

International Academic Exposure as a Means of Strengthening Students' Global Mindset, Cultural Sensitivity, and Academic Motivation

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Abstract.

Strengthening students' global competencies has become a critical challenge in the context of higher education in the era of globalization. Education is no longer focused solely on formal academic achievement, but also on the development of a global mindset, cultural sensitivity, and academic motivation as essential components of students' readiness to engage in a multicultural global environment. One approach to addressing this challenge is through international academic exposure designed as part of community engagement activities. This article aims to describe the contribution of international academic exposure as a means of strengthening students' global mindset, cultural sensitivity, and academic motivation within the context of higher education. The community service program was implemented using a descriptive-participatory approach with a hybrid model that combined offline international activities in Egypt and Saudi Arabia with online academic dissemination and reflection. A total of 12 lecturers from diverse educational backgrounds were involved as facilitators. Student participants consisted of 15 students who took part directly in offline international academic exposure activities and 438 students who participated online through reflective and dissemination activities. Data were collected through observation, discussions, structured reflections, and activity documentation, and were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative approach. The findings indicate that international academic exposure contributes to strengthening students' global mindset, cultural sensitivity, and academic motivation, both intensively among offline participants and reflectively among online participants. These findings affirm that international academic exposure can serve as a relevant education-based community engagement model in supporting the internationalization of higher education.

Keywords: *International academic exposure; higher education; global mindset; cultural sensitivity and academic motivation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of higher education in the era of globalization requires universities to focus not only on formal academic achievement but also on character development, the strengthening of global perspectives, and students' ability to adapt to cultural diversity and cross-national dynamics [10, 14]. Globalization has significantly transformed the landscape of higher education, making geographical boundaries increasingly blurred and positioning cross-national interactions as an integral part of the learning process. In this context, students are no longer prepared solely as academically competent graduates, but also as individuals who possess a global mindset, cultural sensitivity, and strong academic motivation to continue learning and developing within a competitive global environment [1,6,15,16]. However, the reality of higher education in many developing countries, including Indonesia, indicates that students' access to international academic experiences remains relatively limited [2,4]. The internationalization of higher education is often narrowly understood as administrative cooperation, document exchange, or ceremonial activities, without being accompanied by systematic efforts to transform international experiences into meaningful learning

opportunities for students [1,2,4,5]. As a result, the significant potential of *international academic exposure* as a medium for strengthening students' global competencies has not yet been fully utilized. *International academic exposure*, in a more substantive sense, encompasses not only cross-border physical mobility but also intellectual interaction, intercultural dialogue, and the direct engagement of students and educators within academic environments that differ historically, socially, and culturally [3,4].

Such exposure enables students to view educational practices from a broader perspective, understand the diversity of intellectual traditions, and develop an open attitude toward differences in values and ways of thinking. Therefore, *international academic exposure* plays a strategic role in strengthening students' global mindset, understood as a perspective that recognizes global interconnectedness, values diversity, and fosters critical thinking in a global context. In addition to a global mindset, cultural sensitivity is an essential competency that needs to be developed through international experiences [3,4,7]. Cross-cultural interaction enables students not only to become familiar with other cultures at a superficial level, but also to understand the values, norms, and social practices that underpin academic behavior and everyday life in different societies [8]. This cultural sensitivity is crucial in shaping tolerant and empathetic attitudes, as well as the ability to collaborate effectively in multicultural environments. In the long term, this competence becomes an important form of social capital for students, both in academic settings and in their future professional lives. On the other hand, *international academic exposure* also has the potential to strengthen students' academic motivation. Exposure to disciplined, competitive, and excellence-oriented international academic environments can serve as a source of inspiration that encourages students to enhance their learning ethos, broaden their academic aspirations, and cultivate an interest in pursuing further studies or contributing to the advancement of knowledge [9,12].

Academic motivation that emerges from direct experience tends to be more sustainable than motivation developed solely through theoretical approaches in classroom settings [11,13]. Within this framework, the international community engagement activities implemented through a series of academic visits to Egypt and Saudi Arabia become both relevant and strategic. These activities were not designed as experimental or evaluative research, but rather as an *international academic exposure* program aimed at providing cross-cultural and cross-intellectual learning experiences for students and members of the academic community of Indonesian higher education institutions. The program involved a series of integrated academic, cultural, and reflective activities, thereby offering comprehensive exposure to the higher education environment in the Middle East. One of the main activities in this series was an academic visit to Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. Al-Azhar University is one of the oldest and most influential educational institutions in the Islamic world, with an intellectual tradition that has been sustained for more than a thousand years. Through this activity, participants gained first-hand insights into how an international higher education institution maintains academic quality, integrates ethical and spiritual values within its educational system, and preserves its scholarly traditions amid the demands of modernization. Exposure to Al-Azhar's academic system provided important perspectives for participants, particularly students, on the diversity of higher education models and alternative approaches to developing value-based educational quality.

In addition to the visit to Al-Azhar, the program also included academic visits and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with students at the Islamic University of Madinah (IUM), Saudi Arabia. IUM is recognized as one of the leading Islamic universities in the world, emphasizing depth of scholarly studies, character development, and a high level of academic discipline. Through these FGDs, participants interacted directly with international students pursuing their studies at IUM, engaging in discussions on learning experiences, academic challenges, and the dynamics of student life within a multicultural environment. This interaction provided participants with authentic experiences to understand learning realities beyond the national context, while simultaneously enriching their understanding of how academic and cultural values shape students' motivation and learning ethos. In addition to campus-based activities, the community engagement program also included educational visits to the Papyrus Factory in Egypt and a perfume production facility in Taif, Saudi Arabia. These activities were designed as part of contextual learning that connects formal education with local cultural, historical, and economic practices. The visit to the Papyrus

Factory provided participants with direct insights into the history of writing media, the transmission of knowledge, and the role of ancient Egyptian civilization in the development of human knowledge. Such exposure enriched participants' historical awareness and reinforced the understanding that knowledge evolves through long civilizational processes rather than emerging instantaneously. Meanwhile, the visit to the perfume production facility in Taif offered perspectives on how traditional knowledge, local culture, and economic practices can be integrated into modern production activities. This experience not only broadened participants' cultural horizons but also fostered an appreciation for the diversity of social and economic practices in other societies. Within an educational context, such experiences contribute to strengthening students' cultural sensitivity, as they learn to understand the meanings embedded in local practices rather than merely observing them from an external viewpoint. This series of activities demonstrates that *international academic exposure* does not necessarily have to take the form of long-term mobility or formal exchange programs, but can instead be designed through structured and reflective international community engagement activities. Through this approach, international experiences become more inclusive and accessible to a wider range of students while simultaneously generating meaningful educational impacts. The program also underscores that community engagement is not confined to local contexts, but can be extended to the international sphere as part of higher education institutions' contributions to building the global capacity of younger generations. In the context of Indonesian higher education, this program holds strategic relevance. Universities in Indonesia currently face challenges in enhancing global competitiveness, strengthening internationalization, and preparing graduates who are capable of adapting to global environments.

Community engagement-based *international academic exposure* offers an alternative model to support these objectives by emphasizing experiential learning, critical reflection, and the strengthening of values. Through direct experiences within the academic and cultural environments of the Middle East, students are expected to develop a more mature global perspective, enhance their cultural sensitivity, and strengthen their academic motivation. Based on this background, this article aims to describe how *international academic exposure* implemented through international community engagement activities in Egypt and Saudi Arabia contributes to strengthening students' global mindset, cultural sensitivity, and academic motivation. This article is not intended to measure impacts quantitatively, but rather to present reflections and lessons learned from community engagement practices that may serve as a reference for other higher education institutions in designing more meaningful and holistically student-oriented internationalization programs.

II. METHODS

1. Design and Approach of the Program

This community engagement program was designed using a descriptive-participatory approach based on *international academic exposure*. This approach positions cross-national academic experiences as the primary learning medium, emphasizing the active involvement of participants, both lecturers and students, in processes of observation, academic dialogue, reflection, and cross-cultural interaction. This program did not employ an experimental research design and was not intended to test hypotheses or measure impacts quantitatively. Instead, the approach focused on providing meaningful international learning experiences, which are expected to strengthen students' global mindset, cultural sensitivity, and academic motivation through experiential learning. Accordingly, this article positions the program as an international community engagement practice that is educational, reflective, and transformative.

2. Time and Location of Implementation

The international community engagement program was conducted from 7 to 18 November 2025 through a series of integrated activities implemented using a hybrid approach. Offline activities were carried out during academic visits to several strategic locations in the Middle East, while online activities were conducted before, during, and after the visits to support dissemination and structured academic reflection. The offline international activities took place at multiple sites, including Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt; and the Islamic University of Madinah in Madinah, Saudi Arabia; the Papyrus Factory in Egypt; and

a perfume production facility in Taif, Saudi Arabia. These locations were selected to provide participants with comprehensive exposure to diverse academic environments, cultural contexts, and contextual learning settings aligned with the objectives of the program. The online activities were implemented through virtual academic forums involving a broader group of student participants. These sessions served as platforms for disseminating experiences from the offline international visits and facilitating reflective academic discussions. By integrating offline international exposure with online dissemination and reflection over the period of 7–18 November 2025, the program ensured continuity of learning and maximized participant engagement across different modes of implementation.

3. Program Implementation Model: Online and Offline Scheme

The implementation of this community engagement program employed a hybrid model that combined online activities with offline international activities, enabling broader outreach of the program's benefits while simultaneously providing in-depth direct academic experiences.

- a. The online activities were designed to reach a large number of students, focusing on knowledge dissemination, the strengthening of global perspectives, and academic reflection based on international experiences.
- b. The offline activities were conducted through international academic visits to Egypt and Saudi Arabia, involving selected students who participated directly and intensively in international academic exposure.

This model enables a combination of broad outreach (*breadth*) through online activities and depth of experience (*depth*) through offline engagement.

4. Locations and Sequence of Activities

- a. Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt

At Al-Azhar University, this program includes financial literacy activities targeting Indonesian students affiliated with the Muhammadiyah Special Branch Leadership in Egypt (PCIM Egypt), who are also registered as Al-Azhar students. This activity also involves student participants from Indonesia through both offline and online modes. The financial literacy session is themed "Islamic Finance and the Indonesian Sharia Capital Market: Investment Opportunities for International Students." This activity aims to enhance students' understanding of Islamic finance principles and introduce potential investment opportunities in the Indonesian Sharia capital market, especially for students studying abroad.

In addition to the financial literacy session, the program also held Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with several student research groups. These FGDs focused on exploring collaborative research opportunities between Indonesian and Egyptian students, facilitating academic dialogue, and strengthening cross-border research networks among students from both countries.

- b. Islamic University of Madinah (IUM), Saudi Arabia

At the Islamic University of Madinah, the program includes Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and direct observation of the learning environment. Focus group discussions (FGDs) provided a platform for academic exchange between participants and international students at IUM, addressing topics related to learning experiences, academic challenges, and student engagement. Observations were also conducted to examine the campus atmosphere, academic culture, and interaction patterns among students, providing insight into the dynamics of learning and academic discipline within the university environment.

- c. Papyrus Factory, Egypt

At the Papyrus Factory in Egypt, the program implemented contextual learning focused on the history of literacy, knowledge transmission, and the development of civilization. During this visit, lecturers and students engaged in discussions on papyrus as an early writing medium, its unique characteristics, and its historical significance in the preservation and dissemination of knowledge. Participants also observed and discussed the papyrus production process, starting from raw plant materials and progressing through each stage until papyrus sheets were produced and became suitable for writing. This activity enabled participants to connect the evolution of literacy with broader civilizational and educational developments.

- d. Perfume Production Facility, Taif, Saudi Arabia

At the perfume production facility in Taif, Saudi Arabia, the program emphasized cultural and local economic learning based on traditional industrial practices. Lecturers and students observed the

production process, including the transformation of raw materials into various types of perfume. Through this activity, participants gained insights into how traditional knowledge, craftsmanship, and local economic practices are integrated within contemporary production processes, thereby enriching their understanding of the relationship between culture, industry, and education.

All of these activities were designed in an integrated manner as a single, cohesive international academic exposure program.

5. Program Participants

a. Lecturers as Facilitators

A total of 12 lecturers were involved in this program, representing diverse academic backgrounds and institutional home bases. The lecturers came from several study programs, including:

- Accounting
- Management
- Islamic Economics
- Mathematics Education
- Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD)

The lecturers served as:

- Academic facilitators in the community engagement activities
- Student mentors during both online and offline learning processes
- Liaisons for cross-institutional and cross-cultural academic dialogue
- Moderators of post-activity academic reflections

The diversity of lecturers' academic backgrounds constituted a key strength of the program, as it enabled interdisciplinary approaches in interpreting and reflecting on international experiences.

b. Student Participants

Students constituted the primary target of this community engagement program. The number and scheme of student participation were differentiated into online and offline participants, as described below:

1) Online Student Participants

A total of 438 students participated in the community engagement activities through online modes. The online student participants were involved in:

- Seminars and the dissemination of findings from the international visits,
- Reflective discussions on global and cross-cultural education
- The strengthening of global perspectives through exposure to international academic experiences.

The involvement of online students was intended to broaden the reach of the community engagement benefits and to ensure that the international experiences gained were not limited solely to offline participants.

2) Offline Student Participants (International)

A total of 15 students were directly involved in the offline international activities through academic visits to Egypt and Saudi Arabia. These students were selected participants who took part intensively in the entire *international academic exposure* program.

Offline student participants served as:

- Participants in direct academic observation
- Participants in cross-cultural discussions
- Subjects of in-depth reflection on international experiences

This scheme enabled a tiered learning process, in which offline students gained direct experiential learning, while online students acquired learning through dissemination activities and shared reflective processes.

6. Implementation Techniques

The implementation of the program employed several key techniques, as follows:

- a. Academic Observation
Offline participants conducted direct observations of learning systems, academic culture, and lecturer–student interactions at the host universities.
- b. Academic Discussions and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
Academic discussions and FGDs were conducted with academic leaders, lecturers, and international students to explore educational practices, academic development, and the challenges of cross-cultural learning.
- c. Non-Classroom Contextual Learning
Visits to the Papyrus Factory and the perfume production facility were used as interdisciplinary learning media that connected historical, cultural, economic, and educational aspects.
- d. Online Dissemination and Reflection
The results and experiences from the offline activities were disseminated to online students through online forums, followed by structured academic reflection sessions.

7. Reflective Data Collection Techniques

Data in this program were collected through:

- Direct observation during offline activities
- Reflective notes from students and lecturers
- Outcomes of discussions and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); and
- Program documentation, including photographs and reports.

These data were used as the basis for constructing descriptive narratives in the results and discussion sections.

8. Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

The analysis was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach, emphasizing:

- Patterns of participants' experiences
- The learning processes that occurred; and
- The contribution of the program to strengthening students' global perspectives.

The results of the analysis are presented in the form of thematic narratives aligned with the objectives of the community engagement program and the focus of the article.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Overview of Program Implementation and Participant Engagement

This international community engagement program was implemented using a hybrid approach that combined offline *international academic exposure* with online academic dissemination and reflection. This model enabled an expansion of the program's reach without diminishing the depth of learning experiences gained by the core participants. Quantitatively, the program involved a total of 450 students, consisting of 438 online participants and 15 international offline participants, as well as 12 supervising lecturers from diverse academic backgrounds. This scheme reflects a community engagement design that emphasizes not only the number of participants but also the quality and intensity of the learning experiences.

Table 1. Composition of Community Engagement Program Participants

Participant Category	Amount	Form of Participation
Supervising Lecturers	12	acilitators, mentors, academic reflector
Offline Students (International)	15	Direct <i>international academic exposure</i>
Online Students	438	Dissemination, reflection, academic discussions
Total Students	453	Hybrid participation

Based on Table 1, it can be observed that the program was designed to achieve two main objectives simultaneously:

- 1) to provide in-depth international academic experiences for selected students; and
- 2) to expand the educational benefits of the program to a large number of students through online mechanisms.

2. Strengthening Students' Global Mindset

a. Global Mindset among Offline Students

Students who were directly involved in the offline international activities demonstrated a relatively more intensive process of global mindset development. Direct exposure to the academic environments of Al-Azhar University, and the Islamic University of Madinah, provided concrete experiences regarding differences in educational systems, academic cultures, and intellectual traditions. Through academic observation, offline students began to realize that higher education is neither singular nor uniform, but is strongly shaped by historical, value-based, and cultural contexts. For example, students observed that the learning system at Al-Azhar emphasizes the continuity of scholarly traditions and academic authority, whereas universities in Saudi Arabia demonstrate an integration of modern educational systems with strong religious value formation.



Fig 1. Offline Student Participants with Al-Azhar University Students, Egypt

This awareness shaped students' perspectives to become more open and reflective toward global education. Students no longer viewed the national education system as the sole point of reference, but began to perceive it as part of a broader global educational ecosystem.

b. Global Mindset among Online Students

Online students strengthened their global mindset through the dissemination of international experiences conducted by lecturers and offline student participants. Although they did not experience direct exposure, online students still gained global insights through narrative sharing, reflective discussions, and experience-based academic dialogue.

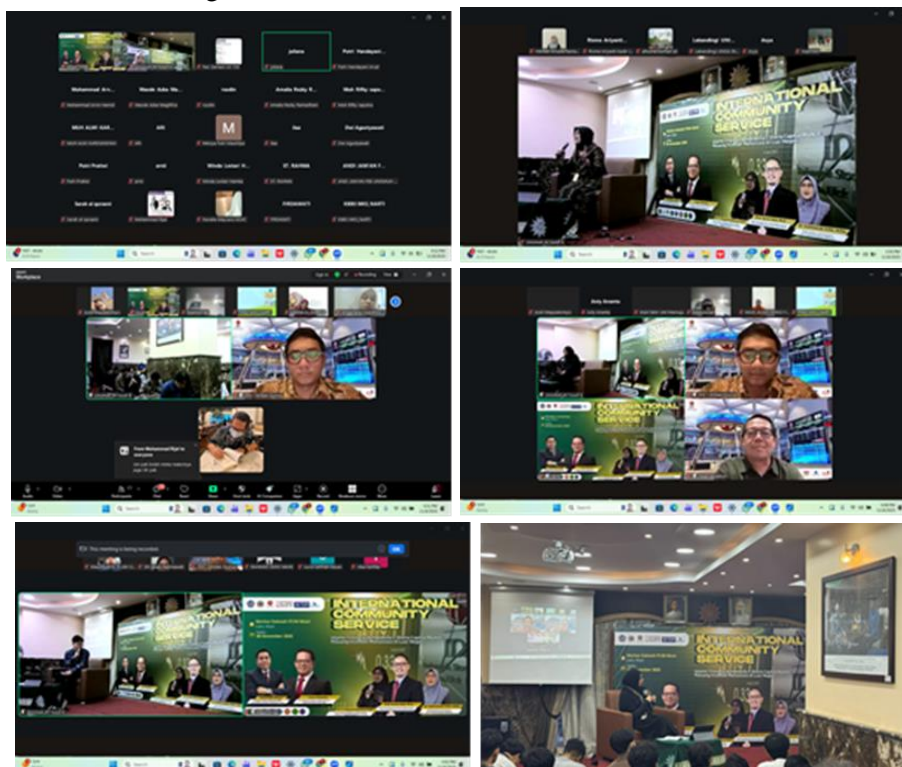


Fig 2. Online Student Participants

The difference between online and offline students lies not in the quality of learning, but in the depth of experience. Online students gained *cognitive exposure* to global education, while offline students acquired *experiential exposure*. Nevertheless, both forms of exposure contributed gradually to the development of students' global mindset.

Table 2. Patterns of Students' Global Mindset Exposure

Student Group	Level of Global Mindset Exposure (Index 0–100)	Exposure Category
Offline Students (International)	85	Very High
Online Students	65	High

This table indicates that offline students experienced a more intensive strengthening of their global mindset, while online students obtained reinforcement that was more reflective and conceptual in nature.

3. Development of Cultural Sensitivity

a. Cultural Sensitivity through Direct Interaction

Cultural sensitivity developed significantly among offline students through direct interaction with the social and academic environments in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with international students at the Islamic University of Madinah served as an important space for cross-cultural dialogue. Indonesian students interacted with peers from various countries, discussing learning experiences, language challenges, and processes of cultural adaptation.



Fig 3. The Giza Pyramids



Fig 4. Focus Group Discussion with Offline Student Participants and Al-Azhar University Students, Egypt

In addition to academic interactions, visits to the Papyrus Factory in Egypt and the perfume production facility in Taif broadened students' understanding of the interconnections between culture, history, and local economic practices. Students not only observed production processes but also gained insights into the cultural values and traditions that underpin them.



Fig 5. Visit to the Papyrus Factory

These experiences encouraged students to develop empathetic attitudes, respect for differences, and an avoidance of cultural generalizations. The cultural sensitivity formed was not merely knowledge about “other cultures,” but a reflective awareness of how culture influences ways of thinking, learning, and interacting.

b. Cultural Sensitivity among Online Students

Online students developed cultural sensitivity through experiential narratives, discussions, and shared reflections. Although they did not engage in direct interaction, this process remained important as it fostered awareness of cultural diversity and global educational practices. Online students demonstrated an increased understanding of Middle Eastern contexts that had often been perceived through stereotypes. Experience-based exposure helped students to view the region as a dynamic academic and civilizational space.

Table 3. Forms of Cultural Sensitivity Strengthening

Activity Form	Offline Students	Online Students
Cross-cultural interaction	Direct	Indirect
Cultural observation	High	Moderate
Cultural reflection	High	High
Understanding of local context	In-depth	Conceptual

This table indicates that although the intensity of experiences differed, both offline and online students experienced the strengthening of cultural sensitivity through different mechanisms.

4. Enhancement of Students’ Academic Motivation

a. Academic Motivation among Offline Students

Offline students demonstrated a significant increase in academic motivation after participating in the *international academic exposure* program. Exposure to disciplined, competitive, and excellence-oriented international academic environments encouraged students to reflect on their academic goals.

Several indicators of increased academic motivation were identified, including:

- a. a growing interest in pursuing higher levels of study;
- b. an increased desire to improve foreign language proficiency; and
- c. heightened awareness of the importance of mastering international academic literature.

This motivation did not emerge as a momentary impulse, but rather as the result of in-depth reflection on cross-cultural learning experiences.

b. Academic Motivation among Online Students

Online students also demonstrated strengthened academic motivation, although in a more moderate form. Reflective discussions and exposure to international experiences encouraged students to:

- 1) broaden their academic perspectives;
- 2) increase their seriousness in academic engagement; and
- 3) begin considering academic opportunities at both national and international levels.

Academic motivation among online students was primarily inspirational in nature, whereas among offline students it tended to be transformational.

Table 4. Patterns of Students' Academic Motivation Improvement

Student Group	Academic Motivation Improvement Index (0–100)	Category
Offline Students (International)	90	Very High
Online Students	70	High

This table illustrates differences in the intensity of academic motivation between offline and online students, without diminishing the contributions of both groups.

5. Discussion: International Academic Exposure as a Community Engagement Model

The results of this program indicate that *international academic exposure* can serve as an effective and relevant community engagement model within the context of higher education. Unlike conventional community engagement activities that focus on one-way knowledge transfer, this model places experience, reflection, and dialogue at the core of the learning process. The use of a hybrid (online–offline) scheme enabled the community engagement program to reach a large number of students while maintaining the quality of learning experiences. Offline students acted as *knowledge carriers* who transferred their experiences to online students, thereby creating a collaborative learning ecosystem.

Conceptually, these findings affirm that:

- 1) A global mindset can be developed through cross-national academic exposure,
- 2) cultural sensitivity evolves through interaction and reflection; and,
- 3) academic motivation is strengthened through inspiration and real-world experiences.

This model is also relevant for higher education institutions facing resource constraints in international mobility, as it still enables the internationalization of education through adaptive and inclusive approaches.

6. Implications for Higher Education

The outcomes of this community engagement program offer several important implications:

- a. for higher education institutions, *international academic exposure* can be integrated as part of internationalization strategies and efforts to strengthen students' soft skills;
- b. for lecturers, this program opens opportunities for reflective and interdisciplinary community engagement; and
- c. for students, international experiences, both direct and indirect, serve as meaningful and sustainable sources of learning.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

1) Conclusion

The international community engagement program implemented through an *international academic exposure* scheme in Egypt and Saudi Arabia demonstrates that cross-national academic experiences can serve as an effective means of strengthening students' global mindset, cultural sensitivity, and academic motivation. Through a hybrid approach that combined offline international activities with online dissemination and reflective processes, the program successfully reached a large number of students while simultaneously providing in-depth learning experiences for selected participants. The results indicate that *international academic exposure* should not be narrowly interpreted as mere physical mobility, but rather as a multidimensional learning process involving academic observation, cross-cultural dialogue, critical reflection, and knowledge dissemination. Students who participated in offline activities gained direct

experiences in understanding the diversity of higher education systems, academic cultures, and scholarly traditions in the Middle East. This exposure fostered more open perspectives on global education and cultivated awareness that higher education is part of a complex and interconnected international knowledge ecosystem. Meanwhile, students who participated through online activities also gained significant benefits through the dissemination of experiences and academic reflection processes.

Although they were not directly involved in international activities, online students obtained conceptual exposure that broadened their global perspectives, reduced stereotypical views of other cultures, and fostered awareness of the importance of global competencies in both academic and professional contexts. These findings demonstrate that community engagement based on *international academic exposure* can be designed inclusively, ensuring that its benefits are not limited to a small group of offline participants. From a global mindset perspective, the program encouraged students to view higher education as a transboundary space shaped by history, culture, and local values. Students began to understand that no single educational model is universal; rather, multiple approaches exist, each with its own strengths and challenges. This awareness is essential in fostering critical and reflective attitudes toward educational practices at both national and international levels. In terms of cultural sensitivity, both direct and indirect interactions with the academic and social environments in Egypt and Saudi Arabia helped students develop empathetic, tolerant attitudes and respect for differences. These experiences reinforced the understanding that culture cannot be comprehended superficially, but must be interpreted through its historical, social, and value-based contexts. The cultural sensitivity cultivated through this program thus becomes an important form of capital for students in navigating an increasingly multicultural global reality.

With regard to academic motivation, the *international academic exposure* program proved effective in fostering students' intrinsic motivation to enhance learning quality, broaden academic aspirations, and plan long-term self-development. Offline students demonstrated transformational motivation, characterized by intentions to pursue further studies, improve foreign language proficiency, and deepen engagement with international academic literature. Meanwhile, online students experienced inspirational motivation, which encouraged greater seriousness in their studies and prompted them to view education from a global perspective. Overall, this community engagement program affirms that *international academic exposure* represents a relevant, adaptive, and contextual approach to community engagement in addressing the challenges of higher education internationalization. The program not only provides individual benefits for students, but also contributes to strengthening the institutional capacity of higher education institutions in developing innovative and globally oriented community engagement models.

2) Recommendations

Based on the implementation and reflective evaluation of the program, several strategic recommendations can be proposed as follows:

a. Recommendations for Higher Education Institutions

Higher education institutions are encouraged to integrate *international academic exposure* as part of their community engagement strategies and higher education internationalization efforts. The hybrid model that combines offline and online activities has proven effective in expanding the reach of program benefits without compromising the quality of learning experiences. Universities should also promote interdisciplinary collaboration in designing similar programs, enabling international experiences to be interpreted and enriched through multiple academic perspectives.

b. Recommendations for Lecturers

Lecturers are expected to play an active role as facilitators of reflective learning within *international academic exposure* programs. Students' international experiences should be processed through structured discussions, reflection, and dissemination to ensure the generation of meaningful learning outcomes. Lecturers may also develop such activities as part of sustainable community engagement practices rather than treating them as incidental or one-time activities.

c. Recommendations for Students

Students are encouraged to utilize *international academic exposure* experiences—both direct and indirect—as valuable resources for their academic and personal development. Students should cultivate

reflective attitudes toward cross-cultural experiences and use them as inspiration to enhance learning quality, openness of thought, and readiness to face global challenges.

d. Recommendations for Future Program Development

Similar programs in the future are recommended to:

- 1) strengthen structured reflection mechanisms;
- 2) expand international networks with partner institutions; and
- 3) develop community engagement modules based on *international academic exposure* that can be replicated in other contexts.

Sustained program development will further strengthen the role of community engagement as a strategic instrument in fostering students who possess global perspectives, cultural sensitivity, and strong academic motivation.

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