measures implemented by Mataram University have two primary facets: the provision of suitable facilities and the enhancement of alumni engagement in foreign student recruitment. The university offers numerous facilities, including a library, study areas, technological resources, and a health facility. The facilities are fundamentally vital in captivating the interest of pupils, especially for newcomers. Moreover, alumni play a crucial role in endorsing and promoting university programs that can entice prospective students. In response to the problems encountered by new students, the institution organized a greeting ceremony that offers advantages, notably in addressing cultural shocks, language barriers, and academic demands.

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